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## 1. An Agreed Statement on the Holy Eucharist.

We, the members of the Orthodox-Catholic Consultation, have met and discussed our understanding of the Holy Eucharist. After a dialogue, based on separately prepared papers, we affirm our remarkable and fundamental agreement on the following:

1. The Holy Eucharist is the memorial of the history of salvation, especially the life, death, resurrection, and glorification of Jesus Christ.

2. In this eucharistic meal, according to the promise of Christ, the Father sends the Spirit to consecrate the elements to be the body and blood of Jesus Christ and to sanctify the faithful.

3. The eucharistic sacrifice involves the active presence of Christ, the High Priest, acting through the Christian community, drawing it into his saving worship. Through celebration of the Eucharist the redemptive blessings are bestowed on the living and the dead for whom intercession is made.

4. Through the eating of the eucharistic body and drinking of the eucharistic blood, the faithful, who through Baptism became adopted sons of the Father, are nourished as the one body of Christ, and are built up as temples of the Holy Spirit.

5. In the eucharistic celebration we not only commend

ourselves and each other and all our lives unto Christ, but at the same time accept the mandate of service of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to mediate salvation to the world.

6. Through the Eucharist the believer is transformed into the glory of the Lord and in this the transfiguration of the whole cosmos is anticipated. Therefore the faithful have the mission to witness to this transforming activity of the Spirit.

Recognizing the importance of this consensus, we are aware that serious differences exist in our understanding of the church, eucharistic discipline, and pastoral practice which now prevent us from communicating in one another's churches. Our task should consist in exploring further how these differences are related to the agreement stated above and how they can be resolved.

Worcester, Massachusetts  
December 13, 1969  
(Fifth meeting)

## **2. An Agreed Statement on Mixed Marriages**

The recent dialogue between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches has led to a deeper appreciation of their common tradition of faith. This exploration has helped us to reassess some specific theological and pastoral problems in the area of Christian marriage. We recognize the practical difficulties which couples continue to face when they enter a mixed marriage as long as their churches are divided on matters of doctrine and styles of Christian life. Because of these difficulties both of our churches discourage mixed marriages

### *I. Pastoral Problems*

1. We recognize that under the conditions of modern life these mixed marriages will continue to take place. For this

reason counseling of couples entering such unions by pastors of both churches is imperative. In this counseling the sincerely held religious convictions of each party, based upon their church's tradition, must be respected, especially as regards the nature of marriage and the style of life in marriage.

2. One area in which counseling by the pastors is desirable concerns the Christian upbringing of the children. We recognize the responsibility of each partner to raise their children in the faith of their respective churches. We encourage the pastors of both churches to counsel these couples in the hope of helping to resolve the problem which this responsibility creates. Specific decisions should be made by the couple only after informed and serious deliberation. Whether the decision is made to raise the children in the Orthodox or Catholic tradition, both partners should take an active role in the Christian upbringing of the children and in establishing their marriage as a stable Christian union. The basis for this pastoral counsel is not religious indifferentism, but our conviction of a common participation in the mystery of Christ and his Church.

3. Each partner should be reminded of the obligation to respect the religious convictions and practice of the other and mutually to support and encourage the other in growing into the fullness of the Christian life.

## *II. Theological Problems*

1. According to the view of the Orthodox Church the marriage of an Orthodox can only be performed by an Orthodox priest as the minister of the sacrament. In the view of the Catholic Church the contracting partners are the ministers of the sacrament, and the required presence of a Catholic major cleric as witness of the Church can be dispensed with for weighty reasons. In view of this, we recommend that the Catholic Church, as a normative practice, allow the Catholic

party of a proposed marriage with an Orthodox to be married with the Orthodox priest officiating. This procedure should, however, take place only after consultation by the partners with both pastors.

2. We plan the further study of the Orthodox and Catholic traditional teaching concerning marriage.

New York City  
May 20, 1970  
(Sixth meeting)

### **3. An Agreed Statement on Respect for Life**

We, the members of the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Bilateral Consultation in the United States, after extensive discussions on the sanctity of marriage, feel compelled to make a statement concerning the inviolability of human life in all its forms.

We recognize that human life is a gift of God entrusted to mankind and so feel the necessity of expressing our shared conviction about its sacred character in concrete and active ways. It is true that the Christian community's concern has recently seemed to be selective and disproportionate in this regard, e.g., in the anti-abortion campaign. Too often human life has been threatened or even destroyed, especially during times of war, internal strife, and violence, with little or no protestation from the Christian leadership. Unfortunately, the impression has frequently been given that churchmen are more concerned with establishing the legitimacy of war or capital punishment than with the preservation of human life. We know that this has been a scandal for many, both believers and unbelievers.

We feel constrained at this point in history to affirm that the "right to life" implies a right to a decent life and to full human development, not merely to a marginal existence.

We affirm that the furthering of this goal for the unborn, the mentally retarded, the aging, and the underprivileged is our duty on a global as well as a domestic scale.

We deplore in particular the U.S. Supreme Court's decision failing to recognize the rights of the unborn—a decision which has led to widespread indiscriminate early abortion.

We affirm our common Christian tradition with regard to the right of the unborn to life.

We acknowledge our responsibility to mediate the love of Christ, especially to the troubled expectant mother, and thus make possible the transmission and nurturing of new life and its fully human development.

We urge our churches and all believers to take a concrete stand on this matter at this time and to exemplify this evangelical imperative in their personal lives and professional decisions.

Washington, D.C.  
May 24, 1974  
(10th meeting)

#### **4. An Agreed Statement on the Church**

Issued by the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Bilateral Consultation in the U.S.A.

1. Christianity is distinguished by its faith in the Blessed Trinity. In the light of this revelation Christianity must interpret the world and every aspect of it. This revelation has obvious implications for the interpretation of the nature of the church.

2. The church is the communion of believers living in Jesus Christ and the Spirit with the Father. It has its origin and prototype in the Trinity in which there is both distinction of persons and unity based on love, not subordination.

3. Since the church in history is constituted by the Spirit

as the body of Christ, the continuity of the church with its origin results from the active presence of the Spirit. This continuity is expressed in and by historical forms (such as Scripture and sacraments) which give visibility to the continuing presence of the Spirit but it does not result merely from a historical process.

4. Sharing in Christ and the Spirit, the local church is at once independent in its corporate existence: a church, and at the same time interdependent in relation to other churches.

