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ABSTRACT

OBEDIENCE AS A THEME IN THE DOCUMENTS OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

This thesis is an analysis of Vatican II's handling of the theme of obedience, conducted from the standpoint of systematic theology. It is not a study of the development of ideas about obedience during the course of the Council; it treats Vatican II's documents as a finished corpus, using earlier magisterial statements as historical background against which to discern shifted emphases in the theology presented by the Council.

In Chapter I we establish obedience as a pivotal idea in relation to which the co-ordination of Vatican II's ecclesiology, anthropology, and doctrine of God may be examined. Chapters II-V consider the place of obedience in the Council's ecclesiology; we find obedience correlated with a view of authority rooted in the concept of the 'invitatory sign'. This view modifies the formerly predominantly jurisdictional emphasis in the Catholic perception of authority, by integrating jurisdiction more closely with kerygma and sacrament. However, although the jurisdictional element of authority is thus modified and relativised, it remains important. We find that Vatican II's ideal of obedience is generally logically consistent with its view of authority, but is not necessarily socially plausible. In matters of doctrine, issues are made more complex still by the Council's shift in epistemology. This, together with the fresh kerygmatic and sacramental perspectives, made it inevitable that infallible teaching should prove contentious after the Council.

Chapter VI forms a bridge: The implications of Vatican II's concept of ecclesiastical obedience for anthropology and the doctrine of God are drawn out. In Chapter VII we test hitherto unexamined passages from the documents against these implications. Generally, we find broad theoretical consistency throughout Vatican II's presentation of the divine-human relationship in all its 'moments', of which obedient Church-membership is one. The extent of this consistency, together with remaining tensions, are summarised in the Postscript.

OBEDIENCE AS A THEME IN THE DOCUMENTS OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

by

Margaret Ann Hutchison

A thesis presented to the University of Durham for the Degree of Ph.D., after research conducted in the Department of Theology of the same university.

1980 A.D.

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14. MAY 1984

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DECLARATION

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PREFACE

1 Aims of the Thesis

This thesis takes the form of an analysis of a highly significant set of documents - those produced as a result of the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council ("Vatican II") (1962-1965). The Roman Catholic Church is the largest single section of Christendom and this, its most recent General Council, is commonly seen as a turning point in its modern history. It is the task of the present thesis to examine the Council's handling of the theme of obedience which, particularly since the time of the Enlightenment, has been the subject of controversy in the pattern of Western thought. We shall consider the question of obedience from two interlocking angles. Firstly, we shall consider the way in which the Council presented the ideal pattern of Christian obedience as it should be rendered in the Church; secondly we shall examine the extent to which this view of ecclesiastical obedience was co-ordinated with Vatican II's picture of the total relationship between man and God. The aim of the thesis, then, is to answer the question, 'was the theme of obedience treated coherently by the Second Vatican Council, and was it correlated consistently with co-ordinate doctrines?'.

Documents such as those of Vatican II may be analysed in a variety of ways; the formal and classical way to assess them would be to analyse their official character according to their form of expression and the canonical status of the Council. Thus they could be related to other documents of the Roman Catholic Magisterium (1) with regard to their comparative weight and authority. This approach will not be taken here. As has been pointed out, the classical, official treatment does not provide an adequately scientific set of hermeneutical principles for the historical understanding of magisterial documents (2), and it is the entire Church which

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(1) I use the term 'Magisterium', with an upper-case 'M', in the modern sense in this thesis: that is, to refer to the body of persons who, severally and corporately, hold teaching authority of various degrees in the Church. I use the same word with a lower-case 'm' to refer to the office which they hold (see Chapter II, pp. 85-90).

(2) See Nicholas Lash, Change in Focus (London, 1973) pp. 3f.

suffers thereby. In the vacuum which is left it is easy for those interested in magisterial teachings to treat them in a way which is subjective, partial, or both. On the one hand, in the case of Vatican II, it is possible to understand its documents purely in the light of later official commentary, or, on the other hand, to espouse a rather vague notion of the 'spirit of the Council', which leads to an inaccurate and possibly biased reading of the texts. Neither of these approaches answers the requirements of scholarly analysis, for neither locates the documents carefully and rigorously in their historical context; these approaches thus fail to show up important aspects of the Council's significance.

I believe that there are two major aspects to a critical, historical study of texts such as those of Vatican II; the complementary nature of these two aspects may be illustrated by taking the analogy of a tapestry. Firstly, the teachings of the Council may be considered in broad relief against the preceding historical background. In this way, the patterns of conciliar theology are thrown into view, like pictures woven into a contrasting plain background. Secondly, a close historical study may be made of the precise processes by which the patterns were brought into being; this more microscopic view focuses upon the threads of argument brought forward within the history of the Council, tracing their historical antecedents and trying to locate, so far as possible, the intentions which motivated those who framed the documents.

Whilst the second mode of approach focuses upon the intentions of the Council members, the first is to some extent more illuminating in relation to questions concerning how the teaching of the Council is likely to be received by the Church at large. Of course, the reception of the documents' meaning cannot be entirely divorced from the intentions by which they were inspired. Apart from official commentary provided by the Magisterium upon the teaching it gave at Vatican II, other commentaries and studies also elucidate the concerns and intentions of the Council's participants. Knowledge of these intentions, of course, enters into the process of reception. However, there is an area of intention and meaning which is perhaps never adequately illuminated even by detailed study of the course of events at Vatican II; this is the 'penumbra' of meanings attached to the schemata and final statements by those who voted upon them without actually making their intentions plain in so doing. Since many of the

texts incorporate compromises of one sort or another we know that this 'penumbra' is bound to have a wide scope; therefore, even detailed microscopic study of the Council's documents and history is not capable of supplying a clear-cut picture of the whole scope of Vatican II's theological significance. The broader form of study, whilst it cannot completely make good this lack in our knowledge of the documents' significance, can nevertheless serve as an indicator of the possible 'penumbra' of meanings attached to the documents' teaching by providing a useful perspective upon Vatican II's place in the broad development of Christian thought. It will be the task of the historian and the sociologist of a later age, as well as the theologian, to analyse the way in which the Council's teaching has, in fact, been received and interpreted in the life of the Church. However, the theological relief-picture, which is attainable even now, is one factor which contributes to the possibility of understanding the history of Roman Catholicism after the Council, even as that history is being lived and created.

It will be our concern in this thesis to concentrate mainly upon the broader type of analysis, in which the overall pattern of Vatican II's theological thought is thrown into relief against the background of magisterial teaching of the preceding hundred years. Necessarily, however, we shall also on occasion have an eye to internal processes of debate at the Council, in order to elucidate points and to keep the argument grounded upon known facts concerning the Council Fathers' intentions. In our study of theological patterns and themes we shall endeavour to avoid the pitfall of generalising about the 'spirit of Vatican II' by using a rigorous comparative methodology (see pp.11-13).

The two angles from which the theme of obedience will be studied have already been outlined (see p. 5 , above). In the second part of the thesis, when the question of obedience is studied in relation to its co-ordination with wider doctrines of the relationship of man to God, we shall be using the theme of obedience as a tool to open up the issue of the proper systematic correlations which should subsist between ecclesiology, Christian anthropology and doctrines of God. This is not to say that the thesis aims to present a complete picture of Vatican II's theology in any one of these fields; our study of them should bear the marks all the time of our starting-point in the question of the

Christian's due obedience in the Church. However, from this starting-point, represented by the earlier part of the thesis, we shall approach areas of the relationship between man and his maker which do not seem to be immediately expressive of a theology of human obedience. However, these areas of anthropology and of the doctrine of God will be shown to have integral links with the way in which ecclesiastical obedience is conceived and commended.

Why has the theme of obedience been chosen as a way of opening up questions of consistency and co-ordination within the theology of Vatican II? It has been chosen as a particularly significant theme because it has been a matter of severe controversy over the last three centuries within the philosophy and social thought of the traditionally Christian countries of the West. Because of this controversy, the doctrine of ecclesiastical obedience is an area in which there are likely to be shifts of emphasis in theology, for theology is a discipline which is not only determinative of behaviour and social patterns, but also susceptible to pressure from ideas and movements outside itself.(3) This is especially true in the area of ecclesiology which aims to be not simply theoretical, but also immediately and practically prescriptive for the life of people who exist not only as members of the Church, but also as participants in a wider culture and social life. In its prescriptions ecclesiology takes up elements derived from the sources of revelation, but also elements which are descriptive of the life of the Church as it concretely exists, or might exist, within the given social context.

In so far as an ecclesiology is descriptive of the life of the Church as it is actually lived, it gives theological ratification to that form of life. This weight of theological ratification may serve to maintain an atmosphere and form of life in the Church for some long time after significant changes have occurred in the social context in which the Church exists. In this way, for example, the atmosphere of the Ancien Régime, with its pomp, ceremony, and strict hierarchicalisation,

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(3) Robin Gill has put forward studies of theology which show its interrelationship with social factors in his books, The Social Context of Theology (London & Oxford, 1975) and The Social Structure of Theology (London & Oxford, 1977).

was frozen in the theory and practice of the Roman Catholic Church by theological justifications which outlasted the rise of democracy and egalitarianism in Western civil society by almost two centuries. There may come a time, however, when an atmosphere and form of ecclesiastical life promoted and reflected in theological formulations is no longer viable, because the pressure of social factors (which are often the vehicles of philosophical ideas) becomes too great.

It is in view of this complex interaction and intermesh between theological and social factors, which in the case of ecclesiology is particularly tight, that the doctrine of ecclesiastical obedience may be seen as an area particularly susceptible to shifts of emphasis. Wider, more speculative or theoretical questions concerning the relationship of man to God may, on the other hand, be less immediately in the line of pressure from theology's social determinants. Therefore, one might envisage a shift coming about in the concept of ecclesiastical obedience at a council such as Vatican II which would not be systematically reflected in other areas of theology. In this way our major question, concerning the co-ordination and correlation of doctrines within the thought of the Council, arises.

There are then, two major theological aims to this thesis; there is that of examining the co-ordination between doctrines, as outlined above, and there is also the aim of analysing the consistency within the Council's presentation of what it means to be an obedient Catholic. In connection with this latter aim, we may also posit a third, minor concern of the thesis - a concern which is not strictly theological, but which comes naturally into view because of the close intermesh between theology and social reality which exists in ecclesiology. This third concern relates to the question, 'is Vatican II's picture of ecclesiastical obedience socially plausible?'.

Even if significant theological shifts of emphasis have occurred within the Council's picture of the Christian's due obedience, and even if this is achieved without serious ruptures in theoretical co-ordination between doctrines, it is nevertheless possible to envisage ways in which such a teaching might fail to describe a plausible social reality. In such a case, the doctrine of obedience put forward might have concrete effects which were not intended or envisaged, as it comes into interaction with the Church's social contexts.

The question of the plausibility of Vatican II's teaching on obedience cannot fully be answered in this thesis; it is a subject which

requires the resources not only of theology, but also of the sociology of ideas, for its complete study. However, in Chapters III-V, in which we shall examine the way in which the theme of obedience was treated in the Council's ecclesiology, we shall consider the question of plausibility briefly at various points and, in Chapter V in particular (on the Council's doctrine of assent to 'infallible' teaching) there will be a sketch drawn showing points of likely inconsistency and tension between Vatican II's theological position and viable concrete practice.

To recapitulate: The first major aim of this thesis is that of analysing the Second Vatican Council's presentation of the ideal of Christian obedience within the Church, both in matters of faith and practice. Attached to this analysis, made on the theological plane, there will also be indications and sketches of the social plausibility of such a picture of obedience. The second major aim is to test the Council's treatment of the wider doctrines of God and man in their relationship against the picture of ecclesiastical obedience which has been uncovered, in order to discover whether the teaching of Vatican II is systematically consistent at this point, on the theological level. (In approaching this second major aim of the thesis, questions of social plausibility will be left behind, and the investigation will be made purely on the theoretical plane.)

2 Structure of the Thesis

Our study will take the form of an alternation between essays on the place and nature of the idea of obedience within a theological system, and analyses of the documents of Vatican II. The analyses will be carried out with the aid of criteria and typological motifs which have been presented in the theological essays. Thus, the first chapter will provide an introduction to the significance of the idea of obedience and its place in systematic theology; it will also provide a typological map showing the correlations between different possible treatments of obedience in ecclesiology and different ideas of God and man in their relationship.

This will be followed by four chapters in which we analyse Vatican II's teaching on the place and nature of obedience in the Church. In these four chapters the pattern of the teaching will be thrown into relief against the background of earlier magisterial pronouncements; in the first of the four, in particular (Chapter II),

we shall look back not only to documents of the immediately preceding hundred years, but also to the teaching of the Council of Trent, as we examine the theory of the nature of ecclesiastical authority. This study of authority will provide a necessary backcloth to the three chapters which follow, treating of Vatican II's presentation of obedience in the Church.

Chapter III will be a study of the way in which the Council viewed the ideals and concrete structures of practical obedience in the life and mission of the Church. Chapter IV will treat the general question of the necessity and nature of obedient assent to the teaching of the Magisterium in matters of both faith and morals. Finally, our analysis of the ecclesiological idea of obedience will conclude with Chapter V, in which we shall consider the question of the special assent which Catholics should give to teachings which are deemed 'infallible' and 'irreformable'. It is in this chapter that we shall examine Vatican II's doctrine most fully from the perspective of social plausibility.

In Chapter VI we shall return to theological reflection in essay form, as the implications of the four preceding chapters are drawn out and considered in the light of the typology of correlations which are presented in Chapter I. By means of this reflection the ground will be prepared for the final chapter of the thesis, in which the doctrine of God and man in their relationship, as the Council documents put these doctrines forward, will be examined for consistency with the conciliar concept of ecclesiastical obedience. Through this analysis we may discover the extent to which the teaching of Vatican II can provide a basis for a systematic exposition of Roman Catholic doctrine, in which ecclesiology is coherent with wider doctrines dealing with other aspects of the divine-human relationship.

The thesis will conclude with a Postscript, in which the methods and achievements of our study will be briefly reviewed.

3 An Explanation of the Method of Analysis Employed in the Thesis

I have already indicated that the basic method to be employed in analyses of the documents of Vatican II in this work is a comparative one. We shall compare the statements of this Council with statements contained in the official teaching of the Magisterium during the preceding century (that is, approximately since 1864, the

year of Pius IX's encyclical Quanta Cura, with its attached Syllabus Errorum). In the first section of Chapter II, however, we shall also look back to the teaching of the Council of Trent as the locus classicus in which many points of Roman Catholic doctrine were defined, in forms which have been maintained over the centuries.

It will not be the aim of this thesis in its use of historical material to give a complete or adequate picture of the development of Catholic teaching during even the last century; nor, on the other hand, would I wish to give the impression that the Magisterium remained static in its thinking during that period. However, for our purposes, documents of the past will be used simply as a backcloth, against which the distinctive features of Vatican II's approach to obedience and other doctrines may be thrown into relief.

In order that the patterns which are thrown into relief may be sufficiently detailed, the analysis will proceed by picking out shifts of emphasis in particular points and ideas. We shall also note cases in which there has been not simply a shift of emphasis, but a complete change in teaching, or the clear addition or omission of important notions.

The analysis of shifts of emphasis will depend upon judgements which I shall make upon the content of Vatican II's teaching as compared to that of previous decades. Despite the fact that an analysis of this kind must, perforce, rest upon the basis of personal judgements, I contend that it is a very significant methodology to employ when studying Roman Catholic official teaching. This is because it is in the nature of the Magisterium to avoid contradicting itself where possible; rather, it prefers to develop its doctrine through nice linguistic and structural variations in the composition of documents. These variations, sometimes very subtle, may be taken as lines of evidence which together converge upon significant shifts of theological emphasis within a broad 'penumbra' of meaning. I hope that the judgements which I make, and the conclusions which I reach, concerning these shifts of emphasis will justify themselves within the course of the argument. Occasionally we shall briefly review the process by which a shift of emphasis (or a clear change in teaching) has been developed by the Magisterium over the years. In all these procedures

the aim will be to illuminate the picture of Vatican II's position.

The question of shifts of emphasis brings into view the concept of a theological atmosphere . This is a term which I have already used in connection with the interaction between the theological enterprise and its social context (see above, pp.8f.). Shifts of emphasis in official documents may either reflect or create a certain atmosphere in the Church's life and thought. I have suggested that in the field of ecclesiology in particular, but also in other areas of theology, atmosphere does not depend solely upon the contribution of purely theological thinking, for the Church and its members are not immune from the influence of cultural and philosophical factors in their social context. Therefore, by examining shifts of emphasis in official Catholic pronouncements we may hope to signal both those influences by which it is conditioned, and also the ways in which it is creative of, or contributory to, a new atmosphere within the Church's life and thought.

The comparative method by which shifts of emphasis are located will be most extensively used in Chapters II-V, where we analyse Vatican II's concept of ecclesiastical obedience against its historical backcloth. When we come to Chapter VII (the testing of the Council's picture of God and man in their wider relationship for coherence with the idea of ecclesiastical obedience) the question of what emphases have shifted will be secondary to our quest for inter-doctrinal co-ordination. However, once again for the sake of illumination, the anthropology and doctrine of God put forward by Vatican II will occasionally be set against a backcloth of previous magisterial teaching, so that particular patterns of ideas may be highlighted.

4 A Survey of some Recent Writings, and of their Relevance to the Subject of this Thesis

It is obvious that the immediate correlate of <u>obedience</u> is <u>authority</u>. Now, authority in the Church has been of considerable interest to theological writers, and particularly in ecumenical debate, over the past few years. However, all too often studies of the question of authority are concerned not so much with its nature, but

simply with who exercises it. (4) Questions about the nature of authority are of great theological significance, because the answers given to them should indicate in what way persons are able to represent the authority of God to others, and also the character of this God whom they represent, and the significance for men of his authority, and its representations.

By orientating this thesis not simply upon the question of authority, but rather upon that of obedience, I believe that we shall cover not only all the issues concerning authority's nature which were just mentioned, but also issues concerning the nature of man himself - his capacity to obey, and the forms his obedience can take. By studying the theme of obedience in the documents of Vatican II our analysis will therefore be both broader than one which is only concerned with the theme of authority, and also less likely to over-emphasise the well-worked question as to who exercises authority, while neglecting that of its inner nature and role.

One of the most significant books from the point of view of this thesis is, however, directly concerned only with authority as its central topic. It is the work of a French sociologist, Pierre Hégy, who presented it as a thesis at the University of Paris X in 1972, and subsequently published it under the title, L'Autorité dans le catholicisme contemporain: du Syllabus à Vatican II. (5) In this book Hégy takes as his starting point the work of Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault on the theory of signs ('semiology'). He argues that up to the time of Vatican II, Roman Catholicism worked with a classical theory of language, (6), in which fixed and immutable meanings of theological formulae were believed to be transparent to metaphysical truth. In such a theory, the linguistic sign in its determinate context of relationship with other signs was seen as being an absolutely adequate "representation of the representation" of truth. (7) That is to say,

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(4) This was a significant complaint brought against the Statement on Authority issued by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission in 1977. (See Professor Geoffrey Lampe's speech of February 1977 to the General Synod of the Church of England, reprinted in Theology, 80, (1977) p.362.)

(5) Paris, 1975.

(6) A classical theory of language was current in secular philosophy from the beginning of the seventeenth century until the time of the French Revolution, according to Barthes. (See Hégy, pp. 18ff.)

