

ECCLESIOLOGY



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Chapter 1

Ecclesiology: Introductory Remarks

Ecclesiology comes from the Greek words *ecclesia* (church/assembly) and *ology* (study of) and refers to the study of the church. In Christian systematic theology, ecclesiology is one of the major areas of study and investigates what the Bible teaches about the church both universal (all believers in Christ) and local (local gatherings of believers in Christ).

Common areas of study within ecclesiology include:
The Definitions of the Church: The New Testament used the Greek word *ekklesia* approximately 114 times. While some uses of the word refer to an assembly of people apart from a religious emphasis, most occurrences identify either the universal church (often spelled with an uppercase C) or local churches (local groups of Christian believers). Of special importance is the fact that a church in the Bible always referred to people, not to buildings, as many people understand the term today. In the New Testament, Christians did not go to church; Christians were the church.

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The Purpose (s) of the Church: The New Testament mentions many roles of the church, some of which are exemplified in the picture of the first church found in Acts 2:42-47. These included worship, teaching, fellowship, service, outreach, and prayer.

The Rituals of the Church: Ecclesiology also considers what rites are appropriate for the Christian Church. Protestants include only the biblical rituals explicitly listed in the New Testament, including baptism and Communion (also called the Lord's Supper). Baptism in particular is hotly debated among different Christian traditions, typically regarding the mode of baptism and whether it should be limited to believers or should include infants. The Lord's Supper is observed by all Christian traditions, though its meaning is understood differently among the various branches of Christian churches today.

The Role of Church Leadership/Church Government: Much emphasis in ecclesiology is placed on the consideration of church leadership. Some traditions insist elders should be the church's primary leaders, while others emphasize the role of deacons more (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1:5-9). In addition, the role of women in church leadership receives much attention. Further, how church leaders are chosen and how church decisions are made are addressed at length within ecclesiology. For example, some argue for congregation-led churches while others prefer most decisions be made by appointed elders and/or pastors.

The Role of Church Members: Since the Bible teaches the importance of every person in Christ and the priesthood of every believer, ecclesiology seeks to understand what the Bible teaches about the role of church members and membership. Some churches very carefully define church membership rules and responsibilities. Others follow the model of the early churches, with less formal requirements and a high level of expectation regarding involvement and commitment.

In summary, ecclesiology is essential for all Christians as it guides us toward a biblical understanding of how Christians relate to one another, to God, and to unbelievers. A firm understanding of ecclesiology benefits us personally as we learn how to help provide healthy church growth and honor God.

The Doctrine of Ecclesiology is the Doctrine of the Church. It is the study of its origin, its nature, constitution, ordinances, and activities. There is always in the popular mind the hazy conception of the church as a club, a mutual society of kindred minds and a continual confusing of the church with the kingdom of Heaven. How often is the aim of the church stated as, “Advancing the kingdom” and “bringing in the kingdom,” “establishing the kingdom,” many times making the church a political thing. Men lose sight of the primary nature of the church as a “called out” body of people “for His name,” a heavenly people, one body separate from all other men of the world as a unique heavenly bride of Christ. Ignorance of its true nature is also displayed in classifying all the saved of all the ages as “members of the church.” Some would even out all the sinners who, like the “mixed multitude” which followed Israel, fasten themselves for one reason or another like parasites to the church, as bona fide members of the church. We must always see the distinctive nature of the church both as to dispensations and as to its membership as containing only the born-again, not an earthly organization but a heavenly organism.

The Origin of the Church (Where and when and how)

It is of the utmost importance to see the absolutely new character of the church; that it is not an out-growth of the Old Testament, Jewish economy, nor its ordinances revamped or converted Jewish rites. Hebrews 8:1-9:28 shows us the fact that there had to be a new covenant and it could not be enforced until the death of the testator (9:16), and the removal of the Old Covenant. (Thus Paul shows in many ways that the saint is not under law but under Grace, married to another. Romans 7:1:4, Paul so graphically shows the contrast to our position now as to that under Law in the Old Testament until one can hardly see how a saint can be ignorant of the fact that there was no church (in the New Testament meaning of the Word, considered later) In the Old Testament, or in the Gospels Christ was “made under the law,” Galatians 4:4; and as a “minister to the circumcision, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers,” Romans 15:8, and that he never established the church while upon earth is very evident by the future tense of His utterance, “I will build my church,” Matthew 16:18. Many try to misquote the words of Jesus here, “I will continue to build my church;” that is erroneous Greek, not the present indicative, but the future indicative action, action to take place in the future. It is the

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same as the “I will give unto you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven,” not delivered unto Peter until after Pentecost, Greek - oikodomeo, is that of a “house builder” - and Paul says he was the Master architect, I Corinthians 3:10, Greek, arkitekton - master builder - skillful architect. The text is without any misunderstanding; Christ is yet to build His church when He spoke these words in Matthew 16. In Acts after chapter 2, we have the church mentioned repeatedly (24 times) as an established entity. Where and when and how did it come into existence? In the great High-priestly prayer of Jesus in John 17, there was a looking forward on the part of Jesus for a new kind of keeping for His own, a future new kind of relationship between Himself and the Believer and, also, all through the Upper-room discourse, a new revelation of a coming Comforter Who not only is with them but in them. You cannot read the wonderful promises Jesus made in this discourse without seeing a new relationship, a new revelation, and a new economy or administration. Let us briefly sum up this line of inference pinpointing the birth of the church.

There are two lines of argument to show that the church had its birthday on the day of Pentecost, and no prior existence. The first line of argument we are pursuing right i.e., showing the future nature of the church by Christ’s prediction of “I will build my Church”, etc.; and the second is the very nature, Ecclesiology, of the church as requiring the agency of the Holy Spirit to baptize the believer into the Body of Christ.

A. The first argument Pinpoints beginning of the Church, “Upon this rock I will build my Church;” continuing our first line of argument for Pentecost as the birthday of the church. Note: The very absence of any mention of the Church in the Gospels except for two times and those in a future sense marks that important body as a future one. Not until the head of the church, her risen Lord, had ascended to the Father, glorified, could He send the great Administrator of the Church, the Holy Spirit. In Acts one, the disciples are still waiting in expectation for the Holy Spirit. Immediately after Pentecost, the Church as a corporate body is recognized, Acts 2:47, “The Lord added to the Church daily such as were being saved.” (Vs. 41 just added about 3,000 souls “to them” is not in the original; 5:14 and 11:24 shows to what added, “to the Lord” i.e., to His body which is the Church. “To the Church” in 2:47 is omitted in most ancient manuscripts.) On Pentecost the

prepared disciples were welded of the Holy Spirit into a Temple of the Triune God. cf. Ephesians 2:21-22. This they could not be without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as Christ prophesied; “He is with you and shall be in you,” John 14:17 cf., thus making them the new temple of God and, in their fullness, constituting the “building or habitation of God.” Here is the meaning of the only time the tongues of fire are seen in the New Testament or in Christian experience - it was emblematic of the presence of God; it was the New Testament Shekinah Glory; God entering His house as He did the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and the Temple of Solomon. It signified a New House of God, a New Temple of the Triune God. There was no living building before Pentecost. Peter is careful to show that Christ is the chief cornerstone of this living spiritual house, but did not so become until disallowed of man, after His death and resurrection, (cf. I Peter 2:4-10). Here again is the idea of the death to validate the New Covenant. This day of Pentecost sees the birth of the Church as a corporate body placed under the jurisdiction and administration of the Holy Spirit who indwells it. The very idea, then, of the church as the “habitation of God,” a “Spiritual house,” for God’s indwelling had to wait the advent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, thus the order in John 7:38-39, “If I go I will send Him unto you,” John 16:17. The coming of the Holy Spirit had to await the home going of Christ to send Him; hence, Pentecost pinpoints the birth of the Church.

B. The second argument follows the nature of the Church, as made up of Spirit baptized believers incorporating them into the Body of Christ, a living union with their Risen Head, We ask the question, “What constitutes the Church as the ‘Body of Christ?’” Paul gives the answer, “It is by virtue of its having all members who have been all baptized into one body by One Spirit, and all made to drink into One Spirit.” I Corinthians 12:13. There is one Spirit or life in each member, the same spirit of life, the Holy Spirit, so that “though we be many members yet are we one body,” because we have the same life; that is what makes our bodies one, hands, feet, etc., one-life courses through the body, so, with the true church, a living body of Christ, before the Baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire. Second, when, where, and how did that baptism take place? The answer must be, “Pentecost:” He wasn’t poured forth before that, and in fact couldn’t be until Christ was glorified. Compare John 7:39 with Acts 2:33; there

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could be no Church before Pentecost. Pentecost was the birthday of the Church; in the Gospels man is still under Law; Christ died for those who are under the Law.

The Organism of the Church: (The What)

A. Negatively (What the Church is Not)

1. One of the most prominent definitions given of the Church is erroneous, "The church is a voluntary association of believers, united together for the purpose of worship and edification." We could as accurately say that the body is a voluntary organization or association of members united together for the purposes of work and locomotion. There is nothing voluntary about it; but, as the voluntary action on the believer's part is to accept Christ, and, at that second, the Holy Spirit joins or unites him to the living Christ, as we shall see in our next division.

2. Another erroneous conception is that the church is an edifice for worship or a building of wood and stone, as, "The Church on the corner." No such usage of the word church is found in the Bible, rather, "The Church, which is in thy house," Philippians 2; Romans 16:5; Colossians 4:15, "their house, his house." Never is any building considered a church and we shall see is incongruous in the light of the etymology of the word for church.

3. Another erroneous conception is of the church as some particular denomination, Methodist church, Baptist church, or Presbyterian Church, many times with the exclusive meaning attached, "The," as though it were the Catholic church, the universal church and only church, hence so many bodies consider themselves the bride of Christ, the only "pillar and ground of truth,"

4. Following the same idea as number one above, the most common error is the consideration of the church as an organization rather than a so-called founder, or a local building named after the founder. From this arises the common idea that one can "join" the church of Christ. We believe in a local membership in a local assembly. There is need for this to give a community of effort and stability. We shall see that there is somewhat of allowance for the idea in the New Testament sense of the local assembly; but it has been carried to all kinds of

extremes of closed communion to all but local members, need of a “letter” to qualify for any local functioning, and exclusions of all kinds. Paul couldn’t preach in many modern churches unless re-baptized and joined up, not to even mention Peter (a married man) who couldn’t be a Pope in modern Roman Church? This idea of organization instead of organism has led the church into political alliances and a social gospel of human betterment, and made a mustard tree out of it, sheltering all kinds of fowls of the air.

5. To them should be added error of making the Church the Kingdom primal in the Old Testament to Israel and Christ on Davids Throne, It is no wonder that the church of Christ has been counterfeited by the great arch-counterfeiter of all time, Satan, He has counterfeited everything God does. To name a building or organization a “church” doesn’t make it one. God calls them in Revelation, a “synagogue of Satan.” Lit., “Assembly of Satan” and doesn’t see fit to honor them with the New Testament name for church. (Revelation 2:9; 3:9) As Jesus said to the religious leaders of His day, who claimed to be God’s people, “Ye are of your father the Devil.” Revelation 3-4 gives Christ’s last messages to His church and in them He warns of the fact that a local assembly can cease to be a church when it loses its testimony, its light goes out, it ceases to be witness unto Him, “it can have a name that it lives but is dead,” (Revelation 3:1). It can have its “Candlestick” removed out of its place, (Revelation 2:5), and even be vomited out of His mouth” (Revelation. 3:16);”Light that becomes darkness and salt that has lost its savor is good only to be cast out and trodden in contempt under foot of men,” (Matthew 6:23; Matthew 5:13). An organization calling itself a church without Christ, with an unbeliever for a preacher, is an “assembly or gathering together of Satan.”

B. Positively (What the church is)

1. First the etymology of the word Church. This is the only method by which we can arrive at the true nature of the Church. We cannot do as many theologians do, use the Scotch, German, or post, biblical Greek usage. They would make our English word “Church” as it comes of Kurriakon for “God’s House.” This is never the usage of the New Testament “Church.” There are FOUR primary words in the Greek New Testament translated church, or assembly, or

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congregation. They each have the general meaning of a gathering together; but the one properly translated consistently “church” carries an added etymological meaning defining it and the nature of the church itself.

- a. Synagogue: Literally, a gathering together, or congregation. Only once applied to the true church, by James 32:2, “there came a man into your assembly.” (James writing to the Jews uses a word familiar to them. This word Christ uses in Revelation 2:9 of the “gathering together of Satan,” “synagogue of Satan.”)
- b. Episyndagoge: Twice used, II Thessalonians 2:1; Hebrews 10:25. In Hebrews 10:25, it has to do with faithfully assembling of yourselves together, but in II Thessalonians, it has to do with our assembling together with Him in the air. See how the word is used by Christ in Matthew 23:37.
- c. Paneeguris: General assembly and church of the first born. Only once in the New Testament, Hebrews 12:23; correctly interpreted, “general assembly, or entire congregation or gathering.” Not a Hendiadys, but no definite article at all in the Greek, so of the saved of all times and the ekklesia of the firstborn; Williams Translation, “Festal gathering and assembly of God’s firstborn sons enrolled in heaven.” The word signifies a gathering of assembly for festive occasion, so all toils, cares, tears, etc., over; that gathering will be as Jesus said, “To drink of the fruit of the vine anew in the Kingdom.”
- d. Ekklesia: The most common word translated “church” in the New Testament, Greek, ek-out, and kaleo, to call, hence a company or assembly of called out ones. It is a company of the klettoi, the called out ones. It may be remarked that the Septuagint used it many times in the translation of the Hebrew gahal, for congregation or gathering. All too many have alighted upon the one time in the New Testament where it is used of Israel in the wilderness to try to prove that Israel was a part of the church; showing an abysmal ignorance of both the dispensational truth and the nature of the church, in Acts 7:38, R.V., correctly translated ekklesia here, “congregation in the wilderness,” in the context showing the great gathering of called out Israelites gathered at Mt. Sinai. In Acts 19, it is used several times for the tumultuous assembly of the

worshippers of Diana, God of the Ephesians, but there is no sense of “The church” there. There is one other extracurricular usage of ekklesia in the New Testament, Hebrews 2:12, where Paul is quoting from the Septuagint of Psalm 22:22, “In the midst of the congregation will I sing praises unto thee.” In all the other, almost a hundred times the word is used, it means the true church purchased with Christ’s blood, first in Matthew 16:18, “My Church.” There are three usages:

Of the local assembly of called out ones, “The church in thy house,” Philippians 2, The church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla; Romans 16:5, “The church in Ephesus,, etc., Revelation 2:3.

Of the churches in a province, “Churches in Asia,” I Corinthians 16:1; “Churches of the Gentiles,” Romans 16:4; “Churches of Macedonia,” II Corinthians 8:1; of Judea, Galatians 1:22.

Of the whole body of Christ, “Christ loved the church,” Ephesians 5:25; “Christ is Head of the Church,” Ephesians 5:23.

From the foregoing we can deduce the important truth of the nature of the church as to its body and, from others, its nature as related to its risen dead, Jesus Christ. The outward visible organization is not to be considered the true church of Christ. It may be far from it; it may be a synagogue of Satan. It may have a few who are true members of Christ’s body, furthermore, it is not numbers that make a church “people” for His name, so a bride for His Son, Acts 15:14. Every born-again person in Christ is a part of the ekklesia - “the called out ones.” From this we naturally go on to the climatical consideration of the nature of the church as not an organization but an organism. This, the New Testament affirms again and again. The two primary proofs are, “The Church, as the body of Christ,” I Corinthians 12:13 and Ephesians 4:4; “One body,” Ephesians 5:30, “The bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh.” Every man or woman in Christ is in this one body - a living organism. The other line of thought is contained in the idea of a “living building,” a habitation of God through the Spirit.” Paul gives the idea of a living organism, Ephesians 2:20-22, a growing organism. (cf. Colossians 2:19), so Peter calls each member “Living stones,” 1 Pt 2:5.

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The only method of entering this Body, becoming a true member of the Church of God is by being born again of the Spirit of God; Acts 5:14 says, “Joined or added to the Lord;” The true definition of the church from the Word of God: why He called it “My Church,” His body’s sake, which is the Church, Colossians 1:24. Note: “His Body, Which is the Church.” The church is His body; He is the head. How then can one be in the church without being in Christ? Don’t be guilty of vague generalities about the church, losing sight of its living relation to her true Head, “Keeping in touch with the Head.” It will save you from many God-dishonoring teachings and getting sidetracked from your true job of getting men saved, genuinely born again of the Spirit of God and added to the Lord, then to edify or build up the church.

Chapter 2

Biblical Foundations of the Church

In order to understand the precise force of this word, something must first be said as to its employment by the Septuagint translators of the Old Testament. Although in one or two places (Psalm 25:5; Judith 6:21; etc.) the word is used without religious signification, merely in the sense of “an assembly”, this is not usually the case. Ordinarily it is employed as the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew qahal, i.e., the entire community of the children of Israel viewed in their religious aspect. Two Hebrew words are employed in the Old Testament to signify the congregation of Israel, viz. qahal ’edah. In the Septuagint these are rendered, respectively, *ekklesia* and *synagoge*. Thus in Proverbs 5:14, where the words occur together, “in the midst of the church and the congregation”, the Greek rendering is *en meso ekklesias kai synagogues*. The distinction is indeed not rigidly observed - thus in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, both words are regularly represented by *synagoge* - but it is adhered to in the great majority of cases, and

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may be regarded as an established rule. In the writings of the New Testament the words are sharply distinguished. With them *ecclesia* denotes the Church of Christ; *synagoga*, the Jews still adhering to the worship of the Old Covenant. Occasionally, it is true, *ecclesia* is employed in its general significance of “assembly” (Acts 19:32; 1 Corinthians 14:19); and *synagoga* occurs once in reference to a gathering of Christians, though apparently of a non-religious character (James 2:2) But *ecclesia* is never used by the Apostles to denote the Jewish Church. The word as a technical expression had been transferred to the community of Christian believers.

It has been frequently disputed whether there is any difference in the signification of the two words. St. Augustine (Enarration on Psalm 77) distinguishes them on the ground that *ecclesia* is indicative of the calling together of men, *synagoga* of the forcible herding together of irrational creatures: “*congregatio magis pecorum convocatio magis hominum intelligi solet*”. But it may be doubted whether there is any foundation for this view. It would appear, however, that the term *qahal*, was used with the special meaning of “those called by God to eternal life”, while ‘edah, denoted merely “the actually existing Jewish community” (Schürer, Hist. Jewish People, II, 59). Though the evidence for this distinction is drawn from the Mishna, and thus belongs to a somewhat later date, yet the difference in meaning probably existed at the time of Christ’s ministry. But however this may have been, His intention in employing the term, hitherto used of the Hebrew people viewed as a church, to denote the society He Himself was establishing cannot be mistaken. It implied the claim that this society now constituted the true people of God, that the Old Covenant was passing away, and that He, the promised Messiah, was inaugurating a New Covenant with a New Israel.

As signifying the Church, the word *Ecclesia* is used by Christian writers, sometimes in a wider, sometimes in a more restricted sense.

- It is employed to denote all who, from the beginning of the world, have believed in the one true God, and have been made His children by grace. In this sense, it is sometimes distinguished, signifying the Church before the Old Covenant, the Church of the Old Covenant, or the Church of the New Covenant. Thus St. Gregory (Book V, Epistle 18) writes: “Sancti ante legem, sancti sub lege, sancti sub gratiâ, omnes hi... in membris Ecclesiæ sunt

constituti” (The saints before the Law, the saints under the Law, and the saints under grace - all these are constituted members of the Church).

- It may signify the whole body of the faithful, including not merely the members of the Church who are alive on earth but those, too, whether in heaven or in purgatory, who form part of the one communion of saints. Considered thus, the Church is divided into the Church Militant, the Church Suffering, and the Church Triumphant.
- It is further employed to signify the Church Militant of the New Testament. Even in this restricted acceptance, there is some variety in the use of the term. The disciples of a single locality are often referred to in the New Testament as a Church (Revelation 2:18; Romans 16:4; Acts 9:31), and St. Paul even applies the term to disciples belonging to a single household (Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:19, Colossians 4:15; Philemon 1-2). Moreover, it may designate specially those who exercise the office of teaching and ruling the faithful, the *Ecclesia Docens* (Matthew 18:17), or again the governed as distinguished from their pastors, the *Ecclesia Discens* (Acts 20:28). In all these cases the name belonging to the whole is applied to a part. The term, in its full meaning, denotes the whole body of the faithful, both rulers and ruled, throughout the world (Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18). It is in this meaning that the Church is treated of in the present article. As thus understood, the definition of the Church given by Bellarmine is that usually adopted by Catholic theologians: “A body of men united together by the profession of the same Christian Faith, and by participation in the same sacraments, under the governance of lawful pastors, more especially of the Roman Pontiff, the sole vicar of Christ on earth” (*Coetus hominum ejusdem christianæ fidei professione, et eorumdem sacramentorum communione colligatus, sub regimine legitimatorum pastorum et præcipue unius Christi in Terris vicarii Romani Pontificis.* - Bellarmine, *De Eccl.*, III, ii, 9). The accuracy of this definition will appear in the course of the article.

OT Background of the Church

Hebrew prophecy relates in almost equal proportions to the person and to the work of the Messiah. This work was conceived

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as consisting of the establishment of a kingdom, in which he was to reign over a regenerated Israel. The prophetic writings describe for us with precision many of the characteristics which were to distinguish that kingdom. Christ during His ministry affirmed not only that the prophecies relating to the Messiah were fulfilled in His own person, but also that the expected Messianic kingdom was none other than His Church. A consideration of the features of the kingdom as depicted by the Prophets, must therefore greatly assist us in understanding Christ's intentions in the institution of the Church. Indeed many of the expressions employed by Him in relation to the society He was establishing are only intelligible in the Light of these prophecies and of the consequent expectations of the Jewish people. It will moreover appear that we have a weighty argument for the supernatural character of the Christian revelation in the precise fulfillment of the sacred oracles.

A characteristic feature of the Messianic kingdom, as predicted, is its universal extent. Not merely the twelve tribes, but the Gentiles are to yield allegiance to the Son of David. All kings are to serve and obey him; his dominion is to extend to the ends of the earth (Psalm 21:28 sq.; 2:7-12; 116:1; Zechariah 9:10). Another series of remarkable passages declares that the subject nations will possess the unity conferred by a common faith and a common worship - a feature represented under the striking image of the concourse of all peoples and nations to worship at Jerusalem. "It shall come to pass in the last days (i.e. in the Messianic Era)... that many nations shall say: Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth out of Sion, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem" (Micah 4:1-2; cf. Isaiah 2:2; Zechariah 8:3). This unity of worship is to be the fruit of a Divine revelation common to all the inhabitants of the earth (Zechariah 14:8).

Corresponding to the triple office of the Messiah as priest, prophet, and king, it will be noted that in relation to the kingdom the Sacred Writings lay stress on three points:

- ❖ it is to be endowed with a new and peculiar sacrificial system
- ❖ it is to be the kingdom of truth possessed of a Divine revelation
- ❖ it is to be governed by an authority emanating from the Messiah.

In regard to the first of these points, the priesthood of the Messiah Himself is explicitly stated (Psalm 109:4); while it is further taught that the worship which He is to inaugurate shall supersede the sacrifices of the Old Dispensation. This is implied, as the Apostle tells us, in the very title, “a priest after the order of *Melchisedech*”; and the same truth is contained in the prediction that a new priesthood is to be formed, drawn from other peoples besides the Israelites (Isaiah 66:18), and in the words of the Prophet Malachias which foretell the institution of a new sacrifice to be offered “from the rising of the sun even to the going down” (Malachi 1:11). The sacrifices offered by the priesthood of the Messianic kingdom are to endure as long as day and night shall last (Jeremiah 33:20).

The revelation of the Divine truth under the New Dispensation attested by Jeremias: “Behold the days shall come saith the Lord, and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Juda... and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, saying: Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least of them even to the greatest” (Jeremiah 31:31, 34), while Zacharias assures us that in those days Jerusalem shall be known as the city of truth. (Zechariah 8:3).

The passages which foretell that the Kingdom will possess a peculiar principle of authority in the personal rule of the Messiah are numerous (e.g. Psalms 2 and 71; Isaiah 9:6 sq.); but in relation to Christ’s own words, it is of interest to observe that in some of these passages the prediction is expressed under the metaphor of a shepherd guiding and governing his flock (Ezekiel 34:23; 37:24-28). It is noteworthy, moreover, that just as the prophecies in regard to the priestly office foretell the appointment of a priesthood subordinate to the Messiah, so those which relate to the office of government indicate that the Messiah will associate with Himself other “shepherds”, and will exercise His authority over the nations through rulers delegated to govern in His name (Jeremiah 18:6; Psalm 44:17; cf. St. Augustine, Enarration on Psalm 44, no. 32). Another feature of the kingdom is to be the sanctity of its members. The way to it is to be called “the holy way: the unclean shall not pass over it”. The uncircumcised and unclean are not to enter into the renewed Jerusalem (Isaiah 35:8; 52:1).

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The later uninspired apocalyptic literature of the Jews shows us how profoundly these predictions had influenced their national hopes, and explains for us the intense expectation among the populace described in the Gospel narratives. In these works as in the inspired prophecies the traits of the Messianic kingdom present two very different aspects. On the one hand, the Messiah is a Davidic king who gathers together the dispersed of Israel, and establishes on this earth a kingdom of purity and sinlessness (Psalms of Solomon, xvii). The foreign foe is to be subdued (Assumpt. Moses, c.x) and the wicked are to be judged in the valley of the son of Hinnon (Enoch, xxv, xxvii, xc). On the other hand, the kingdom is described in eschatological characters. The Messiah is pre-existent and Divine (Enoch, Simil., xlvi, 3); the kingdom He establishes is to be a heavenly kingdom inaugurated by a great world-catastrophe, which separates this world (aion outos), from the world to come (mellon). This catastrophe is to be accompanied by a judgment both of angels and of men (Jubilees, x, 8; v, 10; Assumpt. Moses, x, 1). The dead will rise (Psalms of Solomon, 3.11) and all the members of the Messianic kingdom will become like to the Messiah (Enoch, Simil., xc, 37). This twofold aspect of the Jewish hopes in regard to the coming Messiah must be borne in mind, if Christ's use of the expression "Kingdom of God" is to be understood. Not infrequently, it is true, He employs it in an eschatological sense. But far more commonly He uses it of the kingdom set up on this earth - of His Church. These are indeed, not two kingdoms, but one. The Kingdom of God to be established at the last day is the Church in her final triumph.

Constitution by Christ

The Baptist proclaimed the near approach of the Kingdom of God, and of the Messianic Era. He bade all who would share its blessings prepare themselves by penance. His own mission, he said, was to prepare the way of the Messiah. To his disciples he indicated Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah whose advent he had declared (John 1:29-31). From the very commencement of His ministry Christ laid claim in an explicit way to the Messianic dignity. In the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4:21) He asserts that the prophecies are fulfilled in His person; He declares that He is greater than Solomon (Luke 11:31), more venerable than the Temple (Matthew 12:6), Lord of the Sabbath (Luke 6:5). John, He says, is Elias, the promised

forerunner (Matthew 17:12); and to John's messengers He vouchsafes the proofs of His Messianic dignity which they request (Luke 7:22). He demands implicit faith on the ground of His Divine legation (John 6:29). His public entry into Jerusalem was the acceptance by the whole people of a claim again and again reiterated before them. The theme of His preaching throughout is the Kingdom of God which He has come to establish. St. Mark, describing the beginning of His ministry, says that He came into Galilee saying, "The time is accomplished, and the Kingdom of God is at hand". For the kingdom which He was even then establishing in their midst, the Law and the Prophets had been, He said, but a preparation (Luke 16:16; cf. Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 13:17; 21:43; 24:14; Mark 1:14; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2, 60; 18:17).

When it is asked what is this kingdom of which Christ spoke, there can be but one answer. It is His Church, the society of those who accept His Divine legation, and admit His right to the obedience of faith which He claimed. His whole activity is directed to the establishment of such a society: He organizes it and appoints rulers over it, establishes rites and ceremonies in it, transfers to it the name which had hitherto designated the Jewish Church, and solemnly warns the Jews that the kingdom was no longer theirs, but had been taken from them and given to another people. The several steps taken by Christ in organizing the Church are traced by the Evangelists. He is represented as gathering numerous disciples, but as selecting twelve from their number to be His companions in an especial manner. These share His life. To them He reveals the more hidden parts of His doctrine (Matthew 13:11). He sends them as His deputies to preach the kingdom, and bestows on them the power to work miracles. All are bound to accept their message; and those who refuse to listen to them shall meet a fate more terrible than that of Sodom and Gomorrha (Matthew 10:1-15). The Sacred Writers speak of these twelve chosen disciples in a manner indicating that they are regarded as forming a corporate body. In several passages they are still termed "the twelve" even when the number, understood literally, would be inexact. The name is applied to them when they have been reduced to eleven by the defection of Judas, on an occasion when only ten of them were present, and again after the appointment of St. Paul has increased their number to thirteen (Luke 24:33; John 20:24; 1 Corinthians 15:5; Revelation 21:14).