The independent existence of the local church is expressed best in its eucharistic celebration. The sacramental celebration of the Lord's presence in the midst of his people through the working of the Spirit both proclaims the most profound realization of the church and realizes what it proclaims in the measure that the community opens itself to the Spirit.

5. The independence of local eucharistic communities, in the disciplinary and constitutional spheres, was curtailed in the early church as soon as priests became leaders of the local churches. The dependence of local churches on the territorial bishop found its counterpart in the dependence of bishops on the "first" bishop (archbishop, metropolitan, patriarch) as territories were divided among bishops.

The interplay of independence and communality on the local, territorial, and patriarchal levels mirrors the church's prototype: the Trinity, which the church can only approach.

6. The fundamental equality of all local churches is based on their historical and pneumatological continuity with the church of the apostles. However, a real hierarchy of churches was recognized in response to the demands of the mission of the church. Still this did not and cannot exclude the fundamental equality of all churches.

7. The Catholic and Orthodox Churches explain differently the meaning of this hierarchy of churches.

The Catholic Church recognizes that the position of Peter in the college of the apostles finds visible expression in the Bishop of Rome who exercises those prerogatives defined by Vatican Council I within the whole church of Christ in virtue of this primacy.

The Orthodox Church finds this teaching at variance with its understanding of primacy within the whole church. It appears to destroy the tension between independence and collegiality. For interdependence, a basic condition for collegiality, appears to be removed as a consequence of the jurisdictional and teaching role attributed to the Patriarch of the West by Vatican Council I. The Orthodox believe that a necessary primacy in the church depends on the consent of the church and is at present exercised by the Patriarch of Constantinople.

8. Our two traditions are not easily harmonized. Yet we believe that the Spirit is ever active to show us the way by which we can live together as one and many. We have the hope that we will be open to his promptings wherever they may lead. "For only so will harmony reign, in order that God through the Lord in the Holy Spirit may be glorified, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Apostolic Canons, Cn. 34).

New York City  
December 10, 1974  
(11th meeting)

## 5. The Pastoral Office: A Joint Statement

### *Introduction*

1. Both the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches acknowledge that the pastoral office, exercised by bishops and



priests, is an essential element of the structure of the church founded by Jesus Christ.

The members of this dialogue, while recognizing this fact, also understand that certain changes have taken place in the exercise and in the understanding of this office both in the early church and later in the separated churches.

2. In the interest of furthering the mutual recognition of the pastoral office exercised in each of our churches this Consultation has judged it useful:

- (a) To record the results of its discussions of the understanding and function of pastoral office in the history of the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches;
- (b) To formulate a statement concerning important elements of our common understanding of pastoral office;
- (c) To single out recent discussions on the subject of pastoral office which seem to require the serious attention of both churches.

### *I. Historical Considerations*

According to the New Testament, the witnesses to the resurrection formed the original church on the basis of their common faith in Christ. Within this group, chosen witnesses were given special authority by the risen Lord to exercise pastoral leadership. While this leadership seems to have been exercised in a variety of concrete ways in the New Testament period, the tendency towards a presbyteral form of government, presided over by a bishop, was apparently more common.

At the outset of the second century this movement towards a more monoepiscopal form of local church government continues to develop. In the course of the second and third centuries the bishop gradually emerges everywhere as the

center of unity of his own local church and the visible point of contact with other local churches. He is responsible for faith and order locally.

During this period the presbyterate comes to share in the exercise of more aspects of the pastoral office in subordination to the bishop. This subordinate role is seen especially in presbyteral ordination, which is reserved to bishops.

In accord with the development whereby the presbyterate is explicitly included in the pastoral office of the bishop under virtually all aspects, the presbyter is viewed as having the same relationship to Christ as the bishop. Both are seen directly to represent Christ before the community and, at the same time, to represent the church, as confessing believers, in their official acts.

However, the tendency in the West towards the dissociation of pastoral office from its ecclesial context provided a difference of perspective on the conditions for the valid exercise of the functions of pastoral office. Thus, while Orthodoxy never accepted in principle the concept of "absolute ordination," this notion did find acceptance in the West in the late Middle Ages.

However, the Second Vatican Council's stress on the pastoral dimension of priestly office corrected the weakness of western theology of priesthood. Furthermore, the fathers of the council refocused attention on two major traditional themes: (a) the sacramental nature of episcopal consecration; and (b) the collegial or corporate character of each of these orders, a theme which harmonizes with the traditional Orthodox perspective.

## *II. Our Common Understanding of the Pastoral Office in the Orthodox and Catholic Traditions*

Although the historical perspective points out many di-

vergent practices through the centuries, the members of the Consultation recognize the following as important elements towards the development of a consensus.

1. In the rites of ordination of bishop and presbyter a commission is bestowed by the Holy Spirit to build up the church (Eph. 4:12) on the cornerstone of Christ and the foundation of the apostles (Eph. 2:20).

2. Presiding at the Eucharist belongs to those ordained to pastoral office: bishops and presbyters. This exclusive connection between ordination to the pastoral office and the celebration of the Eucharist affirms that the pastoral office is realized most directly in this celebration of the faith. In the Eucharist the Lord builds up his church by uniting it with his saving worship and communicating his personal presence through his sacramental body and blood (I Cor. 10:16-17).

3. The offices of bishop and presbyter are different realizations of the sacrament of order. The different rites for ordination of bishop and presbyter show that a sacramental conferral of office takes place by the laying on of hands with the ordination prayer which expresses the particular significance of each office.

4. While both bishop and presbyter share the one ministry of Christ, the bishop exercises authoritative leadership over the whole community. The presbyter shares in the pastoral office under the bishop.

5. Ordination in apostolic succession is required for the bestowal of pastoral office because pastoral office is an essential element of the sacramental reality of the church: Ordination effectively proclaims that pastoral office is founded on Christ and the Spirit who give the grace to accomplish the task of exercising the ministry of the apostles.

6. The fundamental reason why pastoral office is required for the celebration of the Eucharist lies in the relationship of pastoral office to church and the relationship of Eucha-

rist to church. Pastoral office is a constitutive element of the structure of church and the Eucharist is the place where the church most perfectly expresses and realizes itself. Consequently, the requirement of correspondence between the comprehensive ecclesial reality and the Eucharist dictates the exercise of pastoral office.