(7) The phrase, "representation of the representation" is Foucault's. (See Hégy, pp. 18ff.)

man could apprehend the determinations of truth correctly in abstractive notions, and his language could then be transparent to this notional apprehension. At the same time, the entire structure of ecclesiastical authority was seen as a 'representation' of the structure of the heavenly Jerusalem. (8)

By contrast, modern theories of the sign highlight the extent to which language is formed 'from below', bearing the marks of the history and culture to which it belongs. Therefore, knowledge, which is mediated through language, is conditioned by the transcendentals of language, work and history. The epistemological role of these transcendentals of understanding has been discovered as a fruit of Enlightenment thought. (9)

Hégy argues that the Second Vatican Council "was not only a revolution which came a century-and-a-half late, but it was also an incomplete revolution . . . this Council touched every field of religion's life with the exception of the ecclesiastical power structure." (10) He claims that the modern theory of the sign was employed by Vatican II in every area of theology except that concerned with authority. For example, in the field of biblical study an historical-critical approach was admitted, supplanting earlier methods of imposing upon the biblical text a fixed and a-historical 'representation'; (11) the Council recognised a variety of human cultures, within which the Church exists as a fully historical sign; (12) finally, it also worked within the scope of a modern theory of the sign when it employed the concept of "signs of the times" as the framework for the theology of the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, (Gaudium et Spes). (13) However, despite all this, when talking about authority the Council continued to use a classical, a-historical theory of the sign as a representation of the immutable and transcendent truth and authority

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(8) Hégy, pp. 56ff.

(9) ibid p. 27

(10) ibid p. 15

(11) ibid p. 47

(12) ibid pp. 161f.

(13) ibid pp. 196f.

of God. The result, then, was inevitable, in Hégy's words:

> ". . .Vatican II made a crisis in the Church unavoidable, because the Council Fathers had put forward a new definition of the sign without daring to touch the power structure inspired by the concepts of another age." (14)

I have found Hégy's work very illuminating, and my debt to him will be obvious, particularly in Chapters II, IV and V of this thesis. However, he tends to class theological statements rather too absolutely as either classical or modern in their underlying conception of the sign. As a result, he passes over some real, though subtle, shifts of emphasis which have occurred in the teaching of Vatican II even in regard to questions of authority. It is my aim to highlight these shifts and nuances more delicately than Hégy's methods allowed. In addition, although my analysis indeed bears a debt to Hégy, the subject of this thesis is obedience, and not simply authority. The kind of obedience which is demanded of Christians depends not only upon the way in which God's authority is known and represented in the Church, but also upon the nature of God, the nature of man, and the nature of man's final end.

This brings us to a consideration of another recent book; Philip Sherrard has argued in his work, Church, Papacy and Schism: a Theological Enquiry (15), that differences in ecclesiology are rooted in different concepts of the very being of God and of man. The book is written from an Eastern Orthodox standpoint and locates the variations in the doctrines of God and man, which lie at the root of different Eastern and Western ecclesiologies, in the sphere of essences and ontology. Sherrard holds that the Roman Catholic theory of the Church, and of authority within it, expresses the idea of an 'ontological gap' between God and the created world - a gap which he believes is not to be found in patristic thought, which rather sees both Church and world as 'epiphanies' or 'theophanies'. (16) He goes on to argue that Western ecclesiology does not only posit a gap between the visible

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(14) ibid p. 238

(15) London, 1978.

(16) See Sherrard, pp. 41f.

aspect of the Church and the realm of the uncreated on the level of ontology, but also heightens this sense of separation through the influence of its doctrine of human fallenness. This separation of man from God is at the basis of the mediatorial authority structure of Roman Catholicism. (17)

By contrast to that of the Roman Catholic Church, Sherrard presents an ecclesiology in which the Church appears as a "theandric reality" (18), and which is related to an anthropology in which the basic unity between God and man is emphasised, despite the Fall. (19) This argument has a distinctly polemical flavour, but it is nevertheless a very instructive example of the way in which systematic theology should co-ordinate ecclesiology with wider doctrines of God and man.

In the present thesis we shall not concentrate so much as Sherrard's book upon the formal structure of authority in the Church (for he is concerned to show that the doctrine of papal primacy is no merely 'accidental' feature of Catholic ecclesiology, upon which suitable compromise might be reached with the Eastern Church) nor shall we be so concerned as he with the doctrine of the inner nature of the Godhead. Rather, we shall look more closely at issues concerning God and man in their relationship to each other; in the case of man, we will find that he is ontologically defined in the terms of this relationship. In the case of God, however, our study will tend to focus more upon his outward 'moral' qualities than upon the inner-Trinitarian relations. (20) The moral qualities which characterise him in his

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(17) ibid. pp. 58-60

(18) ibid. p. 78

(19) ibid. pp. 80f.

(20) Of course, ultimately our understanding of the mode of God's relationship to us must itself be co-ordinated with a doctrine of his essential inner nature. It is such a reassessment of the doctrine of God for which D.M. Mackinnon argued in an illuminating talk, which was published in 1969. He called for "a deep renewal of the Christological, indeed of essential Trinitarian understanding," to be based on the revelation of the "mysteries of the self-revealing, the self-giving, the serving God" seen in the Incarnation. ("Authority and Freedom in the Church", in The Stripping of the Altars (London, 1969) pp. 59 and 58.
It is particularly interesting for us that in Mackinnon's article we are led to consider fundamental doctrines of God by reflecting on questions of authority and obedience in the Church. However, in the present study we shall not be able to venture into the field of re-assessing doctrines of God's very essence, because the material afforded by Vatican II in that area of theology is not sufficient.

approach to men will be summed up by the use of different 'pictures' of God.

A fairly recent article by J. Moingt, entitled, "Le Dieu de la morale chrétienne" (21), seeks to answer two questions: Firstly, around what picture of God did early Christian moral thinking constitute itself? And, secondly, what new picture of God could lend itself to co-ordination with contemporary moral thought?

The question of the ideal of obedience which the Christian should render in the Church has, in large measure, a moral aspect; therefore the present study, being an attempt to correlate the picture of God presented by Vatican II with the standard of Christian obedience demanded by the same Council, can be said to follow the lines of Moingt's argument.

He presented in his article an historical kaleidoscope of Christian pictures of God, each correlated with a different ethical model: Firstly, the picture of Jesus the new Jewish legislator, or the crowning point of the line of pagan sages; next, God as the being who is supremely rationally ethical, with Christ as the rational Logos. This led to the placing of emphasis upon God's role as creator and cosmic legislator, rather than as saviour and legislator for his chosen people. From this point developed a legalism of natural law, while, "the severity of the judge came to veil the bounty of the creator, and the 'human' face of the Father of men was masked by the impossible visage of the justiciary," (22). With the Constantinian era came a slide towards positive laws, correlated with the picture of God as monarch. The Middle Ages combined features of both positive and natural law in its Christian moral theory, but consistently spoke of God in immutable categories:

> "The custom in theological discourse of speaking of God from the point of view of his abstract nature and his essential properties, imposed retroactively upon ethical discourse the fixist model of an original and irreformable institution, posited by the authority of an unchangeable past." (23)

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(21) In Recherches des Sciences Réligieuses, 62 (1974) pp. 631-654.

(22) ibid p. 640

(23) ibid p. 643

Like Hégy, Moingt speaks of a modern revolt against a-historical, immutable categories in theology and ethics:

> "In our days the revolt of liberty against the oppression of power and society is overtaking both this [fixist] ethical model and the picture of God of which it is the vehicle - a picture under which it has become difficult to recognise the God who is liberator of the oppressed, and saviour of the people." (24)

However, unlike Hégy, Moingt does not give an analysis of the function of language and institutions in representing God in a changing world. Instead, he looks at the picture of God of which language and institutions are the vehicles. He correlates the politicisation and de-privatisation of ethics with the 'signs' of the passion of Christ and of the liberating action of God in relation to his people. These are the new (or renewed) pictures through which God is to be apprehended: he is either the liberator of his people, or the one who assumes the passion of history, or, of course, these two ideas may be fused. With the re-historicisation of ethics moral precepts are seen as posing tasks orientated towards the end of history (the eschaton) rather than as demands for conformity with an eternal unchanging order. In such a theological and ethical openness to the future, man's work may be associated with God's creative Word in an eschatologically conditioned activity.

These are some of the key points of Moingt's analysis of a possible modern picture of God, correlated with new ethical orientations. His article is of importance for this thesis, both because it presents a strong argument for correlating different concepts of God with different presentations of ethical demand, and also because it gives a typology of such correlations. I, too, shall present a typology in my first chapter, and it will be in some respects similar to that of Moignt. However, it will not be built upon different ethical systems in general, but specifically upon various concepts of Christian obedience. In addition, it will extend to include a range of different doctrines of man, as well as pictures of God.

The three works which have been surveyed in this section differ in their relationship to the present thesis. Hégy's book, which is the only one of the three to deal specifically with the Second Vatican Council,

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(24) ibid p. 642

is the work to which I owe the greatest debt. It has provided me with the conceptual tool with which I shall analyse the function of ecclesiology in relation to the Christian's knowledge of the nature and content of God's authority. This same tool - the distinction between classical and modern epistemologies - also proves useful for analysing tensions within the document of Vatican II, and for assessing the social viability of their ideal of ecclesiastical obedience.

The works of Sherrard and Moignt are more tangentially informative; they provide examples of the way in which the correlations between theological ideas may be systematically investigated; they confirm my premise that ecclesiology is to be correlated not only with theories about how we know God's authority, but also with doctrinal pictures of his characteristic stance towards us. The present thesis therefore has resemblances to aspects of their approach, as it first analyses the concept of Christian obedience put forward by Vatican II, and then goes on to test its systematic co-ordination with the same Council's doctrines of God and man in the wider scope of their mutual relationship.

CHAPTER I: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE IDEA OF OBEDIENCE AND TO ITS PLACE IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

This chapter will fall into two sections: firstly, we shall view some of the approaches which have been taken to the idea of obedience within the tradition of the Western world; particularly we shall focus upon the critique of obedience offered by thinkers of the Enlightenment period, and we shall examine some of the effects this critique may have upon theology. Secondly, we shall consider the question of obedience in the Church, and a typology of correlations will be constructed showing the systematic links between differing concepts of ecclesiastical obedience and various ways of conceiving the divine-human relationship and the parties to it.

A) Obedience as a Problem for Modern Theology

We may define obedience as the act or disposition by which a person allows an external criterion or authority to direct his will, action, or thought. Obedience in thought and belief may be distinguished from obedience of action by being termed 'assent'. However, in certain cultural contexts assent and action are so closely related conceptually as to be well-nigh inseparable. It is from such contexts of 'concrete' thinking that there springs the close linguistic affinity between 'to obey' and 'to hear' in many Semitic and European languages; the man "who has ears to hear" manifests that fact by his action. His will and deed can scarcely help being under the compulsion of the word of authority which directs his thought, for, in such a context of concrete thinking, there is not the highly developed sense of separate faculties of the person, each with its relative autonomy. This idea of the separate faculties of personality, which supports the expression of conceptual distinctions between mental assent to propositions, obedience in action, and conformity of the will to the will of another, stems largely from Greek philosophy, and is foreign to the concrete thought of most of the biblical writers. For them, knowledge of God is inseparable from action, or 'doing the truth' (see Hos. 4.1, Jn. 3.21, I Jn. 1.6) and willingness for, or profession, of obedience are of little interest apart from action (see Mt. 21.28-32, Mt. 7.21, Lk. 6.46). Within this context of concrete, unitive thinking, obedience and faith are closely related ideas when dealing with man's proper stance

before God: We do the Father's will in believing in him and in Jesus Christ whom he has sent (Jn. 6.28f.); this is the "obedience of faith" (Rom. 1.5 and 16.26) which, without works is dead (see James 2.14-20).

An integrated idea of obedience is, then, firmly embedded in the biblical tradition. (1) It is co-ordinated with a variety of motifs by which Scripture interprets the overall structure of man's relationship to God: In the Old Testament obedience is presented as the proper response to God's self-revelation in the giving of the law; it is the appropriate human constituent of a covenant relationship. Disobedience, on the other hand, is consistently shown as the cause of disruption in man's experience of the blessing of God, whether in the Garden of Eden, or in the history of the Israelite nation. God desires the sacrifice of obedience not only from the group, but also from the individual (see I Sam. 15.22). In the New Testament the idea of obedience appears in co-ordination with the motif of the kingdom, as its "subjective, or human aspect" (2) and it is also supremely exemplified in the obedience of Christ himself (see Jn. 4.34, Rom. 5.19, Phil. 2.8, Heb. 5.8). His obedience has a redemptive effect on man's behalf. Finally, we may instance the connection between the idea of obedience and the teaching of Romans that all men know a law of God, which they should obey, written on their hearts (Rom. 2.15); it is because of this that the whole human race is accountable for its disobedience (see Rom. 11.32).

It might be argued that in the New Testament - and particularly in the theology of Romans - the idea of obedience is presented in a very idiosyncratic way. The idea of God's fore-ordination appears to rob man of the possibility of freedom in submitting his will - or not - which is a necessary presupposition of true obedience.

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(1) On the concept of Obedience in Scripture see further: Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, 3 (New York, 1962) pp. 580f.; Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 1, edited by G. Kittel (Grand Rapids, Mich.,1971) pp. 223-25; K.Vl. Truhlar, L'Obéissance des laïcs", in Laïcs et vie chrétienne parfaite, edited by G. Thils and K.Vl. Truhlar (Rome, 1963) pp. 237-244.

(2) J.A.Heyns, "A Theology of Obedience", The Reformed Theological Review, 32 (1973) p. 41.

Without entering into all the complexities of the debate about predestination we may simply remark here that St. Paul, in Romans and elsewhere, treats disobedience as something for which man is truly responsible, for which he has "no excuse" (see Rom. 1.20 and 2.1). Such responsibility in disobedience implies a corresponding responsibility in obedience, albeit that the grace of God may be absolutely necessary to free the will and actions from those things which hold them back from obedience (see Rom. 7.14ff.). The dialectic of grace and freedom in relation to human responsibility in obedience is traditionally a central topic of theological controversy; we shall find that the issue arises again later in this thesis; at this point we have to take note of the linkage between the idea of obedience and the debate over grace and freedom, and also of the implications of personal responsibility which are attached to the concept of obedience.

Even though obedience is firmly embedded as a fundamental idea in the matrix of Christian tradition it has nevertheless suffered criticism, and to some extent these criticisms have had effects on subsequent theology. The most forceful argument against the appropriateness of obedience as a human response and disposition arise from the philosophy of the Enlightenment.

The Enlightenment critique of obedience has two major aspects: Firstly, it is an attack on the obedience of assent, as it is afforded to propositions because of their extrinsic authority. The second aspect of the critique is concerned with the moral status of obedience as a determinative form for human action. We shall examine each aspect separately.

1. Obedience and Epistemology

The critique of assent to authoritative propositions is particularly associated with the empiricist tradition in philosophy; John Locke, especially, built up a synthesis which combined Descartes' method of 'systematic doubt' with the idea that human certainty can only rest upon experience. Following on from this, Kant made of human understanding the agent which gives structure to that experience, and thus foreclosed any possible knowledge of things as they exist in themselves. In this way, the authoritative teachings of the religions, concerning God and a transcendent realm, appeared to be making illegitimate claims upon human belief, which was closed into its own world of experience,

with the moral sense as its only indicator of anything 'beyond'.

In order to find a way out of the Kantian impasse the Idealist movement sought for a divine reality which was in some way continuous with a structural feature of human experience - life, nature, mind in its constructive activity, the 'whence of things', etc. - and human awareness was thus made part of a greater, enveloping whole which transcends the individual's experience. In this way, a form of transcendence was located whose authority intrinsically recommended itself to the human mind; it was the authority of a truth of which men might make themselves aware simply through rigorous analysis of the structure of their own knowledge and existence.

Another way of dealing with the Kantian foreclosure of transcendent knowledge was that put forward by Kierkegaard; he accepted the veto upon metaphysics posed by Kant, and stressed the reality of the absolute 'otherness' of God. This makes man's knowledge of him an 'absurd' fact, a paradox, a 'leap in the dark', possible only on the grounds of God's own radical action in bridging the gap between himself and man. This philosophical position entails a theology which is completely founded upon the authority of God's Word. However, the authority of this Word over man's intelligence is not bolstered by any extrinsic, formal features which should recommend it to our acceptance; this is why assent and belief have the aspect of 'absurdity'.

Finally we should take note of ways in which the impact of Kantian philosophy has indirect, as well as immediate, effects upon the pattern of theological thinking. Sociologists, and those treating questions in the philosophy of language, have developed the fundamental Kantian insight that the individual structures his own experience according to the 'transcendentals' of his understanding; but such thinkers have developed it at a level 'below' that of concern with the universal transcendentals of space and time, showing how cultural factors of language and conceptuality condition human knowledge (see the Preface to the present thesis, pp. 14f.). Thus, even if we can say with confidence that by some revelational breakthrough we have access to truth about the transcendent, we cannot be equally confident as to our ability to express it in universally perspicuous terms. This is the ground upon which are built the various theories of conceptual relativism.

Is it possible, then, to assent to Christian doctrinal propositions with an assurance that they convey clear and true knowledge about God? The effect of the Enlightenment critique is to raise severe challenges against the validity of such assent as a grounds of knowledge; the individual is called upon to validate his beliefs by his own experience, or at least to assess the statements of external authorities for their inherent probability and aptness of expression. There might, however, be one area of Christian doctrine which would seem to be immune from some effects of the Enlightenment critique of assent; this is the area of doctrine which contains many avowedly negative, or paradoxical statements. These tell us some of the ways in which God escapes from the net of our thinking, and occupies a truly transcendent realm beyond our knowing. Are these doctrines proof against the critique which has been outlined?

One must conclude that even such teachings of the via negativa, or the Christological or Trinitarian paradoxes, do not escape the impact of the Enlightenment critique. These doctrines depend, for their construction, upon the use of various terms with positive metaphysical referents, if only so that these can be denied or set in tension with each other. Thus, the language of the Quicunque Vult is framed in highly classical form, even though it presents in sum a series of intellectual paradoxes. The linguistic structure does not, therefore, remain immune from the relativistic critique, while the paradoxical substance of the teaching remains in controversy with empiricist epistemology.

If Christian theology surrendered all claims that man can achieve or be granted any knowledge of God or the transcendent realm it would cease to have anything to say. If, on the other hand, it adopts an Idealist solution wholesale, and makes God totally continuous with an aspect of fundamental human experience, it loses the necessary sense of his transcendence as the truly 'other'. Such was the contention of Kierkegaard, and such, too, has been the conclusion of the Roman Catholic Magisterium over the past hundred years. (3) But,

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(3) Forms of Idealism leading to Immanentism were ruled out by the first chapter of Dei Filius (Conc. Vat. (1): Dogmatic Constitution on Catholic Faith, 24 April 1860) (Dz 1782/DzS 3001) and both Immanentism and Idealism were marked out by Pius XII as false, in his encyclical Humani Generis (12 August 1950) AAS 42 (1950) p. 563. (Dz 2306/DzS 3878)

yet again, the Kirkegaardian option is closed, to Roman Catholicism at least, because it was committed firmly by the First Vatican Council to the view that human reason is intrinsically capable of attaining knowledge of God by natural means. (4) The structure of Roman Catholic theological work has traditionally given a substantial place to philosophical apologetics and fundamental theology as prologomena to dogmatic and speculative theology.