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In this constitution of the Apostolate Christ lays the foundation of His Church. But it is not till the action of official Judaism had rendered it manifestly impossible to hope the Jewish Church would admit His claim, that He prescribes for the Church as a body independent of the synagogue and possessed of an administration of her own. After the breach had become definite, He calls the Apostles together and speaks to them of the judicial action of the Church, distinguishing, in an unmistakable manner, between the private individual who undertakes the work of fraternal correction, and the ecclesiastical authority empowered to pronounce a judicial sentence (Matthew 18:15-17). To the jurisdiction thus conferred He attached a Divine sanction. A sentence thus pronounced, He assured the Apostles, should be ratified in heaven. A further step was the appointment of St. Peter to be the chief of the Twelve. For this position he had already been designated (Matthew 16:15 sqq.) on an occasion previous to that just mentioned: at Cæsarea Philippi, Christ had declared him to be the rock on which He would build His Church, thus affirming that the continuance and increase of the Church would rest on the office created in the person of Peter. To him, moreover, were to be given the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven - an expression signifying the gift of plenary authority (Isaiah 22:22). The promise thus made was fulfilled after the Resurrection, on the occasion narrated in John 21. Here Christ employs a simile used on more than one occasion by Himself to denote His own relation to the members of His Church - that of the shepherd and his flock. His solemn charge, "Feed my sheep", constituted Peter the common shepherd of the whole collective flock. (For a further consideration of the Petrine texts see article PRIMACY.) To the twelve Christ committed the charge of spreading the kingdom among all nations, appointing the rite of baptism as the one means of admission to a participation in its privileges (Matthew 28:19).

In the course of this article detailed consideration will be given to the principal characteristics of the Church. Christ's teaching on this point may be briefly summarized here. It is to be a kingdom ruled in His absence by men (Matthew 18:18; John 21:17). It is therefore a visible theocracy; and it will be substituted for the Jewish theocracy that has rejected Him (Matthew 21:43). In it, until the day of judgment, the bad will be mingled with the good (Matthew 13:41). Its extent will be universal (Matthew 28:19), and its duration to the end of time

(Matthew 13:49); all powers that oppose it shall be crushed (Matthew 21:44). Moreover, it will be a supernatural kingdom of truth, in the world, though not of it (John 18:36). It will be one and undivided, and this unity shall be a witness to all men that its founder came from God (John 17:21).

It is to be noticed that certain recent critics contest the positions maintained in the preceding paragraphs. They deny alike that Christ claimed to be the Messiah, and that the kingdom of which He spoke was His Church. Thus, as regards Christ's claim to Messianic dignity, they say that Christ does not declare Himself to be the Messiah in His preaching: that He bids the possessed who proclaimed Him the Son of God be silent: that the people did not suspect His Messiahship, but formed various extravagant hypotheses as to his personality. It is manifestly impossible within the limits of this article to enter on a detailed discussion of these points. But, in the light of the testimony of the passages above cited, it will be seen that the position is entirely untenable. In reference to the Kingdom of God, many of the critics hold that the current Jewish conception was wholly eschatological, and that Christ's references to it must one and all be thus interpreted. This view renders inexplicable the numerous passages in which Christ speaks of the kingdom as present, and further involves a misconception as to the nature of Jewish expectations, which, as has been seen, together with eschatological traits, contained others of a different character. Harnack (*What is Christianity?* p. 62) holds that in its inner meaning the kingdom as conceived by Christ is "a purely religious blessing, the inner link of the soul with the living God". Such an interpretation can in no possible way be reconciled with Christ's utterances on the subject. The whole tenor of his expressions is to lay stress on the concept of a theocratic society.

The Church after the Ascension

The doctrine of the Church as set forth by the Apostles after the Ascension is in all respects identical with the teaching of Christ just described. St. Peter, in his first sermon, delivered on the day of Pentecost, declares that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messianic king (Acts 2:36). The means of salvation which he indicates is baptism; and by baptism his converts are aggregated to the society of disciples (Acts 2:41). Though in these days the Christians still availed

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themselves of the Temple services, yet from the first the brotherhood of Christ formed a society essentially distinct from the synagogue. The reason why St. Peter bids his hearers accept baptism is none other than that they may “save themselves from this unbelieving generation”. Within the society of believers not only were the members united by common rites, but the tie of unity was so close as to bring about in the Church of Jerusalem that condition of things in which the disciples had all things common (2:44).

Christ had declared that His kingdom should be spread among all nations, and had committed the execution of the work to the twelve (Matthew 28:19). Yet the universal mission of the Church revealed itself but gradually. St. Peter indeed makes mention of it from the first (Acts 2:39). But in the earliest years the Apostolic activity is confined to Jerusalem alone. Indeed an old tradition (Apollonius, cited by Eusebius Church History V.17, and Clement of Alexandria, Stromata VI. 5) asserts that Christ had bidden the Apostles wait twelve years in Jerusalem before dispersing to carry their message elsewhere. The first notable advance occurs consequent on the persecution which arose after the death of Stephen, A.D. 37. This was the occasion of the preaching of the Gospel to the Samaritans, a people excluded from the privileges of Israel, though acknowledging the Mosaic Law (Acts 8:5). A still further expansion resulted from the revelation directing St. Peter to admit to baptism Cornelius, a devout Gentile, i.e. one associated to the Jewish religion but not circumcised. From this time forward circumcision and the observance of the Law were not a condition requisite for incorporation into the Church. But the final step of admitting those Gentiles who had known no previous connection with the religion of Israel, and whose life had been spent in paganism, was not taken till more than fifteen years after Christ’s Ascension; it did not occur, it would seem, before the day described in Acts 13:46, when, at Antioch in Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas announced that since the Jews accounted themselves unworthy of eternal life they would “turn to the Gentiles”.

In the Apostolic teaching the term Church, from the very first, takes the place of the expression Kingdom of God (Acts 5:11). Where others than the Jews were concerned, the greater suitability of the former name is evident; for Kingdom of God had special reference to Jewish beliefs. But the change of title only emphasizes the social

unity of the members. They are the new congregation of Israel - the theocratic polity: they are the people (laos) of God (Acts 15:14; Romans 9:25; 2 Corinthians 6:16; 1 Peter 2:9 sq.; Hebrews 8:10; Revelation 18:4; 21:3). By their admission to the Church, the Gentiles have been grafted in and form part of God's fruitful olive-tree, while apostate Israel has been broken off (Romans 11:24). St. Paul, writing to his Gentile converts at Corinth, terms the ancient Hebrew Church "our fathers" (1 Corinthians 10:1). Indeed from time to time the previous phraseology is employed, and the Gospel message is termed the preaching of the Kingdom of God (Acts 20:25; 28:31).

Within the Church the Apostles exercised that regulative power with which Christ had endowed them. It was no chaotic mob, but a true society possessed of a corporate life, and organized in various orders. The evidence shows the twelve to have possessed (a) a power of jurisdiction, in virtue of which they wielded a legislative and judicial authority, and (b) a magisterial office to teach the Divine revelation entrusted to them. Thus (a) we find St. Paul authoritatively prescribing for the order and discipline of the churches. He does not advise; he directs (1 Corinthians 11:34; 16:1; Titus 1:5). He pronounces judicial sentence (1 Corinthians 5:5; 2 Corinthians 2:10), and his sentences, like those of other Apostles, receive at times the solemn sanction of miraculous punishment (1 Timothy 1:20; Acts 5:1-10). In like manner he bids his delegate Timothy hear the causes even of priests, and rebuke, in the sight of all, those who sin (1 Timothy 5:19 sq.). (b) With no less definiteness does he assert that the Apostolate carries with it a doctrinal authority, which all are bound to recognize. God has sent them, he affirms, to claim "the obedience of faith" (Romans 1:5; 15:18). Further, his solemnly expressed desire, that even if an angel from heaven were to preach another doctrine to the Galatians than that which he had delivered to them, he should be anathema (Galatians 1:8), involves a claim to infallibility in the teaching of revealed truth.

While the whole Apostolic College enjoyed this power in the Church, St. Peter always appears in that position of primacy which Christ assigned to him. It is Peter who receives into the Church the first converts, alike from Judaism and from heathenism (Acts 2:41; 10:5 sq.), who works the first miracle (Acts 3:1 sq.), who inflicts the first ecclesiastical penalty (Acts 5:1 sq.). It is Peter who casts

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out of the Church the first heretic, Simon Magus (Acts 8:21), who makes the first Apostolic visitation of the churches (Acts 9:32), and who pronounces the first dogmatic decision (Acts 15:7). (See Schanz, III, p. 460.) So indisputable was his position that when St. Paul was about to undertake the work of preaching to the heathen the Gospel which Christ had revealed to him, he regarded it as necessary to obtain recognition from Peter (Galatians 1:18). More than this was not needful: for the approbation of Peter was definitive.

Organization by the apostles

Few subjects have been so much debated during the past half-century as the organization of the primitive Church. The present article cannot deal with the whole of this wide subject. Its scope is limited to a single point. An endeavour will be made to estimate the existing information regarding the Apostolic Age itself. Further light is thrown on the matter by a consideration of the organization that is found to have existed in the period immediately subsequent to the death of the last Apostle. The independent evidence derived from the consideration of each of these periods will, in the opinion of the present writer, be found, when fairly weighed, to yield similar results. Thus the conclusions here advanced, over and above their intrinsic value, derive support from the independent witness of another series of authorities tending in all essentials to confirm their accuracy. The question at issue is, whether the Apostles did, or did not, establish in the Christian communities a hierarchical organization. All Catholic scholars, together with some few Protestants, hold that they did so. The opposite view is maintained by the rationalist critics, together with the greater number of Protestants.

In considering the evidence of the New Testament on the subject, it appears at once that there is a marked difference between the state of things revealed in the later New Testament writings, and that which appears in those of an earlier date. In the earlier writings we find but little mention of an official organization. Such official positions as may have existed would seem to have been of minor importance in the presence of the miraculous charismata of the Holy Spirit conferred upon individuals, and fitting them to act as organs of the community in various grades. St. Paul in his earlier Epistles has no messages for the bishops or deacons, although the circumstances dealt with in

the Epistles to the Corinthians and in that to the Galatians would seem to suggest a reference to the local rulers of the Church. When he enumerates the various functions to which God has called various members of the Church, he does not give us a list of Church offices. "God", he says, "hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly doctors [didaskaloi]; after that miracles; then the graces of healings, helps, governments, kinds of tongues" (1 Corinthians 12:28). This is not a list of official designations. It is a list of "charismata" bestowed by the Holy Spirit, enabling the recipient to fulfill some special function. The only term which forms an exception to this is that of apostle. Here the word is doubtless used in the sense in which it signifies the twelve and St. Paul only. As thus applied the Apostolate was a distinct office, involving a personal mission received from the Risen Lord Himself (1 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:1). Such a position was of altogether too special a character for its recipients to be placed in any other category. The term could indeed be used in a wider reference. It is used of Barnabas (Acts 14:13) and of Andronicus and Junias, St. Paul's kinsmen (Romans 16:7). In this extended signification it is apparently equivalent to evangelist (Ephesians 4:11; 2 Timothy 4:5) and denotes those "apostolic men", who, like the Apostles, went from place to place labouring in new fields, but who had received their commission from them, and not from Christ in person.

The "prophets", the second class mentioned, were men to whom it was given to speak from time to time under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit as the recipients of supernatural inspiration (Acts 13:2; 15:23; 21:11; etc.). By the nature of the case the exercise of such a function could be occasional only. The "charisma" of the "doctors" (or teachers) differed from that of the prophets, in that it could be used continuously. They had received the gift of intelligent insight into revealed truth, and the power to impart it to others. It is manifest that those who possessed such a power must have exercised a function of vital moment to the Church in those first days, when the Christian communities consisted to so large an extent of new converts. The other "charismata" mentioned do not call for special notice. But the prophets and teachers would appear to have possessed an importance as organs of the community, eclipsing that of the local ministry. Thus in Acts 13:1, it is simply related that there were in the Church which was at Antioch prophets and doctors. There is no

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mention of bishops or deacons. And in the Didache - a work as it would seem of the first century, written before the last Apostle had passed away - the author enjoins respect for the bishops and deacons, on the ground that they have a claim similar to that of the prophets and doctors. "Appoint for yourselves", he writes, "bishops and deacons, worthy of the Lord, men who are meek, and not lovers of money, and true and approved; for unto you they also perform the service [leitourgousi ten leitourgian] of the prophets and doctors. Therefore despise them not: for they are your honourable men along with the prophets and teachers" (Acts 15).

It would appear, then, indisputable that in the earliest years of the Christian Church ecclesiastical functions were in a large measure fulfilled by men who had been specially endowed for this purpose with "charismata" of the Holy Spirit, and that as long as these gifts endured, the local ministry occupied a position of less importance and influence. Yet, though this be the case, there would seem to be ample ground for holding that the local ministry was of Apostolic institution: and, further, that towards the later part of the Apostolic Age the abundant "charismata" were ceasing, and that the Apostles themselves took measures to determine the position of the official hierarchy as the directive authority of the Church. The evidence for the existence of such a local ministry is plentiful in the later Epistles of St. Paul (Philippians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus). The Epistle to the Philippians opens with a special greeting to the bishops and deacons. Those who hold these official positions are recognized as the representatives in some sort of the Church. Throughout the letter there is no mention of the "charismata", which figure so largely in the earlier Epistles. It is indeed urged by Hort (Christian Ecclesia, p. 211) that even here these terms are not official titles. But in view of their employment as titles in documents so nearly contemporary, as the Epistle of Clement IV and the Didache, such a contention seems devoid of all probability.

In the Pastoral Epistles the new situation appears even more clearly. The purpose of these writings was to instruct Timothy and Titus regarding the manner in which they were to organize the local Churches. The total absence of all reference to the spiritual gifts can scarcely be otherwise explained than by supposing that they no longer existed in the communities, or that they were at most

exceptional phenomena. Instead, we find the Churches governed by a hierarchical organization of bishops, sometimes also termed presbyters, and deacons. That the terms bishop and presbyter are synonymous is evident from Titus 1:5-7: "I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst... ordain priests in every city... For a bishop must be without crime." These presbyters form a corporate body (1 Timothy 4:14), and they are entrusted with the twofold charge of governing the Church (1 Timothy 3:5) and of teaching (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9). The selection of those who are to fill this post does not depend on the possession of supernatural gifts. It is required that they should not be unproved neophytes, that they should be under no charge, should have displayed moral fitness for the work, and should be capable of teaching. (1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:5-9) The appointment to this office was by a solemn laying on of hands (1 Timothy 5:22). Some words addressed by St. Paul to Timothy, in reference to the ceremony as it had taken place in Timothy's case, throw light upon its nature. "I admonish thee", he writes, "that thou stir up the grace (charisma) of God, which is in thee by the laying on of my hands" (2 Timothy 1:6). The rite is here declared to be the means by which a charismatic gift is conferred; and, further, the gift in question, like the baptismal character, is permanent in its effects. The recipient needs but to "waken into life" [anazopyrein] the grace he thus possesses in order to avail himself of it. It is an abiding endowment. There can be no reason for asserting that the imposition of hands, by which Timothy was instructed to appoint the presbyters to their office, was a rite of a different character, a mere formality without practical import.

With the evidence before us, certain other notices in the New Testament writings, pointing to the existence of this local ministry, may be considered. There is mention of presbyters at Jerusalem at a date apparently immediately subsequent to the dispersion of the Apostles (Acts 11:30; cf. 15:2; 16:4; 21:18). Again, we are told that Paul and Barnabas, as they retraced their steps on their first missionary journey, appointed presbyters in every Church (Acts 14:22). So too the injunction to the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 5:12) to have regard to those who are over them in the Lord (proistamenoι; cf. Romans 12:6) would seem to imply that there also St. Paul had invested certain members of the community with a pastoral charge. Still more explicit is the evidence contained in the account of St.

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Paul's interview with the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:17-23). It is told that, sending from Miletus to Ephesus, he summoned "the presbyters of the Church", and in the course of his charge addressed them as follows: "Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost has placed you bishops to tend [poimainein] the Church of God" (20:28). St. Peter employs similar language: "The presbyters that are among you, I beseech, who am myself also a presbyter... tend [poimainein] the flock of God which is among you." These expressions leave no doubt as to the office designated by St. Paul, when in Ephesians 4:11, he enumerates the gifts of the Ascended Lord as follows: "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors [tous de poimenas kai didaskalous]. The Epistle of St. James provides us with yet another reference to this office, where the sick man is bidden send for the presbyters of the Church, that he may receive at their hands the rite of unction (James 5:14).

The term presbyter was of common use in the Jewish Church, as denoting the "rulers" of the synagogue (cf. Luke 13:14). Hence it has been argued by some non-Catholic writers that in the bishops and deacons of the New Testament there is simply the synagogal organization familiar to the first converts, and introduced by them into the Christian communities. St. Paul's concept of the Church, it is urged, is essentially opposed to any rigid governmental system; yet this familiar form of organization was gradually established even in the Churches he had founded. In regard to this view it appears enough to say that the resemblance between the Jewish "rulers of the synagogue" and the Christian presbyter - episcopus goes no farther than the name. The Jewish official was purely civil and held office for a time only. The Christian presbyterate was for life, and its functions were spiritual. There is perhaps more ground for the view advocated by some (cf. de Smedt, *Revue des quest. hist.*, vols. XLIV, L), that presbyter and episcopus may not in all cases be perfectly synonymous. The term presbyter is undoubtedly an honorific title, while that of episcopus primarily indicates the function performed. It is possible that the former title may have had a wider significance than the latter. The designation presbyter, it is suggested, may have been given to all those who were recognized as having a claim to some voice in directing the affairs of the community, whether this were based on official

status, or social rank, or benefactions to the local Church, or on some other ground; while those presbyters who had received the laying on of hands would be known, not simply as “presbyters”, but as “presiding [proistamenoι - 1 Thessalonians 5:12] presbyters”, “presbyter-bishops”, “presbyter-rulers” (hegoumenoi - Hebrews 13:17).

It remains to consider whether the so-called “monarchical” episcopate was instituted by the Apostles. Besides establishing a college of presbyter-bishops, did they further place one man in a position of supremacy, entrusting the government of the Church to him, and endowing him with Apostolic authority over the Christian community? Even if we take into account the Scriptural evidence alone, there are sufficient grounds for answering this question in the affirmative. From the time of the dispersion of the Apostles, St. James appears in an episcopal relation to the Church of Jerusalem (Acts 12:17; 15:13; Galatians 2:12). In the other Christian communities the institution of “monarchical” bishops was a somewhat later development. At first the Apostles themselves fulfilled, it would seem, all the duties of supreme oversight. They established the office when the growing needs of the Church demanded it. The Pastoral Epistles leave no room to doubt that Timothy and Titus were sent as bishops to Ephesus and to Crete respectively. To Timothy full Apostolic powers are conceded. Not with standing his youth he holds authority over both clergy and laity. To him is confided the duty of guarding the purity of the Church’s faith, of ordaining priests, of exercising jurisdiction. Moreover, St. Paul’s exhortation to him, “to keep the commandment without spot, blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” shows that this was no transitory mission. A charge so worded includes in its sweep, not Timothy alone, but his successors in an office which is to last until the Second Advent. Local tradition unhesitatingly reckoned him among the occupants of the episcopal see. At the Council of Chalcedon, the Church of Ephesus counted a succession of twenty-seven bishops commencing with Timothy (Mansi, VII, 293; cf. Eusebius, Church History III.4-5).

These are not the sole evidences which the New Testament affords of the monarchical episcopate. In the Apocalypse the “angels” to whom the letters to the seven Churches are addressed are almost certainly the bishops of the respective communities. Some commentators, indeed, have held them to be personifications of the

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communities themselves. But this explanation can hardly stand. St. John, throughout, addresses the angel as being responsible for the community precisely as he would address its ruler. Moreover, in the symbolism of chapter 1, the two are represented under different figures: the angels are the stars in the right hand of the Son of Man; the seven candlesticks are the image which figures the communities. The very term angel, it should be noticed, is practically synonymous with apostle, and thus is aptly chosen to designate the episcopal office. Again the messages to Archippus (Colossians 4:17; Philemon 2) imply that he held a position of special dignity, superior to that of the other presbyters. The mention of him in a letter entirely concerned with a private matter, as is that to Philemon, is hardly explicable unless he were the official head of the Colossian Church. We have therefore four important indications of the existence of an office in the local Churches, held by a single person, and carrying with it Apostolical authority. Nor can any difficulty be occasioned by the fact that as yet no special title distinguishes these successors of the Apostles from the ordinary presbyters. It is in the nature of things that the office should exist before a title is assigned to it. The name of apostle, we have seen, was not confined to the Twelve. St. Peter (1 Peter 5:1) and St. John (2 and 3 John 1:1) both speak of themselves as presbyters". St. Paul speaks of the Apostolate as a diakonia. A parallel case in later ecclesiastical history is afforded by the word pope. This title was not appropriated to the exclusive use of the Holy See till the eleventh century. Yet no one maintains that the supreme pontificate of the Roman bishop was not recognized till then. It should cause no surprise that a precise terminology, distinguishing bishops, in the full sense, from the presbyter-bishops, is not found in the New Testament.

The conclusion reached is put beyond all reasonable doubt by the testimony of the sub-Apostolic Age. This is so important in regard to the question of the episcopate that it is impossible entirely to pass it over. It will be enough, however, to refer to the evidence contained in the epistles of St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, himself a disciple of the Apostles. In these epistles (about A.D. 107) he again and again asserts that the supremacy of the bishop is of Divine institution and belongs to the Apostolic constitution of the Church. He goes so far as to affirm that the bishop stands in the place of Christ Himself. "When ye are obedient to the bishop as to Jesus Christ," he writes to

the Trallians, “it is evident to me that ye are living not after men, but after Jesus Christ... be ye obedient also to the presbytery as to the Apostles of Jesus Christ” (Letter to the Trallians 2). He also incidentally tells us that bishops are found in the Church, even in “the farthest parts of the earth” (Letter to the Ephesians 3) It is out of the question that one who lived at a period so little removed from the actual Apostolic Age could have proclaimed this doctrine in terms such as he employs, had not the episcopate been universally recognized as of Divine appointment. It has been seen that Christ not only established the episcopate in the persons of the Twelve but, further, created in St. Peter the office of supreme pastor of the Church. Early Christian history tells us that before his death, he fixed his residence at Rome, and ruled the Church there as its bishop. It is from Rome that he dates his first Epistle, speaking of the city under the name of Babylon, a designation which St. John also gives it in the Apocalypse (c. xviii). At Rome, too, he suffered martyrdom in company with St. Paul, A.D. 67. The list of his successors in the see is known, from Linus, Anacletus, and Clement, who were the first to follow him, down to the reigning pontiff. The Church has ever seen in the occupant of the See of Rome the successor of Peter in the supreme pastorate.

The evidence thus far considered seems to demonstrate beyond all question that the hierarchical organization of the Church was, in its essential elements, the work of the Apostles themselves; and that to this hierarchy they handed on the charge entrusted to them by Christ of governing the Kingdom of God, and of teaching the revealed doctrine. These conclusions are far from being admitted by Protestant and other critics. They are unanimous in holding that the idea of a Church - an organized society - is entirely foreign to the teaching of Christ. It is therefore, in their eyes, impossible that Catholicism, if by that term we signify a worldwide institution, bound together by unity of constitution, of doctrine, and of worship, can have been established by the direct action of the Apostles. In the course of the nineteenth century many theories were propounded to account for the transformation of the so-called “Apostolic Christianity” into the Christianity of the commencement of the third century, when beyond all dispute the Catholic system was firmly established from one end of the Roman Empire to the other. At the present day (1908) the theories advocated by the critics are of a less extravagant nature

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than those of F.C. Baur (1853) and the Tübingen School, which had so great a vogue in the middle of the nineteenth century. Greater regard is shown for the claims of historical possibility and for the value of early Christian evidences. At the same time it is to be observed that the reconstructions suggested involve the rejection of the Pastoral Epistles as being documents of the second century. It will be sufficient here to notice one or two salient points in the views which now find favour with the best known among non-Catholic writers.

It is held that such official organization as existed in the Christian communities was not regarded as involving special spiritual gifts, and had but little religious significance. Some writers, as has been seen, believe with Holtzmann that in the *episcopi* and *presbyteri*, there is simply the synagogal system of *archontes* and *hyperetai*. Others, with Hatch, derive the origin of the episcopate from the fact that certain civic functionaries in the Syrian cities appear to have borne the title of “*episcopi*”. Professor Harnack, while agreeing with Hatch as to the origin of the office, differs from him in so far as he admits that from the first the superintendence of worship belonged to the functions of the bishop. The offices of prophet and teacher, it is urged, were those in which the primitive Church acknowledged a spiritual significance. These depended entirely on special charismatic gifts of the Holy Ghost. The government of the Church in matters of religion was thus regarded as a direct Divine rule by the Holy Spirit, acting through His inspired agents. And only gradually, it is supposed, did the local ministry take the place of the prophets and teachers, and inherit from them the authority once attributed to the possessors of spiritual gifts alone (cf. Sabatier, *Religions of Authority*, p. 24). Even if we prescind altogether from the evidence considered above, this theory appears devoid of intrinsic probability. A direct Divine rule by “*charismata*” could only result in confusion, if uncontrolled by any directive power possessed of superior authority. Such a directive and regulative authority, to which the exercise of spiritual gifts was itself subject, existed in the Apostolate, as the New Testament amply shows (1 Corinthians 14). In the succeeding age a precisely similar authority is found in the episcopate. Every principle of historical criticism demands that the source of episcopal power should be sought, not in the “*charismata*”, but, where tradition places it, in the Apostolate itself.

It is to the crisis occasioned by Gnosticism and Montanism in the second century that these writers attribute the rise of the Catholic system. They say that, in order to combat these heresies, the Church found it necessary to federate itself, and that for this end it established a statutory, so-called "apostolic" faith, and further secured the episcopal supremacy by the fiction of "apostolic succession", (Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma*, II, ii; Sabatier, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-59). This view appears to be irreconcilable with the facts of the case. The evidence of the Ignatian epistles alone shows that, long before the Gnostic crisis arose, the particular local Churches were conscious of an essential principle of solidarity binding all together into a single system. Moreover, the very fact that these heresies gained no foothold within the Church in any part of the world, but were everywhere recognized as heretical and promptly excluded, suffices to prove that the Apostolic faith was already clearly known and firmly held, and that the Churches were already organized under an active episcopate. Again, to say that the doctrine of Apostolic succession was invented to cope with these heresies is to overlook the fact that it is asserted in plain terms in the Epistle of Clement 42.

M. Loisy's theory as to the organization of the Church has attracted so much attention in recent years as to call for a brief notice. In his work, "*L'Évangile et l'Église*", he accepts many of the views held by critics hostile to Catholicism, and endeavours by a doctrine of development to reconcile them with some form of adhesion to the Church. He urges that the Church is of the nature of an organism, whose animating principle is the message of Jesus Christ. This organism may experience many changes of external form, as it develops itself in accordance with its inner needs, and with the requirements of its environment. Yet so long as these changes are such as are demanded in order that the vital principle may be preserved, they are unessential in character. So far indeed are they from being organic alterations, that we ought to reckon them as implicitly involved in the very being of the Church. The formation of the hierarchy he regards as a change of this kind. In fact, since he holds that Jesus Christ mistakenly anticipated the end of the world to be close at hand, and that His first disciples lived in expectation of His immediate return in glory, it follows that the hierarchy must have had some such origin as this. It is out of the question to attribute it to the Apostles. Men

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who believed the end of the world to be impending would not have seen the necessity of endowing a society with a form of government intended to endure.

These revolutionary views constitute part of the theory known as Modernism, whose philosophical presuppositions involve the complete denial of the miraculous. The Church, according to this theory, is not a society established by eternal Divine interposition. It is a society expressing the religious experience of the collectivity of consciences, and owing its origin to two natural tendencies in men, viz. the tendency of the individual believer to communicate his beliefs to others, and the tendency of those who hold the same beliefs to unite in a society. The Modernist theories were analyzed and condemned as “the synthesis of all the heresies” in the Encyclical “*Pascendi Dominici gregis*” (18 September, 1907). The principal features of M. Loisy’s theory of the Church had been already included among the condemned propositions contained in the Decree “*Lamentabili*” (3 July, 1907). The fifty-third of the propositions there singled out for reprobation is the following: “The original constitution of the Church is not immutable; but the Christian society like human society is subject to perpetual change.”