7. Bishops and presbyters can only represent Christ as bishops and presbyters when they exercise the pastoral office of the church. Therefore, the church can recognize only an ordination which involves a bishop with a pastoral office and a candidate with a concrete title of service.

8. We have a common understanding of these effects of sacramental ordination: (a) the ordained is claimed permanently for the service of the church and so cannot be reordained; (b) in the exercise of his office, he is distinct but not separated from the community; (c) he is not dependent merely on his subjective capabilities for the exercise of his service, since he receives the special bestowal of the Spirit in ordination.

Catholic theologians have explained these elements in terms of *character*, priestly *character*. Similar elements are included in Orthodox understanding of priesthood as a *charisma*. Both character and charisma stress the relationship of the ordained to the gift of the Holy Spirit on which the exercise of his ministry in service to the community depends.

### *III. Recent Trends and Disputed Questions in Both Traditions*

Roman Catholic and Orthodox theologians today have addressed themselves to several major topics related to the theology of pastoral office.

1. Some Roman Catholic theologians are challenging the traditional presentation of the pastoral office as direct repre-

sentation of Christ. They interpret pastoral office as directly representing the faith of the church and consequently, Christ who is the living source of the faith. From this viewpoint the peculiarity of pastoral office is situated in the public guardianship of the common matter of all believers: the mission of Christ.

2. The traditional exclusion of women from ordination to the pastoral office affects both Catholic and Orthodox theologians, but in a differing way. Concerning this issue, Catholic theologians are examining biblical data, traditional practice, theological and anthropological data. Since they have not reached a consensus, the question remains disputed among them.

Some Catholic theologians share the position of those Orthodox theologians who reaffirm the traditional practice of excluding women from the pastoral office and base this on the necessity of the iconic representation of Christ in the person of bishops and presbyters.

3. Two of the issues touching the life-style of those called to pastoral office come under serious consideration in both traditions: (a) the compatibility of ordination with occupations which are not directly part of the pastoral office, and (b) the existing practice of celibacy.

(a) Both Catholic and Orthodox theologians see a long tradition of ordained persons exercising certain occupations compatible with the pastoral office which are also seen to serve the sanctification of society.

(b) In the Orthodox Church questions are raised concerning a married episcopate and marriage after ordination. Among Catholics of the Latin rite the celibacy issue focuses on the possibility of also committing the pastoral office to a married clergy.

4. Faced with the important issue of mutual recognition of ministries, both Orthodox and Roman Catholic theologians are searching for criteria leading to such a goal.

### *Conclusion*

The members of the Consultation draw the following conclusions: despite differing emphases, both churches agree on the nature and forms of pastoral office; theologians of both traditions perceive that they have common as well as distinct questions to be resolved.

Washington, D.C.  
May 19, 1976  
(14th meeting)

### **6. The Principle of Economy: A Joint Statement**

1. Members of the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Bilateral Consultation in the United States, having met since 1965, have examined openly, in a spirit of Christian faith and fraternal charity, a wide spectrum of theological questions judged to be crucial for mutual understanding between our two churches.

2. One topic which has been discussed with particular interest, especially during 1975 and 1976, has been *oikonomia* or ecclesiastical "economy." Because of the possible relevance of economy to the question of mutual recognition of churches, this topic, which has been important for the Orthodox, has received increasing attention among Anglicans and Roman Catholics in recent years.

3. In its discussion of economy the Consultation considered an introductory report prepared in 1971 by the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission for the forthcoming Great Council of the Orthodox Church. Some Orthodox and Roman Catholic members were dissatisfied with the interpretation it gave to certain texts and historical incidents but found it a useful beginning for further discussion.

4. Our investigation has shown:

- (a) The wealth of meanings which economy has had over the centuries;
- (b) Some weaknesses in recent presentations of economy;
- (c) The significance of economy for our ongoing ecumenical discussion.

5. At the most basic level, the Greek word *oikonomia* means management, arrangement, or determination in the strictly literal sense. A few overtones add to this basic meaning. *Oikonomia* may imply accommodation, prudent adaptation of means to an end, diplomacy and strategy and even dissimulation and the "pious lie." But *oikonomia* can also have highly positive connotations. It suggests the idea of stewardship, of management on behalf of another, on behalf of a superior.

6. In the New Testament the word *oikonomia* occurs nine times: Luke 16:2, 3, 4; 1 Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 1:10, 3:2; 3:9; Colossians 1:25, and 1 Timothy 1:4. In the Parable of the Steward, Luke 16, the word refers generically to stewardship, house management. In other New Testament usages such as Ephesians 3:9, the word is used to refer to God's purpose or *prothesis*, the economy of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things.

Also in Ephesians 1:8-10 we read that God "has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time (*oikonomian tou pleromatos ton kairon*) to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth." This usage is closely related to the patristic idea that in and through his person the incarnate and risen Christ brings to fulfillment all of creation (*anakephalaiosis*). The Pauline corpus of letters uses *oikonomia* to refer to Paul's own ministry or pastoral office to make the word of God fully known.

7. These New Testament usages of *oikonomia* are further expanded by the fathers' understanding as summarized by the Interorthodox Preparatory Commission's report which states:

“Apart from the meaning which concerns us here, the term *oikonomia* also denotes the divine purpose of *prothesis* (Eph. 1:10, 3:9-11), the mode of existence of the one Godhead in Trinity through mutual indwelling (*perichoresis*), its broad action in the world through the church, divine providence, the savior’s incarnation, the whole redeeming work of our Lord Jesus Christ and all the operations through which human nature was made manifest in the Son, from the time of his incarnation to his ascension into heaven.”

God is seen as arranging all for the purpose of man’s salvation and eternal well-being; and man fashioned in the image and likeness of God is viewed as being called to imitate this divine activity.

8. The word *oikonomia* later acquired additional uses in ecclesiastical contexts, in particular:

- (a) The administration of penance, the arranging or managing of a penitent’s reconciliation to the church;
- (b) The reception of those turning to the church from heresy or schism;
- (c) The restoration of repentant clergy and the reception of heretical or schismatic clergy as ordained.

In all these areas, however, the understanding of economy as responsible stewardship, imitating the divine economy, is maintained, excluding arbitrariness or capriciousness.