We see, then, the possibility of knowing about God, the idea of his real, transcendent 'otherness',and yet the assertion of the capacities of natural human reason in relation to this transcendent object, are principles which we cannot expect to see simply yielded up in Roman Catholic teaching. However, this does not exclude the possibility that such a body of teaching might yet be modified through a dialectical relationship to Enlightenment principles, without completely losing continuity with its own past. (This is all the more true when reference is made to the highly sophisticated epistemological and metaphysical positions of St. Thomas and other scholastic theologians.)

In what ways might one detect the effects of the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment critiques in modifying a body of theology? The relativists' contribution might lead to a less confident certainty among theologians as to whether religious propositions can be treated as more than partial, fragmented, and culturally relative expressions of man's apprehension of the truth about God - expressions which might even, though not necessarily, carry elements of real error and misunderstanding along with the truth that has been grasped in human experience of God's revealing activity. Such a diminution of confidence might be evinced in two, closely related, movements: Firstly, that which places increasing weight upon the idea that faith is an attitude, and correspondingly removes emphasis from its epistemological function. Such a move both stresses the centrality of human experience ('faith is an attitude determined by the experience of encounter with the Lord') and also leaves room for the idea that the propositional content of faith may go through a process of clarification and development as the experience, which underlies it, itself develops or is more appropriately

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(4) Dei Filius, cap. 2. (Dz 1785/DzS 3004.)

articulated. Secondly, one might detect this diminution of confidence in the idea of assent to propositions, in the movement which produces a constant stream of reassessments and re-expressions of the corporately shared formulae of faith. This second move may be related to the first as its social dimension and consequence, or it may spring purely from changes in the theory of language.

Now, of course, Christian faith has always included within itself aspects both of relationship to God, and of man's proper attitude before him. Indeed, we saw in the first part of this chapter that faith and the active attitude of obedience in relation to God were organically integrated in biblical thought. Nevertheless, the articulation of knowledge of the divine object of our attitude of faith has to be hammered out in some way. The questions at the crux of our problem are 'can the formulae in which we express our faith in any sense be objectively reliable as descriptions of God and his stance towards us, or are they merely human attempts to articulate the attitude we hold in face of an inexpressible mystery?' 'If they can be reliable objective descriptions in some way, what are the criteria by which we should recognise this reliability?' Finally, 'what is the nature of this reliability - is it the reliability of language which corresponds exactly with the nature of the (super-sensible) object? Or is it the reliability of language which stands in an analogical relationship to its object, and which might, therefore, be altered if old analogies become inappropriate because of changes in human culture and experience?'

We see that there is a spectrum of degrees and types of objective reliability which might be attributed to propositions about God; the more the Enlightenment critique is accepted, the more such statements are reduced to being reflections of the human situation. Thus, where the veto on metaphysical or noumenal knowledge is fully absorbed, religious language is completely converted into language about man in his attitudes. Where the critique is absorbed only in terms of linguistic relativism, theology is set on a quest for proper canons of inter-cultural interpretation and understanding, and for proper criteria governing the development and re-expression of its own statements, for the truth about God is comprehensible only in terms dictated by different human situations. Here we should note that Roman Catholic theology has always formally acknowledged the analogical

status of language about God, but at some points in history it has treated these analogies as universally valid, because a static view of a single true human Culture was co-ordinated with a theory of analogy based on the abstraction of the concept from the object, rather than upon the dynamic movement of the human mind in making the judgement involved in an analogical statement. Thus, even avowedly analogical language had a classical representational structure (see Preface, pp.14f.). Modification of Roman Catholic epistemology by contact with the Enlightenment critique of assent to propositions may, therefore, be detected in either a shift towards a stress on the centrality of attitude and experience, or on a shift in the theological concept of analogy, or, of course, in both together.

2 The Morality of Obedience

I have mentioned that the second line of the Enlightenment critique of the idea of obedience was directed against the morality of acts carried out under heteronomous authority. Again, Kant figures prominently in the origin of this assault. He made man the centre of morality in two ways, thus abolishing any definition of moral action in terms of conformity of intention and action to the will of God.

The first sense in which man was put in the centre of Kantian moral theory is that 'humanity as an end in itself' was made the object of the moral imperative: "Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another always as an end and never as a means only." (5) The second way in which Kant made man the centre of morality was by making the human ethical consciousness, wherein we are aware of the categorical imperative of morality, the sole source of truly moral injunctions. Conformity with any kind of duty or command which is not imposed by the individual's own ethical reason is treated as a heteronomy which robs an act of any moral value. Therefore, the law or will of God cannot be a moral principle for man; 'God' appeared in Kant's Critique of Practical Reason simply as a postulated guarantor of the universe's hospitality to morality (6), while Christ

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(5) Supreme practical expression of the categorical imperative: See Kant, Foundations of the Metaphysic of Morals, edited by R.B. Wolff (Indianapolis/New York, 1969) p.54.

(6) See Kant, The Critique of Practical Reason, edited and translated by L.W. Beck, (with other writings by Kant on moral philosophy) (Chicago, 1949) pp. 235ff.

is alluded to in Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone as an archetype of conformity to moral duty, but not as a concrete example to be heteronomously followed. (7)

Kant's attack on the morality of obedience can be detected in two kinds of effect upon theology. In the first place, it has led to an exaltation of conscience over against 'objective', exterior religious norms. In its more moderate forms, this injection of concern for the primacy of conscience does not differ significantly from a traditional, scholastic idea of the rational creature's participation in the eternal law through a natural law inscribed upon the heart. However, in its more radical forms a theological coming-to-terms with the Kantian critique excludes all possible correction or guidance of the individual's decision by reference to any objective law whatsoever, as being an assault on free human responsibility. Thus, for example, one modern Protestant theologian holds that Jesus should be seen as having proclaimed "liberated spontaneity", rather obedience to an already-formulated will of God (8) and another traces the human moral and spiritual pilgrimage to its goal in "the courage to be". (9)

This ethic of human self-determination is closely related to the Enlightenment's fruits in epistemology and ontology, as we may see by examining further statements from the Protestant theologians just quoted. Dorothee Sölle specifically says that modern criticism of the entire concept of obedience should be radical, "simply because we do not know exactly who God is, and what he, at any given moment, wills. It is no longer possible to describe our relationship to God with a formal concept that is limited to the mere performance of duties." (10) In other words, this ethic of liberated spontaneity, in which obedience to exterior law is abolished, is fundamentally linked to an increased agnosticism about God and the transcendent realm, which are removed from the realm of our apprehension and understanding.

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(7) See Kant, Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone, translated by T.M. Green and H.H. Hudson (New York, 1960) pp. 54-60.

(8) See, Dorothee Sölle, Beyond Mere Obedience (Minneapolis, 1970) title to Ch. 5.

(9) See, Paul Tillich, The Courage to Be (New Haven, 1952).

(10) Sölle, op. cit., p. 20 (emphasis mine).

Paul Tillich, on the other hand, treats God more after the pattern of the Idealists. The divine is proximate to us, as the 'ground' or 'power' of Being. In positing this ontological bond between God ("the God beyond God") and man, Tillich lays the basis for his Christian ethic which is founded on the idea of theonomy rather than pure heteronomy or autonomy. Once again, however, the concept of obedience to an objective, exterior law becomes otiose. (11)

I have suggested that the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church is committed to positions which makes it impossible for it to admit either the idea that God is unknowable, or that he is to be found purely by means of analysing what is immanently part of human self-awareness. Therefore, this body of theology is not likely to absorb the concept of ethics which is correlated with these ideas to the extent which Protestant thinkers such as Sölle and Tillich have done. However, it may respond to the Enlightenment critique of heteronomously based ethics by placing increased stress on the importance of conscience, and by emphasising more the ways in which moral action is a self-realisation of the person rather than a sheer conformity to external authority.

In addition, a theological ethic which is responsive to the philosophy of the Enlightenment and modern eras will tend to identify the will of God with that which is self-evidently good for persons - for 'humanity-as-an-end-in-itself'. The demand of the Enlightenment and of subsequent humanisms is that our concept of the divine will should be derived from what we apprehend as being good for men, rather than vice versa. Thus, the enhancement of those human values which may commonly be agreed between believers and non-believers takes the centre of the stage as the determining principle of a modified Christian ethical theory, rather than the a priori concept of an objective law of God, whether positive or natural. According to the canons of commonly acceptable human values, ascetical, 'negative' and self-restrictive actions, taken sheerly out of obedience to what is conceived to be God's command, will not be seen as morally valuable, but rather as irrelevant or inimical to true morality. On the other hand, actions taken with a view to changing the human order for the better in the future will tend to be highly esteemed.

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(11) Systematic Theology (London, 1953) pp. 163-170.

When humanistically-based views of morality are absorbed within Christian theology this has significant implications for the doctrine of God's relationship to man. By identifying the good-for-man with what is absolutely good, in an unqualified way, such a theological position logically implies that the will of a supremely good God must similarly be fully orientated on 'humanity-as-an-end-in-itself'. This bears with it the implicit suggestion that God cannot will the eternal loss or frustration of the qualities of humanity in any person. Therefore, one might detect the influence of the humanistic Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment ethical theories in a theology which gave increased emphasis to the love of God for man, and to the universality of salvation.

Conclusion

In this section we have begun to see the central position which ideas of obedience occupy in systematic theology, and the reason why the subject has become a problem for modern thought. I have indicated some of the modifications which the impact of the Enlightenment critique of obedience may have, not only upon Christian ethics, but also upon epistemology and the doctrines of God's very being or nature. At the same time, I have suggested that a body of authoritative theology, such as the teaching of the Roman Catholic Magisterium, bears certain criteriological constraints within it, which make it impossible for the principles of Enlightenment thought to be absorbed wholesale. There may, however, be shifts of emphasis brought about by the dialectic of Enlightenment thought with traditional theology.

It is the first major aim of this thesis to analyse the effects of an epochal change in Western thought, ultimately attributable to the Enlightenment, within the theological shifts of emphasis which appeared at Vatican II concerning the controversial question of obedience in the Church. The second major aim is that of examining whether the influence of Enlightenment philosophy was displayed to an equal and correlative extent by shifts in the Council's basic doctrines of God and man in their relationship. In the section which follows I shall set up a typology relating different ways of conceiving obedience in the Church with different ideas of the divine-human relationship. This will serve as a 'map' for our further analysis of the teaching of Vatican II.

B) Typology of the Relationship of Ideas of Obedience to other Doctrines

One way of asserting the significance of the idea of obedience in the structure of systematic theology is to point out that it is a standard by which man's relationship to God may be characterised and measured. As a concept attached to this notion of relationship, obedience bears with it the idea that man and God are beings who are distinct from each other in thought and will, whose concrete encounter or relationship is amenable to description in moral terms. Therefore, in a study of the theme of obedience, the ideas of distinctness in being, and relationship through morally qualified encounter, are premises for all that is subsequently said about man and God.

The central area of theology dealing with the conditions of the divine-human encounter is ecclesiology. This is not to say that the doctrine of the shape of the Church is the only theological discipline which treats of a possible, conscious relationship of man to God, for one may envisage forms of encounter which take place outside the Church. However, the Church is the place in which people become consciously related to God in a distinctively Christian way, because of the Church's role as bearer of special revelation to the world. (We may also say that any Christian consideration of ways of being related to God outside the Church must be explicitly co-ordinated with a pattern of ecclesiology.)

Because of the nature of the Gospel-message as special revelation, requiring communication through the teaching and preaching of an historical body of men, we may say that the Church is, in some form, the necessary mediator of revelation. But more than this may also be said about the role of the Church: In most systems of theology the Church is considered necessary as the community within which the new disciple of Christ, assenting to the message of the Gospel, lives out his faith. There may be two aspects to this necessity by which the Church lives as the community of discipleship: Firstly, the Church may be viewed simply as the social context in which the life of faith must be lived, existing in this capacity purely because of God's ordinance that there should be a people assembled in his name. Secondly, the Church may be seen as a necessary instrument or aid whereby individuals are enabled to live the life of faith in grace. These different concepts of the Church's role in man's saving relationship to God involve

different emphases and ideas in the presentation of the proper pattern of ecclesiastical obedience.

In this section I shall set up a typology of correlations between presentations of ecclesiastical obedience, concepts of the role of the Church with respect to the individual's relationship to God, and themes in Christian anthropology and the doctrine of God. This typology will then be available to us as a 'map', on which to chart the direction, extent and inner coherence of the doctrinal shifts of Vatican II.

It must be emphasised at the outset that the purpose of this tyoplogy is purely schematic and functional. It is not intended to be descriptive of concrete theological systems as they exist in their richness and complexity. We may cite Richard Niebuhr's explanation of the purpose of a typology in order to illustrate the point:

> "A type is always something of a construct . . . When one returns from the hypothetical scheme to the rich complexity of individual events, it is evident at once that no person or group ever conforms completely to a type. Each historical figure will show characteristics that are more reminiscent of some other family than the one whose name he has been called, or traits will appear that seem wholly unique and individual. The method of typology, however, though historically inadequate, has the advantage of calling to attention the continuity and significance of the great motifs that appear and reappear in the long wrestlings of Christians with their enduring problem." (12)

Because the typology which follows in this section does not aim to delineate complete patterns of ecclesiology, but only aspects of the doctrine of the Church which are related to the idea of obedience and the question of the individual's relationship to God, it differs from the fuller ecclesiological typology set out by Avery Dulles in his book, Models of the Church.(13)

We shall begin this typology by considering the role of the Church in mediating revelation, salvation, and above all, the

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(12) Christ and Culture (London, 1952) pp. 56f.

(13) Dublin, 1976.

authority of God, to the individual. Secondly, we shall consider the correlation between the content and extent of obedience which the Church requires of her members, and the different pictures of God which these requirements convey. Finally, we shall examine the doctrine of man which should be co-ordinated with different concepts of the Church's role in mediating God's authority, and different presentations of the content and extent of proper obedience in the Church.

1 First Part of the Typology: the Church's Mediatorial Role

The Church mediates the conditions necessary for man to have an explicit and conscious relationship with God because it exists, in some sense, as a sign of divine authority and truth. In this sub-section I shall put forward three motifs by which the Church's role as a sign may be variously characterised. The three motifs are not rigorously exclusive of one another; they can appear within actual, historical ecclesiologies in different combinations. However, each motif entails a different justification for the obedience of one member of the Church to another; therefore, we may say that the idea of obedience which is linked with a concrete ecclesiology derives from the relative dominance of one motif over the others, or from the particular way in which they are combined.

Because these motifs of mediation are not exclusive, emphasis can be shifted from one to another without the complete loss of any of them within a theoretical presentation of the Church's nature. It is such shifts of emphasis, of course, which are the subject of the analysis of the documents of Vatican II which will form the bulk of this thesis; therefore, the first part of our typological 'map' consists of setting out these motifs in artificial isolation. They are the motifs of Witness, Embodiment and Representation.

a) The Church's role as a witness to God

In this context, the word 'witness' is being used in a way primarily shaped by its association with the law-courts. I take it to mean a person who recounts events or words of which he has knowledge, in order to convey a share in that knowledge to someone else. Essentially, the activity of such a witness is not self-referent - he speaks of something which happened, or happens,

'outside himself'. In a secondary usage, the word 'witness' may be used of a person whose action or demeanour witnesses to something beyond himself in some way; similarly, even an inanimate object may bear witness.

In the specifically religious context, a witness does not merely invite others to assess the factual probability that such-and-such took place, but also invites them to enter into a particular interpretation of events and their significance. This interpretation has an existentially engaging dimension. A Christian witness, then, not only conveys knowledge of revelation, but also asks those whom he (or it) addresses to take up a stance of commitment based upon faith in the God of this revelatory activity. In this invitation, the Christian witness points beyond himself (or itself). It is the divine truth to which the witness points more or less adequately, which has authority over the minds and hearts of the hearers, and not the witness himself or itself. The hearer must assess the message which the witness bears, and only if this message commends itself as the expression of truth and existential authority should the hearer assent to it. His assent and commitment are not elicited by a quality of authority formally inhering in the witness, although they may be partially elicited by evidence of the witness's claims to reliability in conveying the message.

If we consider the Church under the aspect of a witness to the truth of God's revelation in Christ, and to the presence and authority of God in the world, we conceive it as having only subjective or invitatory authority over the hearts and minds of men - an invitatory authority co-extensive with its power to commend its message as the expression of divine truth. The Church's role as a witness is enhanced by its ability to claim special commissioning by Christ for its preaching mission; However, if one were to conceive the Church <u>solely</u> as a witness, this commissioning would merely appear to be an added motive for accepting ecclesiastical preaching as <u>persuasive</u>; it would not give the Church, or its officers, any formal authority over those whom it addresses.

In a secular and pluralistic world the Church appears in relation to the rest of humanity under the aspect, and with the authority, of a simple witness. However, there are relationships <u>within</u> the Church which may be amenable to description through use of

the witness motif, but which may also be described and justified in other ways. In particular, we are concerned with the exercise of authority within the Church.

If the exercise of authority in the Church is largely or solely justified by the concept that some Christians are specially qualified to bear witness of God's truth and authority to others, the form of Christian obedience which will prevail as an ideal will be that of considered responsiveness to authority, rather than that of acquiescence and formal assent. Such a pattern of authority and obedience will be tolerant of a wide variety of responses and actions flowing from the responsible decisions of those to whom the invitation of the special witnesses is addressed. Nevertheless, because of the natural exigencies of community life, there will need to be certain minimal norms of belief and behaviour to which obedience is due, but the way in which these norms are enforced will clearly be functional and orientated by the good of the Church as a social group. The administration and enforcement of these functional norms and requirements of Church life would, most naturally, be delegated to those in the community who have particular claim to be reliable witnesses to the truth about God. However, because in this sphere of enforceability their authority is functional, their demands for obedience would not <u>inherently</u> form part of the conditions for the individual's salvation; the requirement of outward obedience to the authorities of the Christian community would appear as strictly subordinate to the inner response of the heart which the individual must render directly to God, the source of the truth and grace which lead man to salvation. It is in this interior relationship, to which men are pointed by the witness of the Church, that the power of the Christian life resides, and not intrinsically in the externals of ecclesiastical relations.

Because a witness invites a considered response to his message, the Church's proclamation, seen as a piece of witnessing, may gain from the individual only partial assent, or an assent which is qualified by an act of reinterpretation or modification. Therefore, if the Church is regarded solely as a witnessing body, it may evoke a wide variety of forms of Christian profession, and also a variety of interpretations of the moral consequences and applications of the

Gospel. Yet, even within a witnessing body, variety can only be tolerated up to a level which the members consider compatible with a convincing witness to the outside world. This, then, in the spheres of belief and theory, is how the issue of minimal norms arises for the Church. However, different Christians might pitch the level of required unanimity at different points, and this can be a cause of disagreement. Hence, there is a potential root of instability lodged within the witness motif when it is the dominant aspect under which the Church is considered in its mediatorial role. Inasmuch as a Christian community and its theologians seek a way out of this potentially unstable situation by stressing the need for certain norms to be enforced, and certain key holders of the witnessing office to have powers of enforcement, they will tend to make another idea than that of sheer witness the dominant motif in their ecclesiology; the role of the Church and its office-holders will begin to be characterised by other ideas, which will justify a stronger exercise of authority.

b) The Church's role in embodying the divine presence and authority

In using the term 'embodiment', I mean to express the idea that God uses a created reality to manifest himself directly within the categories of space and time. We may break down the idea of embodiment into two further concepts: Firstly, the most direct and immediate manifestation of the divine presence may be termed an 'epiphany'. In this sense, a 'high' doctrine of the Eucharist may be said to teach that the consecrated species is an epiphany of Christ's presence. Secondly, one may use the simple term 'embodiment' in rather a weaker sense, to suggest that persons participate substantially in the presence and power of God's Spirit in such a way that they inherently share something of his authority. Therefore, although such persons do not embody God's presence in a <u>completely</u> unqualified way, they do, nevertheless locate his authority and action <u>in</u> themselves to some extent. In this sense, embodiment can be the subject of various degrees of guarantee and authority.