The Church, a Divine Society

The church, as has been seen, is a society formed of living men, not a mere mystical union of souls. As such it resembles other societies. Like them, it has its code of rules, its executive officers, its ceremonial observances. Yet it differs from them more than it resembles them: for it is a supernatural society. The Kingdom of God is supernatural alike in its origin, in the purpose at which it aims, and in the means at its disposal. Other kingdoms are natural in their origin; and their scope is limited to the temporal welfare of their citizens. The supernatural character of the Church is seen, when its relation to the redemptive work of Christ is considered. It is the society of those whom He has redeemed from the world. The world, by which term are signified men in so far as they have fallen from God, is ever set forth in Scripture as the kingdom of the Evil One. It is the “world of darkness” (Ephesians 6:12), it is “seated in the wicked one” (1 John 5:19), it hates Christ (John 15:18). To save the world, God the Son became man. He offered Himself as a propitiation for the sins of

the whole world (1 John 2:2). God, Who desires that all men should be saved, has offered salvation to all; but the greater part of mankind rejects the proffered gift. The Church is the society of those who accept redemption, of those whom Christ "has chosen out of the world" (John 15:19). Thus it is the Church alone which He "hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). Of the members of the Church, the Apostle can say that "God hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love" (Colossians 1:13). St. Augustine terms the Church "mundus salvatus" - there deemed world - and speaking of the enmity borne towards the Church by those who reject her, says: "The world of perdition hates the world of salvation" (Tractate 80 on the Gospel of John, no. 2). To the Church Christ has given the means of grace He merited by His life and death. She communicates them to her members; and those who are outside her fold she bids to enter that they too may participate in them. By these means of grace - the light of revealed truth, the sacraments, the perpetual renewal of the Sacrifice of Calvary - the Church carries on the work of sanctifying the elect. Through their instrumentality each individual soul is perfected, and conformed to the likeness of the Son of God.

It is thus manifest that, when we regard the Church simply as the society of disciples, we are considering its external form only. Its inward life is found in the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, the gifts of faith, hope, and charity, the grace communicated by the sacraments, and the other prerogatives by which the children of God differ from the children of the world. This aspect of the Church is described by the Apostles in figurative language. They represent it as the Body of Christ, the Spouse of Christ, the Temple of God. In order to understand its true nature some consideration of these comparisons is requisite. In the conception of the Church as a body governed and directed by Christ as the head, far more is contained than the familiar analogy between a ruler and his subjects on the one hand, and the head guiding and coordinating the activities of the several members on the other. That analogy expresses indeed the variety of function, the unity of directive principle, and the cooperation of the parts to a common end, which are found in a society; but it is insufficient to explain the terms in which St. Paul speaks of the union between Christ and His disciples. Each of them is a member of

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Christ (1 Corinthians 6:15); together they form the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:16); as a corporate unity they are simply termed Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12).

The intimacy of union here suggested is, however, justified, if we recall that the gifts and graces bestowed upon each disciple are graces merited by the Passion of Christ, and are destined to produce in him the likeness of Christ. The connection between Christ and himself is thus very different from the purely juridical relation binding the ruler of a natural society to the individuals belonging to it. The Apostle develops the relation between Christ and His members from various points of view. As a human body is organized, each joint and muscle having its own function, yet each contributing to the union of the complex whole, so too the Christian society is a body “compacted and firmly joined together by that which every part supplieth” (Ephesians 4:16), while all the parts depend on Christ their head. It is He Who has organized the body, assigning to each member his place in the Church, endowing each with the special graces necessary, and, above all, conferring on some of the members the graces in virtue of which they rule and guide the Church in His name (4:11). Strengthened by these graces, the mystical body, like a physical body, grows and increases. This growth is twofold. It takes place in the individual, inasmuch as each Christian gradually grows into the “perfect man”, into the image of Christ (Ephesians 4:13, 15; Romans 8:29). But there is also a growth in the whole body. As time goes on, the Church is to increase and multiply till it fills the earth. So intimate is the union between Christ and His members, that the Apostle speaks of the Church as the “fullness” (pleroma) of Christ (Ephesians 1:23; 4:13), as though apart from His members something were lacking to the head. He even speaks of it as Christ: “As all the members of the body whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:12). And to establish the reality of this union he refers it to the efficacious instrumentality of the Holy Eucharist: “We being many, are one bread, one body: for we all partake of that one bread” (1 Corinthians 10:17- Greek text).

The description of the Church as God’s temple, in which the disciples are “living stones” (1 Peter 2:5), is scarcely less frequent in the Apostolic writings than is the metaphor of the body. “You are the temple of the living God” (2 Corinthians 6:16), writes St. Paul to

the Corinthians, and he reminds the Ephesians that they are “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building being framed together, groweth up into a holy temple in the Lord” (Ephesians 2:20 sq.). With a slight change in the metaphor, the same Apostle in another passage (1 Corinthians 3:11) compares Christ to the foundation, and himself and other Apostolic labourers to the builders who raise the temple upon it. It is noticeable that the word translated “temple” is *naos*, a term which signifies properly the inner sanctuary. The Apostle, when he employs this word, is clearly comparing the Christian Church to that Holy of Holies where God manifested His visible presence in the *Shekinah*. The metaphor of the temple is well adapted to enforce two lessons. On several occasions the Apostle employs it to impress on his readers the sanctity of the Church in which they have been incorporated. “If any shall violate the temple of God”, he says, speaking of those who corrupt the Church by false doctrine, “him shall God destroy” (1 Corinthians 3:17). And he employs the same motive to dissuade disciples from forming matrimonial alliance with Unbelievers: “What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God” (2 Corinthians 6:16). It further illustrates in the clearest way the truth that to each member of the Church God has assigned his own place, enabling him by his work there to cooperate towards the great common end, the glory of God.

The third parallel represents the Church as the bride of Christ. Here there is much more than a metaphor. The Apostle says that the union between Christ and His Church is the archetype of which human marriage is an earthly representation. Thus he bids wives be subject to their husbands, as the Church is subject to Christ (Ephesians 5:22 sq.). Yet he points out on the other hand that the relation of husband to wife is not that of a master to his servant, but one involving the tenderest and most self-sacrificing love. He bids husbands love their wives, “as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered himself up for it” (Ephesians 5:25). Man and wife are one flesh; and in this the husband has a powerful motive for love towards the wife, since “no man ever hated his own flesh”. This physical union is but the antitype of that mysterious bond in virtue of which the Church is so truly one with Christ, that “we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and

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shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh” (Ephesians 5:30 sq.; Genesis 2:24). In these words the Apostle indicates the mysterious parallelism between the union of the first Adam with the spouse formed from his body, and the union of the second Adam with the Church. She is “bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh”, even as Eve was in regard to our first father. And those only belong to the family of the second Adam, who are her children, “born again of water and of the Holy Ghost”. Occasionally the metaphor assumes a slightly different form. In Apocalypse 19:7, the marriage of the Lamb to his spouse the Church does not take place till the last day in the hour of the Church’s final triumph. Thus too St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 11:2), compares himself to “the friend of the bridegroom”, who played so important a part in the Hebrew marriage ceremony (cf. John 3:29). He has, he says, espoused the Corinthian community to Christ, and he holds himself responsible to present it spotless to the bridegroom.

Through the medium of these metaphors the Apostles set forth the inward nature of the Church. Their expressions leave no doubt that in them they always refer to the actually existing Church founded by Christ on earth - the society of Christ’s disciples. Hence it is instructive to observe that Protestant divines find it necessary to distinguish between an actual and an ideal Church, and to assert that the teaching of the Apostles regarding the Spouse, the Temple, and the Body refers to the ideal Church alone (cf. Gayford in Hastings, “Dict. of the Bible”, s.v. Church).

Church as the Sacrament of Salvation

In the preceding examination of the Scriptural doctrine regarding the Church, it has been seen how clearly it is laid down that only by entering the Church can we participate in the redemption wrought for us by Christ. Incorporation with the Church can alone unite us to the family of the second Adam, and alone can engraft us into the true Vine. Moreover, it is to the Church that Christ has committed those means of grace through which the gifts He earned for men are communicated to them. The Church alone dispenses the sacraments. It alone makes known the light of revealed truth. Outside the Church these gifts cannot be obtained. From all this there is but one conclusion: Union with the Church is not merely one out of various means by which salvation may be obtained: it is the only means.

The necessary means of salvation

This doctrine of the absolute necessity of union with the Church was taught in explicit terms by Christ.

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Baptism, the act of incorporation among her members, He affirmed to be essential to salvation. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: he that believeth not shall be condemned” (Mark 16:16). Any disciple who shall throw off obedience to the Church is to be reckoned as one of the heathen: he has no part in the Kingdom of God (Matthew 18:17). St. Paul is equally explicit. “A man that is a heretic”, he writes to Titus, “after the first and second admonition avoid, knowing that he that is such a one is... condemned by his own judgment” (Titus 3:10 sq.). The doctrine is summed up in the phrase, *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*. This saying has been the occasion of so many objections that some consideration of its meaning seems desirable. It certainly does not mean that none can be saved except those who are in visible communion with the Church. The Catholic Church has ever taught that nothing else is needed to obtain justification than an act of perfect charity and of contrition. Whoever, under the impulse of actual grace, elicits the acts receive immediately the gift of sanctifying grace, and is numbered among the children of God. Should he die in these dispositions, he will assuredly attain heaven. It is true such acts could not possibly be elicited by one who was aware that God has commanded all to join the Church, and who nevertheless should willfully remain outside her fold. For love of God carries with it the practical desire to fulfill His commandments. But of those who die without visible communion with the Church, not all are guilty of willful disobedience to God’s commands. Many are kept from the Church by ignorance. Such may be the case of numbers among those who have been brought up in heresy. To others the external means of grace may be unattainable. Thus an excommunicated person may have no opportunity of seeking reconciliation at the last, and yet may repair his faults by inward acts of contrition and charity.

It should be observed that those who are thus saved are not entirely outside the pale of the Church. The will to fulfill all God’s commandments is, and must be, present in all of them. Such a wish implicitly includes the desire for incorporation with the visible Church: for this, though they know it not, has been commanded by God. They thus belong to the Church by desire (*voto*). Moreover, there is a true sense in which they may be said to be saved through the Church. In the order of Divine Providence, salvation is given to man in

the Church: membership in the Church Triumphant is given through membership in the Church Militant. Sanctifying grace, the title to salvation, is peculiarly the grace of those who are united to Christ in the Church: it is the birthright of the children of God. The primary purpose of those actual graces which God bestows upon those outside the Church is to draw them within the fold. Thus, even in the case in which God saves men apart from the Church, He does so through the Church's graces. They are joined to the Church in spiritual communion, though not in visible and external communion. In the expression of theologians, they belong to the soul of the Church, though not to its body. Yet the possibility of salvation apart from visible communion with the Church must not blind us to the loss suffered by those who are thus situated. They are cut off from the sacraments God has given as the support of the soul. In the ordinary channels of grace, which are ever open to the faithful Catholic, they cannot participate. Countless means of sanctification which the Church offers are denied to them. It is often urged that this is a stern and narrow doctrine. The reply to this objection is that the doctrine is stern, but only in the sense in which sternness is inseparable from love. It is the same sternness which we find in Christ's words, when he said: "If you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sin" (John 8:24). The Church is animated with the spirit of Christ; she is filled with the same love for souls, the same desire for their salvation. Since, then, she knows that the way of salvation is through union with her, that in her and in her alone are stored the benefits of the Passion, she must needs be uncompromising and even stern in the assertion of her claims. To fail here would be to fail in the duty entrusted to her by her Lord. Even where the message is unwelcome, she must deliver it.

It is instructive to observe that this doctrine has been proclaimed at every period of the Church's history. It is no accretion of a later age. The earliest successors of the Apostles speak as plainly as the medieval theologians, and the medieval theologians are not more emphatic than those of today. From the first century to the twentieth there is absolute unanimity. St. Ignatius of Antioch writes: "Be not deceived, my brethren. If any man followeth one that maketh schism, he doth not inherit the kingdom of God. If any one walketh in strange doctrine, he hath no fellowship with the Passion" (Philadelphians 3). Origen says: "Let no man deceive himself. Outside

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this house, i.e. outside the Church, none is saved” (Hom. in Jos., iii, n. 5 in P.G., XII, 841). St. Cyprian speaks to the same effect: “He cannot have God for his father, who has not the Church for his mother” (Treatise on Unity 6). The words of the Fourth Ecumenical Council of the Lateran (1215) define the doctrine thus in its decree against the Albigenses: “Una est fidelium universalis Ecclesia, extra quam nullus omnino salvatur” (Denzinger, n. 357); and Pius IX employed almost identical language in his Encyclical to the bishops of Italy (10 August, 1863): “Notissimum est catholicum dogma neminem scilicet extra catholicam ecclesiam posse salvari” (Denzinger, n. 1529).

Visibility of the Church

In asserting that the Church of Christ is visible, we signify, first, that as a society it will at all times be conspicuous and public, and second, that it will ever be recognizable among other bodies as the Church of Christ. These two aspects of visibility are termed respectively “material” and “formal” visibility by Catholic theologians. The material visibility of the Church involves no more than that it must ever be a public, not a private profession; a society manifest to the world, not a body whose members are bound by some secret tie. Formal visibility is more than this. It implies that in all ages the true Church of Christ will be easily recognizable for that which it is, viz. as the Divine society of the Son of God, the means of salvation offered by God to men; that it possesses certain attributes which so evidently postulate a Divine origin that all who see it must know it comes from God. This must, of course, be understood with some necessary qualifications. The power to recognize the Church for what it is presupposes certain moral dispositions. Where there is a rooted unwillingness to follow God’s will, there may be spiritual blindness to the claims of the Church. Invincible prejudice or inherited assumptions may produce the same result. But in such cases the incapacity to see is due, not to the want of visibility in the Church, but to the blindness of the individual. The case bears an almost exact analogy to the evidence possessed by the proofs for the existence of God. The proofs in themselves are evident: but they may fail to penetrate a mind obscured by prejudice or ill will. From the time of the Reformation, Protestant writers either denied the visibility of the Church, or so explained it as to rob it of most of its meaning. After briefly indicating the grounds of the Catholic doctrine, some

views prevalent on this subject among Protestant authorities will be noticed.

It is unnecessary to say more in regard to the material visibility of the Church than has been said in sections III and IV of this article. It has been shown there that Christ established His Church as an organized society under accredited leaders, and that He commanded its rulers and those who should succeed them to summon all men to secure their eternal salvation by entry into it. It is manifest that there is no question here of a secret union of believers: the Church is a worldwide corporation, whose existence is to be forced upon the notice of all, willing or unwilling. Formal visibility is secured by those attributes which are usually termed the “notes” of the Church - her Unity, Sanctity, Catholicity, and Apostolicity (see below). The proof may be illustrated in the case of the first of these. The unity of the Church stands out as a fact altogether unparalleled in human history. Her members all over the world are united by the profession of a common faith, by participation in a common worship, and by obedience to a common authority. Differences of class, of nationality, and of race, which seem as though they must be fatal to any form of union, cannot sever this bond. It links in one the civilized and the uncivilized, the philosopher and the peasant, the rich and the poor. One and all hold the same belief, join in the same religious ceremonies, and acknowledge in the successor of Peter the same supreme ruler. Nothing but a supernatural power can explain this. It is a proof manifest to all minds, even to the simple and the unlettered, that the Church is a Divine society. Without this formal visibility, the purpose for which the Church was founded would be frustrated. Christ established it to be the means of salvation for all mankind. For this end it is essential that its claims should be authenticated in a manner evident to all; in other words, it must be visible, not merely as other public societies are visible, but as being the society of the Son of God.

The views taken by Protestants as to the visibility of the Church are various. The rationalist critics naturally reject the whole conception. To them the religion preached by Jesus Christ was something purely internal. When the Church as an institution came to be regarded as an indispensable factor in religion, it was a corruption of the primitive message. (See Harnack, *What is Christianity*, p. 213.) Passages which deal with the Church in her corporate unity are referred by writers of

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this school to an ideal invisible Church, a mystical communion of souls. Such an interpretation does violence to the sense of the passages. Moreover, no explanation possessing any semblance of probability has yet been given to account for the genesis among the disciples of this remarkable and altogether novel conception of an invisible Church. It may reasonably be demanded of a professedly critical school that this phenomenon should be explained. Harnack holds that it took the place of Jewish racial unity. But it does not appear why Gentile converts should have felt the need of replacing a feature so entirely proper to the Hebrew religion.

The doctrine of the older Protestant writers is that there are two Churches, a visible and an invisible. This is the view of such standard Anglican divines as Barrow, Field, and Jeremy Taylor (see e.g. Barrow, *Unity of Church*, Works, 1830, VII, 628). Those who thus explain visibility urge that the essential and vital element of membership in Christ lies in an inner union with Him; that this is necessarily invisible, and those who possess it constitute an invisible Church. Those who are united to Him externally alone have, they maintain, no part in His grace. Thus, when He promised to His Church the gift of indefectibility, declaring that the gates of hell should never prevail against it, the promise must be understood of the invisible, not of the visible Church. In regard to this theory, which is still tolerably prevalent, it is to be said that Christ's promises were made to the Church as a corporate body, as constituting a society. As thus understood, they were made to the visible Church, not to an invisible and unknown body. Indeed for this distinction between a visible and an invisible Church there is no Scriptural warrant. Even though many of her children prove unfaithful, yet all that Christ said in regard to the Church is realized in her as a corporate body. Nor does the unfaithfulness of these professing Catholics cut them off altogether from membership in Christ. They are His in virtue of their baptism. The character then received still stamps them as His. Though dry and withered branches they are not altogether broken off from the true Vine (Bellarmine, *De Ecclesiâ*, III, ix, 13). The Anglican High Church writers explicitly teach the visibility of the Church. They restrict themselves, however, to the consideration of material visibility (cf. Palmer, *Treatise on the Church*, Part I, C. iii).

The doctrine of the visibility in no way excludes from the Church those who have already attained to bliss. These are united with the

members of the Church Militant in one communion of saints. They watch her struggles; their prayers are offered on her behalf. Similarly, those who are still in the cleansing fires of purgatory belong to the Church. There are not, as has been said, two Churches; there is but one Church, and of it all the souls of the just, whether in heaven, on earth, or in purgatory, are members (Catech. Rom., I, x, 6). But it is to the Church only in so far as militant here below - to the Church among men - that the property of visibility belongs.

The principle of authority

Whatever authority is exercised in the Church, is exercised in virtue of the commission of Christ. He is the one Prophet, Who has given to the world the revelation of truth, and by His spirit preserves in the Church the faith once delivered to the saints. He is the one Priest, ever pleading on behalf of the Church the sacrifice of Calvary. And He is the one King - the chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4) - Who rules and guides, through His Providence, His Church's course. Yet He wills to exercise His power through earthly representatives. He chose the Twelve, and charged them in His name to teach the nations (Matthew 28:19), to offer sacrifice (Luke 22:19), to govern His flock (Matthew 18:18; John 21:17). They, as seen above, used the authority committed to them while they lived; and before their death, they took measures for the perpetuation of this principle of government in the Church. From that day to this, the hierarchy thus established has claimed and has exercised this threefold office. Thus the prophecies of the Old Testament have been fulfilled which foretold that to those who should be appointed to rule the Messianic kingdom it should be granted to participate in the Messiah's office of prophet, priest, and king. (See II above.)

The authority established in the Church holds its commission from above, not from below. The pope and the bishops exercise their power as the successors of the men who were chosen by Christ in person. They are not, as the Presbyterian theory of Church government teaches, the delegates of the flock; their warrant is received from the Shepherd, not from the sheep. The view that ecclesiastical authority is ministerial only, and derived by delegation from the faithful, was expressly condemned by Pius VI (1794) in his Constitution "Auctorem Fidei"; and on the renovation of the error by certain recent Modernist

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writers, Pius X reiterated the condemnation in the Encyclical on the errors of the Modernists. In this sense the government of the Church is not democratic. This indeed is involved in the very nature of the Church as a supernatural society, leading men to a supernatural end. No man is capable of wielding authority for such a purpose, unless power is communicated to him from a Divine source. The case is altogether different where civil society is concerned. There the end is not supernatural: it is the temporal well-being of the citizens. It cannot then be said that a special endowment is required to render any class of men capable of filling the place of rulers and of guides. Hence the Church approves equally all forms of civil government which are consonant with the principle of justice. The power exercised by the Church through sacrifice and sacrament (*potestas ordinis*) lies outside the present subject. It is proposed briefly to consider here the nature of the Church's authority in her office (1) of teaching (*potestas magisterii*) and (2) of government (*potestas jurisdictionis*).

Infallibility

As the Divinely appointed teacher of revealed truth, the Church is infallible. This gift of inerrancy is guaranteed to it by the words of Christ, in which He promised that His Spirit would abide with it forever to guide it unto all truth (John 14:16; 16:13). It is implied also in other passages of Scripture, and asserted by the unanimous testimony of the Fathers. The scope of this infallibility is to preserve the deposit of faith revealed to man by Christ and His Apostles (see INFALLIBILITY.) The Church teaches expressly that it is the guardian only of the revelation, that it can teach nothing which it has not received. The Vatican Council declares: "The Holy Ghost was not promised to the successors of Peter, in order that through His revelation they might manifest new doctrine: but that through His assistance they might religiously guard, and faithfully expound the revelation handed down by the Apostles, or the deposit of the faith" (Conc. Vat., Sess. IV, cap. liv). The obligation of the natural moral law constitutes part of this revelation. The authority of that law is again and again insisted on by Christ and His Apostles. The Church therefore is infallible in matters both of faith and morals. Moreover, theologians are agreed that the gift of infallibility in regard to the deposit must, by necessary consequence, carry with it infallibility as to certain matters intimately related to the Faith. There are questions bearing so nearly on the

preservation of the Faith that, could the Church err in these, her infallibility would not suffice to guard the flock from false doctrine. Such, for instance, is the decision whether a given book does or does not contain teaching condemned as heretical.

It is needless to point out that if the Christian Faith is indeed a revealed doctrine, which men must believe under pain of eternal loss, the gift of infallibility was necessary to the Church. Could she err at all, she might err in any point. The flock would have no guarantee of the truth of any doctrine. The condition of those bodies which at the time of the Reformation forsook the Church affords us an object-lesson in point. Divided into various sections and parties, they are the scene of never-ending disputes; and by the nature of the case they are cut off from all hope of attaining to certainty. In regard also to the moral law, the need of an infallible guide is hardly less imperative. Though on a few broad principles there may be some consensus of opinion as to what is right and what is wrong, yet, in the application of these principles to concrete facts, it is impossible to obtain agreement. On matters of such practical moment as are, for instance, the questions of private property, marriage, and liberty, the most divergent views are defended by thinkers of great ability. Amid all this questioning the unerring voice of the Church gives confidence to her children that they are following the right course, and have not been led astray by some specious fallacy. The various modes in which the Church exercises this gift, and the prerogatives of the Holy See in regard to infallibility, will be found discussed in the article dealing with that subject.

Jurisdiction

The Church's pastors govern and direct the flock committed to them in virtue of jurisdiction conferred upon them by Christ. The authority of jurisdiction differs essentially from the authority to teach. The two powers are concerned with different objects. The right to teach is concerned solely with the manifestation of the revealed doctrine; the object of the power of jurisdiction is to establish and enforce such laws and regulations as are necessary to the well-being of the Church. Further, the right of the Church to teach extends to the whole world: The jurisdiction of her rulers extends to her members alone (1 Corinthians 5:12). Christ's words to St. Peter, "I will give

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thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven”, distinctly express the gift of jurisdiction. Supreme authority over a body carries with it the right to govern and direct. The three elements which go to constitute jurisdiction - legislative power, judicial power, and coercive power - are, moreover, all implied in Christ’s directions to the Apostles (Matthew 18). Not merely are they instructed to impose obligations and to settle disputes; but they may even inflict the extremest ecclesiastical penalty - that of exclusion from membership in Christ.

The jurisdiction exercised within the Church is partly of Divine right, and partly determined by ecclesiastical law. A supreme jurisdiction over the whole Church - clergy and laity alike - belongs by Divine appointment to the pope (Conc. Vat, Sess. IV, cap. iii). The government of the faithful by bishops possessed of ordinary jurisdiction (i.e. a jurisdiction that is not held by mere delegation, but is exercised in their own name) is likewise of Divine ordinance. But the system by which the Church is territorially divided into dioceses, within each of which a single bishop rules the faithful within that district, is an ecclesiastical arrangement capable of modification. The limits of dioceses may be changed by the Holy See. In England the old pre-Reformation diocesan divisions held good until 1850, though the Catholic hierarchy had become extinct in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In that year the old divisions were annulled and a new diocesan system established. Similarly in France, a complete change was introduced after the Revolution. A bishop may exercise his power on other than a territorial basis. Thus in the East there are different bishops for the faithful belonging to the different rites in communion with the Holy See. Besides bishops, in countries where the ecclesiastical system is fully developed, those of the lower clergy who are parish priests, in the proper sense of the term, have ordinary jurisdiction within their own parishes.

Internal jurisdiction is that which is exercised in the tribunal of penance. It differs from the external jurisdiction of which we have been speaking in that its object is the welfare of the individual penitent, while the object of external jurisdiction is the welfare of the Church as a corporate body. To exercise this internal jurisdiction, the power of orders is an essential condition: none but a priest can absolve. But the power of orders itself is insufficient. The minister of the sacrament must receive jurisdiction from one competent to bestow

it. Hence a priest cannot hear confessions in any locality unless he has received faculties from the ordinary of the place. On the other hand, for the exercise of external jurisdiction the power of orders is not necessary. A bishop, duly appointed to a see, but not yet consecrated, is invested with external jurisdiction over his diocese as soon as he has exhibited his letters of appointment to the chapter.

Members of the Church

The foregoing account of the Church and of the principle of authority by which it is governed enables us to determine who are members of the Church and who are not. The membership of which we speak, is incorporation in the visible body of Christ. It has already been noted (VI) that a member of the Church may have forfeited the grace of God. In this case he is a withered branch of the true Vine; but he has not been finally broken off from it. He still belongs to Christ. Three conditions are requisite for a man to be a member of the Church.

In the first place, he must profess the true Faith, and have received the Sacrament of Baptism. The essential necessity of this condition is apparent from the fact that the Church is the kingdom of truth, the society of those who accept the revelation of the Son of God. Every member of the Church must accept the whole revelation, either explicitly or implicitly, by profession of all that the Church teaches. He who refuses to receive it, or who, having received it, falls away, thereby excludes himself from the kingdom (Titus 3:10 sq.). The Sacrament of Baptism is rightly regarded as part of this condition. By it those who profess the Faith are formally adopted as children of God (Ephesians 1:13), and an habitual faith is among the gifts bestowed in it. Christ expressly connects the two, declaring that "he who believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16; cf. Matthew 28:19).

It is further necessary to acknowledge the authority of the Church and of her appointed rulers. Those who reject the jurisdiction established by Christ are no longer members of His kingdom. Thus St. Ignatius lays it down in his Letter to the Church of Smyrna (no. 8): "Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there let the people be; even as where Jesus may be there is the universal Church". In regard to this condition, the ultimate touchstone is to be found in communion

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with the Holy See. On Peter Christ founded his Church. Those who are not joined to that foundation cannot form part of the house of God.

The third condition lies in the canonical right to communion with the Church. In virtue of its coercive power the Church has authority to excommunicate notorious sinners. It may inflict this punishment not merely on the ground of heresy or schism, but for other grave offences. Thus St. Paul pronounces sentence of excommunication on the incestuous Corinthian (1 Corinthians 5:3). This penalty is no mere external severance from the rights of common worship. It is a severance from the body of Christ, undoing to this extent the work of baptism, and placing the excommunicated man in the condition of the heathen and the publican". It casts him out of God's kingdom; and the Apostle speaks of it as "delivering him over to Satan" (1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Timothy 1:20).

Regarding each of these conditions, however, certain distinctions must be drawn.

Many baptized heretics have been educated in their erroneous beliefs. Their case is altogether different from that of those who have voluntarily renounced the Faith. They accept what they believe to be the Divine revelation. Such as these belong to the Church in desire, for they are at heart anxious to fulfill God's will in their regard. In virtue of their baptism and good will, they may be in a state of grace. They belong to the soul of the Church, though they are not united to the visible body. As such they are members of the Church internally, though not externally. Even in regard to those who have themselves fallen away from the Faith, a difference must be made between open and notorious heretics on the one hand, and secret heretics on the other. Open and notorious heresy severs from the visible Church. The majority of theologians agree with Bellarmine (*de Ecclesia*, III, c. x), as against Francisco Suárez, that secret heresy has not this effect.