9. Recent presentations of economy often have included the following elements:

- (a) Economy understood as a departure from or suspension of strict application (*akribeia*) of the church’s canons and disciplinary norms, in many respects analogous to the West’s *dispensatio*.
- (b) Economy applied not only to canon law and church discipline, but to the sacraments as well. In this context, it has been argued, for example that all non-Orthodox sacraments, from the point of view of strictness, are null and void but that the Orthodox



Church can, by economy, treat non-Orthodox sacraments as valid. These views imply that the application of economy to the sacraments may vary according to circumstances, including such pastoral considerations as the attitude of the non-Orthodox group toward Orthodoxy, the well-being of the Orthodox flock, and the ultimate salvation of the person or groups that contemplate entering Orthodoxy.

10. These recent interpretations do not, in the judgment of the Consultation, do justice to the genuine whole tradition underlying the concept and practice of economy. The church of Christ is not a legalistic system whereby every prescription has identical importance, especially when ancient canons do not directly address contemporary issues. Nor can the application of economy make something invalid to be valid, or what is valid to be invalid. Because the risen Christ has entrusted to the church a stewardship of prudence and freedom to listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit about today's problems of church unity, a proper understanding of economy involves the exercise of spiritual discernment.

We hope and pray therefore that our churches can come to discern in each other the same faith, that they can come to recognize each other as sister churches celebrating the same sacraments, and thus enter into full ecclesial communion.

Washington, D.C.

May 19, 1976

(14th meeting)

## **7. An Agreed Statement on the Sanctity of Marriage**

### *Introduction*

At a time when the sacred character of married life is radically threatened by contrary lifestyles, we the members of

the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Consultation feel called by the Lord to speak from the depth of our common faith and to affirm the profound meaning, the "glory and honor," of married life in Christ.

### *I. The Sacramental Character of Marriage*

For Christians of both the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches marriage is a sacrament. Through the prayers and actions of our wedding rites we profess the presence of Christ in the Spirit and believe that it is the Lord who unites a man and a woman in a life of mutual love. In this sacred union, husband and wife are called by Christ not only to live and work together, but also to share their Christian life so that each with the aid of the other may progress through the Holy Spirit in the life of holiness and so achieve Christian perfection. This relationship between husband and wife is established and sanctified by the Lord. As a sacred vocation, marriage mirrors the union of Christ and the church (Eph. 5:23).

Christ affirmed and blessed the oneness and profound significance of marriage. Christian tradition, following his teaching, has always proclaimed the sanctity of marriage. It has defined marriage as the fundamental relationship in which a man and woman, by total sharing with each other, seek their own growth in holiness and that of their children, and thus show forth the presence on earth of God's kingdom.

### *II. Enduring Vocation*

The special character of the human relationship established through marriage has always been recognized in the Christian tradition. By sanctifying the marital bond, the church affirms a permanent commitment to personal union, which is expressed in the free giving and acceptance of each

other by a man and a woman. The sacrament of marriage serves as an admirable example of the union which exists between God and the believer. The Old Testament uses marriage to describe the covenant relationship between God and his people (Hosea). The Letter to the Ephesians sees marriage as the type of relationship which exists between Christ and his church (Eph. 5:31-35). Consequently both the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches affirm the permanent character of Christian marriage: "What God has joined together, let no man put asunder" (Mt. 19:6).

However, the Orthodox Church, out of consideration of the human realities, permits divorces, after it exhausts all possible efforts to save the marriage and tolerates remarriages in order to avoid further human tragedies. The Roman Catholic Church recognizes the dissolution of sacramental non-consummated marriages either through solemn religious profession or by papal dispensation. To resolve the personal and pastoral issues of failed marriages which have been consummated an inquiry is often undertaken to uncover whether there exists some initial defect in the marriage covenant which would render the marriage invalid.

### *III. The Redeeming Effect of Marital Love*

A total sharing of a life of love and concern is not possible apart from God. The limitations of human relationships do not allow for a giving and receiving which fulfill the partners. However, in the life of the church, God gives the possibility of continual progress in the deepening of human relationships. By opening the eyes of faith to the vision that these relationships have as their goal, God offers a more intimate union with himself. Through the liberating effect of divine love, experienced through human love, believers are led away from self-centeredness and self-idolatry. The Gospel indicates the direc-

tion that this love must ultimately take: toward intimate union with the One Who alone can satisfy the fundamental yearning of people for self-fulfillment.

Given this vision of reality, Christian tradition recognizes that the total devotion of the married partners implies as its goal a relationship with God. It teaches, moreover, that the love which liberates them to seek union with God and which is the source of sanctification for them is made possible through the presence of the Spirit of God within them.

Through the love manifested in marriage, an important witness is given to the world of the love of God in Christ for all people. The partners in Christian marriage have the task, as witnesses of redemption, to accept as the inner law of their personal relationship that love which determines the relationship between Christ and the church: "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Eph.5:25). Through this love which liberates believers from selfish interests and sanctifies their relationships, the Christian husband and wife find the inspiration in turn to minister in loving service to others.

#### *IV. Theological Clarifications on Christian Marriage*

In the teaching of the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches a sacramental marriage requires both the mutual consent of the believing Christian partners and God's blessing imparted through the ministry of the church.

At present there are differences in the concrete ways in which this ministry must be exercised in order to fulfill the theological and canonical norms for marriage in our two churches. There are also differences in the theological interpretation of this diversity. Thus the Orthodox Church accepts as sacramental only those marriages sanctified in the liturgical

life of the church by being blessed by an Orthodox priest.

The Catholic Church accepts as sacramental the marriages which are celebrated before a Catholic priest or even a deacon, but it also envisions some exceptional cases in which, by reason of a dispensation or the unavailability of a priest or deacon, Catholics may enter into a sacramental marriage in the absence of an ordained minister of the church.

An examination of the diversities of practice and theology concerning the required ecclesial context for Christian marriage that have existed in both traditions demonstrates that the present differences must be considered to pertain more to the level of secondary theological reflection than to that of dogma. Both churches have always agreed that the ecclesial context is constitutive of the Christian sacrament of marriage. Within this fundamental agreement various possibilities of realization are possible as history has shown and no one form of this realization can be considered to be absolutely normative in all circumstances.