Eastern Orthodox theology tends to describe the entire Church as an epiphany - an immediate manifestation of Christ's presence in the world - because it is the "body of Christ", the "temple of the Holy Spirit", and the community of which God himself is the immanent

principle, assimilating human actions to his own. This concept of the Church posits the social body as an homogenous extension of the eucharistic epiphany around which it is assembled. Such a description runs into the problem of explaining the evident imperfections of the Church's concrete life, for these must be harmonised with the claim that the community is a divine-human reality operating according to a single divine-human mode of activity of which God is the subject. A solution may be sought in the idea that the Church has not attained full 'self-realisation'; on examination, this does not really solve the problem at all, but simply gives it another form of expression.

If the Church is seen as an embodiment of God's presence, in the 'weaker' sense, this idea may be related to that of the eucharistic epiphany through the doctrine that Christians embody God's presence because of their participation in the power of the sacramental epiphany, which is the 'focus' of creation's capacity to be a vehicle of the divine presence. However, the idea that the Church corporately, and its members individually, embody the presence of God may also be related to another way of conceiving the focus of the divine presence in the world: In its own way, Scripture, as it is read and preached in the Church, may be seen as an epiphany of God's Word and action. Finally, the doctrine of the Church's corporate embodiment of God's presence may be associated with no central focus at all, but simply flow from the doctrine of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers - a presence and participation that depends on no focused epiphany to be the instrument of its mediation.

Indeed, whether or not an ecclesiology co-ordinates a doctrine of embodiment with the idea of an epiphany, it will always express the idea that men can embody God's presence and action, by using some theology of the Holy Spirit. He it is who conveys to each Christian a share in the illumination and authority which is associated with God's presence to the world; through him, each Christian embodies, albeit imperfectly, the principle of truth and holiness.

From the doctrine of the general indwelling of the Holy Spirit, no immediate determination of the way in which authority should be exercised within the community can necessarily be drawn. Since all share in the divine power and presence by virtue of membership of the Church, the authority of one Christian over another is not directly indicated. Where, then, is supreme authority in matters of faith

and conduct to be located for practical purposes?

Upon the theological basis of the idea of embodiment there may be erected a doctrine of the supreme authority of the consensus of the entire community; this doctrine sometimes takes the form of attributing to this consensus the quality of inerrancy (although this is not its necessary consequence). However, whatever form it takes, the doctrine of the supreme authority of the consensus of the entire Christian community has an inner contradiction, arising from the fact that authority becomes actual not on the theoretical level, but in its practical enforcement, and particularly in its enforcement against potential dissidents. How is the dissident to be defined over against the authoritative whole? He belongs integrally to it until some means is found of counting him out of it. Therefore, when we find a theological account of Church history which appeals to the idea of the authority of a consensus when explaining the expulsion of heretics from the Church, we must say either that the concept of a consensus has been retrospectively imposed upon the account, or that the concept of a whole and entire consensus is not strictly interpreted, but that the notion is a cipher for the effective rule of the view of the majority, or, finally, that the authority of the entire Church has been delegated to particular representative organs, which have then proceeded to work quasi-independently in their enforcement of authority, while yet drawing their validity and justification from the fact that the Church universally participates in the Holy Spirit's presence and power.

When the authority of the entire Christian community is delegated to certain of its members, it is very often, and logically, delegated to those who are associated with any central focus or epiphany of God's presence which is recognised in that Church. That is to say, it is given to those who administer the sacraments or expound the divine Word. The powers allowed to these persons in an ecclesiology dominated by the motif of embodiment may be greater or less, but they will always be to some extent in tension with the idea that each individual Christian also embodies the principle of divine authority immediately within himself. This situation of tension between the representatives of community norms and the reality of individual participation in the Holy Spirit, will probably tend to

result in an exercise of authority which is largely negative; that is to say, those who define the Church's beliefs and enforce its discipline will tend to do so by setting up broad boundaries of permissibility rather than by putting forward positive and specific statements of what is to be believed and done. Only on occasions of genuine, near-universal consensus in the Church, might one expect office-holders, to whom authority is essentially delegated, to express positive and determinate statements of the Gospel's meaning and application. However, as we shall see, such occasions are to be considered a rarity and perhaps, in modern times, an impossibility (see Chapter V, pp.263-68).

Obedience in matters of faith within an ecclesiology dominated by the concept of embodiment appears, then, as something which allows scope for personal interpretation within a broad but defined boundary of what is corporately acceptable. In this way, it resembles the kind of obedience in matters of faith which would appear in an ecclesiology dominated by the motif of witness. (In fact, concretely ecclesiologies of witness do not exist in isolation; the power to witness to the Gospel is nearly always linked theologically with the idea that the person who is a witness is indwelt and inspired by the Holy Spirit, but that this indwelling does not formally guarantee the content of the witness's proclamation in every part.)

In matters of administrative authority within an ecclesiology in which the motif of embodiment is dominant, the concept of obedience will be co-ordinated with concern for maintaining and protecting the conditions under which embodiment and epiphany can be realised. Thus, for example, canon law may have as its main concern the enforcement of reverence for the Eucharist and the definition of the conditions under which it may be validly celebrated; or it may be concerned with controlling the liturgical exposition of Scripture, or the expression of supernatural charisms.

When authority is delegated by the community to certain persons - even to those who are particularly responsible for the administration of the sacraments or the preaching of the Word - there is a clear sense in which such authority exists <u>within</u> the Church and derives <u>from</u> it. However, the more closely such authoritative persons are bound to a focus of God's presence through their special

sacramental or kerygmatic role, the more likely it is that they will come to be seen as representative not of the community, in their exercise of authority, but rather of God himself. This brings us to our consideration of the third motif whereby authority structures in the Church may be justified, that of representation.

c) Representation of God in the Church

The idea that authority in the Church is 'representational' of the authority of God is, like some theories of the embodiment of the divine presence in the Church, closely associated with the concept of an epiphany or focused embodiment of God's power and presence at the heart of the community's life. However, when the motif of representation dominates, the emphasis is not placed so much upon the immediate participation which all Christians have in the power of the epiphany, but rather, upon the qualifications and authority enjoyed by those persons who represent Christ in bestowing on the community the focus of the divine presence. In particular, the representational motif is linked with the doctrine that Christ's real presence in the Eucharist is dependent upon a capacity which priests have for actualising it. This capacity is not rooted in the personal holiness, competence or charismatic authority of the priestly class, but rather in the fact that they occupy a place in an institutionalised hierarchy which has immediate divine foundation and commissioning for these sacramental acts. The sacramental hierarchy does not derive from the community, but rather, gives the community its constitutional shape.

We see, then, that an ecclesiology of representation takes the idea of a divine epiphany, and looks at it from the opposite angle from that taken by an ecclesiology of embodiment. Instead of concentrating upon the powers which flow outward into the community from participation in God's focused presence, it concentrates upon the question, 'how can the epiphany of God be guaranteed to the community, and what power is associated with being the agent of its actualisation?' The answer it gives is expressed in quasi-legal terms of divine institution and empowerment for the sacramental function. This function in turn translates concretely into power <u>over</u> the community, because those who are sacramentally ordained control the access which others enjoy to the divine epiphany.

Alongside the sacramental or sacerdotal hierarchy, and interpenetrating it, an ecclesiology of representation may also posit another aspect of institutionalised power - namely, a hierarchy of authority in matters of teaching and government. This, too, may be seen as the object of Christ's quasi-legal foundation, and the holders of such authority may appear formally as his 'vicars', or legal representatives.

The two aspects of institution - the priestly aspect, and the governmental and doctrinal aspect - are theoretically separable, but in practice they belong together as the form and substance of practical authority in the Church. All Christians who do not belong to the hierarchical structure, participate in God's presence to the Church only through being under the authority of those who are instituted as his representatives at the altar and in the cathedra of authority. (14)

The structure of the representational hierarchy draws its existence from Christ's two-fold institution, and it extends the authority of the incarnate Lord in history. Obedience to members of the hierarchial structure is obedience to Christ's commissioned representatives, and can formally be identified with obedience to the Lord himself. However, we must draw the distinction between persons who represent God because of their institutional status, and actions which represent the acts of God himself. The latter are associated with the sacramental function into which priests are instituted, but the capacity to represent God's actions in a guaranteed way does not extend beyond this into the sphere of government. There may, then, be cases in which those holding representational status in the Church can be questioned or challenged as to whether what they do or say adequately mirrors the divine will. However, for the most part, the acts of the representational authority are to be treated as though they were the acts of the one it represents. Thus, it has binding, formal authority

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(14) We shall find, in Chapter II, that the theoretical distinction between sacramental representation and the representation of God in government and teaching, does lead to some practical distinctions within Roman Catholic ecclesiology. However, the point holds good that the two forms of representation are organically related as the form and substance of effective authority in this kind of picture of the Church.

over the hearts and actions of those who wish to obey God. (For further consideration of the limits to representational authority in Roman Catholic ecclesiology see Chapter II, pp.81-85 and Chapter III, pp.174-79.)

In Roman Catholic theology the idea of the representation of God by men enters so far into the theory of teaching authority that some statements of the hierarchy are themselves given the status of representational acts. That is to say, although they are not to be identified with the Word or speech of God, they are nevertheless guaranteed distillations of knowledge about divine matters, representing the truth with accuracy through the means of appropriate analogical language. Such teaching is inerrant or 'infallible' in its representation of the truth, and it therefore cannot be reformed, although the knowledge it conveys might be developed or added to.

Whilst we have seen above that a teaching authority which sums up the beliefs of the community which embodies God's presence, or which lays down the minimal norms for a community of witness, is likely to put forward mainly negative, limiting forms of doctrine, expressing the boundaries of what is acceptable to the whole Church, a teaching authority which, on the other hand, claims to be immediately representational of the authority of God has more scope for proposing determinate, positive doctrines for the assent of Christians. The balance of the activity of the Holy Spirit is differently conceived, for more weight is given to his guarantee of the inerrancy of official teaching than to his direct enlightenment of the minds of ordinary believers as they meditate on the meaning and consequences of the Gospel. Knowledge of divine truth, then, is founded upon assent - assent to the representational teaching of representational persons, Christ's authoritative vicars in the Church.

Summary to first part of the typology

We have seen three basic ecclesiological motifs which each justify and locate the exercise of authority in the Church in a different way, and indicate a different scope and significance for the practice of obedience. In an ecclesiology totally dominated by the first motif, that of witness, the significance of obedience to the officers of the voluntary assembly of the Church would be so subordinated to the importance of the individual's judgement of what

obedience to God involves, as to lose any inherent value for the apprehension of truth and salvation. Therefore, if the Church and its authority were conceived solely after such a witness model, any requirements for obedience which might be attached to Church membership would be of greater sociological interest than theological concern, for it would express simply something of the exigencies of group activity. However, if either of the other motifs has a predominant part in an ecclesiology - that is, if God's presence and authority is in some way located in the Church - the nature and scope of required obedience within that community should tell us something about the structure and quality of God's own authoritative relationship to man.

We now turn to consider the nature and content of the Church's demands for obedience from her members, examining the different pictures of God which may be correlated with these requirements in ecclesiologies of embodiment and representation.

2 Second Part of the Typology: Pictures of God

In this sub-section we shall correlate the content of obedience in the Church with different pictures of God, and then go on to examine how these pictures of God should also be co-ordinated with ideas of the Church's role in regard to revelation and salvation. By the term 'content' of obedience I mean the character of those actions, beliefs, or attitudes which holders of authority in the Church require or request from their subordinates.

a) Pictures of God

The content of ecclesiastical obedience may be defined in relation to two sets of polarities; in the first place, it may be characterised according to the degree in which obedience involves adopting beliefs or actions which are either disjunctive with norms of secular belief and action, or else in harmony with such norms. Secondly, the content of obedient action may be described either as being the achievement of conformity with a stable moral order, or as taking the form of constructive activity with a future goal which determines its nature. I shall suggest in this sub-section that the different combinations of ways in which obedience may be characterised

afford the basis for four different pictures of God as their theological correlates.

Like the motifs by which the Church's mediatorial role may be characterised, the four different pictures of God which I shall propose here are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, Christian theology usually operates with a great variety of complementary pictures which enrich our concept of God in his relations to us by the very fact of their variety. Such pictures of God are not individual attempts systematically to define the essence of divinity, but are rather metaphors or types, conveying something of the way in which God is experienced.

i) The God who is eternal king and judge

Under this heading we may place the picture of God which is related to a set of demands in the Church which are both disjunctive with secular norms, and also require conformity from the Christian, according to a stable pattern. For example, the kind of obedience which might be required could include conformity to rituals and worship patterns, and submission to precepts which could not have been inductively guessed at, but have been made known purely as the subject of special revelation. An ecclesiological model which corresponded to this picture of God would show the Church as a body which makes known the revelation of God's will and expounds it as something immutable and applicable to all sorts and conditions of men. The law of God is thus published abroad through the Church, and is binding upon all who wish to please the deity and to escape the charge of rebellion against the eternal king and judge.

ii) The God who is creator and legislator of the universal natural order

We may use this description to suggest a picture of God which derives from the experience of finding in the Church a moral teaching which demands stable conformity, and which also purports to be the law of man's own nature, something which might therefore be inductively arrived at even without the aid of the concept of God and his status as nature's creator.

Concretely, such a moral law will probably be in harmony a good deal with the ideas of various non-Christian ethical systems,

although the correspondence may not be complete. The Church will propose its version of the natural law by the use of rational argumentation, as well as by appeals to the authority of the creator. It will suggest that man should obey this law partly because it is the norm of his own self-realisation. The universality and immutability of the first principles of the law of nature will be stressed, and they will be said to be the principles by which men are guided through the changing conditions of the world to the attainment of an eternally valid pattern of human perfection.

iii) The God who is a liberator and covenant lord

With this picture of God we leave the realms of religious demands for conformity to a stable order, and we consider a picture of God correlated with a content of obedience orientated towards the achievement of a future goal. In this particular case, the obedience required could not be deduced from natural moral experience, but is the subject of God's revealed will. However, man does not obey this will sheerly from the motive of pleasing God and escaping the stigma of rebelliousness, but in order to achieve a new future in the way that God has prescribed specifically. Man obeys because God has promised him liberation from sin and despair by certain means, and also the attainment of a blessed end in company with others.

One of the reasons why the demands associated with this picture of God may be disjunctive with a secular consideration of what would be the right course of action, is because the future towards which man is orientated by his obedience is a future totally unimaginable in the terms of this world's wisdom. Obedience is rooted in faith, therefore, and faith is rooted in God's promise. This, in turn, may also be grounded in the fact that God himself has already acted on man's behalf, in such a way as to make the obedience which is subsequently required of Christians effectual for their redemption. The Church, then, appears in correlation to this picture of God as a body which makes his will known, and is also the pledge and sign of the salvific import of this will. It may exist as the community in which a foretaste of God's future is already available.

iv) The God who shares his creative activity with man

This picture of God is associated, once again, with demands for obedience which are orientated upon the achievement of

new conditions in the future. The Church invites men to collaborate with God through their actions. However, this picture of God is to be distinguished from that in which he appears as liberator and covenant lord by the fact that the action to which the Church invites and urges its members is in harmony with the actions to which they might be prompted by the considerations of a dynamic secular ethic. Similarly, the goals towards which the obedient Christian works may also be easily recognisable as natural human goods, towards which men of many faiths strive - brotherhood, justice, peace, etc.

The picture of the Church which corresponds to this concept of Christian ethics, and to this picture of God, shows it to be an assembly of those called together as the vanguard and co-creators of the new order for which all men long. Within the Church community, the obedience of one member to another will be dictated by the exigencies imposed by these communal goals.

b) Pictures of God and the Church's role with regard to revelation

The reader may have noticed that in the preceding pages the four pictures of God which I proposed as types were derived largely from a consideration of the content of obedient Christian action. However, if we are to consider the whole topic of obedience in the Church, we must also consider the relationship between pictures of God and the content of obedient assent. In the pages which follow we shall therefore examine the co-ordination of the four pictures of God, which have already been set forward, with different concepts of the kind of assent which is due in the Church.

Firstly, pictures of God which posit him as the author of an immutable law (whether this is a revealed, positive law, which could not have been deduced from any purely philosophical starting point, or whether it is the eternal law of man's own nature) imply that there must be one place at least in which the divine law is absolutely clearly available to man. Only so could human guilt in disobedience be both subjectively and objectively real. Thus, for example, even when the immutable law of God is conceived to be the law of human nature, and thus accessible to purely philosophical reflection, the Church nevertheless has the role of unveiling and clarifying man's view of it, so that there can be no mistake. And when the law of God is

conceived to be purely the subject of special revelation, it is the Church which is the locus of this revelation.

Because an immutable law must be clearly available to men, the pictures of God as eternal king and judge, and as the creator and legislator of a universal order, are most easily co-ordinated with ecclesiologies in which the law of God is either the substance of an epiphany around which the community is formed (as the Jewish worshipping community is formed around the Torah) or else is expressed accurately and representationally in the Church's formal teaching.

On the other hand, those pictures of God which stress the future goals to which he leads men through his commands are more easily correlated with ecclesiologies in which authority is attributed to people having a prophetic role. The essential function of the prophet is to make ever new applications of the general principles of the divine will, by reading the 'signs of the times' so as to indicate the concrete means necessary for attaining God's future from the Church's historically-conditioned starting-point. The prophet may, or may not, hold an institutionalised office, and the role may even be carried out corporately, perhaps by the community as a whole.

The statements of a prophetic figure or group may be attributed differing degrees of authority; if a prophetic figure holds institutional office in a representationally conceived Church structure, he will require the respect and obedience for his person which belongs to his status. This personal respect will have its consequences for the way in which his prophetic teaching is viewed and treated. There may even be a degree of authority attached to prophetic teaching which leads men to treat it, itself, as something which is representationally guaranteed by God, and therefore deserving of absolute obedience and assent.

On the other hand, prophetic teaching may appear as something which has no formal authority, but which must recommend itself simply by its appeal to the hearts and minds of its hearers as they seek to find God's way forward.

Whether or not prophetic teaching has the formal authority which belongs to representational status, it differs from the stable representation or epiphany of a fixed divine law because the prophet

is the herald of constant growth and change. This has consequences for the way in which men respond to it: Even if it is acknowledged that prophetic teaching substantially represents the present divine will (or the most appropriate way of understanding divine truth for present circumstances) there will always be an element of uncertainty and debate attached to the question of how long a particular message or injunction is concretely valid. Therefore, men's assent to teaching of a prophetic, future-orientated type, will always be to some extent qualified by the need to be open and responsive to new 'signs of the times'.