In regard to schism the same distinction must be drawn. A secret repudiation of the Church's authority does not sever the sinner from the Church. The Church recognizes the schismatic as a member, entitled to her communion, until by open and notorious rebellion he rejects her authority.

Excommunicated persons are either *excommunicati tolerati* (i.e. those who are still tolerated) or *excommunicati vitandi* (i.e. those to

be shunned). Many theologians hold that those whom the Church still tolerates are not wholly cut off from her membership, and that it is only those whom she has branded as “to be shunned” who are cut off from God’s kingdom (see Murray, *De Eccles.*, Disp. i, sect. viii, n. 118). (See EXCOMMUNICATIO.)

Indefectibility of the Church

Among the prerogatives conferred on His Church by Christ is the gift of indefectibility. By this term is signified, not merely that the Church will persist to the end of time, but further, that it will preserve unimpaired its essential characteristics. The Church can never undergo any constitutional change which will make it, as a social organism, something different from what it was originally. It can never become corrupt in faith or in morals; nor can it ever lose the Apostolic hierarchy, or the sacraments through which Christ communicates grace to men. The gift of indefectibility is expressly promised to the Church by Christ, in the words in which He declares that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. It is manifest that, could the storms which the Church encounters so shake it as to alter its essential characteristics and make it other than Christ intended it to be, the gates of hell, i.e. the powers of evil, would have prevailed. It is clear, too, that could the Church suffer substantial change, it would no longer be an instrument capable of accomplishing the work for which God called it in to being. He established it that it might be to all men the school of holiness. This it would cease to be if ever it could set up a false and corrupt moral standard. He established it to proclaim His revelation to the world, and charged it to warn all men that unless they accepted that message they must perish everlastingly. Could the Church, in defining the truths of revelation err in the smallest point, such a charge would be impossible. No body could enforce under such a penalty the acceptance of what might be erroneous. By the hierarchy and the sacraments, Christ, further, made the Church the depositary of the graces of the Passion. Were it to lose either of these, it could no longer dispense to men the treasures of grace.

The gift of indefectibility plainly does not guarantee each several part of the Church against heresy or apostasy. The promise is made to the corporate body. Individual Churches may become corrupt in morals, may fall into heresy, may even apostatize. Thus at the time of the Mohammedan conquests, whole populations renounced

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their faith; and the Church suffered similar losses in the sixteenth century. But the defection of isolated branches does not alter the character of the main stem. The society of Jesus Christ remains endowed with all the prerogatives bestowed on it by its Founder. Only to One particular Church is indefectibility assured, viz. to the See of Rome. To Peter, and in him to all his successors in the chief pastorate, Christ committed the task of confirming his brethren in the Faith (Luke 22:32); and thus, to the Roman Church, as Cyprian says, "faithlessness cannot gain access" (Epistle 54). The various bodies that have left the Church naturally deny its indefectibility. Their plea for separation rests in each case on the supposed fact that the main body of Christians has fallen so far from primitive truth, or from the purity of Christian morals, that the formation of a separate organization is not only desirable but necessary. Those who are called on to defend this plea endeavour in various ways to reconcile it with Christ's promise. Some, as seen above (VII), have recourse to the hypothesis of an indefectible invisible Church. The Right Rev. Charles Gore of Worcester, who may be regarded as the representative of high-class Anglicanism, prefers a different solution. In his controversy with Canon Richardson, he adopted the position that while the Church will never fail to teach the whole truth as revealed, yet "errors of addition" may exist universally in its current teaching (see Richardson, *Catholic Claims*, Appendix). Such an explanation deprives Christ's words of all their meaning. A Church which at any period might conceivably teach, as offaith, doctrines which form no part of the deposit could never deliver her message to the world as the message of God. Men could reasonably urge in regard to any doctrine that it might be an "error of addition".

It was said above that one part of the Church's gift of indefectibility lies in her preservation from any substantial corruption in the sphere of morals. This supposes, not merely that she will always proclaim the perfect standard of morality bequeathed to her by her Founder, but also that in every age the lives of many of her children will be based on that sublime model. Only a supernatural principle of spiritual life could bring this about. Man's natural tendency is downwards. The force of every religious movement gradually spends itself; and the followers of great religious reformers tend in time to the level of their

environment. According to the laws of unassisted human nature, it should have been thus with the society established by Christ. Yet history shows us that the Catholic Church possesses a power of reform from within, which has no parallel in any other religious organization. Again and again she produces saints, men imitating the virtues of Christ in an extraordinary degree, whose influence, spreading far and wide, gives fresh ardour even to those who reach a less heroic standard. Thus, to cite one or two well-known instances out of many that might be given: St. Dominic and St. Francis of Assisi rekindled the love of virtue in the men of the thirteenth century; St. Philip Neri and St. Ignatius Loyola accomplished a like work in the sixteenth century; St. Paul of the Cross and St. Alphonsus Liguori, in the eighteenth. No explanation suffices to account for this phenomenon save the Catholic doctrine that the Church is not a natural but a supernatural society, that the preservation of her moral life depends, not on any laws of human nature, but on the life-giving presence of the Holy Ghost. The Catholic and the Protestant principles of reform stand in sharp contrast the one to the other. Catholic reformers have one and all fallen back on the model set before them in the person of Christ and on the power of the Holy Ghost to breathe fresh life into the souls which He has regenerated. Protestant reformers have commenced their work by separation, and by this act have severed themselves from the very principle of life. No one of course would wish to deny that within the Protestant bodies there have been many men of great virtues. Yet it is not too much to assert that in every case their virtue has been nourished on what yet remained to them of Catholic belief and practice, and not on anything which they have received from Protestantism as such.

The Continuity Theory

The doctrine of the Church's indefectibility just considered will place us in a position to estimate, at its true value, the claim of the Anglican Church and of the Episcopalian bodies in other English-speaking countries to be continuous with the ancient pre-Reformation Church of England, in the sense of being part of one and the same society. The point to be determined here is what constitutes a breach of continuity as regards a society. It may safely be said that the continuity of a society is broken when a radical change

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in the principles it embodies is introduced. In the case of a Church, such a change in its hierarchical constitution and in its professed faith suffices to make it a different Church from what it was before. For the societies we term Churches exist as the embodiment of certain supernatural dogmas and of a Divinely-authorized principle of government. when, therefore, the truths previously held to be of faith are rejected, and the principle of government regarded as sacred is repudiated, there is a breach of continuity, and a new Church is formed. In this the continuity of a Church differs from the continuity of a nation. National continuity is independent of forms of government and of beliefs. A nation is an aggregate of families, and so long as these families constitute a self-sufficing social organism, it remains the same nation, whatever the form of government may be. The continuity of a Church depends essentially on its government and its beliefs.

The changes introduced into the English Church at the time of the Reformation were precisely of the character just described. At that period fundamental alterations were made in its hierarchical constitution and in its dogmatic standards. It is not to be determined here which was in the right, the Church of Catholic days or the Reformed Church. It is sufficient if we show that changes were made vitally affecting the nature of the society. It is notorious that from the days of Augustine to those of Warham, every archbishop of Canterbury recognized the pope as the supreme source of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The archbishops themselves could not exercise jurisdiction within their province until they had received papal confirmation. Further, the popes were accustomed to send to England legates *à latere*, who, in virtue of their legatine authority, whatever their personal status in the hierarchy, possessed a jurisdiction superior to that of the local bishops. Appeals ran from every ecclesiastical court in England to the pope, and his decision was recognized by all as final. The pope, too, exercised the right of excommunication in regard to the members of the English Church. This supreme authority was, moreover, regarded by all as belonging to the pope by Divine right, and not in virtue of merely human institution. When, therefore, this power of jurisdiction was transferred to the king, the alteration touched the constitutive principles of the body and was fundamental in its character.

Similarly, in regard to matters of faith, the changes were revolutionary. It will be sufficient to note that a new rule of faith was introduced, Scripture alone being substituted for Scripture and Tradition; that several books were expunged from the Canon of Scripture; that five out of the seven sacraments were repudiated; and that the sacrifices of Masses were declared to be “blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits”. It is indeed sometimes said that the official formularies of Anglicanism are capable of a Catholic sense, if given a “non-natural” interpretation. This argument can, however, carry no weight. In estimating the character of a society, we must judge, not by the strained sense which some individuals may attach to its formularies, but by the sense they were intended to bear. Judged by this criterion, none can dispute that these innovations were such as to constitute a fundamental change in the dogmatic standpoint of the Church of England.

The Ecclesiology of Vatican II

Just after the First World War, Romano Guardini coined an expression that quickly became a slogan for German Catholics: “An event of enormous importance is taking place: the Church is awakening within souls”. The result of this awakening was ultimately the Second Vatican Council. Through its various documents it expressed and made part of the patrimony of the whole Church something that, during four decades full of ferment and hope (1920 to 1960), had been maturing in knowledge gained through faith. To understand Vatican II one must look back on this period and seek to discern, at least in outline, the currents and tendencies that came together in the Council. I will present the ideas that came to the fore during this period and then describe the fundamental elements of the Council’s teaching on the Church.

I. The Church, the Body of Christ

The Image of the Mystical Body

“The Church is awakening within souls”. Guardini’s expression had been wisely formulated, since it finally

recognized and experienced the Church as something within us-not as an institution outside us but something that lives within us.

If until that time we had thought of the Church primarily as a structure or organization, now at last we began to realize that we ourselves were the Church. The Church is much more than an organization: it is the organism of the Holy Spirit, something that is alive, that takes hold of our inmost being. This consciousness found verbal expression with the concept of the “Mystical Body of Christ”, a phrase describing a new and liberating experience of the Church. At the very end of his life, in the same year the Constitution on the Church was published by the Council, Guardini wrote: the Church “is not an institution devised and built by men ... but a living reality.... It lives still throughout the course of time. Like all living realities it develops, it changes ... and yet in the very depths of its being it remains the same; its inmost nucleus is Christ... To the extent that we look upon the Church as organization ... like an association ... we have not yet arrived at a proper understanding of it. Instead, it is a living reality and our relationship with it ought to be-life” (La Chiesa del Signore, [English translation: “The Church of the Lord”]; Morcelliana, Brescia 1967, p. 160).

Today, it is difficult to communicate the enthusiasm and joy this realization generated at the time. In the era of liberalism that preceded the First World War, the Catholic Church was looked upon as a fossilized organization, stubbornly opposed to all modern achievements. Theology had so concentrated on the question of the primacy as to make the Church appear to be essentially a centralized organization that one defended staunchly but which somehow one related to from the outside. Once again it became clear that the Church was more than this - she is something we all bring forward in faith in a living way, just as the Church brings us forward. It became clear that the Church has experienced organic growth over the centuries, and continues to grow even today. Through the Church the mystery of the Incarnation is alive today: Christ continues to move through time. If we were to ask ourselves what element present from the very beginning could still be found in Vatican II, our answer would be: the Christological definition of the Church. J.A. Möhler, a leader in the revival of Catholic theology after the devastation of the Enlightenment, once said: a certain erroneous theology could be caricatured with the

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short phrase: “In the beginning Christ created the hierarchy and had thus taken adequate care of the Church until the end of time”. Opposed to this concept is the fact that the Church is the Mystical Body; Christ and His act of founding are never over but always new. In the Church Christ never belongs just to the past, He is always and above all the present and the future. The Church is the presence of Christ: He is contemporary with us and we are His contemporaries. The Church lives from this: from the fact that Christ is present in our hearts and it is there that Christ forms His Church. That is why the first word of the Church is Christ, and not herself. The Church is healthy to the extent that all her attention is focused on Him. The Second Vatican Council placed this concept masterfully at the pinnacle of its deliberations; the fundamental text on the Church begins with the words: *Lumen gentium cum sit Christus: “since Christ is the Light of the World ... the Church is a mirror of His glory; she reflects His splendour”*. If we want to understand the Second Vatican Council correctly, we must always go back to this opening statement....

Next, with this point of departure, we must establish both the feature of her interiority and of her communitarian nature. The Church grows from within and moves outwards, not vice-versa. Above all, she is the sign of the most intimate communion with Christ. She is formed primarily in a life of prayer, the sacraments and the fundamental attitudes of faith, hope and love. Thus if someone should ask what must I do to become Church and to grow like the Church, the reply must be: you must become a person who lives faith, hope, and charity. What builds the Church is prayer and the communion of the sacraments; in them the prayer of the Church comes to meet us. Last summer I met a parish priest who told me that for many years there hadn't been a single vocation to the priesthood from his parish. What ought he do? We cannot manufacture vocations, it is the Lord who raises them up. Should we therefore stand by helpless? The priest decided to make a pilgrimage every year, a long and difficult pilgrimage to the Marian Shrine of Altötting to pray for vocations, and invited those who shared in this intention to join him in the pilgrimage and common prayer. Year after year the number of participants in this pilgrimage grew until finally, this year, the whole village with great joy, celebrated the first Mass in living memory said by a priest from the parish...

The Church grows from within: this is the meaning of the expression “Body of Christ”. The phrase implies something more: Christ has formed a body for himself. If I want to find Him and make Him mine, I am directly called to become a humble and complete and full member of His Body, and, by becoming one of His members, becoming an organ of his Body in this world, I will be so for eternity. The idea of liberal theology that whereas Jesus on his own would be interesting, the Church would be a wretched reality, contradicts this understanding completely. Christ gives Himself only in His body, and never as a pure ideal. This means that He gives Himself, and the others, in the uninterrupted communion that endures through time and is His Body. It means that the Church is not an idea, it is a Body. The scandal of becoming flesh that Jesus’ incarnation caused so many of His contemporaries, is repeated in the “scandalous character” of the Church. Jesus’ statement is valid in this instance: “Blessed is he who is not scandalized in me”.

The communitarian nature of the Church necessarily entails its character as “we”. The Church is not somewhere apart from us, it is we who constitute the Church. No one person can say “I am the Church”, but each one of us can and ought to say, “we are the Church”. This “we” does not represent an isolated group, but rather a group that exists within the entire community of all Christ’s members, living and dead. This is how a group can genuinely say: “we are the Church”. Here is the Church, in this open “we” that breaches social and political boundaries, and the boundary between heaven and earth as well. We are the Church. This gives rise to a co-responsibility and also the possibility of collaborating personally. From this understanding there derives the right to criticize but our criticism must be above all self-criticism. Let us repeat: the Church is not “somewhere else”; nor is she “someone else”. We ourselves build the Church. These ideas matured and led directly to the Council. Everything said about the common responsibility of the laity, and the legal forms that were established to facilitate the intelligent exercise of responsibility, are the result of this current of thought.

Finally, the concept of the development and therefore of the historical dynamic of the Church belongs to this theme. A body remains identical to itself over the course of its life due to the fact that in the life process it constantly renews itself. For the great English Cardinal,

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Newman, the idea of development was the true and proper bridge to his conversion to Catholicism. I believe that the idea of development belongs to those numerous fundamental concepts of Catholicism that are far from being adequately explored. Once again it is Vatican II to which we owe the first solemn formulation of this idea in a Magisterial document. Whoever wants to attach himself solely to the literal interpretation of the Scriptures or to the forms of the Church of the Fathers imprisons Christ in “yesterday”. The result is either a wholly sterile faith that has nothing to say to our times, or the arrogant assumption of the right to skip over 2,000 years of history, consign them to the dustbin of mistakes, and try to figure out what a Christianity would look like either according to Scripture or according to Jesus. The only possible result will be an artificial creation that we ourselves have made, devoid of any consistency. Genuine identity with the beginning in Christ can only exist where there is a living continuity that has developed the beginning and preserved the beginning precisely through this development.

2. Eucharistic Ecclesiology

Let us go back and look at developments in the pre-Conciliar era. Reflection on the Mystical Body of Christ marked the first phase of the Church’s interior re-discovery; it began with St Paul and led to placing in the foreground the presence of Christ and the dynamics of what is alive (in Him and us). Further research led to a fresh awareness. Above all, more than anyone else, the great French theologian Henri de Lubac in his magnificent and learned studies made it clear that in the beginning the term “corpus mysticum” referred to the Eucharist. For St Paul and the Fathers of the Church the idea of the Church as the Body of Christ was inseparably connected with the concept of the Eucharist in which the Lord is bodily present and which He gives us His Body as food. This is how a Eucharistic ecclesiology came into existence.

What do we mean today by “Eucharistic ecclesiology”? I will attempt to answer this question with a brief mention of some fundamental points. The first point is that Jesus’ Last Supper could be defined as the event that founded the Church. Jesus gave His followers this Liturgy of Death and Resurrection and at the same time He gave them the Feast of Life. In the Last Supper he repeats the covenant of

Sinai - or rather what at Sinai was a simple sign or prototype, that becomes now a complete reality: the communion in blood and life between God and man. Clearly the Last Supper anticipates the Cross and the Resurrection and presupposes them, otherwise it would be an empty gesture. This is why the Fathers of the Church could use a beautiful image and say that the Church was born from the pierced side of the Lord, from which flowed blood and water. When I state that the Last Supper is the beginning of the Church, I am actually saying the same thing, from another point of view. This formula means that the Eucharist binds all men together, and not just with one another, but with Christ; in this way it makes them "Church". At the same time the formula describes the fundamental constitution of the Church: the Church exists in Eucharistic communities. The Church's Mass is her constitution, because the Church is, in essence, a Mass (sent out: "missa"), a service of God, and therefore a service of man and a service for the transformation of the world.

The Mass is the Church's form, that means that through it she develops an entirely original relationship that exists nowhere else, a relationship of multiplicity and of unity. In each celebration of the Eucharist, the Lord is really present. He is risen and dies no more. He can no longer be divided into different parts. He always gives Himself completely and entirely. This is why the Council states: "This Church of Christ is truly present in all legitimate local communities of the faithful which, united with their pastors, are themselves called Churches in the New Testament. For in their locality these are the new People called by God, in the Holy Spirit and with great trust (cf. 1 Thes. 1,5).... In these communities, though frequently small and poor, or living in the diaspora, Christ is present, and in virtue of His power there is brought together one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church" (Lumen Gentium, n. 26). This means that the ecclesiology of local Churches derives from the formulation of the Eucharistic ecclesiology. This is a typical feature of Vatican II that presents the internal and sacramental foundation of the doctrine of collegiality about which we will speak later.

For a correct understanding of the Council's teaching, we must first look more closely at what exactly it said. Vatican II was aware of the concerns of both Orthodox and Protestant theology and integrated them into a more ample Catholic understanding. In Orthodox

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theology the idea of Eucharistic ecclesiology was first expressed by exiled Russian theologians in opposition to the pretensions of Roman centralism. They affirmed that insofar as it possesses Christ entirely, every Eucharistic community is already, in se, the Church. Consequently, external unity with other communities is not a constitutive element of the Church.

Therefore, they concluded that unity with Rome is not a constitutive element of the Church. Such a unity would be a beautiful thing since it would represent the fullness of Christ to the external world, but it is not essential since nothing would be added to the totality of Christ. The Protestant understanding of the Church was moving in the same direction. Luther could no longer recognize the Spirit of Christ in the universal Church; he directly took that Church to be an instrument of the anti-Christ. Nor could he see the Protestant State Churches of the Reformation as Churches in the proper sense of the word. They were only social, political entities necessary for specific purposes and dependent on political powers-nothing more. According to Luther the Church existed in the community. Only the assembly that listens to the Word of God in a specific place is the Church. He replaced the word "Church" with "community" (Gemeinde). Church became a negative concept.

If we go back now to the Council text certain nuances become evident. The text does not simply say, "The Church is entirely present in each community that celebrates the Eucharist", rather it states: "This Church of Christ is truly present in all legitimate local communities of the faithful which, united with their pastors, are themselves called Churches". Two elements here are of great importance: to be a Church the community must be "legitimate"; they are legitimate when they are "united with their pastors". What does this mean? In the first place, no one can make a Church by himself. A group cannot simply get together, read the New Testament and declare: "At present we are the Church because the Lord is present wherever two or three are gathered in His name". The element of "receiving" belongs essentially to the Church, just as faith comes from "hearing" and is not the result of one's decision or reflection. Faith is a converging with something I could neither imagine nor produce on my own; faith has to come to meet me. We call the structure of this encounter, a "Sacrament". It is part of the fundamental form of a sacrament that

it be received and not self-administered. No one can baptize himself. No one can ordain himself. No one can forgive his own sins. Perfect repentance cannot remain something interior - of its essence it demands the form of encounter of the Sacrament. This too is a result of a sacrament's fundamental structure as an encounter [with Christ]. For this reason communion with oneself is not just an infraction of the external provisions of Canon Law, but it is an attack on the innermost nature of a sacrament. That a priest can administer this unique sacrament, and only this sacrament, to himself is part of the *mysterium tremendum* in which the Eucharist involves him. In the Eucharist, the priest acts "in persona Christi", in the person of Christ [the Head]; at the same time he represents Christ while remaining a sinner who lives completely by accepting Christ's Gift.

One cannot make the Church but only receive her; one receives her from where she already is, where she is really present: the sacramental community of Christ's Body moving through history. It will help us to understand this difficult concept if we add something: "legitimate communities". Christ is everywhere whole. This is the first important formulation of the Council in union with our Orthodox brothers. At the same time Christ is everywhere only one, so I can possess the one Lord only in the unity that He is, in the unity of all those who are also His Body and who through the Eucharist must evermore become it. Therefore, the reciprocal unity of all those communities who celebrate the Eucharist is not something external added to Eucharistic ecclesiology, but rather its internal condition: in unity here is the One. This is why the Council recalls the proper responsibility of communities, but excludes any self-sufficiency. The Council develops an ecclesiology in which being Catholic, namely being in communion with believers in all places and in all times, is not simply an external element of an organizational form, it represents grace coming from within and is at the same time a visible sign of the grace of the Lord who alone can create unity by breaching countless boundaries.

The Church, as the People of God

After the initial enthusiasm that greeted the discovery of the idea of the Body of Christ, scholars analyzed and gradually began to refine the concept and make corrections in two directions. We have already referred to the first of these corrections in the work of Henri de

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Lubac. He made concrete the idea of the Body of Christ by working out a Eucharistic ecclesiology and opened it in this way to concrete questions about the juridical ordering of the Church and the reciprocal relations between local Churches and the universal Church. The other form of correction began in Germany in the 1930's, where some theologians were critical of the fact that with the idea of the Mystical Body certain relationships were not clear between the visible and the invisible, law and grace, order and life. They therefore proposed the concept of "People of God", found above all in the Old Testament, as a broader description of the Church to which one could more easily apply sociological and juridical categories. While the Mystical Body of Christ would certainly remain an important "image", by itself it could not meet the request of theology to express things using "concepts".

Initially this criticism of the idea of the Body of Christ was somewhat superficial. Further study of the Body of Christ uncovered its positive content; the concept of "People of God", along with the concept of the Body of Christ, entered the ecclesiology of the Council. One wondered if the image of the Mystical Body might be too narrow a starting point to define the many forms of belonging to the Church now found in the tangle of human history. If we use the image of a body to describe "belonging" we are limited only to the form of representation as "member". Either one is or one is not a member, there are no other possibilities. One can then ask if the image of the body was too restrictive, since there manifestly existed in reality intermediate degrees of belonging. The Constitution on the Church found it helpful for this purpose to use the concept of "the People of God". It could describe the relationship of non-Catholic Christians to the Church as being "in communion" and that of non-Christians as being "ordered" to the Church where in both cases one relies on the idea of the People of God (Lumen Gentium, nn. 15, 16).

In one respect one can say that the Council introduced the concept of "the People of God" above all as an ecumenical bridge. It applies to another perspective as well: the rediscovery of the Church after the First World War that initially was a phenomenon common to both Catholics and Protestants. Certainly the liturgical movement was by no means limited to the Catholic Church. This shared character gave rise to reciprocal criticism. The idea of the Body of Christ was

developed within the Catholic Church, when the Church was designated as “Christ who continues to live on earth” and so the Church was described as the incarnation of the Son that continues to the end of time. This idea provoked opposition among Protestants who saw in the teaching an intolerable identifying of the Church herself with Christ. According to Protestants the Church was in a way adoring herself and making herself infallible. Gradually, the idea struck Catholic thinkers who, even though they did not go that far, found that this understanding of the Church made her every declaration and ministerial act so definitive that it made any criticism appear to be an attack on Christ himself and simply forgot the human, at times far too human, element of the Church. The Christological distinction had to be clearly emphasized: the Church is not identical with Christ, but she stands before Him. She is a Church of sinners, ever in need of purification and renewal, ever needing to become Church. The idea of reform became a decisive element of the concept of the People of God, while it would be difficult to develop the idea of reform within the framework of the Body of Christ.

There is a third factor that favoured the idea of the “People of God”. In 1939 the Evangelical exegete, Ernst Käsemann gave his monograph on the Letter to the Hebrews the title, *The Pilgrim People of God*. In the framework of Council discussions, this title became right away a slogan because it made something become more clearly understood in the debates on the Constitution on the Church: the Church has not yet reached her goal. Her true and proper hope still lies ahead of her. The “eschatological” import of the concept of Church became clear. The phrase conveys the unity of salvation history which comprises both Israel and the Church in her pilgrim journey. The phrase expresses the historical nature of the pilgrim Church that will not be wholly herself until the paths of time have been traversed and have blossomed in the hands of God. It describes the unity of the People of God amid the variety, as in all peoples, of different ministries and services; yet above and beyond all distinctions, all are pilgrims in the one community of the pilgrim People of God. In broad outline, if one wants to sum up what elements relating to the concept “People of God” were important for the Council, one could say that the phrase “People of God” conveyed the historical nature of the Church, described the unity of God’s history with man, the internal unity of

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God's people that also goes beyond the frontiers of sacramental states of life. It conveys the eschatological dynamic, the provisional and fragmentary nature of the Church ever in need of renewal; and finally, it expresses the ecumenical dimension, that is the variety of ways in which communion and ordering to the Church can and do exist, even beyond the boundaries of the Catholic Church.

However, commentators very soon completely handed the term "people" in the concept "People of God" to a general political interpretation. Among the proponents of liberation theology it was taken to mean "people" in the Marxist sense, in opposition to the ruling classes, or more generally, it was taken to refer to popular sovereignty at long last being applied to the Church. This led to large-scale debates on Church structures. On occasion the expression was understood in a peculiarly Western sense as "democratization" or more in the sense of the so-called Eastern "People's Republics". Gradually this "verbal fireworks" (N. Lohfink) died down either because the power games ended in exhaustion and gave way to the ordinary work of parish councils, or because solid theological research had irrefutably demonstrated the impossibility of politicizing a concept that had arisen in an entirely different context. Bochum Werner Berg provides an example of the meticulous exegesis that characterized this theological research when he affirmed: "in spite of the small number of passages that mention the 'People of God' (it is a rare expression in the Bible) one common element is immediately apparent: the expression 'People of God' describes the relationship with God, the connection with God, the link between God and those designated as the People of God, it is therefore a 'vertical relationship'. The expression does not lend itself easily to a description of the hierarchical structure of this community, especially if 'People of God' is used in "contrast" to the ministers..." If we begin with the biblical meaning of this expression it can no longer be easily understood as a cry of protest against the ministers: "We are the People of God". Josef Meyer zu Schlochtern, the Professor of Fundamental Theology at Paderborn, concludes his discussion of the concept "People of God" with an observation on Vatican II's Constitution on the Church. The document concludes by "depicting the Trinitarian structure as the foundation of the final determination of the Church...". The discussion is brought back to the essential point: the Church does not exist for herself;

rather, she is God's instrument to gather mankind in Himself and to prepare for that time when "God will be all in all" (I Cor 15,28). The very concept of God was left out of all the "fireworks" surrounding this expression, thus depriving the expression of its meaning. A Church which existed only for herself would be useless. People would realize this immediately. The crisis of the Church reflected in the expression "People of God" is a "crisis of God". It derives from our abandoning the essential. All that remains is a struggle for power. This sort of thing is already abundantly present in the world - there is no need for the Church to enter this arena.