#### *V. Plans for Further Study*

The members of the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Consultation give thanks to God for this common faith in the sanctity of marriage which we share in our sister churches. We recognize however that pastoral problems remain to be studied in depth, such as the liturgical celebration of weddings between Orthodox and Roman Catholic partners and the religious upbringing of children in such families. We continue to explore these questions out of a common vision of marriage and with confidence in the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

New York, N.Y.  
December 8, 1978  
(19th meeting)

## 8. Reaction of Orthodox-Roman Catholic Dialogue to the Agenda of the Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church

### *Introduction*

The agenda for the forthcoming Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church was formulated by the Pre-Synodal Pan-Orthodox Conference, in Chambesy, Geneva, November 21-28, 1976. At the recommendation of His Eminence Metropolitan Meliton, chairman of the Conference, and at the invitation of His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos, co-chairman of our Consultation, the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Consultation in the USA discussed this agenda during its meeting in Washington, D.C., September 28-29, 1977. The Consultation welcomed the agenda as an important step toward the future Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church. The following suggestions summarize various observations on the agenda by members of the Consultation. We hope that these suggestions may be of some value and of some service in the preparation of the study documents to be used as the basis of the Great Council's initial discussions.

### *The Agenda*

*Topics 1-3.* The first three topics (fasting regulations, impediments to marriage, calendar) involve practical issues which deserve the attention of the Orthodox Churches. They are a fitting subject of a Great Council both because a common solution to these issues would enhance the daily life of the Orthodox Christians, and because they offer to the Council the opportunity for reflection on religious issues in the context of today's world.

*Topic 1.* We understand that some changes in fasting practices are advisable in view of the changing conditions and

rhythm of life in some geographical areas of the Orthodox Church. It is not altogether clear, because of insufficient study, what has been the result of the changes pertaining to fasting regulations within the Roman Catholic Church. This should provide the basis for the exercise of caution in the matter of proposed changes within the Orthodox Church. Disciplinary changes pertaining to fasting practices do not automatically bring about the hoped for spiritual fruits without careful preaching and instruction about the reasons for these adaptations. Another question to be raised with regard to these changes is to what extent common practices are necessary to preserve the unity of the church. Finally, discussion about fasting practices should, above all, seriously raise the question of the proper Christian attitudes toward the material world, modern consumerism, availability of foods, modern hedonism, ecology, religious discipline in contemporary society, and the like.

*Topic 2.* The issue regarding impediments to marriage, pertaining to both clergy and laity, as well as the possible issue of the eligibility of married clergy for the episcopate, requires discussion on the basis of an explicitly formulated theology of marriage, the presbyterate, and the episcopate. Other related themes to be dealt with are human sexuality in general, celibacy and monasticism.

*Topic 3.* With regard to the calendar question, the impact of Christian agreement on a common Easter date would be considerable both within and without the Christian world. The calendar question also offers an opportunity to address the question of the relationship of the church to modern science. However, a caution may also be sounded: unprepared changes in calendar matters could signal enormous pastoral problems.

*Topic 4.* It seems to us that the resolution of the *Diaspora* problem might serve to better express the communion ecclesiology of the Orthodox Church. The question of the *Diaspora*

should be investigated against the background of the idea of the *catholicity* of the church. An attempt in this regard has already been made at the Second World Conference of the Orthodox School of Theology, Penteli, Athens, August 19-29, 1976.

*Topic 5.* On the question of the relationship of the Orthodox Church to other Christian churches and communities, special attention should be given to promoting closer relations with the Oriental Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, the Old Catholic Church, and the Anglican Communion. We see that this may involve a thorough study of the principles which have traditionally determined Orthodox views regarding the *ecclesial status* of "separated Christians," and "separated churches."

*Topic 6.* The question of the ranking of autocephalous churches raises the issue of the practical and theological significance of rank *per se* within the Orthodox Churches. Why, for instance, has the actual importance—past or present—of certain churches in fostering the life of the entire church been the crucial factor in their gaining prominence in rank among their family of churches?

*Topic 7.* It seems to us that under the theme of autonomy and autocephaly some consideration should be given to the *limits of uniformity* compatible with the unity of the church.

*Topic 8.* We feel that the consideration of the terms under which autonomy is granted to local churches might take in view the history of the Roman Catholic Church's practice of removing the status of "missionary church" from locally established churches. The history of the relationship between Rome and the Roman Catholic Church of North and South America, as well as Africa, may be useful in this matter. In this connection, the Anglican model of granting independence to missionary churches may also be instructive for the Orthodox Church.



*Topic 9.* We hold that the presence of the Orthodox Church in the World Council of Churches is a valuable witness of the apostolic and catholic tradition. We feel that Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement as outlined by the Patriarchal Encyclical of 1920 is an indispensable factor in Christian efforts toward cooperation and unity between Christian churches and communities.

*Topic 10.* We believe that in proclaiming Christian ideals to the world the church may explicitly call attention to what it has learned from its experience in the world concerning basic Christian ideals. Hence theological reflection is needed on the presence of the Holy Spirit in the world outside the church and the values of the world in the eyes of the church. Under this topic the following specific themes may be given special attention:

- (a) Justice and human rights;
- (b) Ethical Consensus on many important issues such as sexuality, cohabitation without marriage, abortion, medical issues pertaining to the preservation of life, and the like; and
- (c) Study of the roles and methods of effective preaching, Christian education, and liturgical celebration toward spiritual renewal, i.e., the nature of the experience of the living God over against contemporary secularism and the modern experience of the "absence of God."

### *Conclusion*

The agenda of the Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church has in view the status and unity of the Orthodox Church primarily in practical terms. However, these matters cannot be adequately discussed without raising deeper theological issues about the nature of discipline, unity, the church, the

Gospel, and life. The Great Council can settle the practical issues in order to strengthen the life of the Orthodox Church. It can also make a real contribution to the proclamation of the Gospel in today's world through the witness of an effective Orthodox consensus on important theological issues pertaining to the church's presence in today's world.

Washington, D.C.  
September 29, 1977  
(16th meeting)

**9. A Statement by the Orthodox and Roman Catholic  
Bilateral Consultation on Persecution  
of the Greek Orthodox Community  
in Turkey**

*Introduction*

Since 1965 in the United States, we the "Orthodox and Roman Catholic Bilateral Consultation," an official group of churchmen, university and seminary professors, have been investigating matters of mutual concern between Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches. The participants in this Consultation have been officially designated by the respective ecclesiastical authorities.

At our most recent Consultation which took place in New York City, January 24-25, 1978, this statement of concern was drafted, in the first place, by the Roman Catholic participants. They propose to submit it to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops of the United States, with the request that the Conference consider it as a matter of grave significance and take appropriate action. The Orthodox participants in the Consultation unanimously concur in the positions taken be-

low. This statement is issued therefore as a formal statement of the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Bilateral Consultation.