I have tried to draw the distinction between stable and prophetic forms of revelation as sharply as possible, for the sake of clarity. In fact, concretely, the contrast cannot be quite so stark. For example, in the moral sphere, those pictures of God and his will which correlate with the idea of obedience as goal-seeking must nevertheless include within themselves the idea that there is something unchanging about God; his will, although expressed differently in different concrete circumstances, must always have an immutable orientation towards the goals which he wants for men and the world. On the other hand, those pictures of God which associate him with an ethic of conformity to a stable order must nevertheless allow a degree of variation in the ways in which God's law is concretely applied in different historical and human situations. In this way, the two pairs of pictures of God, and the two kinds of ethical pattern with which they are associated, come to meet each other.

However, the contrast I have drawn is not completely dissolved by these qualifications, for although in both cases there is a co-ordination of unchanging principles with varying applications, in each case the immutable principles have rather a different nature. In those pictures of God, for example, in which his will and command are seen as being orientated upon the achievement of future goals, the unchanging principles of this will have the form of generalised definitions of its characteristic orientation. In the pictures of God which are associated with an established set of stable moral absolutes, the unchanging principles of divine law have much greater practical scope in themselves, and the secondary applications which may be built up upon the general laws will tend to assume relatively fixed form in a science of casuistry.

To sum up, we may say that pictures of God which present him as the author of a stable law, whether natural or wholly revealed, tend to be correlated with ecclesiologies in which the Church is given the role of revealing that law in absolute form to the world through dogma and representational teaching, or through the manifestation of that law in liturgical reading of the Scriptures. If this is true of the way in which an ecclesiology presents moral teaching, it is also likely to be true about the role it gives to the Church in revealing other aspects of divine truth. Therefore, we may say that the pictures of God as eternal king and judge, or as creator and legislator of a stable and universal order, tend to be correlated with doctrines of the Church which attribute to it a clear dogmatic role, or else describe it as the assembly which is gathered round an epiphany of the Word. On the other hand, those pictures of God which present him as one who commands men to seek future goals will tend to be co-ordinated with ecclesiologies in which the Church does not have the role of revealing the divine will with such absolute and unchangeable certainty. Similarly, when other matters of revelation are considered, such ecclesiologies will probably not treat Church teaching as a matter of fixed and universally perspicuous certainty, but as a more historically-conditioned form of representation or witness. Therefore, in these doctrines of the Church, communal certainty will not be guaranteed by universal and unquestioning assent to the propositional form of authoritative teaching.

c) Pictures of God and the Church's role with regard to salvation

As we consider the Church's role with regard to salvation in the next few pages we shall be looking at this role specifically from the angle dictated by our concern with the question of obedience. Therefore, we shall not be examining the Church's function as a provider of the resources of grace necessary for the life which is directed towards salvation, but rather the part played by the Church's demands for obedience in marking out the path of redemption.

Once again, this part of the typology of correlations is to be constructed by the drawing out of a contrast. Here, the contrast is that between a concept of final salvation which sees it as a <u>reward</u>, given because of the obedience which man has rendered (or, which has been

rendered on his behalf) and a concept in which final salvation appears as the fruition of man's earthly relationship to God in grace, and of the activities and attitudes characteristic of that relationship.

Where the experience of final salvation is conceived to be a fruition of that which went before, emphasis is laid upon the continuity between human awareness of things divine in this world, and the awareness which men will have of them in the next. Now, those pictures of God which posit him as one who invites and commands men to construct a new future through their obedience - that is, the pictures of God as liberator and covenant lord, and as one who shares his creative activity with man - necessarily locate the beginning of God's future on the earthly plane, for that is within the scope of man's constructive activity and achievement. Therefore, such pictures are usually to be related to the notion that the final experience of salvation will be a fruition of the situation that man can bring about through his present obedience. However, in each case the pattern of fruition will be different; where God is conceived as one who shares his creative activity with men through injunctions which are congruous with dynamic secular morality, the pattern of fruition will be straightforward - ultimate salvation will mean the enhancement of all the human values for which men naturally strive, and which the Church fosters. On the other hand, where God is conceived as a liberator and covenant lord, leading men to a new future through underivable, positive commands, human obedience will indeed bring about new situations redolent of the kingdom even in the earthly sphere, and these new situations will be perfected and consummated when the kingdom finally breaks in, in its fullness. However, the foretastes of the kingdom which are attainable even now are already grounded not only in human obedience, but also in the transforming, redemptive action and promise of God. Therefore, final salvation will be experienced not straightforwardly as the fruit and enhancement of mere human strivings, but rather as the consummation of a radical act of redemption with which men have been proleptically associated during their earthly lives.

If we turn to the pictures of God, and the ethical demands, which are associated with ideas of a stable and fixed order in the divine will, we find that the two pictures of God concerned each have a

different bearing upon the way in which salvation is to be conceived. Firstly, if we examine the picture of God as creator and legislator of a universal natural order, we find that the idea of natural law which is associated with this picture is the idea of the norm of man's own growth in perfection. Therefore, the natural law may direct men to growth which is partially attainable even in this life, and the concept of final salvation may be presented in terms of a fruition and completion of this progress to perfection. Secondly, however, the picture of God as eternal king and judge presents the divine demands for obedience in such a way as to suggest that their fulfillment may bear only an arbitrary relationship to the experience of final salvation. The man who glorifies and pleases the eternal king through the sheer fact of his obedience may, indeed, be rewarded, but it is not at all clear that the substance of this reward must be the fruition of what he achieved by his obedience.

We see, then, that three out of four pictures of God bear with them the suggestion that man's obedience and its content is of substantial, and not merely of formal, interest to the way in which he is to experience final salvation. But what exactly is the role of the Church in man's pilgrimage of obedience towards this goal? Is she merely the body which enunciates the nature of God's will, or does membership of the Church enter into the substance of the obedience which is to bear fruit or be rewarded at the end?

There is, I contend, a clear correlation between concepts of salvation as a fruition, and beliefs that the Church and its life will continue into the divine kingdom. If we examine those pictures of God, and their co-ordinate ethical systems, which suggest that Christian obedience should be orientated towards the achievement of future goals, we find that these goals are almost bound to include the dimension of human community - it is hard to conceive of any idea of constructing a new future, whether by natural or supernatural means, which would not posit this future in terms of human interrelationship. Therefore, those pictures of God and of the ethical endeavour which are most closely related to the concept of salvation as a fruition of the achievements of obedience, are consequently likely to be related to concepts of salvation in which the experience of community ('communion') is integrated and perfected. Man obeys God's precepts

in order to build up a communion of love, brotherhood and justice, both in the Church and beyond it; upon this endeavour, eschatological salvation supervenes to confirm and complete the communion for which men strove. That which man experiences now as the community of the Church is a foretaste of heaven's social reality.

If we turn to the picture of God which is co-ordinated with the concept of universal natural law, we find that the corporate dimension of salvation may, or may not, be associated with it. The law of human nature, which leads to the individual's perfection, can be conceived in more or less social terms, depending upon whether human nature is viewed as being intrinsically, or only 'accidentally', wedded to social relationships. If human perfection (which is the end sought through conformity to the dictates of natural law) is conceived as being a perfection of the faculties and capacities of the individual, achieved only with the instrumental help of the social relationships in which he has been sustained, it is possible to conceive of a final consummation of the individual's life before God in which community will no longer have any part to play. On the other hand, the experience of participation in community may be conceived to be an essential part of what human perfection means, and in this case the life of heaven would logically include enhanced communal relationships.

It is the picture of God as eternal king and judge which is most unequivocally related to a concept of salvation which is purely individualist. The Church's role on this earth is to preach God's positive, revealed law, and to provide occasions for its practice. In this way, the individual can glorify God through his obedience, and merit the reward of salvation. Once he attains that reward, the need for the Church passes away. Avery Dulles caricatured the idea of the Church's role in mediating salvation, which can appear when this nexus of theological ideas predominates, thus:

> ..."Because man's social life, in this model, is fully institutionalised, the disappearance of the institution at the end of man's earthly pilgrimage involves the termination of social life. Each individual, equipped with his own pair of opera glasses (lumen gloriae) gazes on the divine essence without being conscious of who is in the next box." (15)

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(15) Op. cit. pp. 103f.

To sum up, the life of the Church is seen as giving a foretaste of a communal experience of salvation in those patterns of thought in which salvation appears as a fruition of the obedient actions of men. This idea of fruition is, in turn, associated with pictures of God which posit him as commanding and inviting men to obey him in the construction of a new future. It may also be associated with the picture of God which presents him as the founder of a stable, natural order in which human perfection is to be found in personal relationships which grow to conformity with the natural and stable norm. On the other hand, the life of the Church appears to be merely instrumental in the achievement of individual salvation when that salvation is conceived to be the reward which God gives for acts of obedience whose value lies purely in their formal nature as acts of submission to the divine, royal will. Therefore, concepts of ecclesiastical obedience which concentrate upon the value of its formal nature are likely to be correlated with a picture of God as eternal king and judge (or else as the author of a natural order in which human perfection is conceived purely in individualistic terms).

Summary to second part of the typology

We have examined the correlation of various ideas of the proper content of Christian obedience with four different pictures of God. We have then considered the co-ordination of these pictures with different ideas of how God and his truth are known in the Church, and of the Church's role in conveying salvation to men. Out of these considerations, certain circles of correlative doctrines have emerged; these circles of related ideas can be entered conveniently by means of answering our primary question, 'what content of ecclesiastical obedience is set up as an ideal in any given ecclesiology?'.

The reader may have noticed that, while setting up these circles of correlation, we have effectively ignored the doctrine of sin. It is, of course, the fact of sin which explains why natural law should have to be the subject of ecclesiastical teaching at all; it is also the fact of sin which explains why the Church's role in mediating salvation to man must go beyond the mere conveying of revelation and the provision of a communal life, and must include the mediation of

grace so that man may achieve obedience. In the sub-section which follows, we shall pay more attention to the doctrine of sin and human fallenness, as we come to focus on the co-ordination of different doctrines of man with various ways of presenting the purpose and nature of ecclesiastical obedience. Here, however, we must remind ourselves that the aim of the typology of correlations which we are constructing is limited to that of providing a schematic 'map'. Within the perspective of this aim, the isolation of the patterns which we have observed above from the problem of sin can be justified, because such isolation provides a useful schematic basis for locating certain interrelated ideas when they appear in more complex theological wholes.

3 Third Part of the Typology: Obedience in the Church and the Doctrine of Man in his Relationship to God

Having examined how different ideals of obedience in the Church entail different pictures of God within the context of coherent theological systems, we must now consider the relationship between ideals of obedience and different types of Christian anthropology.

Man's relationship to God develops through a series of 'moments' - that of the original relationship of creator and creature, that which subsists with human fallenness, that which is brought about through grace, even in this life, and that relationship for which man is eschatologically destined. We shall begin our study of the structure of man's relationship to God from the starting point provided by the issue of obedience in the Church. We can proceed from an ecclesiological starting point in this way because the doctrine of the Church stands at the turning point of man's relationship to God; the life of the Church is located between the 'moments' of creation and fallenness, on the one hand, and that of man's eschatological destiny, on the other. It is in the Church that man's relationship to his maker is reconstituted in the structure of grace. The way in which this relationship of grace is described should both indicate the human condition upon which it supervened, and also the structure of relationship for which man is being prepared.

We shall begin our examination of the correlation of ecclesiastical obedience with doctrines of man's relationship to God

by recapitulating on the different roles which may be attributed to the Church in mediating God's authority (see above, sub-section (1)). I shall then suggest how these different roles (of witness, embodiment and representation) should each correspond to a different exposition of the changing pattern of divine-human relationships. However, the expositions which I shall construct on this basis will be seen to lack specificity on certain points. This lack will lead us to approach the question of man's relationship to God from another ecclesiological angle - this time, that of the content of due ecclesiastical obedience. It is at this point that we shall particularly illuminate the part played in Christian anthropologies by different approaches to the fact of sin.

a) Recapitulation of the Church's role in mediating salvation and revelation to man

By the very fact of saying that the Church is the locus in which man comes to a conscious and explicit relationship to God we imply that, on the conscious level at least, man is generally separated from awareness of his creator. This separation is radical, because the Church's function in conveying knowledge of God and his will has to extend beyond that of mere Socratic midwifery to that of mediating distinctly 'new', revelatory information.

Man's separation from God extends beyond the sphere of knowledge and consciousness, of course; it is for this reason that the Church has a role beyond that of revelation alone in providing the necessary conditions for man's salvation, as we have already remarked (see p. 54). However, at this point in the thesis we are limiting our consideration of the Church's mediatorial task to issues directly related to the overcoming of man's epistemological separation from God. It is largely because this epistemological separation is conceived in various ways that there arise different ways of characterising the Church's mediatorial role - namely, through the motifs of witness, embodiment and representation.

i) Man's relationship to God and the Church's role as a witness

We have seen in sub-section (1) that, inasmuch as the Church is viewed as a witness to God, to what he has done, and to what he continues to do, it is seen as a body which points to something

which is beyond itself. Therefore, an ecclesiology dominated by this motif would stress man's separateness from God. Of course, the founding events of the Church, to which her preaching witnesses, comprise the dramatic overpassing of that separation by God himself, in the act of incarnation; but, in so far as the Church is a simple witness to this event, she stresses its uniqueness and its paradoxically divine quality. If there existed a concrete ecclesiology which was purely of this type, then, it would not claim for the Church and its members any effective immediate participation in the power and presence of God. However, as we have seen (see p.38), ecclesiologies purely based on the idea of witness alone do not exist, because of the theological ubiquity of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The nearest approximation to an ecclesiology of the pure witness type is to be found when the idea of the Spirit's indwelling is not expounded as entailing any guarantee that the Church or the Christian's intellectual knowledge <u>about</u> God is 'right', although it may well be the dynamic of the Spirit which impels the Church and its members to give the best witness that they can to the reality in which they mysteriously participate, and to the historical events of the Incarnation.

ii) Man's relationship to God and the Church's role of embodiment

When the Church is viewed more immediately under its aspect as an embodiment of God's presence, or when it is seen specifically as a community gathered around a focused epiphany, the separation between man and God does not appear to be so radical. Some part of the human realm is shown to have the continuous capacity to be a point of divine embodiment or manifestation; the incarnation may, in a sense, be 'extended' in the eucharistic elements, the Word of Scripture read among the faithful, or the composite life of the entire Church. Emmanuel has not departed. The members of the Church each share in the power of the divine presence through substantial participation in it, whether through the Sacrament, or simply through the real presence of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. At the very <u>least</u>, therefore, we may say that the <u>structure</u> of human nature is such as to admit of God's indwelling; at the <u>most</u>, some part of man's world (bread, language or human interrelationships) can become so <u>translucent</u> to the divine as to constitute an epiphany in a continuous form.

iii) Man's relationship to God and the Church's role of representation

Whilst the functions of witness and epiphany are on the opposite ends of a scale of man's intrinsic openness to God (with the idea of a rather diffuse and mysterious embodiment of the Holy Spirit inbetween) the ecclesiological function of representing the power and presence of God is conditioned not simply by an idea of man's intrinsic openness to the divine, but also by the concept of extrinsic and formal conditions by which human openness to God may be qualified in such a way as to guarantee its fulfillment of a representational role. We have seen that the notion of representational authority in the Church is linked to a concept of sacramental epiphany which, of itself, gives rise to the idea that the Holy Spirit's presence and power is diffusely embodied in all those who partake in the sacraments. However, in the Western tradition of ecclesiology the concept of extrinsically conditioned representation has tended to detract from certain aspects of effectual belief in the whole Church's diffuse participation in the power and knowledge of God. The openness of the ordinary Christian to God has been overshadowed by a stress on the special guarantees attached to representational office, and the special endowments of grace given to those who hold such office. (16)

In this brief recapitulation we have seen that the different motifs by which we characterised the role of the Church, or of certain persons in the Church, in mediating salvation and revelation, are linked to different concepts of the way and extent in which man is open to the

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(16) The special guarantees attached to representational office have, themselves, a formal and negative quality; they are, for example, the guarantees of indefectibility (see Chapter II, pp.76 and 82-84) which are attached to the actions and government of representational figures, and of 'infallibility' or inerrancy, attached to certain exercised of teaching authority. Only in the sphere of the sacraments are guarantees of intrinsic and positive power attached to the idea of representation, and this positive power belongs more immediately to the promised epiphany than to God's representational agents who actualise it.
Special endowments of personal grace tend to be a matter of pious belief and hope, although they are not matters of guarantee.

experience, knowledge and power of God, through a very complex web of ideas. Since none of the motifs completely describes a single, concrete ecclesiology, the relationship of these ideas in actuality is likely to be even more complicated. However, within this web, we may pick out the threads which indicate whether human openness to God is an intrinsic factor in man's life, or whether it is, on the other hand, dependent on or qualified by, extrinsic and formal conditions. These threads of correlation will be useful to us in our analysis of shifts of emphasis in the ecclesiology of Vatican II.

b) Patterns of ecclesiology and the history of man's relationship to God

Having considered the implications which different ecclesiological motifs bear regarding the present structure of human relationship to God, we must now examine the factors in man's history which must condition these structures of relationship. Why is man intrinsically open, or closed, to God? What relationship does the extent of man's present openness have to his original, created nature? And, what will be the structure of the divine-human relationship in the eschaton, according to these different forms of ecclesiological thought? These are some of the questions which we must now broach, examining once again each ecclesiological motif in turn.

i) The Church's role as a witness, and the history of the divine-human relationship

In an ecclesiology of witness, stressing the ways in which man is separated from God, even within the context of the Church, human persons are sharply distinguished from the one whose heralds they are, and their message is distinguished from his immediate self-revelation. Even when this theology is combined with a doctrine of the Holy Spirit's presence to believers, this presence does not so bridge the gap between the human condition and the life of God as to make men's words and deeds identifiable with the words and deeds of God himself. Perfection of human knowledge of God, and completeness of communion with him, remain eschatological goals. In the Church, the grace of Christ enables man to "see through a glass darkly" - this is the full measure of the possible effectiveness of salvation within the confines of space and time.

How can such a radical separation from God be accounted for? Firstly, it may be laid at the door of man's created nature; the status of a creature may be conceived as being so ontologically distinct from that enjoyed by the creator that no inherent affinity between them is to be expected. It is quite possible to conceive of God as creating a perfect, but self-enclosed nature, operating and developing according to divinely-given laws, but which has no immediate access to the transcendent realm. Such a nature could find its completeness in a created perfection which had no reference to divine life, and the extent of its knowledge and expression would be strictly limited to its experience within the space-time continuum.

(This picture of the inherent limitations of human nature and knowledge, cut off from the transcendent by its very created status, is, of course, coherent with Kant's enclosure of the scope of pure human reasoning within the boundaries of space and time. Therefore, we may expect certain lines of post-Enlightenment thought to reinforce the idea that the Church may be a human body which witnesses in only a fragmentary way to a God who is radically beyond us, and yet who has broken in uniquely and paradoxically upon the human realm by his act of incarnation.)