The Ecclesiology of Communion

Around the time of the extraordinary Synod of 1985 which attempted to make an assessment of the 20 years since the Council there was a renewed effort to synthesize the Council's ecclesiology. The synthesis involved one basic concept: the ecclesiology of communion. I was very much pleased with this new focus in ecclesiology and I endeavoured, to the extent I was able, to help work it out. First of all one must admit that the word "communio" did not occupy a central place in the Council. All the same if properly understood it can serve as a synthesis of the essential elements of the Council's ecclesiology. All the essential elements of the Christian concept of "communio" can be found in the famous passage from the First Letter of Saint John (1,3); it is a frame of reference for the correct Christian understanding of "communio". "That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship (communio) with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And we are writing this that our joy may be complete". The point of departure of communio is clearly evident in this passage: the union with the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who comes to mankind through the proclamation of the Church. Fellowship (communio) among men is born here and merges into fellowship (communio) with the One and Triune God. One gains access to communion with God through the realization of God's communion with man - it is Christ in person. To meet Christ creates communion with Him and therefore with the Father in the Holy Spirit. This unites men with one another. The goal of all this is the fullness of joy: the Church carries in her bosom an eschatological dynamic. This

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expression “fullness of joy” recalls the farewell address of Jesus, His Paschal mystery and the Lord’s return in the Easter apparitions which prefigure His definitive return in the new world. “You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy ... I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice ...ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full (Jn 16, 20.22.24). If this verse is compared to the invitation to prayer in St Luke (Lk 11,13) it is apparent that “joy” and the “Holy Spirit” are equivalent. Although John does not explicitly mention the Holy Spirit in his first Epistle (1,3) he is hidden within the word “joy”. In this biblical context the word “communio” has a theological, Christological, soteriological and ecclesiological characteristic. It enjoys a sacramental dimension that is absolutely explicit in St Paul: “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body ... ” (I Cor 10,16ff.). The ecclesiology of communion at its very foundation is a Eucharistic ecclesiology. It is very close to that Eucharistic ecclesiology that Orthodox theologians so convincingly developed during the past century. In it-as we have already seen-ecclesiology becomes more concrete while remaining totally spiritual, transcendent and eschatological. In the Eucharist, Christ, present in the bread and wine and giving Himself anew, builds the Church as His Body and through His Risen Body He unites us to the one and triune God and to each other. The Eucharist celebrated in different places is universal at the same time, because there is only one Christ and only a single body of Christ. The Eucharist comprehends the priestly service of “repraesentatio Christi” as well as that network of service, the synthesis of unity and multiplicity which is expressed in the term “communio”. Without any possible doubt one could say that this concept conveys a synthesis of ecclesiology which combines the discourse of the Church with the discourse of God, and to life through God and with God. This synthesis assembles all the essential intentions of Vatican II ecclesiology and connects them with one another in an appropriate fashion.

For these reasons I was both grateful and happy when the 1985 Synod placed “communio” at the centre of their study. The following years demonstrated the fact that no word is safe from misunder

standing, not even the best and most profound word. To the extent that “communio” became an easy slogan, it was devalued and distorted. As happened to the concept ‘People of God’, one must point to a growing horizontal understanding that abandoned the concept of God. The ecclesiology of communion was reduced to a consideration of relations between the local Church and the universal Church; this in turn was reduced to the problem of determining the area of competence of each. Naturally the egalitarian thesis once more gained ground: only full equality was possible in “communio”. Here again was the exact same argument that had exercised the disciples about who was the greatest amongst them. Obviously this was something that would not be resolved within a single generation. Mark’s description of the incident is the most forceful. On the road from Jerusalem Jesus spoke to His Disciples about His coming Passion for the third time. When they arrived at Capernaum He asked them what they had been talking about on the road. “They were silent” because they had been discussing who among them would be the greatest—a sort of discussion about the primacy (Mk 9, 33-37). Isn’t it just the same today? The Lord is going towards His Passion, while the Church, and in her Christ, is suffering and, we on the other hand are entangled in our favorite discussion: who comes first with the power. If He were to come among us and ask what we were talking about we would blush and be silent.

This does not mean that there should be no discussion of good government and the division of responsibility in the Church. It is certainly true that there are imbalances that need correcting. We should watch for and root out an excessive Roman centralization that is always a danger. But questions of this sort ought not to distract us from the true mission of the Church: the Church should not be proclaiming herself but God. It is only to assure that this is done in the purest possible way, that there is criticism within the Church. Criticism should insure a correlation between discourse on God and common service. To sum it up, it is no accident that Jesus’ words “the first shall be last and the last first” occur more than once in the Gospel tradition. They are like a mirror constantly focused on us all.

Faced with the post-1985 reduction of the concept of “communio”, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith thought it appropriate

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to prepare a “Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion”. The Letter was issued on 28 May, 1992. Today, any theologian concerned about his reputation feels obliged to criticize all documents from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Our Letter met with a storm of criticism-very few parts of the text met with approval. The phrase that provoked the most controversy was this statement: “The universal Church in her essential mystery is a reality that ontologically and temporally is prior to every particular Church” (cf. n. 9). There was a brief reference to this statement being based on the Patristic notion that the one, unique Church precedes the creation of particular Churches and gives birth to them. The Fathers were reviving a rabbinical concept that the Torah and Israel were pre-existent. Creation was conceived as providing space for the Will of God. This Will needed a people who would live for the Will of God and would make it the Light of the world. Since the Fathers were convinced of the final identity of the Church and Israel, they could not envision the Church as something accidental, only recently created; in this gathering of people under the Will of God the Fathers recognized the internal theology of creation. Beginning with Christology this image was amplified and deepened: they explained history-under the influence of the Old Testament-as a story of love between God and man. God finds and prepares a Bride for His Son-the unique Bride who is the unique Church. In the light of Genesis 2,24, where man and woman become “two in one flesh” the image of the Bride merges with the idea of the Church as the Body of Christ-an analogy derived from the Eucharistic liturgy. The unique Body of Christ is prepared; Christ and the Church will be “two in one flesh”, one body and in this way “God will be everything to everyone”. The ontological priority of the universal Church-the unique Church, the unique Body, the unique Bride-vis-à-vis the empirical, concrete manifestations of various, particular Churches is so obvious to me that I find it difficult to understand the objections raised against it. These objections only seem possible if one will not or cannot recognize the great Church conceived by God-possibly out of despair at her earthly shortcomings. These objections look like theological ravings. All that would remain is the empirical image of mutually related Churches and their conflicts. This would mean that the Church as a theological theme is cancelled. If one can

only see the Church as a human institution, all that remains is desolation. In this case one has abandoned not only the ecclesiology of the Fathers, but the ecclesiology of the New Testament and the understanding of Israel in the Old Testament as well. It is not just the later deuteropauline letters and the Apocalypse that affirm the ontological priority of the universal Church to the particular Churches (reaffirmed by the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith). This concept can be found in the great Pauline letters: in the Letter to the Galatians, the Apostle speaks about the heavenly Jerusalem not as something great and eschatological, but as something which precedes us: "This Jerusalem is our mother" (Gal 4,26). H. Schlier comments that for St Paul, inspired by Jewish tradition, the Jerusalem above is the new aeon. For St Paul this new aeon already exists "in the Christian Church. For him the Church is the heavenly Jerusalem in her children".

Let me conclude. To understand the ecclesiology of Vatican II one cannot ignore chapters 4 to 7 of the Constitution *Lumen Gentium*. These chapters discuss the laity, the universal call to holiness, the religious and the eschatological orientation of the Church. In these chapters the inner goal of the Church, the most essential part of its being, comes once again to the fore: holiness, conformity to God. There must exist in the world space for God, where he can dwell freely so that the world becomes His "Kingdom". Holiness is something greater than a moral quality. It is the presence of God with men, of men with God; it is God's "tent" pitched amongst men in our midst (cf. Jn 1,14). It is a new birth-not from flesh and blood but from God (Jn 1,13). Orientation towards holiness is one and the same as eschatological orientation. Beginning with Jesus' message it is fundamental for the Church. The Church exists to become God's dwelling place in the world, to become "holiness". This is the only reason there should be any struggle in the Church-and not for precedence or for the first place. All of this is repeated and synthesized in the last chapter of the Constitution on the Church that is dedicated to the Mother of the Lord.

As everyone knows, the question of dedicating a specific document to Mary was widely debated. In any event I believe it was appropriate to insert the Marian element directly into the doctrine on the Church. In this way the point of departure for our consideration is once more

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apparent: the Church is not an apparatus, nor a social institution, nor one social institution among many others. It is a person. It is a woman. It is a Mother. It is alive. A Marian understanding of the Church is totally opposed to the concept of the Church as a bureaucracy or a simple organization. We cannot make the Church, we must be the Church. We are the Church, the Church is in us only to the extent that our faith more than action forges our being. Only by being Marian, can we become the Church. At its very beginning the Church was not made, but given birth. She existed in the soul of Mary from the moment she uttered her fiat. This is the most profound will of the Council: the Church should be awakened in our souls. Mary shows us the way.

Marks of the Church

The marks of the Church are certain unmistakable signs, or distinctive characteristics which render the Church easily recognizable to all, and clearly distinguish it from every other religious society, especially from those which claim to be Christian in doctrine and origin. That such external signs are necessary to the true Church is plain from the aim and the purpose which Christ had in view when He made His revelation and founded a Church. The purpose of the redemption was the salvation of men. Hence, Christ made known the truths which men must heed and obey. He established a Church to which He committed the care and the exposition of these truths, and, consequently He made it obligatory on all men that they should know and hear it (Matthew 18:17). It is obvious that this Church, which takes the place of Christ, and is to carry on His work by gathering men into its fold and saving their souls, must be evidently discernible to all. There must be no doubt as to which is the true Church of Christ, the one which has

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received, and has preserved intact the Revelation which He gave it for man's salvation. Were it otherwise the purpose of the Redemption would be frustrated, the blood of the Saviour shed in vain, and man's eternal destination at the mercy of chance. Without doubt, therefore, Christ, the all-wise legislator, impressed upon His Church some distinctive external marks by which, with the use of ordinary diligence, all can distinguish the real Church from the false, the society of truth from the ranks of error. These marks flow from the very essence of the Church; they are properties inseparable from its nature and manifestive of its character, and, in their Christian and proper sense, can be found in no other institution. In the Formula of the Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381), four marks of the Church are mentioned - unity, sanctity, Catholicity, Apostolicity - which are believed by most theologians to be exclusively the marks of the True Church.

1. Unity

Some False Notions of Unity

All admit that unity of some kind is indispensable to the existence of any well-ordered society, civil, political, or religious. Many Christians, however, hold that the unity necessary for the true Church of Christ need be nothing more than a certain spiritual internal bond, or, if external, it need be only in a general way, inasmuch as all acknowledge the same God and reverence the same Christ. Thus most Protestants think that the only union necessary for the Church is that which comes from faith, hope, and love toward Christ; in worshipping the same God, obeying the same Lord, and in believing the same fundamental truths which are necessary for salvation. This they regard as a unity of doctrine, organization, and cult. A like spiritual unity is all the Greek schismatics require. So long as they profess a common faith, are governed by the same general law of God under a hierarchy, and participate in the same sacraments, they look upon the various churches - Constantinople, Russian, Antiochene, etc. - as enjoying the union of the one true Church; there is the common head, Christ, and the one Spirit, and that suffices. The Anglicans likewise teach that the one Church of Christ is made up of three branches: the Greek, the Roman, and the Anglican, each having a different legitimate hierarchy but all united by a common spiritual bond.

True Notion of Unity

The Catholic conception of the mark of unity, which must characterize the one Church founded by Christ, is far more exacting. Not only must the true Church be one by an internal and spiritual union, but this union must also be external and visible, consisting in and growing out of a unity of faith, worship, and government. Hence the Church which has Christ for its founder is not to be characterized by any merely accidental or internal spiritual union, but, over and above this, it must unite its members in unity of doctrine, expressed by external, public profession; in unity of worship, manifested chiefly in the reception of the same sacraments; and in unity of government, by which all its members are subject to and obey the same authority, which was instituted by Christ Himself. In regard to faith or doctrine it may be here objected that in none of the Christian sects is there strict unity, since all of the members are not at all times aware of the same truths to be believed. Some give assent to certain truths which others know nothing of. Here it is important to note the distinction between the habit and the object of faith. The habit or the subjective disposition of the believer, though specifically the same in all, differs numerically according to individuals, but the objective truth to which assent is given is one and the same for all. There may be as many habits of faith numerically distinct as there are different individuals possessing the habit, but it is not possible that there be a diversity in the objective truths of faith. The unity of faith is manifested by all the faithful professing their adhesion to one and the same object of faith. All admit that God, the Supreme Truth, is the primary author of their faith, and from their explicit willingness to submit to the same external authority to whom God has given the power to make known whatever has been revealed, their faith, even in truths explicitly unknown, is implicitly external. All are prepared to believe whatever God has revealed and the Church teaches. Similarly, accidental differences in ceremonial forms do not in the least interfere with essential unity of worship, which is to be regarded primarily and principally in the celebration of the same sacrifice and in the reception of the same sacraments. All are expressive of the one doctrine and subject to the same authority.

The true Church of Christ is One

That the Church which Christ instituted for man's salvation must be one in the strict sense of the term just explained, is already evident

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from its very nature and purpose; truth is one, Christ revealed the truth and gave it to His Church, and men are to be saved by knowing and following the truth. But the essential unity of the true Christian Church is also explicitly and repeatedly declared throughout the New Testament:

- ❖ Speaking of His Church, the Saviour called it a kingdom, the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God (Matthew 13:24, 31, 33; Luke 13:18; John 18:36);
- ❖ He compared it to a city the keys of which were entrusted to the Apostles (Matthew 5:14; 16:19),
- ❖ to a sheepfold to which all His sheep must come and be united under one shepherd (John 10:7-17);
- ❖ to a vine and its branches (John 15:1-11)
- ❖ to a house built upon a rock against which not even the powers of hell should ever prevail (Matthew 16:18).
- ❖ Moreover, the Saviour, just before He suffered, prayed for His disciples, for those who were afterwards to believe in Him - for His Church - that they might be and remain one as He and the Father are one (John 17:20-23); and
- ❖ He had already warned them that “every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate: and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand” (Matthew 12:25).
- ❖ These words of Christ are expressive of the closest unity.
- ❖ St. Paul likewise insists on the unity of the Church.
- ❖ Schism and disunion he brands as crimes to be classed with murder and debauchery, and declares that those guilty of “dissensions” and “sects” shall not obtain the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:20-21).
- ❖ Hearing of the schisms among the Corinthians, he asked impatiently: “Is Christ divided? Was Paul then crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” (1 Corinthians 1:13).
- ❖ And in the same Epistle he describes the Church as one body with many members distinct among themselves, but one with Christ their head: “For in one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free” (1 Corinthians 12:13).

- ❖ To show the intimate union of the members of the Church with the one God, he asks: “The chalice of benediction, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread, which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord? For we, being many, are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread” (1 Corinthians 10:16-17).
- ❖ Again in his Epistle to the Ephesians he teaches the same doctrine, and exhorts them to be “careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”, and he reminds them that there is but “one body and one spirit—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all” (Ephesians 4:3-6).
- ❖ Already, in one of his very first Epistles, he had warned the faithful of Galatia that if anybody, even an angel from heaven, should preach unto them any other Gospel than that which he had preached, “let him be anathema” (Galatians 1:8).

Such declarations as these coming from the great Apostle are clear evidence of the essential unity which must be characteristic of the true Christian Church.

The other Apostles also persistently proclaimed this essential and necessary unity of Christ’s Church (cf. 1 John 4:1-7; Apocalypse 2:6, 14-15, 20-29; 2 Peter 2:1-19; Jude 5:19). And although divisions did arise now and then in the early Church, they were speedily put down and the disturbers rejected, so that even from the beginning the Christians could boast that they were of “one heart and one soul” (Acts 4:32; cf. Acts 11:22; 13:1).

Tradition is unanimous to the same effect. Whenever heresy threatened to invade the Church, the Fathers rose up against it as an essential evil.

- ✓ The unity of the Church was the object of nearly all the exhortations of St. Ignatius of Antioch (“Ad Ephes.”, n. 5, 16-17; “Ad Philadelph.”, n. 3).
- ✓ St. Irenaeus went even further, and taught that the test of the one true Church, in which alone was salvation, was its union with Rome (Adv. haeres., III, iii).
- ✓ Tertullian likewise compared the Church to an ark outside of which there is no salvation, and he maintained that only he who embraced

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- every doctrine handed down by the Apostolic Churches, especially by that of Rome, belonged to the true Church (De praescript., xxi).
- ✓ The same contention was upheld by Clement of Alexandria and by Origen, who said that outside the one visible Church none could be saved.
 - ✓ St. Cyprian in his treatise on the unity of the Church says: “God is one, and Christ one, and one the Church of Christ” (De eccl. unitate, xxiii); and again in his epistles he insists that there is but “One Church founded upon Peter by Christ the Lord” (Epist. 70, ad Jan.) and that there is but “one altar and one priesthood” (Epist. 40, v).

Many more testimonies of unity might be adduced from Saints Jerome, Augustine, Chrysostom, and the other Fathers, but their teachings are only too well known. The long list of councils, the history and treatment of heretics and heresies in every century show beyond doubt that unity of doctrine of cult, and of authority, has always been regarded as an essential and visible mark of the true Christian Church. As shown above, it was the intention of Christ that His Church should be one, and that, not in any accidental internal way, but essentially and visibly. Unity is the fundamental mark of the Church, for without it the other marks would have no meaning, since indeed the Church itself could not exist. Unity is the source of strength and organization, as discord and schism are of weakness and confusion. Given one supernatural authority which all respect, a common doctrine which all profess, one form of worship subject to the same authority and expressive of the same teaching, centred in one sacrifice and in the reception of the same sacraments, and the other marks of the Church necessarily follow and are easily understood.

That the mark of unity which is distinctive of and essential to the true Church of Christ is to be found in none other than the Roman Catholic Church, follows naturally from what has been said. All the theories of unity entertained by the sects are woefully out of harmony with the true and proper concept of unity as defined above and as taught by Christ, the Apostles, and all orthodox Tradition. In no other Christian body is there a oneness of faith, of worship, and of discipline. Between no two of the hundreds of non-Catholic sects is there a common bond of union; each one having a different head, a different belief, a different cult. Nay more, even between the members

of any one sect there is no such thing as real unity, for their first and foremost principle is that each one is free to believe and do as he wishes. They are constantly breaking up into new sects and subdivisions of sects, showing that they have within themselves the seeds of disunion and disintegration. Divisions and subdivisions have ever been the characteristics of Protestantism. This is certainly a literal fulfilment of the words of Christ: "Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up" (Matthew 15:13); and "every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate: and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand" (Matthew 12:25).

2. Sanctity

The term "sanctity" is employed in somewhat different senses in relation to God, to individual men, and to a corporate body. As applied to God it denotes that absolute moral perfection which is His by nature. In regard to men it signifies a close union with God, together with the moral perfection resulting from this union. Hence holiness is said to belong to God by essence, and to creatures only by participation. Whatever sanctity they possess comes to them as a Divine gift. As used of a society, the term means that this society aims at producing holiness in its members, and is possessed of means capable of securing that result, and that the lives of its members correspond, at least in some measure, with the purpose of the society, and display a real, not a merely nominal holiness.

The Church has ever claimed that she, as a society, is holy in a transcendent degree. She teaches that this is one of the four "notes", viz., unity, catholicity, apostolicity, and sanctity, by which the society founded by Christ can be readily distinguished from all human institutions. It is in virtue of her relation to the Person and work of Christ that this attribute belongs to the Church. She is (1) the fruit of the Passion - the kingdom of the redeemed. Those who remain outside her are the "world" which knows not God (1 John 3:1). The object of the Passion was the redemption and sanctification of the Church: "Christ also loved the church, and delivered Himself up for it: that he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life" (Ephesians 5:25, 26). Again (2) the Church is the body of Christ. He is the head of the mystical body: and supernatural life - the life of Christ Himself - is communicated through the sacraments to all His members. Just as the Holy Ghost dwelt in the human body of

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Christ, so He now dwells in the Church: and His presence is so intimate and so efficacious that the Apostle can even speak of Him as the soul of the mystical body: "One body and one Spirit" (Ephesians 4:4). Thus it follows as a necessary consequence from the nature of the Church and her relation to Christ, that as a society she must possess means capable of producing holiness: that her members must be characterized by holiness: and that this endowment of sanctity will afford a ready means of distinguishing her from the world.

It is further manifest that the Church's holiness must be of an entirely supernatural character - something altogether beyond the power of unassisted human nature. And such is in fact the type of sanctity which Christ and His Apostles require on the part of members of the Church. (1) The virtues which in the Christian ideal are the most fundamental of all, lie altogether outside the scope of the highest pagan ethics. Christian charity, humility, and chastity are instances in point. The charity which Christ sets forth in the Sermon on the Mount and in the parable of the Good Samaritan - a charity which knows no limits and which embraces enemies as well as friends - exceeds all that moralists had deemed possible for men. And this charity Christ requires not of a chosen few, but of all His followers. Humility, which in the Christian scheme is the necessary groundwork of all sanctity (Matthew 18:3), was previously to His teaching an unknown virtue. The sense of personal unworthiness in which it consists, is repugnant to all the impulses of unregenerate nature. Moreover, the humility which Christ demands, supposes as its foundation a clear knowledge of the guilt of sin, and of the mercy of God. Without these it cannot exist. And these doctrines are sought in vain in other religions than the Christian. In regard to chastity Christ not merely warned His followers that to violate this virtue even by a thought, was a grievous sin. He went yet further. He exhorted those of His followers to whom the grace should be given, to live the life of virginity that thereby they might draw nearer to God (Matthew 19:12).

(2) Another characteristic of holiness according to the Christian ideal is love of suffering; not as though pleasure were evil in itself, but because suffering is the great means by which our love of God is intensified and purified. All those who have attained a high degree

of holiness have learnt to rejoice in suffering, because by it their love to God was freed from every element of self-seeking, and their lives conformed to that of their Master. Those who have not grasped this principle may call themselves by the name of Christian, but they have not understood the meaning of the Cross.

(3) It has ever been held that holiness when it reaches a sublime degree is accompanied by miraculous powers. And Christ promised that this sign should not be lacking to His Church. The miracles, which His followers should work, would, He declared, be no whit less stupendous than those wrought by Himself during His mortal life (Mark 16:17, 18; John 14:12).

Such in brief outline is the sanctity with which Christ endowed His Church, and which is to be the distinguishing mark of her children. It is, however, to be noted that He said nothing to suggest that all His followers would make use of the opportunities thus afforded them. On the contrary, He expressly taught that His flock would contain many unworthy members (Matthew 13:30, 48). And we may be sure that as within the Church the lights are brightest, so there too the shadows will be darkest - *corruptio optimi pessima*. An unworthy Catholic will fall lower than an unworthy pagan. To show that the Church possesses the note of holiness it suffices to establish that her teaching is holy: that she is endowed with the means of producing supernatural holiness in her children: that, notwithstanding the unfaithfulness of many members, a vast number do in fact cultivate a sanctity beyond anything that can be found elsewhere: and that in certain cases this sanctity attains so high a degree that God honours it with miraculous powers.

It is not difficult to show that the Catholic and Roman Church, and she alone, fulfils these conditions. In regard to her doctrines, it is manifest that the moral law which she proposes as of Divine obligation, is more lofty and more exacting than that which any of the sects has ventured to require. Her vindication of the indissolubility of marriage in the face of a licentious world affords the most conspicuous instance of this. She alone maintains in its integrity her Master's teaching on marriage. Every other religious body without exception has given place to the demands of human passion. In regard to the means of holiness, she, through her seven sacraments, applies to her members

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the fruits of the Atonement. She pardons the guilt of sin, and nourishes the faithful on the Body and Blood of Christ. Nor is the justice of her claims less manifest when we consider the result of her work. In the Catholic Church is found a marvellous succession of saints whose lives are as beacon-lights in the history of mankind. In sanctity the supremacy of Bernard, of Dominic, of Francis, of Ignatius, of Theresa, is as unquestioned as is that of Alexander and of Cæsar in the art of war. Outside the Catholic Church the world has nothing to show which can in any degree compare with them. Within the Church the succession never fails.

Nor do the saints stand alone. In proportion to the practical influence of Catholic teaching, the supernatural virtues of which we have spoken above, are found also among the rest of the faithful. These virtues mark a special type of character which the Church seeks to realize in her children, and which finds little favour among other claimants to the Christian name. Outside the Catholic Church the life of virginity is contemned; love of suffering is viewed as a medieval superstition; and humility is regarded as a passive virtue ill-suited to an active and pushing age. Of course it is not meant that we do not find many individual instances of holiness outside the Church. God's grace is universal in its range. But it seems beyond question that the supernatural sanctity whose main features we have indicated, is recognized by all as belonging specifically to the Church, while in her alone does it reach that sublime degree which we see in the saints. In the Church too we see fulfilled Christ's promise that the gift of miracles shall not be wanting to His followers. Miracles, it is true, are not sanctity. But they are the aura in which the highest sanctity moves. And from the time of the Apostles to the nineteenth century the lives of the saints show us that the laws of nature have been suspended at their prayers. In numberless cases the evidence for these events is so ample that nothing but the exigencies of controversy can explain the refusal of anti-Catholic writers to admit their occurrence.

The proof appears to be complete. There can be as little doubt which Church displays the note of sanctity, as there is in regard to the notes of unity, catholicity and apostolicity. The Church in communion with the See of Rome and it alone possesses that holiness which the words of Christ and His Apostles demand.

3. Catholicity

The word Catholic (*katholikos* from *katholou* - throughout the whole, i.e., universal) occurs in the Greek classics, e.g., in Aristotle and Polybius, and was freely used by the earlier Christian writers in what we may call its primitive and non-ecclesiastical sense. Thus we meet such phrases as the "the catholic resurrection" (Justin Martyr), "the catholic goodness of God" (Tertullian), "the four catholic winds" (Irenaeus), where we should now speak of "the general resurrection", "the absolute or universal goodness of God", "the four principal winds", etc. The word seems in this usage to be opposed to *merikos* (partial) or *idios* (particular), and one familiar example of this conception still survives in the ancient phrase "Catholic Epistles" as applied to those of St. Peter, St. Jude, etc., which were so called as being addressed not to particular local communities, but to the Church at large.

The combination "the Catholic Church" (*he katholike ekklesia*) is found for the first time in the letter of St. Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans, written about the year 110. The words run: "Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there let the people be, even as where Jesus may be, there is the universal [*katholike*] Church." However, in view of the context, some difference of opinion prevails as to the precise connotation of the italicized word, and Kattenbusch, the Protestant professor of theology at Giessen, is prepared to interpret this earliest appearance of the phrase in the sense of *mia mone*, the "one and only" Church [*Das apostolische Symbolum* (1900), II, 922]. From this time forward the technical signification of the word Catholic meets us with increasing frequency both East and West, until by the beginning of the fourth century it seems to have almost entirely supplanted the primitive and more general meaning. The earlier examples have been collected by Caspari (*Quellen zur Geschichte des Taufsymbols*, etc., III, 149 sqq.). Many of them still admit the meaning "universal". The reference (c. 155) to "the bishop of the catholic church in Smyrna" (Letter on the Martyrdom of St. Polycarp, xvi), a phrase which necessarily presupposes a more technical use of the word, is due, some critics think, to interpolation. On the other hand this sense undoubtedly occurs more than once in the Muratorian Fragment (c. 180), where, for example, it is said of certain heretical writings that they "cannot be received in

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the Catholic Church". A little later, Clement of Alexandria speaks very clearly. "We say", he declares, "that both in substance and in seeming, both in origin and in development, the primitive and Catholic Church is the only one, agreeing as it does in the unity of one faith" (Stromata, VII, xvii; P.G., IX, 552). From this and other passages which might be quoted, the technical use seems to have been clearly established by the beginning of the third century. In this sense of the word it implies sound doctrine as opposed to heresy, and unity of organization as opposed to schism (Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, Part II, vol. I, 414 sqq. and 621 sqq.; II, 310-312). In fact Catholic soon became in many cases a mere appellative-the proper name, in other words, of the true Church founded by Christ, just as we now frequently speak of the Orthodox Church, when referring to the established religion of the Russian Empire, without adverting to the etymology of the title so used. It was probably in this sense that the Spaniards Pacian (Ep. i ad Sempron.) writes, about 370: "Christianus mihi nomen est, catholicus cognomen", and it is noteworthy that in various early Latin expositions of the Creed, notably that of Nicetas of Remesiana, which dates from about 375 (ed. Burn, 1905, p. lxx), the word Catholic in the Creed, though undoubtedly coupled at that date with the words Holy Church, suggests no special comment. Even in St. Cyprian (c. 252) it is difficult to determine how far he uses the word Catholic significantly, and how far as a mere name. The title, for instance, of his longest work is "On the Unity of the Catholic Church", and we frequently meet in his writings such phrases as *catholica fides* (Ep. xxv; ed. Hartel, II, 538); *catholica unitas* (Ep. xxv, p. 600); *catholica regula* (Ep. lxx, p. 767), etc. The one clear idea underlying all is orthodox as opposed to heretical, and Kattenbusch does not hesitate to admit that in Cyprian we first see how Catholic and Roman came eventually to be regarded as interchangeable terms. (Cf. Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, II, 149-168.) Moreover it should be noted that the word *Catholica* was sometimes used substantively as the equivalent of *ecclesia Catholica*. An example is to be found in the Muratorian Fragment, another seemingly in Tertullian (*De Praescrip*, xxx), and many more appear at a later date, particularly among African Writers.