*A Statement of Concern*

In recent months the Turkish government has taken a series of injurious actions against the Greek Orthodox community in Turkey. This Consultation is deeply concerned about this grave situation that violates even the most basic human rights. The history of restrictive measures and outright persecutions by Turkish officials against the Greek Orthodox minority community, reflected in recent years by the closing of the historic Theological School of Halki, is already well known. However, in more recent times, further discriminatory measures have been imposed by Turkish authorities which limit the leaders of the Greek Orthodox community in the exercise of their legitimate religious rights. For example, millions of liras in taxes have been imposed by Turkish authorities upon the schools and churches of the Greek Orthodox community in Istanbul. At the same time, the Turkish government has refused to issue passports and permits for certain hierarchs and many Turkish citizens of Greek descent to travel abroad. By such actions Turkish officials have seriously interfered with the exercise of the worldwide religious responsibilities of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

These violations of human rights and religious freedom are in themselves reasons for protest. In addition, we, the members of this Consultation wish to underline the historic significance of the Orthodox See of Constantinople in its present geographical situation for witnessing to the continuity of the Christian church. The oppression of the Greek Orthodox in Turkey and the threat to the very existence there of the Ecumenical Patriarchate are all the more serious in this period when the cause of religious unity and world peace has been fostered by the growing relationships between the Ecumenical

Patriarch and all the Orthodox Churches with the late Pope John XXIII, His Holiness Pope Paul VI and with Christians everywhere.

We express our shock and outrage at these actions and we dedicate ourselves in fraternal concern to continued protests against these measures.

New York City  
January 25, 1978  
(17th meeting)

#### **10. Orthodox and Catholic Council Proposed— Can Become Vehicle of a Theology of Christian Living**

For the last decade or so a group of Orthodox and Catholic theologians have met twice a year to examine together certain fundamental issues that keep the two Churches diverse in belief and separate in organization and government. The Consultation is under the joint chairmanship of Archbishop Iakovos and Cardinal Baum. They both believe in the imperative need to bring the two great Churches into the closest possible contact in the face of the many contemporary hostile trends and practices that seriously threaten not only the effectiveness but also the very being of the entire Church as well.

Thus, the work of the Consultation is of paramount importance to all and indeed sacred, attempting—as it does in the measure of its resources—to pull together forces that had succeeded in the past in destructively violating the most obvious foundational Apostolic aphorism of the Christian ecclesia: Christ cannot be divided. As a matter of fact, this Consultation is for now the only ongoing dialogue between Orthodox and Catholics and its findings are received with great interest by theologians, congregations, and the central authorities of the two Churches, in Rome and Constantinople.

Up to about a year ago, the Consultation occupied itself with differing beliefs and practices that were of the utmost importance for theologians but of little direct import on the personal experience of the peoples of either Church. But the last and current subject of the Consultation, marriage, is of immediate and vital concern to all who take marital conjugation seriously as an experience of personal rights and obligations that no other human association implies or exhibits.

As the work of finding out and stating the differing positions in theory and practice on marriage progressed, many members of the Consultation came to realize that a theological statement of positions and a possible reconciliation between their respective most fundamental precepts on marriage would not by any means exhaust the subject; nor would it free them from the additional and equally sacred obligation of translating their theology of marriage into patterns of marital experience for our people.

A mere statement of theological positions, unrelated to the present day immense moral task faced by conscientious marital partners, would indeed be in line with past ecclesiastical attitudes we now attempt to remedy. Then, pronouncements were made primarily in pursuit of our own institutional aims but with little or no regard for the human situation around us. As someone said, however, if theology is what its name signifies, that is, reasoning about God, this reasoning is not done for the sake of God but for the sake of humanity. Thus, a theology that does not relate its aims and findings to serving the believer becomes an aimless contemplation worth no more than other such contemplations.

It was realized, then, that to tell our people that the concept of marriage as a sacrament is practically identical between the two Churches and to present them with the virtues of Christian marriage as patterns of personal conduct to be followed would do little or nothing to help them in terms of personal acquiescence, or of living in the context of so many

other types of relationships between a man and a woman that have gained a strong footing in today's cultural setting.

Actually, aphorisms of this kind tend to prove either counterproductive or, at best, leave people cold, disappointed and helpless. A lofty theology that looks at people from on high and expects them to climb to its own heights instead of itself descending to the level of their weakness, creates vacuums that sooner or later will be filled by all kinds of humanistic interpretations. Thus, any statement on marriage on the part of a body of this synthesis and hopeful expectations should encompass much more than theological conclusions.

This is the first time in a thousand years that East and West have found a way to speak and listen to each other and then to speak to others with one mind and one voice on matters that surpass argumentations and quarrels about the Church as the instrument of institutional powers. Now, they seem to concern themselves with the Church as the peoples of God whose identity and responsibilities as Christians by far surpass their membership in one particular Church.

The Orthodox-Catholic Consultation could gradually develop into a National Orthodox and Catholic Council in the United States, with wide and effective representation of both Churches and with a scope including but not limited by theological dialogue. Since any separation of true theology from life is unrealistic and unproductive, this Council could become the vehicle of a theology of Christian living far and beyond mere dogmatical tabulations and argumentations, and could also create in the hearts of the peoples of the two Churches the inner sense of facing together the problems and visions of present day intelligent living and of responding together on the strength of their common sacramental life and ecclesial nearness to adversities, attacks, and all kinds of philosophies and lifestyles that violate the dictates of the Christian Gospel.

Beyond that, a Council of this kind could pronounce on

and seek remedies for a number of social and national issues that touch on occasion on the very quality of our peoples' lives and leave them—if unguided and unconvinced—in a state of helplessness and heightened susceptibility to dangerous preachings and practices.

Perhaps few of us fully realize the extent and depth of the feeling of security our peoples would have knowing that their two Churches—possessors of the genuineness of Christian antiquity—live after all the Christian experience together, and when speaking on contemporary problems derive their authority from the wealth and originality of their tradition according to which the soul of humanity has not changed throughout human development, in spite of humanity's advances in recognizing and assuming considerable control over natural and mental realities. Consequently, the Christ-centered essence of human experience remains and will remain the only way out of the difficulties and impasses in which individuals succeed in entrenching themselves on occasion.