Man's separation from God may be conceived as being not only attributable to his created status and condition, but also as being reinforced by the fact of sin. This can be seen as supervening upon the ontological separation of man from God, having the further effect of making mankind untrue even to itself. The way in which the effect of sin has been assessed in different theologies has varied; most radically, it has been seen as the total corruption even of man's natural goodness. This view suggests that mankind is not only cut off from the divine realm, but also actively turned against it; it is both true that man cannot attain to God by natural reasoning or natural virtue - and it is even true that what we count as reasoning and virtue, within the concrete conditions of our fallenness, actually prove obstacles to, and rejection of, the ingress of God's grace.

The less radical view of the effect of sin sees it as a wound or weakness in man's natural goodness. The individual does not lose it completely, but he is divided against himself in the practice of it; his various faculties are disordered, and none of them can

fully achieve its end, nor can they work in harmony. However, in strictly limited ways, real goodness can be attained, and human reasoning can be of positive value, even though it is partially obscured. The divine goodness, in the revelation of God, does not, therefore, negate human experience, reasoning and morality; rather, nature can be integrated in the obedient life of grace which is both man's response to the witness of God, and also God's gift.

We have looked at two contrasting views of the effects of sin, and we have seen that it is the concept of total corruption of human nature which most fully reinforces the ontological gap between man and God. The second concept leaves man with a more favourable basis for receiving the witness of the Church and affirming it in faith. The concept of total corruption must be linked with a theory of a completely transforming action which the Holy Spirit must preveniently carry out in man in order to make him receptive to the Gospel; the second also requires a doctrine of the Holy Spirit's action, but in this case it will be characterised in terms of healing and elevation of human nature, because the Church's message is not totally disjunctive with the evidence of this nature, but rather presents to man a higher and more integrated goodness and truth than that which he might attain for himself.

Finally, if we consider the relationship of an ecclesiology dominated by the witness motif to the idea of man's final salvation, we find that the gap between man and God, written into the very essence of the Church according to this view, suggests that the eschatological fulfillment or reward which results from a life lived in grace is also likely to preserve within itself a clear distinction between man and God. Created human nature would not seem to have the structural capacity for a substantial union of life and knowledge with the divine (unless the radical newness of that which is to come takes the form of a complete re-creation and restructuration of man's existence according to a different ontological and epistemological pattern).

ii) The Church's role of embodiment and the history of the divine-human relationship

If we take an ecclesiology based on the idea of epiphany, or some degree of embodiment of the divine presence in the Church, it

suggests that human nature has a basic structure of openness to the presence of God. This may be accounted for in two ways: Firstly, it may be attributed to the nature of man's creation - he was made in the image of God , capable both of attaining to perfect knowledge of the divine (even to a share in God's own self-knowledge) and of living a life of communion which both mirrors, and participates in, the life of the Trinity. Human beings were made to be 'God-bearers' to one another. Being thus created, man's nature persists in this structure of openness. His language, and the work of his hands can, perhaps, be the adequate vehicles of God's epiphany. Likewise, the human spirit can apprehend the things of God with immediacy, through the intuitive knowledge given by the Holy Spirit.

How is sin to be integrated into this first pattern of doctrine? It may be held responsible for the fact that mankind does not, concretely, live in constant affinity to God. This affinity was lost through the Fall, and the divine life for which man was made was withdrawn (although the structure of openness to divine life remained, but as an empty shell) until grace returned as Christ's gift.

This first pattern of doctrine, which stresses man's essential goodness and openness to God, has been presented by means of a highly schematic type. In fact, man's capacity to embody the divine presence in the Church is not usually set forward so starkly as a mere restoration of the situation which prevailed in the moment of creation. A second factor is normally emphasised as a further way of accounting for human openness to God. This second factor is that of redemption: By Christ's incarnation human nature (as a universal reality) has been assimilated to the life of God so that, concretely, each individual is potentially open to the divine because of the Word's redemption of humanity as a whole.

The idea of the redemption of universal human nature through its 'inclusion' in the being of the Godhead by Christ's incarnation supervenes upon the doctrine of man's <u>created</u> openness to God in two ways. Firstly, the idea of redemption may be co-ordinated with a doctrine of sin and the Fall which attributes to them a greater effect than that of having caused simply a <u>loss</u> of divine life. If the Christian in the Church finds himself open to God's presence, this may be because a real wound or distortion in his nature, which sin had brought about, has been healed and set right by the redemptive effects of Christ's incarnation (and particularly by the passion of the

incarnate Lord). The idea of a redeemed openness to God, therefore, can cope with a graver view of sin than can the idea of a human openness which is rooted solely in man's created nature.

Secondly, the idea of the redemption of human nature through Christ's incarnation and passion is often taken to include the notion that man's redeemed relationship to God is more than a restoration, and is actually a better and a closer relationship than that in which man was created. The state of grace is more blessed than the state of original justice.

We see, then, that the motif which characterises the life of the Church as a life which embodies the presence and activity of God, may be co-ordinated with a view of human nature which focuses either upon the fact that God created us to be open to him, or else, upon the fact that human nature has been redeemed and refashioned after the pattern of openness through its adoption by the Son of God. The two ideas may also be closely linked, as they are, for example, when the bond is stressed between man, who is made after the image of God, and the eternal Word, who is the Image of the Father.

Although an ecclesiology in which the motif of embodiment or epiphany predominates does not have altogether clear implications concerning the created structure of man's first relationship to God, nor concerning the extent and nature of what would have been sin's unredeemed effects, it does, however, have clearer implications regarding the way in which man will be related to God in the eschaton. Because of the claim that created things have a capacity to be vehicles for the divine (and this is particularly true in the case of ecclesiologies based around a eucharistic epiphany) it may be deduced that man, the creature, may also have the capacity to be transfigured by a full participation in the divine life. It is no accident that Eastern Orthodox theology, which most strongly emphasises the way in which the Church embodies the divine presence and manifests it to the world, is also the scheme of thought which stresses the concept of man's final divinisation . This divinisation begins in the diffuse participation in God's presence which individual men can know through present membership of the Church and their share in the power of the eucharistic epiphany; it will reach its full realisation at the last day, the final epiphany or unveiling of God's presence in the midst of his people.

iii) The Church's role of representation and the history of the divine-human relationship

Finally, we reach the question of ecclesiologies dominated by the motif of representation. The reader will remember that the idea of representation attaches itself to the doctrine of embodiment, but qualifies it by introducing extrinsic conditions for the Church's embodiment of God's presence, and for the individual's participation in the power of a central, sacramental epiphany.

An ecclesiology which was strongly formed by the idea of representation might suggest an underlying ambivalence about the capacity of human nature to be open to God. Is it that knowledge and experience of God are available to man within the institutional structure of the Church because only there does the Holy Spirit create the necessary new conditions within human nature? Or is it rather the case that all human nature, within and without the Church, is potentially open to knowledge of God and to a share in his life, but it is only within the Church that this possibility is activated within a proper structure of relationships and revealed truths? If the first were true, we might conclude that human nature as it exists outside the Church is deeply corrupted by sin, and that this creates an opposition to God which only the powers of ecclesiastical grace can overcome. If the second were the case, however, human nature as it exists outside the Church would appear to be less radically distorted by sin, and to bear more clearly the marks of having originally been created after God's image.

We find, therefore, that an ecclesiology dominated by the motif of representation does not, in that single aspect, make clear the role of sin and the role of man's original, created nature in determining his present capacity for relationship to God in the Church.

If we consider the nature of that relationship to God which is achieved in the Church, we find that in the representational scheme of thought, it is a matter of some complexity, involving both intrinsic and extrinsic factors (see p 58). However, the fact that man can intrinsically be open to God only to the degree of a rather diffuse participation in the Holy Spirit's presence, and that extrinsic, formal conditions must be fulfilled for the guarantee and

confirmation of the faith and authority which flow from this diffuse participation, suggest that there is a real gap between man and God of which membership of the Church and the presence of the Holy Spirit do not fully overcome. Whilst the pattern of relationships within the institution of the Church may mirror the pattern of heavenly relationships, and while human words may represent divine truth through appropriate analogies, even so, ecclesiastical authority and ecclesiastical teaching are not identical with the mystery of divine truth and authority, of which they are the mere analogies, representations and reflections. Only in the eucharistic focus of the Church's life (where we leave the realm of representation for that of epiphany) does the created realm become substantially transformed and divinised.

There is, then, a two-fold structure of human relationship to God implied in a representational ecclesiology; on the epistemological level, there is a definite gap, which persists, between man and God; on the 'spiritual' level, however, touched by the eucharistic epiphany on a plane other than that of intellectual knowledge, man and creation may be seen as having a real capacity or openness for the divine realm.

How, then, are we to envisage the doctrine of man's final destiny which should properly be co-ordinated with a representational ecclesiology? Perhaps this, too may be conceived as a two-fold structure: On the intellectual level, we might expect man to remain excluded from God's own knowledge of himself, because humanity lacks the capacity for a share in this; but on the spiritual level of sanctification, a real identification or divinisation may be envisaged. However, as in the case of the other ecclesiological motifs, we must be very tentative in drawing conclusions concerning man's eschatological destiny, because the radical newness of the kingdom might cancel all expectations.

Having looked at the interrelationship between the ways in which the Church is said to mediate God's presence, power and truth to men, and the structure of human nature vis-à-vis its creator, we have found that the bare patterns of ecclesiology do not completely

define and delimit which doctrines of God and man should correspond to them. Rather, each ecclesiological motif can be co-ordinated with different concepts of the structure of the divine-human relationship. The main factor distinguishing these differing concepts is the issue of sin and its effects on man's openness to God.

In order to discover a determinate concept of man's relationship to God - that is, a concept which includes a specific notion of the weight and effect of sin - we must view an ecclesiology not only from the angle of the way in which it shows God's action, authority and truth to be mediated, but also from the point of view afforded by knowledge of the content of ecclesiastical obedience which is associated with it. We turn once more, therefore, to the issue of the content of due obedience in the Church.

c) The content of due Christian obedience in correlation with the concept of sin and its effects

In those patterns of ecclesiology in which the Church is attributed a witnessing or representational role in relation to the action, power and presence of God, we saw that it is possible to conceive of sin as <u>either</u> having wounded and weakened the human capacity for goodness, <u>or</u> as having corrupted it. In the latter case, that which man considers good is not merely disordered on the natural plane, but also constitutes a real obstacle to obedience to God's will. Without a total conversion of thought and action, effected by the prevenient grace of the Holy Spirit, human nature will reject any revelation of God and his law which might lead it to its transcendent destiny.

A picture of the formal content of the Church's requirements for obedience helps us to locate which of the above concepts of sin is operative in an ecclesiology which is of the representational or witness type. (It cannot, however, help us immediately with the question posed by an ecclesiology based purely on ideas of epiphany or embodiment because, whatever the nature of sin's effect on universal human nature, the effects of its redemptive healing are equally universal, through the assumption by Christ of human nature. Therefore, the distinction between man's openness in the Church, and his openness to God outside the Church, can, at its

sharpest, only be a distinction between potential and actuality; the fundamental structuration of man's redeemed nature towards divine life is the same, whether or not the individual has concretely received that life.)

We have, of course, already examined the issue of the formal content of ecclesiastical obedience, when we derived four different pictures of God from the various possible ways of conceiving this obedience. The reader will remember the distinction which was drawn between Christian obedience which is disjunctive with secular moral norms, and Christian obedience which may be harmonised with such norms (see p. 44). The disjunction of divinely revealed law with man's 'natural' way of conceiving what is right may be of two kinds: Firstly, it may be a disjunction of mere difference. For example, secular morality does not suggest that we should rest one day in seven, nor that we should turn to prayer in our concern to construct new human conditions. However, secular concepts of duty do not actively oppose themselves (generally) to such actions. Therefore, both secular and religious precepts may be compounded together in one coherent system of morality, without violence to either element. However, there may be a disjunction which is of another kind, namely, a disjunction of opposition between secular and divinely revealed injunctions. For example, purely human concepts of justice may indicate that injury should be met with proportionate retribution; the command of Christ, on the other hand, is to "turn the other cheek".

The existence of the less radical kind of disjunction, that of mere difference, indicates that the created order has its own laws of government which are distinct from divinely revealed laws because they deal with a different plane of life. Human sin may well have disturbed man's apprehension of the laws of the created order, but it has not entered as a radical corruption into the very fabric of his concept of the good. Divinely revealed laws, which direct man to a supernatural destiny, can be added to natural morality and be co-ordinated with it, although this divine revelation may have to clarify matters of natural morality which wounded human nature grasps only obscurely and inaccurately.

The existence of the more radical kind of disjunction, that of opposition, may indicate that natural moral concepts as we concretely know them are opposed to the commandments of God which direct man to a supernatural end. That is to say, human nature is corrupt and goes contrary to the will of its creator (for it is inconceivable that God's will for human action should be radically self-contradictory between the natural and supernatural orders). However, it is necessary to be cautious in reaching such a conclusion from the evidence of one or two 'clashes' between human and divine precepts; these may be explicable in terms other than that of the total corruption of human nature. They may, for example, be the results of a wounded nature, and even come about because man grasps a real good, but grasps it in a distorted way. Thus, if we take the example given of retributive justice, it may be viewed as a distortion of the idea of God-willed justice which is a moral reality in both the natural and the supernatural spheres.

There is, then, a continuum of degrees of distortion which may be attributed to human nature in its apprehension of the good. At one pole there stands total corruption, whereby man is both radically disordered in his natural ideas of what is right, and also actively set against the reception of divine revelation. At the other pole of the continuum stands the idea that human nature is merely weakened in its grasp of the natural good, and that it is neutral, or even passively open, to the revelation of God and his will. This continuum is to be correlated with a spectrum of different ideas of the obedience which is due in the Church; at one pole stands the concept of the Church that sees it as the vehicle of a divine law which stands in total judgement over all natural human ethical insights. At the other pole stands the idea of the Church in which its demands are almost completely justifiable in humanly comprehensible terms.

All this is very reminiscent of the distinctions we made when putting forward the bases upon which different pictures of God might be constructed; however, our concern is not immediately with the doctrine of God, but with the question of sin in human nature. However, it will be clear that the pictures under which God is conceived in different theologies can be correlated, in their turn, with the ways in which these theologies see the role of human

sinfulness. Thus, for example, the picture of God as creator and legislator of a stable natural order is associated with the Church's teaching of natural law, and this, in turn, is correlated with a view of man in which he appears as one who is wounded by sin, but not totally corrupted. On the other hand, the picture of God as eternal king and judge belongs together with a concept of Christian ethics which is completely disjunctive with 'natural' human morality; this, in turn, is correlated with the idea of man's total corruption by sin.

From this, it should become clear that the 'pictures' of God which were described earlier are not, indeed, systematic doctrinal accounts of his nature. If God appears, for example, as a king who demands actions which are disjunctive with normal, secular morality, this is not necessarily because he is in fact asking for obedience which is disjunctive with the nature of the world he has created; it may rather be because man's view of the world and of the nature of the moral order is totally corrupted and distorted through sin. Therefore, we may conclude that pictures of God in his relationship to us do not tell the whole divine story. Later in this thesis, when we come to treat the doctrine of God more systematically, we shall have to draw not only upon the pictures of God which we have constructed, but also upon the doctrine of man, in order to reach a more determinate concept of the divine nature.

Summary of the third part of the typology

In this part of the typology we have examined the structure of man's relationship to God as it is entailed in ecclesiology, and particularly in the idea of due Christian obedience in the Church. By taking a standpoint in ecclesiology we have been able to look backwards over the history of the divine-human relationship in the 'moments' of creation and fallenness, and we have also been able to look forward to the structure of man's redeemed relationship to God. We have taken this overview by means of drawing together elements of ecclesiology which we had already examined in earlier parts of the typology, and by examining the ways in which they correlate with different expositions of the changing character of the divine-human relationship in its wider scope. Through the use of this method, several distinct circles

of correlative ideas have emerged, in which concepts of obedience, pictures of God, doctrines of man, and ideas of the nature and significance of sin, are seen to be integrally linked together. It is against the background of these links, which have been schematically mapped-out here, that we shall chart shifts of emphasis in Vatican II's ideal of ecclesiastical obedience, and suggest their significance.

Conclusion

The title at the head of this chapter is, "An Introduction to the significance of the Idea of Obedience and to its Place in Systematic Theology". How far has the treatment of obedience which has been given here provided an outline of its significance and place in systematic theology?

I have structured the typology which occupies the second section of this chapter upon the basic supposition that obedience is a theme with an integral place both in ecclesiology and also in wider doctrines concerning the nature of God and man in their relationship. I have suggested that obedience has this necessary organic place in the various fields of systematic theology because mainstream, orthodox Christian thinking treats man and God as distinct beings who can be related through mutual knowledge and through activity directed towards each other. Obedience has its place particularly in the doctrine of the Church, because it is in the Church that man enters into this relationship with God consciously; the character of the obedience which is said to be due in the Church, or which should at least be inspired by its preaching, is a measure of a theological system's concept of the way in which man should rightly encounter God. The character of such a right encounter itself depends on the nature of the God and creature who are set face to face in it.

Ideas of due Christian obedience may change, but the centrality of the theme is not lost. Shifts in the idea of such obedience should indicate similar shifts in all co-ordinate areas of doctrine. I believe that the typology constructed in the second section of this chapter amply illustrates this contention, as well as setting out a schematic 'map', to guide us through an analysis of the teaching of Vatican II.

CHAPTER II: THE DEFINITION AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE INSTITUTION AND USE OF AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH IN THE DOCUMENTS OF VATICAN II

In this chapter, and the three which follow it, we shall be analysing the documents of the Second Vatican Council according to the method outlined in the Preface to the thesis (see pp.11-13); that is to say, we shall be looking for shifts of emphasis in the Council's treatment of the idea of obedience, by comparing its teaching with that of magisterial documents of earlier times. During the course of this analysis we shall pay attention to the theological atmosphere which Vatican II's treatment of obedience betokens, and in this way we shall be able to remark not only upon the inner consistency of the Council's teaching on obedience, but also, to some extent, upon its social plausibility.

In the present chapter we are to examine the justifications which Vatican II gave for the institutional exercise of authority in Christ's body, the Church; this study will begin to illuminate the way in which the Council distributed emphasis among the different motifs describing the role and significance of the Church and its authorities in mediating salvation and revelation to men. The theme of the Church's role will also be followed up in the subsequent chapters, but they will treat the matter more concretely, and also show what the content of ideal Christian obedience was, according to the thinking of the Council.

Now we must turn to the questions which will concern us in the present chapter: 'Do the men who hold institutional authority in the Church do so primarily as God's witnesses, his representatives, or as those whose authority is grounded in their special association with an epiphany at the heart of the Church's life?' 'What is the relationship between their special, authoritative role, and that which belongs to the Church as a whole?'

In order to have a clear view of the background against which we should see the answers given by Vatican II to these questions, we shall devote the first section of this chapter to a sketch of the ways in which institutional authority in the Church was defined and justified in the period from the Council of Trent to this century. After this will follow two sections which are devoted more particularly to Vatican II's

own teaching: Firstly, to the Council's general definition and justification of the existence of institutionalised authority in the Roman Catholic Church, and secondly to its delineation of the specific degrees of hierarchical authority which exist, and of their relationship to the life and function of lay Christians. In connection with our concern with the status of lay Christians, we shall also view Vatican II's concept of the role of the entire Church in mediating God's authority and presence to the 'secular' world.