Among the Greeks it was natural that while Catholic served as the distinctive description of the one Church, the etymological significance

of the word was never quite lost sight of. Thus in the “Catechetical Discourses” of St. Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 347) he insists on the one hand (sect. 26): “And if ever thou art sojourning in any city, inquire not simply where the Lord’s house is—for the sects of the profane also attempt to call their own dens, houses of the Lord—nor merely where the church is, but where is the Catholic Church. For this is the peculiar name of the holy body the mother of us all.” On the other hand when discussing the word Catholic, which already appears in his form of the baptismal creed, St. Cyril remarks: (sect. 23) “Now it [the Church] is called Catholic because it is throughout the world, from one end of the earth to the other.” But we shall have occasion to quote this passage more at length later on.

There can be no doubt, however, that it was the struggle with the Donatists which first drew out the full theological significance of the epithet Catholic and passed it on to the schoolmen as an abiding possession. When the Donatists claimed to represent the one true Church of Christ, and formulated certain marks of the Church, which they professed to find in their own body, it could not fail to strike their orthodox opponents that the title Catholic, by which the Church of Christ was universally known, afforded a far surer test, and that this was wholly inapplicable to a sect which was confined to one small corner of the world. The Donatists, unlike all previous heretics, had not gone wrong upon any Christological question. It was their conception of Church discipline and organization which was faulty. Hence, in refuting them, a more or less definite theory of the Church and its marks was gradually evolved by St. Optatus (c. 370) and St. Augustine (c. 400). These doctors particularly insisted upon the note of Catholicity, and they pointed out that both the Old and the New Testament represented the Church as spread over all the earth. Moreover, St. Augustine insists upon the consensus of Christians in the use of the name Catholic. “Whether they wish or no”, he says, “heretics have to call the Catholic Church Catholic” (“De vera religione”, xii). “Although all heretics wish to be styled Catholic, yet if any one ask where is the Catholic place of worship none of them would venture to point out his own conventicle” (*Contra Epistolam quam vocant Fundamenti*, iv). Of later exponents of this same thesis the most famous is Vincent of Lérins (c. 434). His canon of Catholicity is “That which has been believed everywhere,

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always, and by all.” “This”, he adds, “is what is truly and properly Catholic” (Commonitorium, I, ii).

Although belief in the “holy Church” was included in the earliest form of the Roman Creed, the word Catholic does not seem to have been added to the Creed anywhere in the West until the fourth century. Kattenbusch believes that our existing form is first met with in the “Exhortatio” which he attributes to Gregorius of Eliberis (c. 360). It is possible, however, that the creed lately printed by Dom Morin (*Revue Bénédictine*, 1904, p. 3) is of still earlier date. In any case the phrase, “I believe in the holy Catholic Church” occurs in the form commented on by Nicetas of Remesiana (c. 375). With regard to the modern use of the word, Roman Catholic is the designation employed in the legislative enactments of Protestant England, but Catholic is that in ordinary use on the Continent of Europe, especially in Latin countries. Indeed, historians of all schools, at least for brevity’s sake, frequently contrast Catholic and Protestant, without any qualification. In England, since the middle of the sixteenth century, indignant protests have been constantly made against the “exclusive and arrogant usurpation” of the name Catholic by the Church of Rome. The Protestant, Archdeacon Philpot, who was put to death in 1555, was held to be very obstinate on this point (see the edition of his works published by the Parker Society); and among many similar controversies of a later date may be mentioned that between Dr. Bishop, subsequently vicar Apostolic, and Dr. Abbot, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, regarding the “Catholicke Deformed”, which raged from 1599 to 1614. According to some, such combinations as Roman Catholic, or Anglo-Catholic, involve a contradiction in terms. (See the Anglican Bishop of Carlisle in “*The Hibbert Journal*”, January, 1908, p. 287.) From about the year 1580, besides the term papist, employed with opprobrious intent, the followers of the old religion were often called Romish or Roman Catholics. Sir William Harbert, in 1585, published a “Letter to a Roman pretended Catholique”, and in 1587 an Italian book by G.B. Aurellio was printed in London regarding the different doctrines “dei Protestanti veri e Cattolici Romani”. Neither do the Catholics always seem to have objected to the appellation, but sometimes used it themselves. On the other hand, Protestant writers often described their opponents simply as “Catholics”. A conspicuous instance is the “Pseudomartyr” of Dr. John Donne, printed in 1610.

Moreover, if only for brevity's sake, such burning questions as "Catholic Emancipation" have commonly been discussed by both sides without any qualifying prefix. In connection with this matter we may call attention to a common Anglican view represented in such a popular work of reference as Hook's "Church Dictionary" (1854), s.v. "Catholic" - "Let the member of the Church of England assert his right to the name of Catholic, since he is the only person in England who has a right to that name. The English Romanist is a Roman Schismatic and not a Catholic." The idea is further developed in Blunt's "Dictionary of Sects and Heresies" (1874), where "Roman Catholics" are described as "a sect organized by the Jesuits out of the relics of the Marian party in the reign of Queen Elizabeth". An earlier and less extreme view will be found in Newman's "Essays Critical and Historical", published by him as an Anglican (see No. 9, "The Catholicity of the Anglican Church"). The Cardinal's own note on this essay, in the last revised edition, may be read with advantage.

So far we have been considering only the history and meaning of the name Catholic. We turn to its theological import as it has been emphasized and formalized by later theologians. No doubt the enumeration of four precise "notes" by which the Church is marked off from the sects is of comparatively recent development, but the conception of some such external tests, as pointed out above, is based upon the language of St. Augustine, St. Optatus, and others, in their controversies with the heretics of their time. In a famous passage of St. Augustine's treatise "Contra Epistolam quam vocant Fundamenti", directed against the Donatists, the holy doctor declares that besides the intrinsic acceptability of her doctrine "there are many other things which most justly keep me within the bosom of the Church", and after indicating the agreement in the faith among her members, or, as we should say, her Unity, as well as "the succession of priests from the installation of Peter the Apostle, to whom our Lord after His resurrection entrusted His sheep to be fed, down to the present episcopate", in other words the quality which we call Apostolicity, St. Augustine continues in a passage previously cited in part, "Lastly there holds me the very name of Catholic which not without reason so closely attaches to the Church amid the heresies which surround it, that although all heretics would fain be called Catholics, still if any stranger should ask where the Catholic service is held, not one of these

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heretics would dare to point to his own conventicle” (Corpus Scrip. Eccles. Lat., XXV, Pt. I, 196). It was very natural that the situation created by the controversies of the sixteenth century should lead to a more exact determination of these “notes”. English theologians like Stapleton (*Principiorum Fidei Doctrinalium Demonstratio*, Bk. IV, cc. iii sqq.) and Sander (*De Visibili Monarchia*, Bk. VIII, cap. xl) were foremost in urging this aspect of the question between the Churches, and foreign scholars like Bellarmine, who engaged in the same debates, readily caught the tone from them. Sander distinguished six prerogatives of the Church instituted by Christ.

Stapleton recognized two primary attributes as contained in Christ’s promises—to wit, universality in space and perpetuity in time—and from these he deduced the other visible marks. Bellarmine, starting with the name Catholic, enumerated fourteen other qualities verified in the external history of the institution which claimed this title (*De Conciliis*, Bk. IV, cap. iii). In all these varying schemes, it may be remarked, the universality of the Church was given a foremost place among her distinctive marks. However, already in the fifteenth century the theologian John Torquemada had set down the notes of the Church as four in number, and this more simple arrangement, founding upon the wording of the familiar Mass Creed (*Et unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam*), eventually won universal acceptance. It is adopted, for instance, in the “*Catechismus ad Parochos*”, which in accordance with a decree of the Council of Trent was drawn up and published in 1566 with the highest official sanction. In this authoritative document we read:

The third mark of the Church is that she is Catholic, that is, universal; and justly is she called Catholic, because, as St. Augustine says, ‘she is diffused by the splendour of one faith from the rising to the setting sun’. Unlike republics of human institution, or the conventicles of heretics, she is not circumscribed within the limits of any one kingdom, nor confined to the members of any one society of men, but embraces within the amplitude of her love, all mankind, whether barbarians or Scythians, slaves or freemen, male or female.

In confirmation of this, various prophetic utterances of Holy Scripture are quoted, after which the Catechism proceeds: “To

this Church, built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets (Ephesians 2:20) belong all the faithful who have existed from Adam to the present day, or shall exist in the profession of the true faith to the end of time, all of whom are founded and raised upon the one cornerstone, Christ, who made both one, and announced peace to them that are near, and to them that are far. She is also called universal, because all who desire eternal salvation must cling to and embrace her, like those who entered the ark to escape perishing in the flood. This, therefore, is to be taught as a most just criterion to distinguish the true from a false church.”

This multiplex and somewhat confused presentment of the note of Catholicity undoubtedly finds its warrant in the equally wide interpretation of some of the early Fathers. Thus, for example, St. Cyril of Jerusalem says: “The Church is called Catholic because she is diffused throughout the whole world [i.e. the habitable world, *oikoumenes*] from one end of the earth to the other, and because she teaches universally and without curtailment all the truths of faith which ought to be known to men whether they concern visible or invisible things, heavenly things or the things of earth; further because she brings under the yoke of God’s true service all races of men, the mighty and the lowly, the learned and the simple; and finally because she tends and heals every kind of sin committed by body or soul and because there is no form of virtue, whether in word or deed or in spiritual gifts of any kind whatever, which she does not possess as her own” (Cateches., xviii, 23; P.G., XXXIII, 1043). In similar terms speaks St. Isidore (De Offic., Bk. I), among the Fathers of the West, and a variety of other explanations might also, no doubt, be appealed to.

But of all these various interpretations, which, after all, are not inconsistent with one another, and which are probably only characteristic of a fashion of exegesis which delighted in multiplicity, one conception of Catholicity is almost invariably made prominent. This is the idea of the actual local diffusion of the Church, and this is also the aspect which, thanks no doubt to the influence of Protestant controversy, has been most insisted upon by the theologians of the last three centuries. Some heretical and schismatical teachers have practically refused to recognize Catholicity as an essential attribute of Christ’s Church, and in the Lutheran version of the

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Apostles' Creed, for example, the word Catholic ("I believe in the holy Catholic Church") is replaced by Christian. But in the majority of the Protestant professions of faith the wording of the original has been retained, and the representatives of these various shades of opinion have been at pains to find an interpretation of the phrase which is in any way consistent with geographical and historical facts. (For these see CHRISTENDOM.) The majority, including most of the older Anglican divines (e.g. Pearson on the Creed), have contented themselves with laying stress in some shape or form upon the design of the Founder of the Church that His Gospel should be preached throughout the world. This diffusion de jure serves its purpose sufficiently as a justification for the retention of the word Catholic in the Creed, but the supporters of this view are of necessity led to admit that Catholicity so understood cannot serve as a visible criterion by which the true Church is to be distinguished from schismatical sects. Those Protestant bodies who do not altogether reject the idea of "notes" distinctive of the true Church consequently fall back for the most part upon the honest preaching of God's word and the regular administration of the sacraments as the only criteria. (See the "Confession of Augsburg", Art. 7, etc.) But such notes as these, which may be claimed by many different religious bodies with apparently equal right, are practically inoperative, and, as Catholic controversialists have commonly pointed out, the question only resolves itself into the discussion of the nature of the Unity of the Church under another form. The same must be said of that very large class of Protestant teachers who look upon all sincere Christian communions as branches of the one Catholic Church with Christ for its invisible head. Taken collectively, these various branches lay claim to worldwide diffusion de facto as well as de jure. But clearly, here again the question primarily involved is that concerning the nature of the Unity of the Church.

As against these and other interpretations which have prevailed among Protestants from the Reformation until quite recent times, the scholastic theologians of the last three centuries have been wont to put forward the conception of the note of Catholicity in various formal propositions, of which the most essential elements are the following. The true Church of Christ, as it is revealed to us in prophecy, in the New Testament, and in the writings of the Fathers of the first

six centuries, is a body which possesses the prerogative of Catholicity, i.e. of general diffusion, not only as a matter of right, but in actual fact. Moreover, this diffusion is not only successive-i.e. so that one part of the world after another should in course of ages be brought in contact with the Gospel- but it is such that the Church may be permanently described as spread throughout the world. Further, as this general diffusion is a property to which no other Christian association can justly lay claim, we are entitled to say that Catholicity is a distinctive mark of the true Church of Christ.

It will be seen from this that the point upon which stress is laid is that of actual local diffusion, and it can hardly be denied that both Scriptural and Patristic arguments adduced by Bellarmine, Thomassin, Alexander Natalis, Nicole, and others, to take but a few prominent names, afford strong justification for the claim. The Scriptural argument seems first to have been developed by St. Optatus of Mileve against the Donatists, and it was equally employed by St. Augustine when he took up the same controversy a few years later. Adducing a large number of passages in the Psalms (e.g. Pss. ii and lxxi), with Daniel (ch. ii), Isaiah (e.g. liv, 3), and other prophetic writers, the Fathers and modern theologians alike draw attention to the picture which is there afforded of the Kingdom of Christ the Messia as something gloriously and conspicuously spread throughout the world, e.g. "I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession", "He shall rule from sea to sea", "All the nations shall serve Him", etc., etc. Moreover, in combination with these we have to notice our Lord's instructions and promises: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations", "You shall be witnesses unto me... even to the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8), or St. Paul's words quoting Psalm 18, "Yes, verily, their sound went out over all the earth and their words unto the ends of the whole world" (Romans 10:18), etc. But the real strength of the argument lies in the patristic evidence, for such words of Scripture as those just quoted are cited and interpreted, not by one or two only, but by a large number of different Fathers, both of the East and of the West, and nearly always in such terms as are consistent only with the actual diffusion over regions which to them represented, morally speaking, the whole world. It is indeed particularly important

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to note that in many of these patristic passages the writer, while insisting upon the local extension of the Church, distinctly implies that this diffusion is relative and not absolute, that it is to be general indeed, but in a moral, not in a physical or mathematical sense. Thus St. Augustine (Epist. cxcix; P.L., XXXIII, 922, 923) explains that the nations which formed no part of the Roman Empire had already joined the Church, which was fructifying and increasing throughout the whole world. But he adds that there will be always need and room for it still to grow; and, after quoting Romans 10:14, he adds:

In those nations therefore among whom the Church is not yet known it has still to find a place [in quibus ergo gentibus nondum est ecclesia, oportet ut sit], not indeed in such a way that all who are there should become believers; for it is all nations that are promised, not all the men of all nations... Otherwise how shall that prophesy be fulfilled, 'Ye shall be hated by all for my name's sake', unless among all nations there are those who hate as well as those who are hated?

Lastly, it should be said that among some confused thinkers of the Anglican communion, as also among certain representatives of Modernist opinions, an interpretation of the Catholicity of the Church has lately come into fashion which has little connection with anything that has hitherto fallen under our notice. Starting with the conception familiar in such locutions as "a man of catholic tastes", meaning a man who excludes no rational interest from his sympathies, these writers would persuade us that a catholic church either does or should mean a church endowed with unlimited comprehensiveness, i.e. which is prepared to welcome and assimilate all opinions honestly held, however contradictory. To this it may be answered that the idea is absolutely foreign to the connotation of the phrase Catholic Church as we can trace it in the writings of the Fathers. To take a term consecrated by centuries of usage and to attach a brand-new meaning to it, of which those who through the ages had it constantly on their lips never dreamed, is to say the least extremely misleading. If this comprehensiveness and elasticity of belief is regarded as a desirable quality, by all means let it have a new name of its own, but it is dishonest to leave the impression upon the ignorant or the credulous, that this is the idea which devout men in past ages have all along been groping for, and that it has been left to the religious thinkers of our

own day to evolve from the name catholic its true and real significance. So far from the idea of a nebulous and absorbent substance imperceptibly shading off into the media which surround it, the conception of the Fathers was that the Catholic Church was cut off by the most clearly defined of lines from all that lay outside. Its primary function, we might also say, was to set itself in acute opposition to all that threatened its vital principle of unity and stability. It is true that patristic writers may sometimes play with the word catholic, and develop its etymological suggestiveness with an eye to erudition or edification, but the only connotation upon which they insist as a matter of serious import is the idea of diffusion throughout the world. St. Augustine, indeed, in his letter to Vincentius (Ep. xciii, in "Corpus Scrip. Eccles. Lat.", XXXIV, p. 468) protests that he does not argue merely from the name. I do not maintain, he declares equivalently, that the Church must spread throughout all the world, simply because it is called Catholic. I base my proof of its diffusion upon the promises of God and upon the oracles of Holy Scripture. But the saint at the same time makes it clear that the suggestion, that the Church was called Catholic because it observed all God's Commandments and administered all the sacraments, originated with the Donatists, and he implies that this was a view in which he did not himself concur. Here again the demonstration of the unity of the Church as built upon a dogmatic basis is fundamental, and the reader must be referred to the article CHURCH. The Anglican Bishop of Carlisle, in an article published in the Hibbert Journal for January, 1908, and entitled "The Catholic Church, What Is It?", seems to carry the modern formula, Catholic = comprehensive, to its most extreme lengths. No principle of cohesion seems to be left except this, that the Catholic Church is that which bans nothing. The bishop conceives of it, apparently, as an institution invested by Christ with unlimited power to add to its numbers, but no power to expel. It must surely be plain that practical common sense pronounces against such a conception not less strongly than the plain words of our Lord in the Gospel or the consistent attitude of the Fathers.

4. Apostolicity

Apostolicity is the mark by which the Church of today is recognized as identical with the Church founded by Jesus Christ upon the

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Apostles. It is of great importance because it is the surest indication of the true Church of Christ, it is most easily examined, and it virtually contains the other three marks, namely, Unity, Sanctity, and Catholicity. Either the word “Christian” or “Apostolic”, might be used to express the identity between the Church of today and the primitive Church. The term “Apostolic” is preferred because it indicates a correlation between Christ and the Apostles, showing the relation of the Church both to Christ, the founder, and to the Apostles, upon whom He founded it. “Apostle” is one sent, sent by authority of Jesus Christ to continue His Mission upon earth, especially a member of the original band of teachers known as the Twelve Apostles. Therefore the Church is called Apostolic, because it was founded by Jesus Christ upon the Apostles. Apostolicity of doctrine and mission is necessary. Apostolicity of doctrine requires that the deposit of faith committed to the Apostles shall remain unchanged. Since the Church is infallible in its teaching, it follows that if the Church of Christ still exists it must be teaching His doctrine. Hence

Apostolicity of mission is a guarantee of Apostolicity of doctrine. St. Irenæus (*Adv. Haeres*, IV, xxvi, n. 2) says: “Wherefore we must obey the priests of the Church who have succession from the Apostles, as we have shown, who, together with succession in the episcopate, have received the certain mark of truth according to the will of the Father; all others, however, are to be suspected, who separated themselves from the principal succession”, etc. In explaining the concept of Apostolicity, then, special attention must be given to Apostolicity of mission, or Apostolic succession. Apostolicity of mission means that the Church is one moral body, possessing the mission entrusted by Jesus Christ to the Apostles, and transmitted through them and their lawful successors in an unbroken chain to the present representatives of Christ upon earth. This authoritative transmission of power in the Church constitutes Apostolic succession. This Apostolic succession must be both material and formal; the material consisting in the actual succession in the Church, through a series of persons from the Apostolic age to the present; the formal adding the element of authority in the transmission of power. It consists in the legitimate transmission of the ministerial power conferred by Christ upon His Apostles. No one can give a power which he does

not possess. Hence in tracing the mission of the Church back to the Apostles, no lacuna can be allowed, no new mission can arise; but the mission conferred by Christ must pass from generation to generation through an uninterrupted lawful succession. The Apostles received it from Christ and gave it in turn to those legitimately appointed by them, and these again selected others to continue the work of the ministry. Any break in this succession destroys Apostolicity, because the break means the beginning of a new series which is not Apostolic. "How shall they preach unless they be sent?" (Romans 10:15). An authoritative mission to teach is absolutely necessary, a man-given mission is not authoritative. Hence any concept of Apostolicity that excludes authoritative union with the Apostolic mission robs the ministry of its Divine character. Apostolicity, or Apostolic succession, then, means that the mission conferred by Jesus Christ upon the Apostles must pass from them to their legitimate successors, in an unbroken line, until the end of the world. This notion of Apostolicity is evolved from the words of Christ Himself, the practice of the Apostles, and the teaching of the Fathers and theologians of the Church.

The intention of Christ is apparent from the Bible passages, which tell of the conferring of the mission upon the Apostles. "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you: (John 20:21). The mission of the Apostles, like the mission of Christ, is a Divine mission; they are the Apostles, or ambassadors, of the Eternal Father. "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world: (Matthew 28:18). This Divine mission is always to continue the same, hence it must be transmitted with its Divine character until the end of time, i.e. there must be an unbroken lawful succession which is called Apostolicity. The Apostles understood their mission in this sense. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans (x, 8-19), insists upon the necessity of Divinely established mission. "How shall they preach unless they be sent?" (x, 15). In his letters to his disciples Timothy and Titus, St. Paul speaks of the obligation of preserving Apostolic doctrine, and of ordaining other disciples to continue the work entrusted to the Apostles. "Hold the form of sound words, which thou hast heard

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from me in faith and in the love which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 1:13). “And the things which thou hast heard from me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2). “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou should set in order the things that are wanting and should ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee” (Titus 1:5). Just as the Apostles transmitted their mission by lawfully appointing others to the work of the ministry, so their successors were to ordain priests to perpetuate the same mission given by Jesus Christ, i.e. an Apostolic mission must always be maintained in the Church.

The writings of the Fathers constantly refers to the Apostolic character of the doctrine and mission of the Church. See St. Polycarp, St. Ignatius, (Smyrnæans 8), St. Clement of Alexandria, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Athanasius (History of Arianism), Tertullian (Lib. de Praescript, n. 32, etc). We quote a few examples which are typical of the testimony of the Fathers. St. Irenæus (Adv. Haeres, IV, xxvi, n. 2): “Wherefore we must obey the priests of the Church, who have succession from the Apostles,” etc. - quoted above. St. Clement (Ep. I, ad. Cor., 42-44): “Christ was sent by God, and the Apostles by Christ... They appointed the above-named and then gave them command that when they came to die other approved men should succeed to their ministry.” St. Cyprian (Ep. 76, Ad Magnum): “Novatianus is not in the Church, nor can he be considered a bishop, because in contempt of Apostolic tradition he was ordained by himself without succeeding anyone.” Hence authoritative transmission of power, i.e. Apostolicity, is essential. In all theological works the same explanation of Apostolicity is found, based on the Scriptural and patristic testimony just cited. Billuart (III, 306) concludes his remarks on Apostolicity in the words of St. Jerome: “We must abide in that Church, which was founded by the Apostles, and endures to this day.: Mazella (De Relig. et Eccl., 359), after speaking of Apostolic succession as an uninterrupted substitution of persons in the place of the Apostles, insists upon the necessity of jurisdiction or authoritative transmission, thus excluding the hypothesis that a new mission could ever be originated by anyone in the place of the mission bestowed by Christ and transmitted in the manner described. Billot (De Eccl. Christi, I, 243-275) emphasizes the idea that the Church, which

is Apostolic, must be presided over by bishops, who derive their ministry and their governing power from the Apostles. Apostolicity, then, is that Apostolic succession by which the Church of today is one with the Church of the Apostles in origin, doctrine, and mission.

The history of the Catholic Church from St. Peter, the first Pontiff, to the present Head of the Church, is an evident proof of its Apostolicity, for no break can be shown in the line of succession. Cardinal Newman (*Diff. of Anglicans*, 369) says: "Say there is no church at all if you will, and at least I shall understand you; but do not meddle with a fact attested by mankind." Again (393): "No other form of Christianity but this present Catholic Communion has a pretence to resemble, even in the faintest shadow, the Christianity of antiquity, viewed as a living religion on the stage of the world;" and again, (395): "The immutability and uninterrupted action of the laws in question throughout the course of Church history is a plain note of identity between the Catholic Church of the first ages and that which now goes by that name." If any break in the Apostolic succession had ever occurred, it could be easily shown, for no fact of such importance could happen in the history of the world without attracting universal notice. Regarding questions and contests in the election of certain popes, there is no real difficulty. In the few cases in which controversies arose, the matter was always settled by a competent tribunal in the Church, the lawful Pope was proclaimed, and he, as the successor of St. Peter, received the Apostolic mission and jurisdiction in the Church. Again, the heretics of the early ages and the sects of later times have attempted to justify their teaching and practices by appealing to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, or to their early communion with the Catholic Church. Their appeal shows that the Catholic Church is regarded as Apostolic even by those who have separated from her communion.

Apostolicity is not found in any other Church. This is a necessary consequence of the unity of the Church. If there is but one true Church, and if the Catholic Church, as has just been shown, is Apostolic, the necessary inference is that no other Church is Apostolic. (See above quotations from Newman, "*Diff. of Anglicans*", 369, 393.) All sects that reject the Episcopate, by the very fact make Apostolic succession impossible, since they destroy the channel through which the Apostolic

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mission is transmitted. Historically, the beginnings of all these Churches can be traced to a period long after the time of Christ and the Apostles. Regarding the Greek Church, it is sufficient to note that it lost apostolic succession by withdrawing from the jurisdiction of the lawful successors of St. Peter in the See of Rome. The same is to be said of the Anglican claims to continuity (Mac Laughlin, "Divine Plan of the Church", 213; and, Newman, "Diff. of Angl.", Lecture 12.) for the very fact of separation destroys their jurisdiction. They have based their claims on the validity of orders in the Anglican Church. Anglican orders, however, have been declared invalid. But even if they were valid, the Anglican Church would not be Apostolic, for jurisdiction is essential to the Apostolicity of mission. A study of the organization of the Anglican Church shows it to be entirely different from the Church established by Jesus Christ.

Primacy, Supremacy and Infallibility of Pope

Besides the bishopric of the Roman Diocese, certain other dignities are held by the pope as well as the supreme and universal pastorate: he is Archbishop of the Roman Province, Primate of Italy and the adjacent islands, and sole Patriarch of the Western Church. The Church's doctrine as to the pope was authoritatively declared in the Vatican Council in the Constitution "Pastor Aeternus". The four chapters of that Constitution deal respectively with the office of Supreme Head conferred on St. Peter, the perpetuity of this office in the person of the Roman pontiff, the pope's jurisdiction over the faithful, and his supreme authority to define in all questions of faith and morals.

Institution of a supreme head by Christ

The proof that Christ constituted St. Peter head of His Church is found in the two famous Petrine texts, Matthew 16:17-19, and John 21:15-17.

Matthew 16:17-19

In Matthew 16:17-19, the office is solemnly promised to the Apostle. In response to his profession of faith in the Divine Nature of his Master, Christ thus addresses him:

Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And what so ever thou shalt bind on earth it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.

“Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven.” The prerogatives here promised are manifestly personal to Peter. His profession of faith was not made as has been sometimes asserted, in the name of the other Apostles. This is evident from the words of Christ. He pronounces on the Apostle, distinguishing him by his name Simon son of John, a peculiar and personal blessing, declaring that his knowledge regarding the Divine Sonship sprang from a special revelation granted to him by the Father (cf. Matthew 11:27).

“And I say to thee: That thou art Peter...” He further proceeds to recompense this confession of His Divinity by bestowing upon him a reward proper to himself:

Thou art Peter [Cepha, transliterated also Kipha] and upon this rock [Cepha] I will build my Church.

The word for Peter and for rock in the original Aramaic is one and the same; this renders it evident that the various attempts to explain the term “rock” as having reference not to Peter himself but to something else are misinterpretations. It is Peter who is the rock of the Church. The term ecclesia (ekkklesia) here employed is the Greek rendering of the Hebrew qahal, the name which denoted the Hebrew nation.

“And upon this rock I will build my Church...” Here then Christ teaches plainly that in the future the Church will be the society of those who acknowledge Him, and that this Church will be built on Peter. The expression presents no difficulty. In both

the Old and New Testaments the Church is often spoken of under the metaphor of God's house (Numbers 12:7; Jeremiah 12:7; Hosea 8:1; 9:15; 1 Corinthians 3:9-17, Ephesians 2:20-2; 1 Timothy 3:5; Hebrews 3:5; 1 Peter 2:5). Peter is to be to the Church what the foundation is in regard to a house.

He is to be the principle of unity, of stability, and of increase. He is the principle of unity, since what is not joined to that foundation is no part of the Church; of stability, since it is the firmness of this foundation in virtue of which the Church remains unshaken by the storms which buffet her; of increase, since, if she grows, it is because new stones are laid on this foundation.