Organizationally, the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops could supply the authority and determine the level, function, and constitutional perimeter of a body of this kind. Bringing bishops and other clergymen in frequent and informal contact can do much more toward unity than the most successful theological dialogues.

Considering the fact that dogmatical variance and division has been mainly the product of separate reasoning about God and his Church and of living the life of his Church apart from each other, the resulting estrangement and enmity cannot be eliminated but by living the life of the Spirit together just as we partake of the same national and cultural experience in this country and express ourselves via the same linguistic medium and thought patterns. The divine prompting exhibited by both Patriarch Athenagoras and Pope Paul in selecting

personal contact in preference to theological talking has established a pattern for all future dialogues.

Returning briefly to the subject of marriage as a striking example of what a Council of the kind sketched above can do, one must realize that the marital bond is extremely complex. It includes, apart from its religious character, a number of other experiences deriving from situations and influences that involve disciplines other than theology, such as, psychology, sociology, ethical theories, politics, etc.

To encounter successfully those trends and practices we consider opposite to the Christian nature of marriage, we should know, understand, and be able to refute the motivations and underlying forces that spearhead these trends and practices. Rejecting them on the strength of our theological positions might be self-evident and sufficient for us, but it is not necessarily so for many other people who are neither theologians nor that sufficiently imbued with the precepts of biblical morality on the subject. Thus, our refutation must be done on their own ground and by people who are experts in the disciplines that supply to these objectionable lifestyles their strength and appeal to the people who have adopted them.

This means that while the theologians will supply the foundation—our theological positions—to the arguments against these objectionable beliefs and practices, the arguments themselves must derive from and be of a dialectical structure that is understood by those who have grown up with an exclusively rational outlook on man and his cosmos. It would be of no profit to us and of no service to our people to require the latter to switch from their everyday rationality and scientific standards to a religious reality they find impossible to support by their daily experience.

Our Consultation will have to enlist the knowledge and talents of experts on the subjects we deliberate—whenever these deal with the peoples' lives—and on the conclusions we



intend to set before our congregations as standards of behavior. It is in the reality and ensuing relationships of everyday life that our people want and need guidance. Guidance and protection of this kind, coming from both Churches, would prove influential beyond the membership of our two Churches and would tend to establish norms not easily rejected by anyone. This, unhesitatingly, can be called real service to the people of God.

**Editor's note: Fr. Patrinos is the Ecumenical Officer for the Greek Orthodox Church in the United States and a member of the Orthodox-Catholic Consultation.**

Rev. Dr. Nikon D. Patrinos

11. JOINT RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF CHILDREN  
OF MARRIAGES BETWEEN ORTHODOX AND ROMAN CATHOLICS

Introduction

1. In this consultation's Agreed Statement on Mixed Marriages (New York City, May 20, 1970) reference was made to the spiritual formation of children of marriages involving Orthodox and Roman Catholic partners. The consultation affirms the position taken in that statement but now presents a more detailed explanation of its reasons for it.

Christian Marriage  
and the Spiritual Formation  
of Children

2. Our understanding of the spiritual formation of children is based on our common understanding of Christian marriage as a sacrament, as expressed in our Agreed Statement on the Sanctity of Marriage (New York, December 8, 1978). Christian marriage is a vocation from God in which the liberating effect of divine love is experienced through human love. This love expresses itself in permanent commitment to mutual fidelity, help and support in all aspects of life, spiritual as well as physical. It also expresses itself in the generation of new life--that is, in the procreation and nurture of children--again, on both the spiritual and physical levels. A primary responsibility of parents therefore is the spiritual formation of their children, a task which is not limited to church membership and formal religious education but extends to all aspects of their lives.

Church Community  
and the Spiritual Formation  
of Children

3. Christian marriage also has a social dimension which extends beyond the partners and their relatives. Through marriage the partners are integrated in a new way into the church community. Just as the marriage partners have a responsibility for the building up of the church, so the church community itself has a responsibility to each Christian family to foster its life of faith. In particular the community shares in the responsibility for the spiritual formation of children.

Current Practice

4. Practical difficulties often arise in discharging this responsibility, especially in mixed marriages. Today each of our churches insists that the children of such marriages be raised within its own communion, on the grounds that this is in the best interests of the child's spiritual welfare, thus presuming that one of the parents will relinquish the chief responsibility to the other. Yet if the purpose of the general law is indeed the child's spiritual welfare, its application should be guided by a prudent judgment concerning what is better for the child in the concrete situation.

### Practical Recommendations

5. The Orthodox/Roman Catholic couple contemplating marriage should discuss the problem of the spiritual formation of children with both their pastors. Both parents should be urged to take an active role in their children's spiritual formation in all its aspects. Pastors should counsel the parents, and their children as well, against indifference in religious matters, which so often masks itself as tolerance. Since unity in Christ through the Spirit is the ultimate basis and goal of family life, all members of the family should be willing, in a spirit of love, trust, and freedom, to learn more about their faith. They should agree to pray, study, discuss, and seek unity in Christ, and to express their commitment to this unity in all aspects of their lives.
6. Decisions, including the initial and very important one of the children's church membership, rest with both husband and wife and should take into account the good of the children, the strength of the religious convictions of the parents and other relatives, the demands of their consciences, the unity and stability of the family, and other aspects of the specific context. In some cases, when it appears certain that only one of the partners will fulfill his or her responsibility, it seems clear that the children should be raised in that partner's church. In other cases, however, the children's spiritual formation may include a fuller participation in the life and traditions of both churches, respecting, however, the canonical order of each church. Here particularly the decision of the children's church membership is more difficult to make. Yet we believe that this decision can be made in good conscience. This is possible because of the proximity of doctrine and practice of our churches, which enables each to a high degree to see the other precisely as Church, as the locus for the communion of men and women with God and with each other through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.

### Conclusion

7. In no way do we mean to minimize differences that still exist between our churches; and we are well aware of the difficulties which these differences may present for those in mixed marriages. Yet we are convinced that such marriages can be a means of spiritual growth both for the partners and for their children.
8. We are also aware that our joint recommendations on the formation of children of marriages between Orthodox and Roman Catholics differ in certain respects from the present legislation and practice of our churches. Yet we believe that our position is theologically and pastorally sound. Therefore we would urge our respective hierarchies to consider ways of reformulating legislation and pastoral guidelines in this area and of communicating this on the parish level, so that the spiritual growth of both the partners and the children of such marriages may better be fostered.