A) The Definition and Justification of Institutional Authority in the Church, from the Council of Trent to the Twentieth Century

During the post-Tridentine era there have been two distinct ways of describing and justifying the possession and exercise of power in the Church. (1) The first has been the use of the idea of canonical (jurisdictional) authority; the second has been the idea of sacramental power. Each concept of power or authority underlies the structure of a hierarchy of office holders in the Church - a hierarchy which exists by the institution of the Incarnate Christ - and these two hierarchies overlap with one another, although the degrees of the possession of sacramental power have not been seen as exactly equivalent to the degrees in which canonical authority is held.

Although two distinct types of power are invested in Roman Catholic clergy, theirs is not a twofold, but a threefold task. They have the functions of sanctifying, ruling and teaching in the Church of God. (2) The function of sanctifying the Church is attached to the possession of sacramental power, and that of ruling it to the

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(1) For general articles on "Power", see: S.I. Benn's article in Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 6 (New York and London, 1967) pp. 424-26; article by K. Hemmerle, in Sacramentum Mundi, 5 (London, 1970) pp. 70-72.
For articles specifically on ecclesiastical power, see: G. H. Joyce, "The Power of the Keys", in Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, 10 (Edinburgh, 1918); J. Dahyot-Dolivet, "Potestas", in Dictionarium Morale et Canonicum, 3 (Rome, 1966) pp. 720ff; F. Lakner, "Potestas", in LTK, 8, cols. 647f.

(2) We shall see later (p.85) that the formulation of a trichotomy of functions was a late addition to Roman Catholic theology.

possession of canonical power. The task of teaching with authority, (magisterium) has, since the nineteenth century, customarily been assigned to the function of jurisdiction held by those with higher degrees of canonical power. The reasoning behind this identification of teaching authority and canonical power is this: The most authoritative form of teaching in the Church is a definition. This is a formal judgement on an issue in faith or morals, and it discriminates between what is acceptable and what is unacceptable for members of the Church to believe and do. A definition commonly has a negative form, and describes which views are anathematised; such acts of anathematisation, by which the limits to Church membership are fixed through the medium of doctrine and morals, are clearly acts of jurisdiction. This, then, is the most authoritative way of teaching in the Church, and it belongs to those with canonical, or jurisdictional, authority of the highest degree. Moreover, if an act of authoritative teaching is considered in its positive aspect, as an act which enunciates what should be believed or held in the Church, it requires formal obedience or assent. Therefore, it appears closely related by nature to acts of government, which also require obedience. (We shall return to these issues in greater detail in the pages which follow, and also in Chapter IV.)

There are, then, in post-Tridentine ecclesiology (particularly as it has been received since the beginning of the nineteenth century) two types of power which may be attributed to office-holders in the Church and three functions in which these powers are exercised. In the sub-sections which follow, we shall examine the relationship between these powers and these functions more closely, and ask the question, 'what kind of role in mediating God's authority does post-Tridentine ecclesiology attribute to those who hold office in the Church?'.

1 The Canonical Office and the Power of Jurisdiction

Jurisdictional, or canonical, power has legislative, juridical and administrative elements. One who holds such power in its fullness has the faculty of commanding that certain laws and specific injunctions should be kept, and he is institutionally qualified to enact and enforce these laws and injunctions. On the

negative side, the holder of the highest degree of canonical power can also enforce prohibitions.

So far, canonical power in the Church appears to be very similar to civil authority; however, ecclesiastical power has a distinctive dimension: Whereas civil law and jurisdiction can only apply to men's external, social actions, the jurisdictional power of the Church is exercised in reference to the law of God, as well as to humanly made laws. The law of God extends over both man's external action and his internal thought and intention; it extends both over actions which have social effects and over those whose effects appear to be purely private. Thus, there is an aspect of the jurisdictional power of the Church, exercised through the confessional, which gives its holders authority to pronounce on matters of the 'internal forum', and to pronounce verdicts and penalties which are effective not only in the socially observable sphere, but also have effective validity before the divine tribumal. (3) Equally, even when the specific case is not brought to the judgement of the confessional, certain transgressions of divine law are attached to automatic ecclesiastical penalties, according to principles enunciated by the Church. (4) However, we should note here that the Church's power of pronouncing upon a person's state before God, by reference to divine law, does not extend so far as the capacity to say that even an excommunicate of the most serious degree('to be avoided') is finally damned, because of the possibility of arcane 'perfect contrition', accompanied by a desire for the sacrament of penance, which remains open to him to the end of his life. (5) The Church's power in regard to the law of God, therefore, consists of the faculty enjoyed by properly empowered ministers to say that someone needs to repent, or, upon evidence of repentance in confession, that his sins are remitted; (6) whereupon the minister may enjoin appropriate penances by which the

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(3) See Conc. Trid., Sess. XIV, Doctrine on Penance (de Paenitentia), canon. 3. (Dz 913/DzS 1703); also, ibid,, can. 15. (Dz 925/ DzS 1715).

(4) For example, desecration of the Sacrament, or involvement in an abortion, entail an internal excommunication, effecto secutu, even if the circumstance is only known to the transgressor himself.

(5) See de Paenitentia, cap. 4. (Dz 898/DzS 1677).

(6) See note (3) above.

temporal satisfaction still due to the consequence of sin may be rendered.

With regard to humanly made, ecclesiastical laws, the extent of the Church's authority in the 'internal forum' of conscience is a matter of debate. According to one view, ecclesiastical law can be raised to the status of having binding force in the sight of God, by virtue of the authority which Christ give to Peter and the Apostles, when it is enacted by the highest jurisdictional authority in the Church - that is, by the Pope or a General Council. (7) According to another view, however, such humanly made law only has the status of a very strong guideline regarding the exigencies of salvation, and it belongs to the individual's conscience to interpret and apply such laws as those which require yearly confession and communion, for example. (8) Indeed, it is possible theoretically to envisage a case in which the Pope or a Council might command something which the individual Catholic found to be directly contrary to the indications afforded by his conscience. Such a command might even be attached to threatened excommunication for those who failed to keep it. In this case, there is a strong stream of tradition which indicates that the individual should obey conscience rather than the authority of the Church, and "humbly bear the excommunication". (9)

What role, then, do holders of jurisdictional authority play in regard to the mediation of God's own authority? Clearly, when they act and speak in the sphere of divine law, they act and speak as those who can give representational teaching (see pp. 48f.). In the light of this teaching, their acts of judgement make them agents, or representatives, of God himself in applying divine law to specific cases. However, when they act or speak in the sphere of purely ecclesiastical law, it is not clear whether their very acts can be representational

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(7) See J. Salaverri, Sacrae Theologiae Summa, 1 (4th edition, Madrid, 1958) sections 703 and 708.

(8) Conc. Lat. IV, cap. 21 (Dz 437(I)/DzS 812).

(9) Innocent III, cited from A. Friedberg, Corpus Iuris Canonici, (Leipzig, 1881) by Hans Küng, in Infallible? (London, 1971) p. 39. See also the traditional sources quoted by J.H. Newman in his Letter Addressed to His Grace the Duke of Norfolk (London, 1875) pp. 52f., 64.

of the will of God himself, or whether their authority is limited to that of being representational persons, even when this authority is exercised in its highest degree.

It is clear that some acts of jurisdictional authority lay no claim to being representational of the acts of God; it is only at the highest level, when ecclesiastical law is made with the utmost solemnity, that some commentators deem it to be invested with full, inerrant, binding authority. In other cases, the exercise of canonical authority may be said to enjoy the assistance of God, in a 'relative', 'prudential' manner. (10) Decisions of this kind command moral assent, which is rendered on the basis that members of the hierarchy hold and exercise their authority legitimately. Anyone who withheld the proper moral assent and obedience, for insufficient reasons, would be committing sin, because he would be withholding the obedience which is due in justice to his superiors because of their status as representatives of God.

We may raise two questions about the traditional concept of canonical power and its scope. (a) In what ways was the possession of this power by a distinct group of persons in the Church theologically grounded and justified? And (b) what might constitute sufficient reason for withholding the obedience demanded by someone in a position of canonical authority?

a) The justification for institutions and persons holding authority

The Council of Trent cited St. Paul's words to the elders of Ephesus, that they were "set by the Holy Spirit to rule the Church of God," (see Acts 20.28) as the basis for the canonical power of bishops, relying also on the idea that they are successors to the Apostles ("qui in Apostolorum locum successerunt") in their task. (11)

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(10) See Charles Journet, L'Église du Verbe incarné, 1 (Paris, 1955) pp. 426-31. We shall discuss the questions arising from a concept of 'prudential' assistance in division (b) of this sub-section, pp.81-85.

(11) Conc. Trid. Sess. XXIII, Decree on the Sacrament of Order (de sacram. Ordinis), cap. 4. (Dz 960/DzS 1768).

Meanwhile, the Pope is seen as the successor to Peter, chief of the Apostles. These ideas of gradation in canonical office were based on the quasi-legal notion of being an inheritor ('haeres') of power and status; this, in turn, was integrally linked with a concept of the Church as a 'perfect society', conforming to the same kind of social relationships as those to be found in civil society, and "as visible and palpable as the community of the Roman people, the kingdom of France or the republic of Venice". (12) The holding of canonical power could be justified by immediate reference to its institution by Christ, then, and also by the necessity incumbent on the Church of having an orderly social constitution. Only in this did the Church essentially differ from other societies in the character of its constitution - the Church's hierarchy could be claimed to reflect the hierarchy of heaven! (13)

The grade of the priesthood below the bishops did not possess powers which were proper to it in the canonical sphere; presbyteral priests exercised authority in the Church only by virtue of 'canonical mission' given by their superiors. This was because they did not fill the jurisdictional category of being inheriting successors to the Apostles in canonical power. However, there was one exception to this: It is in the jurisdictional sphere of action that persons are referred to as "vicars of Christ" (a title most often associated with the Pope himself) but it was also applied by the Council of Trent to all priests in their exercise of the "power of the keys", when they preside over the faithful in the sacrament of penance, (14) We see, therefore, that in the sacrament of penance the canonical and sacramental hierarchies of power intersect, so that presbyters, who are distinguished chiefly by their participation in the sacramental power structure, are, at this point, attributed a title and role which

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(12) Robert Bellarmine, De Controversiis Christianae Fidei, 2, Prima Controv. Generalis, Bk. III, cap. 2 (Ingolstaldt, 1601) cols. 137f.

(13) See Pius XII, encycl. Mediator Dei (20 Nov. 1947) AAS 39 (1947) p. 538.

(14) de Paenitentia, cap. 5: "Iesus Christus . . . sacerdotes sui ipsius vicarios reliquit . . . tamquam praesides et iudices."

belongs to the sphere of jurisdiction. Because they succeed the Apostles in the priesthood (15) even presbyters potentially inherit a limited share in juridical power through their penitential function. However, under normal circumstances, this juridical potential needs to be activated by the bestowal of proper canonical authorisation from above if it is to be exercised at all validly (and not just if it is to be exercised legitimately). (16) There was, therefore, at this point a certain ambiguity about the exact way in which presbyters participated in the jurisdictional function instituted by Christ. (We shall explore further ambiguities concerning the relationship between the sacramental and canonical hierarchies within the next few paragraphs.)

By the nineteenth century, the theory of the structure of the canonical hierarchy was highly developed. At the head of this hierarchy stands the Supreme Pontiff, who, according to the teaching of the First Vatican Council, occupies a see which holds the primacy of ordinary power over all the churches; the Pope's primacy of jurisdiction is "truly episcopal" ("vere episcopalis") (17) and can be immediately

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(15) de sacram. Ordinis, cap. 1. (Dz 956/DzS 1764).

(16) Except where someone is in danger of death (CIC can. 882) proper jurisdictional power must have been delegated to a presbyter if he is to administer the sacrament of penance validly (CIC can. 872).

(17) Conc. Vat. (I), Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ (Pastor Aeternus) (18 July 1870) cap. 3. (Dz 1827/DzS 3060). The phrase, "truly episcopal", can be taken to mean that the Pope has a power of oversight, in a general sense. Indeed, a document issued by the German bishops in 1875 (as a vindication of the Vatican Council in the face of Bismark's Kulturkampf) stressed that the Pope is "bishop of Rome, not bishop of any other city or diocese," but that as pastor and head of the whole Church "the Pope must take care that each bishop fulfills completely the obligations of his office; and where the bishop is impeded, or some other necessity demands it, the Supreme Pontiff has the right and duty - not as bishop of the diocese concerned, but as Pope - of ordering everything concerning its administration." (DzS 3113) This corporate declaration was confirmed by Pius IX. (DzS 3117) We may say, therefore, that although the Pope has oversight over all the churches, he is not their bishop. However, there is an area of uncertainty here, expressed, for example, in the signature which Pope Paul appended to each of the documents of Vatican II: "Ego PAULUS Catholicae Ecclesiae Episcopus."

exercised in the whole Church. It follows, therefore, that "pastors and faithful of all rites, whether singly or together, are bound by the duty of hierarchical obedience not only in matters of faith and morals, but also in matters concerning the discipline and government of the Church throughout the world". (18) Although the bishops possess a power which is "proper to them, and are called with absolute truth the governing ordinaries ("antistites ordinarii") of the people they rule, " which means that they are not to be considered as "vicars of the Roman Pontiff" (19) yet, both Leo XIII and Pius XII taught that their jurisdictional power is not fully "sui iuris"; (20) Pius XII spelt out what this meant in the following way - the ordinary power of jurisdiction which bishops enjoy is "immediately communicated" to them "by the Supreme Pontiff". (21)

The Pope then, stands at the head of the jurisdictional hierarchy; in the period succeeding Vatican I he was attributed a role which almost made him the sole fount of jurisdictional power. Below him were the bishops, successors of the Apostles in their office, and they, in turn, presided over presbyteral priests, to whom canonical authority was quite clearly ceded only through the device of 'canonical mission', or delegation from above (except for the ambiguous area of jurisdiction concerned with the sacrament of penance).

We must now consider a question which the Council of Trent left open: Is the distinction between bishops and presbyters a distinction to be attributed purely to the canonical or jurisdictional hierarchy, or is it rooted also in different gradations in the possession of sacramental power?

The Council of Trent treated the generic notion of priesthood ('sacerdotium') as its focus of interest in the treatment of Sacred Order. In relation to this it said:

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(18) Pastor Aeternus, loc. cit.

(19) Leo XIII, encycl. Satis Cognitum (29 June 1896) ASS 28 (1895-96) pp. 731f. (Dz 1958/DzS 3307)

(20) Leo XIII, ibid., 737; Pius XII, encycl. Mystici Corporis (29 June 1943) AAS 35 (1943) p. 211.

(21) loc. cit.

> "In addition to the other ecclesiastical degrees ("gradus") bishops, who succeeded in the office of the Apostles, belong in an eminent way ("praecipue pertinere") to this hierarchical order . . . and are superior to presbyters, and can confer the sacrament of confirmation, ordain ministers of the Church, and accomplish many other things. Others, of the lower order, do not possess the power for these functions." (22)

It is not clear here whether "ecclesiastical degrees", and "hierarchical order" refer to sacramental or to purely jurisdictional distinctions. Previously, in the same decree, where the grades of a sevenfold ministry related to sacerdotal functions are listed, the episcopate is not mentioned; (23) however, the fact that bishops are partly distinguished by their powers to confirm and ordain suggest a sacramental definition for their eminence in the hierarchy. (24) It is in this way that the matter was left ambiguous. One thing, however, is clear: Never in the post-Tridentine era has the papacy been considered a higher degree of sacramental order than the episcopate, despite its jurisdictional superiority. (25) Therefore, at one point at least, the sacramental and canonical hierarchies are visibly non-equivalent in their gradations; the ambiguity lies in the answer given by Trent to the question whether this non-equivalence was manifest also in the distinction to be made between priests of the presbyteral and episcopal orders.

We find, then, that the twofold justification for the possession of power in the Church led, concretely, to a concept of

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(22) de sacram. Ordinis, cap. 4. (Dz 960/DzS 1768)

(23) ibid. cap. 2 (Dz 958/DzS 1765)

(24) The practice of the Eastern Church does not suggest that the bishops alone have the power to administer confirmation, and in extra-ordinary circumstances, even the Latin rite Catholic Church has allowed a "simple priest" to administer the sacrament with chrism blessed by a bishop. (See Clement XIV, Instructio. (DzS 2588)).

(25) Cornelius Ernst argues that the Anniversary Sermons of Leo the Great (440-461) show a view of the Petrine primacy as a 'sacrament': "The decay of this sacramental consciousness led to a juris-dictional or 'political' theology of the primacy which was to find its most balanced expression in Vatican I." ("The Primacy of Peter: Theology and Ideology", in New Blackfriars, 50 (1968-69) p. 354.)

two hierarchies which intersected at certain points. The points of intersection were not clearly defined, but for the practical purposes of government of the Church it was the jurisdictional or canonical way of conceiving the power structure which was determinative.

b) What might constitute sufficient reason for withholding the obedience demanded by someone in a position of canonical authority?

Within the philosophy and theology of St. Thomas, obedience is due to legitimate authority when it does not demand something which is outside its proper area of concern, and when it does not require something which is objectively immoral. (26) However, this statement should be qualified by reference to the authority which Thomas attributed to the human act of conscience (the act of judgement which translates for the individual what is demanded by the moral law written on his heart into concrete terms). Because conscience appears to be the most immediate vehicle of God's objective law, the individual sins in disobeying it; he sins in disobeying it even if his conscience is objectively wrong, but he also sins in obeying it in these circumstances (though less gravely) because he has a responsibility to make sure that his conscience is objectively in conformity with divine law. (27) If the matter in question is a command issued by a superior concerning something which is, in fact, of indifference with regard to divine law, the man who feels that he should obey his conscience in disregard of his superior's command firstly, is mistaken as to the moral nature of the matter in question, and secondly, sins in justice against his superior. "However, he sins more if he does not do what his conscience dictates, as long as that conscience remains, since it binds more than the precepts of a superior." (28)

The original Thomist basis for post-Tridentine moral theology, therefore, gave a significant place to conscience, but always measured conscience itself for its adequacy against the standard

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(26) Aquinas, ST 2a 2ae, q.104, a.1 and a.5.

(27) Aquinas, ST 1a 2ae, q.19, a.5 and a.6
QD q. 17, a.3, and a.4.

(28) Aquinas, QD q. 17, a.5 (vol. 2, p. 336).

of an objective, divine law, which the individual was responsible for knowing.

Overlying the Thomist analysis of the duty of obedience, and its relationship to conscience, there came to be a stratum of thought, partly attributable to St. Ignatius Loyola and the Jesuits' "Fourth Vow", by which obedience in the Church was more and more assimilated to an ascetical practice for the member of a religious order. This kind of obedience became, in subsequent literature, the model for all Christians. (29) Therefore, some of the careful balance worked out in the moral system of St. Thomas was lost, and the strong presumption in favour of obeying the hierarchy's commands in all cases, except any which involved blatantly obvious immoral action, became a norm of action.

In addition to the spirituality of obedience, an expanded concept of indefectibility sometimes bolstered the idea of the safety which lies in submitting to the requirements of superior authorities. We have seen that a 'relative' or 'prudential' assistance of the Holy Spirit came to be attributed by some theologians to the non-'infallible' exercise of authority by the hierarchy (see p. 76). Journet, for example, saw this 'prudential' assistance as having the effect that the particular legislation of the Church constituted adequate action for the circumstances. (30) He did, however, also admit that the fallibility with which authority might be exercised in individual commands could create tensions for the Christian which were "terribly painful and fraught with anguish". (31) However, within the sphere of commands constraining the individual alone, a Catholic is never required to obey if obedience is objectively immoral. (32) That is the limiting point of obedience. The safeguard of the individual's conscience, where there are particular precepts addressed to him, protects the Church's hierarchy from ever being totally responsible for immoral actions which Catholics might perform under

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(29) See A. Müller, Obedience in the Church (London, 1966) p. 45.