“And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” It is through her union with Peter, Christ continues, that the Church will prove the victor in her long contest with the Evil One: The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

There can be but one explanation of this striking metaphor. The only manner in which a man can stand in such a relation to any corporate body is by possessing authority over it. The supreme head of a body, in dependence on whom all subordinate authorities hold their power, and he alone, can be said to be the principle of stability, unity, and increase. The promise acquires additional solemnity when we remember that both Old Testament prophecy (Isaiah 28:16) and Christ's own words (Matthew 7:24) had attributed this office of foundation of the Church to Himself. He is therefore assigning to Peter, of course in a secondary degree, a prerogative which is His own, and thereby associating the Apostle with Himself in an altogether singular manner.

“And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.” In the following verse (Matthew 16:19) He promises to bestow on Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

The words refer evidently to Isaiah 22:22, where God declares that Eliacim, the son of Helcias, shall be invested with office in place of the worthless Sobna: And I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulder: and he shall open, and none shall shut: and he shall shut and none shall open. In all countries the key is the symbol of authority. Thus, Christ's words are a promise that He will confer on Peter supreme power to govern the Church. Peter is

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to be His vicegerent, to rule in His place. “And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.” Further the character and extent of the power thus bestowed are indicated. It is a power to “bind” and to “loose” - words which, as is shown below, denote the grant of legislative and judicial authority. And this power is granted in its fullest measure. Whatever Peter binds or looses on earth, his act will receive the Divine ratification.

Objections: The meaning of this passage does not seem to have been challenged by any writer until the rise of the sixteenth-century heresies. Since then a great variety of interpretations have been put forward by Protestant controversialists. These agree in little save in the rejection of the plain sense of Christ’s words. Some Anglican controversy tends to the view that the reward promised to St. Peter consisted in the prominent part taken by him in the initial activities of the Church, but that he was never more than *primus inter pares* among the Apostles. It is manifest that this is quite insufficient as an explanation of the terms of Christ’s promise.

John 21:15-17

The promise made by Christ in Matthew 16:16-19, received its fulfilment after the Resurrection in the scene described in John 21. Here the Lord, when about to leave the earth, places the whole flock - the sheep and the lambs alike - in the charge of the Apostle. The term employed in 21:16, “Be the shepherd [poimaine] of my sheep” indicates that his task is not merely to feed but to rule. It is the same word as is used in Psalm 2:9 (Septuagint): “Thou shalt rule [poimaneis] them with a rod of iron”.

The scene stands in striking parallelism with that of Matthew 16. As there the reward was given to Peter after a profession of faith which singled him out from the other eleven, so here Christ demands a similar protestation, but this time of a yet higher virtue: “Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these”? Here, too, as there, He bestows on the Apostle an office which in its highest sense is proper to Himself alone. There Christ had promised to make Peter the foundation-stone of the house of God: here He makes him the shepherd of God’s flock to take the place of Himself, the Good Shepherd.

The passage receives an admirable comment from St. Chrysostom: He saith to him, "Feed my sheep". Why does He pass over the others and speak of the sheep to Peter? He was the chosen one of the Apostles, the mouth of the disciples, the head of the choir. For this reason Paul went up to see him rather than the others. And also to show him that he must have confidence now that his denial had been purged away. He entrusts him with the rule [prostasia] over the brethren... If anyone should say "Why then was it James who received the See of Jerusalem?", I should reply that He made Peter the teacher not of that see but of the whole world.

[St. John Chrysostom, Homily 88 on John, 1. Cf. Origen, "In Ep. ad Rom.", 5:10; Ephraem Syrus "Hymn. in B. Petr." in "Bibl. Orient. Assemani", 1:95; Leo I, "Serm. iv de natal.", 2].

Even certain Protestant commentators frankly own that Christ undoubtedly intended here to confer the supreme pastorate on Peter. But other scholars, relying on a passage of St. Cyril of Alexandria ("In Joan." 12:1), maintain that the purpose of the threefold charge was simply to reinstate St. Peter in the Apostolic commission which his three fold denial might be supposed to have lost to him. This interpretation is devoid of all probability. There is not a word in Scripture or in patristic tradition to suggest that St. Peter had forfeited his Apostolic commission; and the supposition is absolutely excluded by the fact that on the evening of the Resurrection he received the same Apostolic powers as the others of the eleven. The solitary phrase of St. Cyril is of no weight against the overwhelming patristic authority for the other view. That such an interpretation should be seriously advocated proves how great is the difficulty experienced by Protestants regarding this text.

The position of St. Peter after the Ascension, as shown in the Acts of the Apostles, realizes to the full the great commission bestowed upon him. He is from the first the chief of the Apostolic band - not primus inter pares, but the undisputed head of the Church.

If then Christ, as we have seen, established His Church as a society subordinated to a single supreme head, it follows from the very nature of the case that this office is perpetual, and cannot have been a mere transitory feature of ecclesiastical life. For the Church must endure to the end the very same organization which

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Christ established. But in an organized society it is precisely the constitution which is the essential feature. A change in constitution transforms it into a society of a different kind. If then the Church should adopt a constitution other than Christ gave it, it would no longer be His handiwork. It would no longer be the Divine kingdom established by Him. As a society it would have passed through essential modifications, and thereby would have become a human, not a Divine institution. None who believe that Christ came on earth to found a Church, an organized society destined to endure for ever, can admit the possibility of a change in the organization given to it by its Founder.

The same conclusion also follows from a consideration of the end which, by Christ's declaration, the supremacy of Peter was intended to effect. He was to give the Church strength to resist her foes, so that the gates of hell should not prevail against her. The contest with the powers of evil does not belong to the Apostolic age alone. It is a permanent feature of the Church's life. Hence, throughout the centuries the office of Peter must be realized in the Church, in order that she may prevail in her age-long struggle.

Thus an analysis of Christ's words shows us that the perpetuity of the office of supreme head is to be reckoned among the truths revealed in Scripture. His promise to Peter conveyed not merely a personal prerogative, but established a permanent office in the Church. And in this sense, as will appear in the next section, His words were understood by Latin and Greek Fathers alike.

Primacy of the Roman See

We have shown in the last section that Christ conferred upon St. Peter the office of chief pastor, and that the permanence of that office is essential to the very being of the Church. It must now be established that it belongs of right to the Roman See. The proof will fall into two parts: that St. Peter was Bishop of Rome, and that those who succeed him in that see succeed him also in the supreme headship.

St. Peter was Bishop of Rome

It is no longer denied by any writer of weight that St. Peter visited Rome and suffered martyrdom there (Harnack, "Chronol.," I, 244, n. 2). Some, however, of those who admit that he taught and suffered in Rome, deny that he was ever bishop of the city

(e.g. Lightfoot, “Clement of Rome”, II, 501; Harnack, *op. cit.*, I, 703). It is not, however, difficult to show that the fact of his bishopric is so well attested as to be historically certain. In considering this point, it will be well to begin with the third century, when references to it become frequent, and work backwards from this point.

- ❖ St. Cyprian: In the middle of the third century St. Cyprian expressly terms the Roman See the Chair of St. Peter, saying that Cornelius has succeeded to “the place of Fabian which is the place of Peter” (Epistle 51:8; cf. 75:3).
- ❖ Firmilian of Caesarea: Firmilian of Caesarea notices that Stephen claimed to decide the controversy regarding rebaptism on the ground that he held the succession from Peter (Cyprian, Epistle 75:17). He does not deny the claim: yet certainly, had he been able, he would have done so. Thus in 250 the Roman episcopate of Peter was admitted by those best able to know the truth, not merely at Rome but in the churches of Africa and of Asia Minor.
- ❖ Tertullian: In the first quarter of the century (about 220) Tertullian (On Modesty 21) mentions Callistus’s claim that Peter’s power to forgive sins had descended in a special manner to him. Had the Roman Church been merely founded by Peter and not reckoned him as its first bishop, there could have been no ground for such a contention. Tertullian, like Firmilian, had every motive to deny the claim. Moreover, he had himself resided at Rome, and would have been well aware if the idea of a Roman episcopate of Peter had been, as is contended by its opponents, a novelty dating from the first years of the third century, supplanting the older tradition according to which Peter and Paul were co-founders, and Linus first bishop.
- ❖ Hippolytus: About the same period, Hippolytus (for Lightfoot is surely right in holding him to be the author of the first part of the “Liberian Catalogue” - “Clement of Rome”, 1:259) reckons Peter in the list of Roman bishops.
- ❖ “Adversus Marcionem”: We have moreover a poem, “Adversus Marcionem”, written apparently at the same period, in which Peter is said to have passed on to Linus “the chair on which he himself had sat” (P.L., II 1077).

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- ❖ St. Irenaeus: These witnesses bring us to the beginning of the third century. In the second century we cannot look for much evidence. With the exception of Ignatius, Polycarp, and Clement of Alexandria, all the writers whose works we possess are apologists against either Jews or pagans. In works of such a character there was no reason to refer to such a matter as Peter's Roman episcopate. Irenaeus, however, supplies us with a cogent argument. In two passages (Against Heresies I.27.1 and III.4.3) he speaks of Hyginus as ninth Bishop of Rome, thus employing an enumeration which involves the inclusion of Peter as first bishop (Lightfoot was undoubtedly wrong in supposing that there was any doubt as to the correctness of the reading in the first of these passages. In III:4:3, the Latin version, it is true, gives "octavus"; but the Greek text as cited by Eusebius reads enatos.

Irenaeus we know visited Rome in 177. At this date, scarcely more than a century after the death of St. Peter, he may well have come in contact with men whose fathers had themselves spoken to the Apostle. The tradition thus supported must be regarded as beyond all legitimate doubt.

Lightfoot's suggestion (Clement 1:64), that it had its origin in the Clementine romance, has proved singularly unfortunate. For it is now recognized that this work belongs not to the second, but to the fourth century. Nor is there the slightest ground for the assertion that the language of Irenaeus, III:3:3, implies that Peter and Paul enjoyed a divided episcopate at Rome - an arrangement utterly unknown to the Church at any period. He does, it is true, speak of the two Apostles as together handing on the episcopate to Linus. But this expression is explained by the purpose of his argument, which is to vindicate against the Gnostics the validity of the doctrine taught in the Roman Church. Hence he is naturally led to lay stress on the fact that that Church inherited the teaching of both the great Apostles. Epiphanius ("Haer." 27:6) would indeed seem to suggest the divided episcopate; but he has apparently merely misunderstood the words of Irenaeus.

Those who Succeed Peter in Rome Succeed him also in the Supreme Headship

History bears complete testimony that from the very earliest times the Roman See has ever claimed the supreme headship, and that that

headship has been freely acknowledged by the universal Church. We shall here confine ourselves to the consideration of the evidence afforded by the first three centuries.

- St. Clement: The first witness is St. Clement, a disciple of the Apostles, who, after Linus and Anacletus, succeeded St. Peter as the fourth in the list of popes. In his "Epistle to the Corinthians", written in 95 or 96, he bids them receive back the bishops whom a turbulent faction among them had expelled. "If any man", he says, "should be disobedient unto the words spoken by God through us, let them understand that they will entangle themselves in no slight transgression and danger" (Ep. 59). Moreover, he bids them "render obedience unto the things written by us through the Holy Spirit". The tone of authority which inspires the latter appears so clearly that Lightfoot did not hesitate to speak of it as "the first step towards papal domination" (Clement 1:70). Thus, at the very commencement of church history, before the last survivor of the Apostles had passed away, we find a Bishop of Rome, himself a disciple of St. Peter, intervening in the affairs of another Church and claiming to settle the matter by a decision spoken under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Such a fact admits of one explanation alone. It is that in the days when the Apostolic teaching was yet fresh in men's minds the universal Church recognized in the Bishop of Rome the office of supreme head.
- St. Ignatius of Antioch: A few years later (about 107) St. Ignatius of Antioch, in the opening of his letter to the Roman Church, refers to its presiding over all other Churches. He addresses it as "presiding over the brotherhood of love [prokathemene tes agapes] The expression, as Funk rightly notes, is grammatically incompatible with the translation advocated by some non-Catholic writers, "pre-eminent in works of love".
- St. Irenaeus: The same century gives us the witness of St. Irenaeus - a man who stands in the closest connection with the age of the Apostles, since he was a disciple of St. Polycarp, who had been appointed Bishop of Smyrna by St. John. In his work "Adversus Haereses" (III:3:2) he brings against the Gnostic sects of his day the argument that their doctrines have no support in the Apostolic tradition faithfully preserved by the Churches, which could trace the succession of their bishops back to the Twelve. He writes:

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Because it would be too long in such a volume as this to enumerate the successions of all the churches, we point to the tradition of that very great and very ancient and universally known Church, which was founded and established at Rome, by the two most glorious Apostles, Peter and Paul: we point I say, to the tradition which this Church has from the Apostles, and to her faith proclaimed to men which comes down to our time through the succession of her bishops, and so we put to shame... all who assemble in unauthorized meetings. For with this Church, because of its superior authority, every Church must agree - that is the faithful everywhere - in communion with which Church the tradition of the Apostles has been always preserved by those who are everywhere [Ad hanc enim ecclesiam propter potentiorem principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam, hoc est eos qui sunt undique fideles, in qua semper ab his qui sunt undique, conservata est ea quâ est ab apostolis traditio].

He then proceeds to enumerate the Roman succession from Linus to Eleutherius, the twelfth after the Apostles, who then occupied the see. Non-Catholic writers have sought to rob the passage of its importance by translating the word *convenire* "to resort to", and thus understanding it to mean no more than that the faithful from every side (*undique*) resorted to Rome, so that thus the stream of doctrine in that Church was kept immune from error. Such a rendering, however, is excluded by the construction of the argument, which is based entirely on the contention that the Roman doctrine is pure by reason of its derivation from the two great Apostolic founders of the Church, Sts. Peter and Paul. The frequent visits made to Rome by members of other Christian Churches could contribute nothing to this. On the other hand the traditional rendering is postulated by the context, and, though the object of innumerable attacks, none other possessing any real degree of probability has been suggested in its place (see Dom. J. Chapman in "Revue Benedictine", 1895, p. 48).

- St. Victor: During the pontificate of St. Victor (189-98) we have the most explicit assertion of the supremacy of the Roman See in regard to other Churches. A difference of practice between the Churches of Asia Minor and the rest of the Christian world in regard to the day of the Paschal festival led the pope to take action.

There is some ground for supposing that the Montanist heretics maintained the Asiatic (or Quartodeciman) practice to be the true one: in this case it would be undesirable that any body of Catholic Christians should appear to support them. But, under any circumstances, such a diversity in the ecclesiastical life of different countries may well have constituted a regrettable feature in the Church, whose very purpose it was to bear witness by her unity to the oneness of God (John 17:21). Victor bade the Asiatic Churches conform to the custom of the remainder of the Church, but was met with determined resistance by Polycrates of Ephesus, who claimed that their custom derived from St. John himself. Victor replied by an excommunication. St. Irenaeus, however, intervened, exhorting Victor not to cut off whole Churches on account of a point which was not a matter of faith. He assumes that the pope can exercise the power, but urges him not to do so. Similarly the resistance of the Asiatic bishops involved no denial of the supremacy of Rome. It indicates solely that the bishops believed St. Victor to be abusing his power in bidding them renounce a custom for which they had Apostolic authority. It was indeed inevitable that, as the Church spread and developed, new problems should present themselves, and that questions should arise as to whether the supreme authority could be legitimately exercised in this or that case. St. Victor, seeing that more harm than good would come from insistence, withdrew the imposed penalty.

- Inscription of Abercius: Not many years since a new and important piece of evidence was brought to light in Asia Minor dating from this period. The sepulchral inscription of Abercius, Bishop of Hierapolis (d. about 200), contains an account of his travels couched in allegorical language. He speaks thus of the Roman Church: "To Rome He [Christ] sent me to contemplate majesty: and to see a queen golden-robed and golden-sandalled." It is difficult not to recognize in this description a testimony to the supreme position of the Roman See.
- Tertullian: Tertullian's bitter polemic, "De Pudicitia" (about 220), was called forth by an exercise of papal prerogative. Pope Callistus had decided that the rigid discipline which had hitherto prevailed in many Churches must be in large measure relaxed. Tertullian, now lapsed into heresy, fiercely attacks "the peremptory edict", which "the supreme pontiff, the bishop of bishops", has sent

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forth. The words are intended as sarcasm: but none the less they indicate clearly the position of authority claimed by Rome. And the opposition comes, not from a Catholic bishop, but from a Montanist heretic.

- St. Cyprian: The views of St. Cyprian (d. 258) in regard to papal authority have given rise to much discussion. He undoubtedly entertained exaggerated views as to the independence of individual bishops, which eventually led him into serious conflict with Rome. Yet on the fundamental principle his position is clear. He attributed an effective primacy to the pope as the successor of Peter. He makes communion with the See of Rome essential to Catholic communion, speaking of it as “the principal Church whence episcopal unity had its rise” (*ad Petri cathedram et ad ecclesiam principalem unde unitas sacerdotialis exorta est*).

The force of this expression becomes clear when viewed in the light of his doctrine as to the unity of the Church. This was, he teaches, established by Christ when He founded His Church upon Peter. By this act the unity of the Apostolic college was ensured through the unity of the foundation. The bishops through all time form a similar college, and are bound in a like indivisible unity. Of this unity the Chair of Peter is the source. It fulfils the very office as principle of union which Peter fulfilled in his lifetime. Hence to communicate with an antipope such as Novatian would be schism (Epistle 66:1).

He holds, also, that the pope has authority to depose an heretical bishop. When Marcian of Arles fell into heresy, Cyprian, at the request of the bishops of the province, wrote to urge Pope Stephen “to send letters by which, Marcian having been excommunicated, another may be substituted in his place” (Epistle 66:3). It is manifest that one who regarded the Roman See in this light believed that the pope possessed a real and effective primacy.

At the same time it is not to be denied that his views as to the right of the pope to interfere in the government of a diocese already subject to a legitimate and orthodox bishop were inadequate. In the rebaptism controversy his language in regard to St. Stephen was bitter and intemperate. His error on this point does not, however, detract from the fact that he admitted a primacy, not merely of honour but of jurisdiction. Nor should his mistake occasion too much surprise. It

is as true in the Church as in merely human institutions that the full implications of a general principle are only realized gradually. The claim to apply it in a particular case is often contested at first, though later ages may wonder that such opposition was possible.

St. Dionysius of Alexandria

Contemporary with St. Cyprian was St. Dionysius of Alexandria. Two incidents bearing on the present question are related of him.

Eusebius (Church History VII.9) gives us a letter addressed by him to St. Xystus II regarding the case of a man who, as it appeared, had been invalidly baptized by heretics, but who for many years had been frequenting the sacraments of the Church. In it he says that he needs St. Xystus's advice and begs for his decision (gnomen), that he may not fall into error (dedios me hara sphallomai).

Again, some years later, the same patriarch occasioned anxiety to some of the brethren by making use of some expressions which appeared hardly compatible with a full belief in the Divinity of Christ. They promptly had recourse to the Holy See and accused him to his namesake, St. Dionysius of Rome, of heretical leanings. The pope replied by laying down authoritatively the true doctrine on the subject.

Both events are instructive as showing us how Rome was recognized by the second see in Christendom as empowered to speak with authority on matters of doctrine. (St. Athanasius, "De sententia Dionysii" in P.G., XXV, 500).

Nature and extent of the papal power

Not only did Christ constitute St. Peter head of the Church, but in the words, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed in heaven," He indicated the scope of this headship.

The expressions binding and loosing here employed are derived from the current terminology of the Rabbinic schools. A doctor who declared a thing to be prohibited by the law was said to bind, for thereby he imposed an obligation on the conscience. He who declared it to be lawful was said to loose. In this way the terms had come respectively to signify official commands and permissions in general. The words of Christ, therefore, as understood by His hearers, conveyed

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the promise to St. Peter of legislative authority within the kingdom over which He had just set him, and legislative authority carries with it as its necessary accompaniment judicial authority.

Moreover, the powers conferred in these regards are plenary. This is plainly indicated by the generality of the terms employed: "Whatsoever thou shalt bind... Whatsoever thou shalt loose"; nothing is withheld. Further, Peter's authority is subordinated to no earthly superior. The sentences which he gives are to be forthwith ratified in heaven. They do not need the antecedent approval of any other tribunal. He is independent of all save the Master who appointed him. The words as to the power of binding and loosing are, therefore, elucidatory of the promise of the keys which immediately precedes. They explain in what sense Peter is governor and head of Christ's kingdom, the Church, by promising him legislative and judicial authority in the fullest sense. In other words, Peter and his successors have power to impose laws both preceptive and prohibitive, power likewise to grant dispensation from these laws, and, when needful, to annul them. It is theirs to judge offences against the laws, to impose and to remit penalties. This judicial authority will even include the power to pardon sin. For sin is a breach of the laws of the supernatural kingdom, and falls under the cognizance of its constituted judges. The gift of this particular power, however, is not expressed with full clearness in this passage. It needed Christ's words (John 20:23) to remove all ambiguity. Further, since the Church is the kingdom of the truth, so that an essential note in all her members is the act of submission by which they accept the doctrine of Christ in its entirety, supreme power in this kingdom carries with it a supreme magisterium - authority to declare that doctrine and to prescribe a rule of faith obligatory on all. Here, too, Peter is subordinated to none save his Master alone; he is the supreme teacher as he is the supreme ruler. However, the tremendous powers thus conferred are limited in their scope by their reference to the ends of the kingdom and to them only. The authority of Peter and his successors does not extend beyond this sphere. With matters that are altogether extrinsic to the Church they are not concerned.

Protestant controversialists contend strenuously that the words, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind etc.", confer no special prerogative on Peter, since precisely the same gift, they allege, is conferred on all

the Apostles (Matthew 18:18). It is, of course, the case that in that passage the same words are used in regard of all the Twelve. Yet there is a manifest difference between the gift to Peter and that bestowed on the others. In his case the gift is connected with the power of the keys, and this power, as we have seen, signified the supreme authority over the whole kingdom. That gift was not bestowed on the other eleven: and the gift Christ bestowed on them in Matthew 18:18, was received by them as members of the kingdom, and as subject to the authority of him who should be Christ's vicegerent on earth. There is in fact a striking parallelism between Matthew 16:19, and the words employed in reference to Christ Himself in Apocalypse 3:7: "He that hath the key of David; he that openeth, and no man shutteth; shutteth, and no man openeth." In both cases the second clause declares the meaning of the first, and the power signified in the first clause by the metaphor of the keys is supreme. It is worthy of note that to no one else save to Christ and His chosen vicegerent does Holy Scripture attribute the power of the keys.

Certain patristic passages are further adduced by non-Catholics as adverse to the meaning given by the Church to Matthew 16:19. St. Augustine in several places tells us that Peter received the keys as representing the Church - e.g. Tractate 1 on the Gospel of John, no. 12: "Si hoc Petro tantum dictum est, non facit hoc Ecclesia...; si hoc ergo in Ecclesia fit, Petrus quando claves accepit, Ecclesiam sanctam significavit" (If this was said to Peter alone, the Church cannot exercise this power...; if this power is exercised in the Church, then when Peter received the keys, he signified the Holy Church); cf. Tractate 124 on the Gospel of John, no. 5; Sermon 295. It is argued that, according to Augustine, the power denoted by the keys resides primarily not in Peter, but in the whole Church. Christ's gift to His people was merely bestowed on Peter as representing the whole body of the faithful. The right to forgive sins, to exclude from communion, to exercise any other acts of authority, is really the prerogative of the whole Christian congregation. If the minister performs these acts he does so as delegate of the people. The argument, which was formerly employed by Gallican controversialists (cf. Febronius, "De statu eccl.", 1:76), however, rests on a misunderstanding of the passages. Augustine is controverting the Novatian heretics, who affirmed that the power to remit sins was a purely personal gift to Peter alone, and

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had disappeared with him. He therefore asserts that Peter received it that it might remain for ever in the Church and be used for its benefit. It is in that sense alone that he says that Peter represented the Church. There is no foundation whatever for saying that he desired to affirm that the Church was the true recipient of the power conferred. Such a view would be contrary to the whole patristic tradition, and is expressly reprobated in the Vatican Decree, cap. 1.

It appears from what has been said that, when the popes legislate for the faithful, when they try offenders by juridical process, and enforce their sentences by censures and excommunications, they are employing powers conceded to them by Christ. Their authority to exercise jurisdiction in this way is not founded on the grant of any civil ruler. Indeed the Church has claimed and exercised these powers from the very first. When the Apostles, after the Council of Jerusalem, sent out their decree as vested with Divine authority (Acts 15:28), they were imposing a law on the faithful. When St. Paul bids Timothy not receive an accusation against a presbyter unless it be supported by two or three witnesses, he clearly supposes him to be empowered to judge him in foro externo. This claim to exercise coercive jurisdiction has, as might be expected been denied by various heterodox writers. Thus Marsilius Patavinus (*Defensor Pacis* 2:4), Antonius de Dominis (*De rep. eccl.* 4:6-7, 9), Richer (*De eccl. et pol. potestate*, 11-12), and later the Synod of Pistoia, all alike maintained that coercive jurisdiction of every kind belongs to the civil power alone, and sought to restrict the Church to the use of moral means. This error has always been condemned by the Holy See. Thus, in the Bull "Auctorem Fidei", Pius VI makes the following pronouncement regarding one of the Pistoian propositions:

[The aforesaid proposition] in respect of its insinuation that the Church does not possess authority to exact subjection to her decrees otherwise than by means dependent on persuasion: so far as this signifies that the Church "has not received from God power, not merely to direct by counsel and persuasion but further to command by laws, and to coerce and compel the delinquent and contumacious by external and salutary penalties" [from the brief "Ad assiduas" (1755) of Benedict XIV], leads to a system already condemned as heretical.

Nor may it be held that the pope's laws must exclusively concern spiritual objects, and their penalties be exclusively of a spiritual

character. The Church is a perfect society. She is not dependent on the permission of the State for her existence, but holds her charter from God. As a perfect society she has a right to all those means which are necessary for the attaining of her end. These, however, will include far more than spiritual objects and spiritual penalties alone: for the Church requires certain material possessions, such, for example, as churches, schools, seminaries, together with the endowments necessary for their sustentation. The administration and the due protection of these goods will require legislation other than what is limited to the spiritual sphere. A large body of canon law must inevitably be formed to determine the conditions of their management. Indeed, there is a fallacy in the assertion that the Church is a spiritual society; it is spiritual as regards the ultimate end to which all its activities are directed, but not as regards its present constitution nor as regards the means at its disposal.

The question has been raised whether it be lawful for the Church, not merely to sentence a delinquent to physical penalties, but itself to inflict these penalties. As to this, it is sufficient to note that the right of the Church to invoke the aid of the civil power to execute her sentences is expressly asserted by Boniface VIII in the Bull “*Unam Sanctam*”. This declaration, even if it be not one of those portions of the Bull in which the pope is defining a point of faith, is so clearly connected with the parts expressly stated to possess such character that it is held by theologians to be theologically certain (Palmieri, “*De Romano Pontifice*”, thes. 21). The question is of theoretical, rather than of practical importance, since civil Governments have long ceased to own the obligation of enforcing the decisions of any ecclesiastical authority. This indeed became inevitable when large sections of the population ceased to be Catholic. The state of things supposed could only exist when a whole nation was thoroughly Catholic in spirit, and the force of papal decisions was recognized by all as binding in conscience.

The Pope’s Immediate and Ordinary Jurisdiction

In the Constitution “*Pastor Aeternus*”, cap. 3, the pope is declared to possess ordinary, immediate, and episcopal jurisdiction over all the faithful:

We teach, moreover, and declare that, by the disposition of God, the Roman Church possesses supreme ordinary authority over

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all Churches, and that the jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiff, which is true episcopal jurisdiction is immediate in its character (Enchir., n. 1827).

It is further added that this authority extends to all alike, both pastors and faithful, whether singly or collectively. An ordinary jurisdiction is one which is exercised by the holder, not by reason of any delegation, but in virtue of the office which he himself holds. All who acknowledge in the pope any primacy of jurisdiction acknowledge that jurisdiction to be ordinary. This point, therefore, does not call for discussion. That the papal authority is likewise immediate has, however, been called in question. Jurisdiction is immediate when its possessor stands in direct relation to those with whose oversight he is charged. If, on the other hand, the supreme authority can only deal directly with the proximate superiors, and not with the subjects save through their intervention, his power is not immediate but mediate. That the pope's jurisdiction is not thus restricted appears from the analysis already given of Christ's words to St. Peter. It has been shown that He conferred on him a primacy over the Church, which is universal in its scope, extending to all the Church's members, and which needs the support of no other power. A primacy such as this manifestly gives to him and to his successors a direct authority over all the faithful. This is also implied in the words of the pastoral commission, "Feed my sheep". The shepherd exercises immediate authority over all the sheep of his flock. Every member of the Church has been thus committed to Peter and those who follow him.