New York City  
October 11, 1980

12. A Response to the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church regarding the Munich Document:  
 "The Mystery of the Church and of the Eucharist in the Light of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity"

prepared by the Orthodox/Roman Catholic Bilateral Consultation in the United States.

1. The Munich common statement of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church regarding "The Mystery of the Church and of the Eucharist in the Light of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity," dated July 6, 1982, is a landmark in the recent history of Orthodox/Roman Catholic relations. The text is a creative statement about the high degree of agreement that already exists between the two churches. The Commission deserves commendation for its achievement. What follows is a response to the text on the part of the Orthodox/Roman Catholic Consultation in the United States established by the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of America (SCOBA) and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) which was reached unanimously at its 26th meeting, May 23-25, 1983 in New York.

2. That a joint statement was published by the Commission is in itself an important achievement. The text moves us farther away from our history of mutual estrangement and allows the churches to speak with one voice on matters at the heart of the Christian faith. The decision to publish the text promptly for wider reaction was welcome. We hope that this procedure will be continued in the future.

3. The text requires careful reading, and to some its language may seem unfamiliar, despite many biblical and liturgical allusions. A clear attempt is made not to impose specific terminologies of either Roman Catholic or Orthodox theology. Rather, the text appropriately uses new formulations as needed in order to hand on the faith to men and women of our time. For example, use of the word "event" (événement, to gegonos) found in I, 1, bis; I, 2; I, 3; I, 4b; I, 5d, para. 2; II, 1, para. 3; II, 2, para. 3, is helpful in stressing the work of the Trinity. However, this word as well as others such as "sacrament," "mystery," "word," and "energies," are open to various interpretations and thus call for further elucidations.

4. We have several suggestions which, if followed, might facilitate discussion and assessment of this and future documents.

(a) It is not always clear to whom the document is addressed. If addressed to the Church at large, then much in the text is inaccessible.

(b) Criticism of omissions or overemphases could often be forestalled if the document were situated within the context of the long-range agenda of the Commission. The publication of an annotated text of this agenda would be appreciated.

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(c) Publication of commentaries or background papers by the Commission would be helpful in explicating the document and would make it more accessible to non-specialists.

(d) In formulating texts, a more systematic and consistent numbering of paragraphs would be desirable.

(e) The document itself recognizes that this is but "the first step in the effort to fulfill the program." It is to be hoped therefore that this text will be reformulated in the light of critical responses and the developments of other sections of the dialogue. This process has proved extremely useful in other international dialogues.

5. Our Consultation took note of several specific doctrinal themes raised in the document. In discussing the synaxis, or eucharistic celebration (especially in I, 5, b, c and I, 6), the text states clearly that the eucharistic celebration is the anamnēsis of the work of Christ as savior made manifest by the Spirit, but also that the Spirit transforms the sacred gifts into the body of Christ in order to effect the growth of the Body of Christ which is the Church. Particularly welcome are the assertions that "the entire (Eucharistic) celebration is an epiclēsis, which becomes more explicit at certain moments" and that "the Church is continually in a state of epiclēsis" (I, 5, c).

6. The formulation of the relationship between the Son and the Spirit (I, 6, para. 2), though it does not address the filioque question directly, does state that "the Spirit which proceeds from the Father (Jn 15:26) as the sole source in the Trinity ... is communicated to us particularly in the eucharist by this Son upon whom he reposes in time and eternity." The text thus gives a solid basis for further statements about the Spirit in the treatment of the mission of the Spirit. Indeed the entire section which discusses the relation of the Spirit's activity to the historical mission of Christ and to the mystery of the Risen Christ (I, 4 to I, 6) is well formulated.

7. Collegiality and the synodal nature of the church are affirmed by the references to "communion in the same patriarchate" or "in some other form of regional unity" or "communion between sister churches" (III, 3, 6), as well as to a bishop's "solicitude for the local community" and "his care for the Church spread throughout the world" (III, 4, para. 2). However, the appeal to the term "sister churches" is unclear. Does it refer to patriarchates or jurisdictions in full communion or to the special relationship between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church?

8. The expression the "episkopē of the entire Church" (III, 4, para. 2) needs further exploration in the context of the separated Christian churches. The way in which the document focuses on the "local church" through eucharistic ecclesiology does not readily correspond to the actual situation of bishops and their churches today. Although this

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model offers some useful insights, the character, numerical size, and geographical extent of most local churches makes application problematic.

9. Regarding the office of episkopos and other institutions, such as ordination and sacramental practices, the text does not pay sufficient attention to historical development, creating an impression of oversimplification. For example, the appeal to the "uninterrupted series of episcopal ordinations, beginning from the holy apostles" (II, 3), or the "college of the apostles" (III, 4, para. 2) needs refinement. Other statements about apostolicity and apostolic faith are better developed, as in II, 4, para. 2. Further, the use of New Testament texts lacks rigor and does not coincide with the requirements of responsible historico-critical scholarship.

10. The text should have discussed the diversity of ministries within the one body (cf. II, 1, para. 4); likewise, some reference to the priesthood proper to all the faithful would have been in order. The relation between the bishop's ministerial priesthood and that of all the faithful is not adequately explored. The relation of the bishop and the presbyter is not sufficiently addressed. We hope that significant aspects of these major problems will be addressed in future documents.

11. The sections of the document regarding kerygmatic aspects of koinonia and its relationship to the "unity in faith" (II, 2, para. 3) and "communion in the same kerygma, and so in the same faith" (III, 3, b, para. 2) need clarification. It is not always apparent that the text sufficiently distinguishes between faith (or credal) affirmations and theological explanations about faith that need not require unanimity.

12. The document is open to criticism for not sufficiently recognizing the social dimensions of church and eucharist. It seems to prescind from concrete social problems. When mention is made of social issues, this seems to be an afterthought (e.g., II, 4, para. 3). When the text mentions the transformative aspects of church and eucharist, this is usually in the context of individual repentance, conversion, self sacrifice (cf. I, 6, para. 3; II, 1, para. 3; II, 2, para. 2). It neglects the Christian's vocation to contribute to the transformation of society (I, 1).

13. The sections which discuss the eucharist should situate it more clearly in the context of Christian initiation and the total sacramental life of the Church. It is encouraging therefore that the International Commission has taken as its next task the study of the sacraments of baptism, chrismation and the eucharist and the unity of the Church.