This immediate authority has been always claimed by the Holy See. It was, however, denied by Febronius (op. cit., 7:7). That writer contended that the duty of the pope was to exercise a general oversight over the Church and to direct the bishops by his counsel; in case of necessity, where the legitimate pastor was guilty of grave wrong, he could pronounce sentence of excommunication against him and proceed against him according to the canons, but he could not on his own authority depose him (op. cit., 2:4:9). The Febronian doctrines, though devoid of any historical foundation, yet, through their appeal to the spirit of nationalism, exerted a powerful influence for harm on Catholic life in Germany during the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth century. Thus it was imperative that the error should be definitively condemned. That the pope's power is truly episcopal needs

no proof. It follows from the fact that he enjoys an ordinary pastoral authority, both legislative and judicial, and immediate in relation to its subjects. Moreover, since this power regards the pastors as well as the faithful, the pope is rightly termed *Pastor pastorum*, and *Episcopus episcoporum*.

It is frequently objected by writers of the Anglican school that, by declaring the pope to possess an immediate episcopal jurisdiction over all the faithful, the Vatican Council destroyed the authority of the diocesan episcopate. It is further pointed out that St. Gregory the Great expressly repudiated this title (Epistle 7:27 and Epistle 8:30). To this it is replied that no difficulty is involved in the exercise of immediate jurisdiction over the same subjects by two rulers, provided only that these rulers stand in subordination, the one to the other. We constantly see the system at work. In an army the regimental officer and the general both possess immediate authority over the soldiers; yet no one maintains that the inferior authority is thereby annulled. The objection lacks all weight. The Vatican Council says most justly (cap. iii):

This power of the supreme pontiff in no way derogates from the ordinary immediate power of episcopal jurisdiction, in virtue of which the bishops, who, appointed by the Holy Spirit [Acts 20:28], have succeeded to the place of the Apostles as true pastors, feed and rule their several flocks, each the one which has been assigned to him: that power is rather maintained, confirmed and defended by the supreme pastor (Enchir., n. 1828).

It is without doubt true that St. Gregory repudiated in strong terms the title of universal bishop, and relates that St. Leo rejected it when it was offered him by the fathers of Chalcedon. But, as he used it, it has a different signification from that with which it was employed in the Vatican Council. St. Gregory understood it as involving the denial of the authority of the local diocesan (Epistle 5:21). No one, he maintains, has a right so to term himself universal bishop as to usurp that apostolically constituted power. But he was himself a strenuous assertor of that immediate jurisdiction over all the faithful which is signified by this title as used in the Vatican Decree. Thus he reverses (Epistle 6:15) a sentence passed on a priest by Patriarch John of Constantinople, an act which itself involves a claim to universal

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authority, and explicitly states that the Church of Constantinople is subject to the Apostolic See (Epistle 9:12). The title of universal bishop occurs as early as the eighth century; and in 1413 the faculty of Paris rejected the proposition of John Hus that the pope was not universal bishop (Natalis Alexander, "Hist. eccl.," saec. XV and XVI, c. ii, art. 3, n. 6)

The right of entertaining appeals in all ecclesiastical causes

The Council goes on to affirm that the pope is the supreme judge of the faithful, and that to him appeal may be made in all ecclesiastical causes. The right of appeal follows as a necessary corollary from the doctrine of the primacy. If the pope really possesses a supreme jurisdiction over the Church, every other authority, whether episcopal or synodal, being subject to him, there must of necessity be an appeal to him from all inferior tribunals. This question, however, has been the subject of much controversy. The Gallican divines de Marca and Quesnel, and in Germany Febronius, sought to show that the right of appeal to the pope was a mere concession derived from ecclesiastical canons, and that the influence of the pseudo-Isidorean decretals had led to many unjustifiable exaggerations in the papal claims. The arguments of these writers are at the present day employed by frankly anti-Catholic controversialists with a view to showing that the whole primacy is a merely human institution. It is contended that the right of appeal was first granted at Sardica (343), and that each step of its subsequent development can be traced. History, however, renders it abundantly clear that the right of appeal had been known from primitive times, and that the purpose of the Sardican canons was merely to give conciliar ratification to an already existing usage. It will be convenient to speak first of the Sardican question, and then to examine the evidence as regards previous practice.

In the years immediately preceding Sardica, St. Athanasius had appealed to Rome against the decision of the Council of Tyre (335). Pope Julius had annulled the action of that council, and had restored Athanasius and Marcellus of Ancyra to their sees. The Eusebians, however, had contested his right to call a conciliar decision in question. The fathers who met at Sardica, and who included the most eminent of the orthodox party from East and West alike, desired by their decrees to affirm this right, and to establish a canonical mode

of procedure for such appeals. The principal provisions of the canons which deal with this matter are:

- ❖ that a bishop condemned by the bishops of his province may appeal to the pope either on his own initiative or through his judges;
- ❖ that if the pope entertains the appeal he shall appoint a court of second instance drawn from the bishops of the neighbouring provinces; he may, if he thinks fit, send judges to sit with the bishops.

There is nothing whatever to suggest that new privileges are being conferred. St. Julius had recently, not merely exercised the right of hearing appeals in the most formal manner, but had severely censured the Eusebians for neglecting to respect the supreme judicial rights of the Roman See: “for”, he writes, “if they [Athanasius and Marcellus] really did some wrong, as you say, the judgment ought to have been given according to the ecclesiastical canon and not thus... Do you not know that this has been the custom first to write to us, and then for that which is just to be defined from hence?” (Athanasius, “Apol.” 35). Nor is there the smallest ground for the assertion that the pope’s action is hedged in within narrow limits, on the ground that no more is permitted than that he should order a re-hearing to take place on the spot. The fathers in no way disputed the pope’s right to hear the case at Rome. But their object was to deprive the Eusebians of the facile excuse that it was idle for appeals to be carried to Rome, since there the requisite evidence could not be forthcoming. They therefore provided a canonical procedure which should not be open to that objection.

Having thus shown that there is no ground for the assertion that the right of appeal was first granted at Sardica, we may now consider the evidence for its existence in earlier times. The records of the second century are so scanty as to throw but little light on the subject. Yet it would seem that Montanus, Prisca, and Maximilla appealed to Rome against the decision of the Phrygian bishops. Tertullian (Against Praxeas 1), tells us that the pope at first acknowledged the genuineness of their prophecies, and that thus “he was giving peace to the Churches of Asia and Phrygia”, when further information led him to recall the letters of peace which he had issued. The fact that the pope’s decision had weight to decide the whole question of their orthodoxy is sufficiently significant. But in St. Cyprian’s correspondence we find clear and unmistakable evidence of a system of appeals. Basilides and

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Martial, the bishops of Leon and Merida in Spain, had in the persecution accepted certificates of idolatry. They confessed their guilt, and were in consequence deposed, other bishops being appointed to the sees. In the hope of having themselves reinstated they appealed to Rome, and succeeded, by misrepresenting the facts, in imposing on St. Stephen, who ordered their restoration. It has been objected to the evidence drawn from this incident, that St. Cyprian did not acknowledge the validity of the papal decision, but exhorted the people of Leon and Mérida to hold fast to the sentence of deposition (Epistle 67:6). But the objection misses the point of St. Cyprian's letter. In the case in question there was no room for a legitimate appeal, since the two bishops had confessed. An acquittal obtained after spontaneous confession could not be valid. It has further been urged that, in the case of Fortunatus (Epistle 59:10), Cyprian denies his right of appeal to Rome, and asserts the sufficiency of the African tribunal. But here too the objection rests upon a misunderstanding. Fortunatus had procured consecration as Bishop of Carthage from a heretical bishop, and St. Cyprian asserts the competency of the local synod in his case on the ground that he is no true bishop - a mere pseudo-episcopus. Juridically considered he is merely an insubordinate presbyter, and he must submit himself to his own bishop. At that period the established custom denied the right of appeal to the inferior clergy. On the other hand, the action of Fortunatus indicates that he based his claim to bring the question of his status before the pope on the ground that he was a legitimate bishop. Privatus of Lambese, the heretical consecrator of Fortunatus who had previously been himself condemned by a synod of ninety bishops (Epistle 59:10), had appealed to Rome without success (Epistle 36:4).

The difficulties at Carthage which led to the Donatist schism provide us with another instance. When the seventy Numidian bishops, who had condemned Caecilian, invoked the aid of the emperor, the latter referred them to Rome, that the case might be decided by Pope Miltiades (313). St. Augustine makes frequent mention of the circumstances, and indicates plainly that he holds it to have been Caecilian's undoubted right to claim a trial before the pope. He says that Secundus should never have dared to condemn Caecilian when he declined to submit his case to the African bishops, since he had the right "to reserve his whole case to the judgment of other colleagues,

especially to that of Apostolical Churches” (Epistle 43:7). A little later (367) a council, held at Tyana in Asia Minor, restored to hissee Eustathius, bishop of that city, on no other ground than that of a successful appeal to Rome. St. Basil (Epistle 263:3) tells us that they did not know what test of orthodoxy Liberius had required. He brought a letter from the pope demanding his restoration, and this was accepted as decisive by the council. It should be observed that there can be no question here of the pope employing prerogatives conferred on him at Sardica, for he did not follow the procedure there indicated. Indeed there is no good reason to believe that the Sardican procedure ever came into use in either East or West. In 378 the appellate jurisdiction of the pope received civil sanction from Emperor Gratian. Any charge against a metropolitan was to come before the pope himself or a court of bishops nominated by him, while all (Western) bishops had the right of appeal from - their provincial synod to the pope (Mansi, III, 624). Similarly Valentinian III in 445 assigned to the pope the right of evoking to Rome any cause he should think fit (Cod. Theod. Novell., tit. 24, De episcoporum ordin.). These ordinances were not, however, in any sense the source of the pope’s jurisdiction, which rested on Divine institution; they were civil sanctions enabling the pope to avail himself of the civil machinery of the empire in discharging the duties of his office. What Pope Nicholas I said of the synodal declarations regarding the privileges of the Holy See holds good here also: “Ista privilegia huic sanctae Ecclesiae a Christo donata, a synodis non donata, sed jam solummodo venerata et celebrata” (These privileges bestowed by Christ on this Holy Church have not been granted her by synods, but merely proclaimed and honoured by them) (“Ep. ad Michaellem Imp.” in P.L., CXIX, 948).

Much has been made by anti-Catholic writers of the famous letter “Optaremus”, addressed in 426 by the African bishops to Pope St. Celestine at the close of the incident relating to the priest Apiarius. As the point is discussed in a special article (APIARIUS OF SICCA), a brief reference will suffice here. Protestant controversialists maintain that in this letter the African bishops positively repudiate the claim of Rome to an appellate jurisdiction, the repudiation being consequent on the fact that they had in 419 satisfied themselves that Pope Zosimus was mistaken in claiming the authority of Nicaea for the Sardican canons. This is an error. The letter, it is true, urges with some

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display of irritation that it would be both more reasonable and more in harmony with the fifth Nicene canon regarding the inferior clergy and the laity, if even episcopal cases were left to the decision of the African synod. The pope's authority is nowhere denied, but the sufficiency of the local tribunals is asserted. Indeed the right of the pope to deal with episcopal cases was freely acknowledged by the African Church even after it had been shown that the Sardican canons did not emanate from Nicaea. Antony, Bishop of Fussala, prosecuted an appeal to Rome against St. Augustine in 423, the appeal being supported by the Primate of Numidia (Ep. ccix). Moreover, St. Augustine in his letter to Pope Celestine on this subject urges that previous popes have dealt with similar cases in the same manner, sometimes by independent decisions and sometimes by confirmation of the decisions locally given (*ipsa sede apostolica judicante vel aliorum judicata firmante*), and that he could cite examples either from ancient or from more recent times (Ep. 209:8). These facts appear to be absolutely conclusive as to the traditional African practice. That the letter "Optaremus" did not result in any change is evinced by a letter of St. Leo's in 446, directing what is to be done in the case of a certain Lupicinus who had appealed to him (Epistle 12:13). It is occasionally argued that if the pope really possessed *jure divino* a supreme jurisdiction, the African bishops would neither have raised any question in 419 as to whether the alleged canons were authentic, nor again have in 426 requested the pope to take the Nicene canon as the norm of his action. Those who reason in this way fail to see that, where canons have been established prescribing the mode of procedure to be followed in the Church, right reason demands that the supreme authority should not alter them except for some grave cause, and, as long as they remain the recognized law of the Church should observe them. The pope as God's vicar must govern according to reason, not arbitrarily nor capriciously. This, however, is a very different thing from saying, as did the Gallican divines, that the pope is subject to the canons. He is not subject to them, because he is competent to modify or to annul them when he holds this to be best for the Church.

Jurisdictional Rights and Prerogatives of the Pope

In virtue of his office as supreme teacher and ruler of the faithful, the chief control of every department of the Church's life belongs to

the pope. In this section the rights and duties which thus fall to his lot will be briefly enumerated. It will appear that, in regard to a considerable number of points, not merely the supreme control, but the whole exercise of power is reserved to the Holy See, and is only granted to others by express delegation. This system of reservation is possible, since the pope is the universal source of all ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Hence it rests with him to determine in what measure he will confer jurisdiction on bishops and other prelates.

(1) As the supreme teacher of the Church, whose it is to prescribe what is to be believed by all the faithful, and to take measures for the preservation and the propagation of the faith, the following are the rights which pertain to the pope:

- it is his to set forth creeds, and to determine when and by whom an explicit profession of faith shall be made (cf. Council of Trent, Sess. 24, cc. 1 and 12);
- it is his to prescribe and to command books for the religious instruction of the faithful; thus, for example, Clement XIII has recommended the Roman Catechism to all the bishops.
- The pope alone can establish a university, possessing the status and privileges of a canonically erected Catholic university;
- to him also belongs the direction of Catholic missions throughout the world; this charge is fulfilled through the Congregation of the Propaganda.
- It is his to prohibit the reading of such books as are injurious to faith or morals, and to determine the conditions on which certain classes of books may be issued by Catholics;
- his is the condemnation of given propositions as being either heretical or deserving of some minor degree of censure, and lastly
- he has the right to interpret authentically the natural law. Thus, it is his to say what is lawful or unlawful in regard to social and family life, in regard to the practice of usury, etc.

(2) With the pope's office of supreme teacher are closely connected his rights in regard to the worship of God: for it is the law of prayer that fixes the law of belief. In this sphere very much has been reserved to the sole regulation of the Holy See. Thus

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- ✓ the pope alone can prescribe the liturgical services employed in the Church. If a doubt should occur in regard to the ceremonial of the liturgy, a bishop may not settle the point on his own authority, but must have recourse to Rome. The Holy See likewise prescribes rules in regard to the devotions used by the faithful, and in this way checks the growth of what is novel and unauthorized.
- ✓ At the present day the institution and abrogation of festivals which was till a comparatively recent time free to all bishops as regards their own dioceses, is reserved to Rome.
- ✓ The solemn canonization of a saint is proper to the pope. Indeed it is commonly held that this is an exercise of the papal infallibility. Beatification and every permission for the public veneration of any of the servants of God is likewise reserved to his decision.
- ✓ He alone gives to anyone the privilege of a private chapel where Mass may be said.
- ✓ He dispenses the treasury of the Church, and the grant of plenary indulgences is reserved to him. While he has no authority in regard to the substantial rites of the sacraments, and is bound to preserve them as they were given to the Church by Christ and His Apostles, certain powers in their regard belong to him;
- ✓ he can give to simple priests the power to confirm, and to bless the oil of the sick and the oil of catechumens, and
- ✓ he can establish diriment and impedient impediments to matrimony.

(3) The legislative power of the pope carries with it the following rights:

- ❖ he can legislate for the whole Church, with or without the assistance of a general council;
- ❖ if he legislates with the aid of a council it is his to convoke it, to preside, to direct its deliberations, to confirm its acts.
- ❖ He has full authority to interpret, alter, and abrogate both his own laws and those established by his predecessors. He has the same plenitude of power as they enjoyed, and stands in the same relation to their laws as to those which he himself has decreed;
- ❖ he can dispense individuals from the obligation of all purely ecclesiastical laws, and can grant privileges and exemptions in their regard.

- ❖ In this connection may be mentioned his power to dispense from vows where the greater glory of God renders it desirable. Considerable powers of dispensation are granted to bishops, and, in a restricted measure, also topriests; but there are some vows reserved altogether to the Holy See.

(4) In virtue of his supreme judicial authority *causae majores* are reserved to him. By this term are signified cases dealing with matters of great moment, or those in which personages of eminent dignity are concerned.

- ← His appellate jurisdiction has been discussed in the previous section. It should, however, be noted
- ← that the pope has full right, should he see fit, to deal even with *causae minores* in the first instance, and not merely by reason of an appeal (Trent, Sess. XXIV; cap. 20). In what concerns punishment,
- ← he can inflict censures either by judicial sentence or by general laws which operate without need of such sentence.
- ← He further reserves certain cases to his own tribunal. All cases of heresy come before the Congregation of the Inquisition. A similar reservation covers the cases in which a bishop or a reigning prince is the accused party.

(5) As the supreme governor of the Church the pope has authority over all appointments to its public offices. Thus

- it is his to nominate to bishoprics, or, where the nomination has been conceded to others, to give confirmation. Further, he alone can translate bishops from one see to another, can accept their resignation, and can, where grave cause exists, sentence to deprivation.
- He can establish dioceses, and can annul a previously existing arrangement in favour of a new one. Similarly, he alone can erect cathedral and collegiate chapters.
- He can approve new religious orders, and can, if he sees fit, exempt them from the authority of local ordinaries.
- Since his office of supreme ruler imposes on him the duty of enforcing the canons, it is requisite that he should be kept informed as to the state of the various dioceses. He may obtain this information by legates or by summoning the bishops to Rome. At

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the present day this *jus relationum* is exercised through the triennial *visita ad limina* required of all bishops. This system was introduced by Sixtus V in 1585 (Constitution, “*Rom. Pontifex*”), and confirmed by Benedict XIV in 1740 (Constitution, “*Quod Sancta*”).

- It is to be further observed that the pope’s office of chief ruler of the Church carries with it *jure divino* the right to free intercourse with the pastors and the faithful. The *placitum regium*, by which this intercourse was limited and impeded, was therefore an infringement of a sacred right, and as such was solemnly condemned by the Vatican Council (Constitution, “*Pastor Aeternus*”, cap. iii). To the pope likewise belongs the supreme administration of the goods of the Church.
- He alone can, where there is just cause, alienate any considerable quantity of such property. Thus, e.g., Julius III, at the time of the restoration of religion in England under Queen Mary validated the title of those laymen who had acquired Church lands during the spoliations of the previous reigns.
- The pope has further the right to impose taxes on the clergy and the faithful for ecclesiastical purposes (cf. Trent, Sess. XXI, cap. iv de Ref.).
- Though the power of the pope, as we have described it, is very great, it does not follow that it is arbitrary and unrestricted. “The pope”, as Cardinal Hergenröther well says, is circumscribed by the consciousness of the necessity of making a righteous and beneficent use of the duties attached to his privileges... He is also circumscribed by the spirit and practice of the Church, by the respect due to General Councils and to ancient statutes and customs, by the rights of bishops, by his relation with civil powers, by the traditional mild tone of government indicated by the aim of the institution of the papacy - to “feed” - and finally by the respect indispensable in a spiritual power towards the spirit and mind of nations (“*Cath. Church and Christian State*”, tr., I, 197).

Chapter 7

Models of the Church: Avery Dulles

Avery Dulles, SJ (1918-2008), was born in NY to John Foster Dulles (who served as Eisenhower's Secretary of State) and Janet Pomeroy Avery. Raised a Presbyterian, he lost his faith before starting college at Harvard in 1936. A conversion experience along the Charles River began his shift from being agnostic and he converted to Roman Catholicism in 1940. After a stint in the Navy, he joined the Society of Jesuits in 1946, was ordained to the priesthood in 1956, and completed doctoral studies in 1960. A prolific author (over 700 articles and 22 books) and accomplished teacher, he was elevated to cardinal (directly from priest without being named a Bishop). He is best known for his 1974 theological work, *Models of the Church*, which is a standard text in most ecclesiology courses.

As Dulles describes it, *Models of Church* attempts to transform the type of comparative ecclesiology that reflects on the similarities and differences of various

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denominations to instead offer five theologically-based approaches that illuminate the strengths and limitations of these models. He cautions against the potential codification that can occur by recognizing that the Church is a mystery. As a mystery, it can not be limited by a specific description, but can be illuminated by analogies that likely overlap when applied to particular contexts. For example, he writes from a Roman Catholic perspective and acknowledges that the Institutional model predominantly describes the Roman Catholic Church. Still, the Roman Catholic church also exhibits elements from other models.

A helpful initial description of the church is that used by Pope Paul VI. He described the church as a mystery. It is a reality imbued with the hidden presence of God. This mystery of the church is revealed in Jesus, the word of God, who became human. Jesus, as portrayed in the New Testament, is the touchstone for the mystery, message and mission of Church. This image of mystery was used extensively in *The Constitution of the Church in the Modern World (Lumen Gentium)*, proclaimed by the second Vatican Council. Church as mystery opens up the richness and diversity of images and ways of understanding the concept 'Church'. Such images and understandings are grounded in the Scriptures and form the basis of the so-called 'Models of Church'.

Avery Dulles' Models of the Church

The purpose of the Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium* The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church was to unfold the 'inner nature and universal mission' of the church (LG, 1). This document did not simply present the church as a monolithic reality but presented several models and images of Church. Today the models remain an important tool for helping Catholics who wish to examine where they themselves stand. Models provide lens for focusing valid and complementary ways of being Church. In his now classic work, *Models of the Church*, Avery Dulles explored several of the underlying guiding concepts of church in contemporary Catholic theology. Each of these models finds significant support in the Vatican II documents. Dulles discussed the following five complementary models, each with its own distinct nature and mission. The models of Church discussed here are present throughout *Lumen Gentium* in various ways.

The Institution Model

Typically seen as a formal organization, the church is seen as “the perfect society” that, by its nature, has a structure of governance (a constitution, rules, governing body, recognized leaders, confessional formulas, prescribed forms of public worship). This model expands the governance function and highlights its place with the three functions of the church: teaching, sanctifying, and governing with the authority of Christ. It also recognizes the body of Christ that affirms this structure and benefits from this structure.

The institution model, as Dulles characterised it in the original version of his book, is the view that makes primary the institutional elements of the church, such as offices, doctrines, laws, and ritual forms. The people, their relationship with God, the Scriptures, and justice issues, can be subordinated to the institutional elements. This model, then, unlike the other four, is by definition a limited starting point. He does add, though, that whatever one’s model of church, one needs to incorporate and appreciate the institutional elements. Dulles holds that institutional structures should not be taken as primary, but he adds that some of the problems with the institution model could be overcome if one thinks not simply in sociological terms but in terms of what God ‘instituted’ in Christ’ (p. 205). In other words, there are ways of thinking of the church as basically an institution without pitting the structural elements over against the people and their spirituality. This clarification is important because the institution model is the one most directly associated with pre-Vatican II views of the church.

The Community Model

Quoting Jerome Hamer - “the mystical body of Christ is a communion which is at once inward and external, an inner communion of spiritual life (faith, hope, and charity) signified and engendered by an external communion in profession of faith, discipline and sacramental life.” As such, “the communion given by the Holy Spirit finds expression in a network of mutual interpersonal relationships of concern and assistance.” Here the church is viewed as the people of God or body of Christ growing into the final perfection of the kingdom.

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The mystical communion model places its emphasis on the people who make up the Church and their connectedness with each other and with God. This model, while not necessarily rejecting institutional elements, places more stress upon spirituality, community and fellowship. The church in this view is something of a spiritual support group that aids people in their quest to live holy lives. Dulles associates two images with this model, the Body of Christ and the People of God. These images, although they can be harmonised, stand in conflict with each other in contemporary theological debates. Both functioned prominently at Vatican II as images for church renewal. The Body of Christ image is often used today to support a strong role for the hierarchy as the particular ‘member of the body’ that functions in the place of Christ as the ‘head’ of the body. The People of God image tends to be favoured by those who advocate for continuing reform in the church by granting larger roles in ministry and decision making to women and to lay people.

The Sacrament Model

As the sign of the intimate union of God with the human community, the church is an instrument of union and unity. It is a visible manifestation of the grace of Christ in the human community calling us to embrace every age, race, kind, and condition and manifest God’s dream both within the church and within the world.

The sacrament model is the view that focuses on the church as the continuing presence of Christ in the world. Sacrament is understood as a way of making a sacred reality present and active. As Christ can be thought of as the sacrament of God, so the church can be thought of as the sacrament of Christ. The sacrament model explains how visible realities mediate invisible realities. A thing, or word, or gesture that is present can make available something that is otherwise not present.

The Herald Model

As the church is gathered and formed by the word of God, so is its mission to proclaim that which it has heard, believed, and been commissioned to proclaim. . . . this model is kerygmatic and emphasizes faith and its proclamation. Somewhat paralleling McLuhans’ “the

medium is the message, Dulles recognizes that “the gospel is not a system of abstract propositional truths, nor a written document, but rather the event of proclamation itself.”

The herald model emphasises the primacy of the Bible. The church consists of those who hear the word and are converted. The mission of the church is to preach the word to the ends of the earth. Within Catholicism the model of the Church as ‘herald’ has been given greater prominence since Vatican Council II and its emphasis on the importance of hearing and proclaiming the scriptures. Catholic re-emphasis on the herald model is indebted to an ongoing emphasis by protestant churches on the importance of proclaiming the Word of God.

The Servant Model

Quoting Richard McBrien, Dulles identifies that the servant church “must offer itself as one of the principle agents whereby the human community is judged by the enduring values of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: freedom, justice, peace, compassion, and reconciliation.” Dedicated to the transformation of the world into the Dream of God, this model calls us to maintain a preferential option for the poor (Boff’s words, not Dulles), the oppressed, and the outcast.

The servant model emphasises the need for the church to be engaged in social transformation. If traditionally the church had been often presented as a refuge from a world of vice and temptation, this model presents a church that should be at the service of a world that is basically good. Members of the church are seen as part of the larger human family. God is known not simply through the Church, but also through human experience and the things of this world. Culture and science are recognised as having their own legitimate autonomy apart from the dominance of the church. The most striking contemporary example of a servant model today can be found in the liberation theology of Latin America. Liberation theology begins with the experience of political, social, and economic oppression of the people of Latin America. It exemplifies a version of the servant model in that it places a strong emphasis on the need for the church to be involved in social change.

Community of Disciples Model

Amalgamating the other five models, Dulles offers the Community of Disciples as a “supermodel” with the imperative of making Christ present in the world by taking advantage of the strengths of the other models.

In the expanded edition of *Models of the Church*, Dulles added a new category, the community of disciples model. He took the phrase from a passing comment made by Pope John Paul II in his first encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis* (1979). The community of disciples is not just another model to be added to the others, but a more inclusive model intended to integrate what is best in the other five. Dulles says that it is in a sense a version of the mystical communion model, but without the tendency to be satisfied with internal mutual support. Rather, this model focuses on discipleship. What does it mean to follow the Lord and to carry out the implications of this seriously in one’s life? This model is intended to illuminate the purposes of the institutional structures and the sacramental aspects of the church, and to ground the missionary thrust toward evangelization and social transformation. The interrelationship between the models can be described from the perspective of the Church as institution. The Church as institution is a kind of sacrament that works to build unity in community. It is entrusted to herald the message of salvation. As a pilgrim, the Church continues to grow as being a servant of peace and justice. Models of Church throughout History The history of the church traces the ways the Church has been and still is the community or body of Christ, institution, sacrament, herald, pilgrim people, and servant. Over the centuries the church has developed in different ways. For instance, as the church grew, the institutional dimension became much more obvious. At other times, the missionary activities of the church highlighted the Church’s role as herald. The nature and mission of Church has always incorporated elements of all of Dulles’ models. Particular models of Church provide a useful way of viewing, describing and summarising dominant features of particular eras of Church history e.g. Building Church as Community 28 - 100CE, Church as Herald to a Gentile world 100 - 800CE, Church as prevailing Institution in

the Medieval world 800-1500CE, Church as Pilgrim in a time of upheaval and confusion during the Reformation and Post Reformation period from 1500-1900, Church as Sacrament and sign in a changing world around Vatican II -1962-1965 and Church as Servant in the contemporary world. The changes that have occurred in the church throughout history have almost always occurred so that it could be a more effective Body of Christ, Institution, Sacrament, Herald and Servant. It is important to remember that the Church is more than the sum of its parts- more than all the models put together. Ultimately, the Church remains a fascinating mystery that reflects Christians' attempts to form communities faithful to Jesus and his message over time and in diverse contexts.