(30) See note (10) above.

(31) Charles Journet, "Le Charactere théandrique de l'église", in L'Eglise de Vatican II, 2, edited by G. Baraúna (Paris, 1966) p. 309.

(32) ibid. p. 310.

its fallible command. We return, therefore, to the Thomist principles governing the limits of obedience.

The problem which arises in respect of Thomist principles governing individual action is this: The categories of an objective moral law do not seem to be big enough to cope with the objections which an individual may responsibly raise against a course of action which seems 'less than the best', or even positively harmful for some section of the life of the Church. The idea of the Church's indefectibility, on the other hand, is too large, for one may not actually have to envisage that a certain course of action would destroy the Church before one might wish to object to it as inappropriate. Whilst Catholic moral theology often allowed that the individual indeed had the right of making 'representations' to his superior if he thought a command a bad one, there was, nevertheless (particularly from the time of the late nineteenth century onwards) an ever-increasing presumption in favour of the rightness of those in authority in the Church. Certainly (after any appropriate 'representation' might have been made) there was no room for any kind of 'conscientious objection' in the Church, except for that which was wedded to the strict canons of recognised objective, divine law. (33)

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(33) The issue of obedience in the Church became the subject of heated controversy during the 1950s. The view that had become standard was expressed, for example, by M. Labourdette in his commentary on Thomas's concept of obedience: "As far as practical judgement is concerned . . . the subordinate must obey the order of a legitimate authority if it does not overstep its limits, even if he continues to think that the goal in view could have been much better attained in another way." (Quoted by K.H. Truhlar in "L'Obéissance des laïcs" in Laïcs et vie chrétienne parfaite, edited by G. Thils and K.H. Truhlar (Rome, 1963) p. 248.)

Similarly, G. Philips wrote that "conscientious objection to a formal decision of authority is unthinkable for a Catholic." (The Role of the Laity in the Church) (Cork, 1955) p. 34.

The issue of the difficulty of locating a border-line between 'immoral' and undesirable commands was highlighted by a play, Sur la terre comme au ciel, by Hochwälder, which occasioned a sharp theological debate in France in 1953-54. The question is raised by the play in the context of the Jesuits' administration of Paraguay in the sixteenth century. They were commanded by their superior in Rome (for political reasons) to abandon the work, leaving large numbers of Indians to the mercies of a notorious Spanish administration. Should the Jesuits of

Cont. p. 84

Finally, before concluding this sub-section, we should briefly examine the concept of indefectibility more closely. Whilst theologians such as Journet expanded the notion of indefectibility to cover the idea that the Holy Spirit gives 'prudential' assistance to the legislation of the hierarchy, so that is adequate for the life of the Church, in fact the idea of indefectibility only denotes Christ's promise that the Church should endure as the institution of salvation, and that it will not be destroyed so far as its essential constitution goes. Some theologians would hold that the only thing that could destroy the Church would be a grave deficiency in a matter touching doctrine. Thus, the guarantee of indefectibility may cover the hierarchy's action to the extent that a papal decree could not, for example, command the recitation of an heretical creed, but in areas concerning matters other than doctrine, the hierarchy might, in fact, command things which could be highly questionable, both morally and practically.

If indefectibility is considered in this narrower scope, the legislation and commands of the chief authorities of the Church lie much more open to question, objection, and perhaps disobedience. However, the problem with this limitation of the concept of indefectibility lies in the fact that it is attached to rather a narrow concept of what constitutes destruction of the Church's life. It is because of a desire to claim for the commands and laws of ecclesiastical authority a rather more expansive scope of protection that theories such as that of the Spirit's 'prudential' assistance of the hierarchy have been used as interpretations of the concept of indefectibility.

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(33) cont. from page 83

Paraguay have obeyed the command? This is the central issue of the play.

A similar border-line problem, in a more modern context, was sketched by Karl Rahner in an article published in 1960; his example is this: What should a headmaster do if commanded by a legitimate superior to make his pupils go to confession once a week? ("Reflections on obedience: A basic Ignatian Concept", in Crosscurrents (1960) pp. 364-74.) Rahner was one of those who argued that one should not simply obey without assessing the probable results of one's action; these should be included in one's view of the morality of a command.

(We shall see in Chapter IV that similar concepts have appeared in theological commentary on the extent of obedience due to the Magisterium when it does not speak 'infallibly'.)

2 Teaching Authority in the Church (the Magisterium)

It was the nineteenth-century canonists and theologians who attributed to the hierarchy a threefold function in the Church; this was associated first of all with an ecclesiology which saw the Church as a continuation of the Incarnation, and consequently attributed to its officers shares in all the offices of Christ - prophet, priest and king. (34) The function of teaching with authority was firmly assigned to the Pope and bishops, and this provided the basis for the modern use of the term 'Magisterium' as a way of describing these persons in the exercise of that function. (35) In this sub-section we shall largely be examining the concept of the Magisterium and its authority as it has been described since the nineteenth century. We shall also consider specifically the role of the Magisterium in preaching the Gospel to the world.

a) The nature of magisterial authority

One significant aspect of the shift in the use of the term 'Magisterium' is the fact that it signified the complete ascendancy of the hierarchy in the teaching sphere; no longer, as in the Middle Ages, would Catholic condemnations of heresy be issued by the universities. It had become the task of the hierarchy, and par ticularly of the Pope, to be both judge and organ of truth. As the organ of truth, the supreme, extraordinary Magisterium of the Pope was declared infallible at the First Vatican Council (36) whilst

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(34) Congar first notes the use of the threefold division of powers in the second edition of F. Walter's Lehrbuch des Kirchenrechts (Bonn, 1823.) (See Y.M.-J. Congar, "Pour une histoire sémantique du terme 'Magisterium'", in Révue des Sciences Philosophiques et Theologiques, 60 (1976) p. 95.) Michael Place remarks on the fact that the threefold division of officers entered Roman Catholic theology from Protestantism. (See "From Solicitude to Magisterium" in Chicago Studies,17 (1978) pp. 232f.)

(35) See Preface, note (1).
Congar holds that the first popes to use 'Magisterium' in the modern sense were Gregory XVI and Pius IX. The usage became common under Pius XII and Paul VI. (See Congar art. cit. p. 97.)

(36) Pastor Aeternus, cap. 4. (Dz 1839/DzS 3074).

the same Council also confirmed the teaching of Pius IX that the universal ordinary magisterium of the bishops might propose doctrines to be the object of divine faith. (37) The Magisterium, then, was the body through whom God's truth was representationally taught to the Church and the world, with a divine guarantee of accuracy.

What was the relationship of theologians to the representational teaching of the Magisterium? In the years following the First Vatican Council the role of the theologians was firmly delineated in direct relation to magisterial definitions. Theological and exegetical study could serve the function of preparing the way for ecclesiastical definitions (38), but it could also be employed in order to vindicate official teaching to the world, and to explain and comment upon it: "Now, it is . . . always right for theologians to return to the sources of divine revelation; they have the task of showing in what way the teachings of the living Magisterium are to be found in Holy Scripture and divine 'tradition', whether explicitly or implicitly." (39) Indeed, it could be said that it was the teaching of the living Magisterium which was the 'proximate' norm of faith for all Catholics, whether theologians or simple faithful. As we shall see in Chapter IV, this view, at its most extreme, could even seek to make the teaching of the ordinary magisterium of the Pope (which had no strong claim to infallibility) a final norm for theological study. This was a result of the thorough juridicalisation of the teaching function which we have already noted (see p. 85); even when the Magisterium could not claim to be teaching representationally (i.e. 'infallibly') it claimed the respectful obedience to its teachings which should characterise the proper attitude before any enunciation given by persons who, of themselves, represent Christ in governing authority.

What were the theological ideas underlying the assignation of magisterial functions solely to those with canonical authority? We have already remarked that doctrinal and moral teaching lends

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(37) Dei Filius, cap. 3. (Dz 1792/DzS 3011)
Pius IX had first advanced this idea in a letter of 1864 (Ep. "Tuas Libenter". (Dz 1683/DzS 2879))

(38) See Leo XIII, encycl. Providentissimus Deus (18 Nov. 1893) ASS 26 (1893-94) p. 280 . (Dz 1942/DzS 3282).

(39) Pius XII, encycl. Humani Generis, p. 568. (Dz 2314/DzS 3886).

itself to being placed in a juridical category because of the importance of beliefs and moral behaviour in delineating the boundaries of the Church (see pp.72f.). In the nineteenth century the function of the teaching authority was heightened, and the Popes saw their task not merely in terms of marking out fairly wide limits of acceptability, but rather in terms of achieving virtual unanimity in the Church. Thus we find Leo XIII speaking of the Magisterium's role in his encyclical on the unity of the Church in these terms:

> "To unite spirits, to create and conserve agreement of sentiments, it was necessary, despite the existence of divine Scriptures, to have another principle . . .
> [For this reason] Jesus Christ instituted in the Church a living, authentic and perpetual Magisterium, which he has invested with his own power, taught by the Spirit of truth, confirmed with miracles, and whose precepts of doctrine he has willed and solemnly commanded to be accepted as his own." (40)

It is clear from Leo's treatment of the subject that the exercise of the office of magisterium was an exercise of government aimed at maintaining tight social unity, for, "the necessary foundation of such great and absolute harmony among men is the agreement and conjunction of minds". (41) It is tempting to posit a link between the nineteenth century's complete juridicalisation of the teaching office and the Church's history in that period, as it closed ranks against an increasingly hostile post-revolutionary world. However, an earlier change also lay behind the development: This was the fact that the content of the creeds had already come to be seen in juridical categories as a content put forward by the hierarchical authority of the Church, and therefore requiring assent on those extrinsic grounds. In earlier times, the creeds had been seen as the expression of the universal Church's Tradition, and the hierarchy had simply had the function of confronting the interpretations of faith put forward by the theologians with these Symbols of the Tradition, which essentially belonged to the context of worship. (42) It

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(40) Satis Cognitum, pp.716 & 721.(see DZ 1957/DzS 3305)

(41) ibid. p. 715. (Dz 1956/DzS 3305).

(42) Y.M.-J. Congar, "Bref historique des formes du 'Magistère' et de ses rélations avec les docteurs" in Révue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques, 60 (1976) pp. 101f. and 105. See also Avery Dulles, "The Magisterium in History: A Theological Reflection", in Chicago Studies, 17 (1978) p. 278.

was the juridicalisation of the concept of the creeds which made of the hierarchical Magisterium a body which could propose determinate, theological teaching for the Church's assent, on the grounds that Christ had given authority to the hierarchy to make it an organ of truth.

b)The Magisterium and preaching

Because the idea of the Magisterium which was dominant in the nineteenth century, and the first half of the twentieth century, qutie firmly located the enunciation of truth in a juridical context, it did not only subject the aspect of the creeds associated with worship to the juridical framework, but subjected the function of preaching to this framework as well. The Codex Iuris Canonici of 1917 treats of preaching as a section of its Part IV, which is generally headed, "De Magisterio Ecclesiastico". The first canon of the section on the preaching of the Gospel defines the activity in the following terms:

> 1) "Christ the Lord entrusted the deposit of faith to the Church so that it might religiously guard revealed doctrine, and faithfully expound it, under the continual help of the Holy Spirit.
> 2) It is the right and duty of the Church to teach the doctrine of the Gospel ("evangelicam doctrinam") to all nations, independently of any civil power whatsoever: Everyone is bound by divine law to learn it rightly, and to embrace the true Church of God." (43)

Now, of course, this statement necessarily has legal dimensions, because of its origin in a code of canon law; what we should particularly notice here is not the way the Church asserts her rights to evangelise against interference by civil authorities, but the fact that the Gospel is treated as a body of doctrine 'contained' in the Church, which functions as a preservative institution. The act of spreading the Gospel is identified with the extension of the jurisdictional boundaries of the Church.(44) The world appears in

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(43) CIC can.1322.

(44) The correlation between the salvation of souls and the extension of the Church's boundaries was a common theme: For example,"[on account of the salvation of souls] it is the nature [of the Church] that she should extend herself to embrace the entire human race". (Leo XIII, encycl. Immortale Dei (1 Nov. 1885) ASS 18 (1885-86) p.164. (DzS 3166)).

the guise of a classroom of pupils, who are duty-bound to learn the doctrine of their ecclesiastical teacher, lest otherwise they incur the wrath of God. Such a concept of the Gospel treats faith as though it terminates in the words of the hierarchical teachers, rather than in a divine mystery lying beyond the full representational grasp of those words.

Because all magisterial activity is assimilated to the exercise of canonical and jurisdictional authority in this conceptuality, we find that the place of the Pope at the head of the canonical hierarchy is duplicated by his position as the Church's supreme teacher. Indeed, some of the early advocates of the theory of the 'infallibility' of the papal magisterium equated this characteristic with the Pope's supremacy in the temporal order (45) and when Vatican I came to define 'infallibility' it was in a context which linked the pastoral and the doctoral roles together. (46)

Just as the Pope appears as the chief doctor of Christians, he also appears as the one who is chiefly responsible for the preaching activity of the Church: "The universal care of missions among non-Catholics is reserved to the Apostolic See alone." (47) However, this legal demarcation of sole responsibility was tempered by appeals from the Popes to other bishops for aid in the task. Pius XI, in 1926, specifically made mention of the fact that Christ's missionary mandate was not given to Peter alone, and he appealed to the Christian sense of charity which should particularly inspire the bishops, "conspicuous by the plenitude of priesthood", so that they might be moved to share in the Pope's labours for the propagation of the faith. (48) This line of thought was further developed by Pius XII, and his bishops were not so much appealed to, as told that they were answerable for the mission of the Church, being successors to the

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(45) This was the view of Joseph de Maistre, for example. (See Place, art. cit. p. 235.)

(46) When Christ prayed that all should be one, he "desired that there should be pastors and doctors in his Church to the end of the age." (Pastor Aeternus, prolog. (Dz 1821/DzS 3050)) Similarly, Peter's successor is both "father and doctor" of all Christians." (ibid. cap. 3. (Dz 1826/DzS 3059)

(47) CIC canon 1350.2.

(48) encycl. Rerum Ecclesiae (28 Feb. 1926) AAS 18 (1926) p. 69.

Apostles. (49) Nevertheless, it remained the case that preaching to the whole world remained primarily the Pope's responsibility, and this is to be related to his position at the head of the jurisdictional hierarchy.

3 Sacraments and the Exercise of Authority in the Church

We remarked in Chapter I that, in an ecclesiology dominated by the motif of representation the sacramental function and the power of government belong together as form and substance of practical authority in the Church (see p. 42). This is because sacramental power - although of itself it is not the power to command anything - gives those who possess it the capacity to accomplish sacred actions on behalf of others. Those who can accomplish these actions are thereby also empowered to deny their benefits to those who cannot, and to use this possibility as a means of disciplinary sanction. In this sub-section we shall first examine the relationship between sacramental power and the exercise of discipline in the post-Tridentine era. Secondly, we shall look more closely at the way in which the sacramental hierarchy is theologically defined in the doctrine of 'character'.

a) The sacraments and discipline

Sacraments are the means by which the saving benefits of membership of the Church are bestowed on men. According to the theology of Trent, entry to the Church with the remission of the guilt of both original and actual sin is given in Baptism; (50) full communion in the grace of Christ present in the Church is enjoyed through a share in the Eucharist, and the offering of the Mass has the nature of a sacrifice which satisfies God, and serves for the bestowal of grace and penitence and the remission of sins. (51) Reconciliation with God after mortal sin is effected by the sacrament of Penance (52) whilst that of

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(49) encycl. Fidei Donum (21 April 1957) AAS 49 (1957) p. 236.

(50) de Paenitentia, cap. 2. (Dz 895/DzS 1671-72)

(51) Conc. Trid. Sess. XXII, Doctrine on the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass (de Missa) cap. 2. (Dz 940/DzS 1743)

(52) de Paenitentia cap. 2. (Dz 895/DzS 1671-72)

Unction gives the remission of sins, helps and strengthens the soul to bear sickness and the temptations of the devil, and sometimes also brings healing of the body. (53) In addition, there are three further sacraments - of Confirmation, Holy Order, and Marriage. However, it is the four whose functions have just been outlined which are of particular interest to us here.

It is the sacraments of Baptism, the Mass, Penance and Unction which have, in Tridentine theology, a direct relationship to someone's forgiveness, and hence to his salvation. Because of this, they intrinsically confer potential disciplinary authority on those who control them. Although, strictly speaking, only Baptism ('in voto', at least,) is the sole absolutely necessary sacrament for salvation, and its administration is not totally reserved to the hierarchy and clergy (54) the fact that those in Holy Orders do have complete control over the Eucharist and Absolution gives them effective power over the degree to which other Christians can participate in the means of grace which are available only in the Church, because the grace of Baptism must be supplemented by the effects of these other sacraments in the case of anyone who has committed mortal sin after his entry into the Church. It is the general assumption, underlying the Church's discipline of annual confession and communion,(55) that most adults need to receive Absolution at least once yearly, and to make their communion as often. Thus it is that the possession of sacramental power by the clergy, and the control of its exercise by the bishops, gives to them the capacity to include or exclude people from the ecclesiastical life of grace which leads to salvation.

In addition, I think that we may note a factor in the theology of the post-Tridentine era which enhanced the authority of those holding sacramental powers by relating these powers more firmly to a jurisdictional framework. The idea of dealing with sin so dominated Catholic thinking during this period as to overshadow other benefits of the sacraments. Penance held the centre of the stage in the experience of many Catholics, alongside communion at the Mass. Both

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(53) Conc. Trid. Sess. XIV, Doctrine on Extreme Unction (de Unctione extrema) cap. 2. (Dz 909/DzS 1696)

(54) See Conc. Trid. Sess. VII, Decree on the sacraments, Canons on the sacrament of Baptism, cap. 4. (Dz 860/DzS 1617)

(55) See note (8) above, p.75.

were enjoined as yearly duties, and, despite the reforms of Trent, more frequent communion did not become common until the time of Pius X. Thus, those in sacramental order were commonly encountered as frequently in their juridical role in the confessional as at the altar rail in communion. Moreover, the very Tridentine doctrine of the Mass tended to stress the doing away of sin at least as much as the invitation to live a life nourished by grace. The priest, therefore, by virtue of his sacramental role, stood before his people as a representative of divine justice and its requirements for satisfaction. This, we may conclude, built up an atmosphere in which an essentially juridical concept of authority in the Church was very much at home.

Because the sacrament of Penance is also an act of jurisdiction, and because it was central to Catholic experience during much of this period, this could only enhance the authority of those who were able to reserve to themselves the power of Absolution in the cases of gravest sin. (56) The highest judge of all, of course, was the Roman Pontiff, "supreme judge of the faithful", to whom appeal might be made in all ecclesiastical cases, but against whose judgement there was no appeal. (57) Because of this, the one who possessed a purely canonical degree of supremacy thereby had the power to use sacramental discipline in a way impossible for anyone else.

b) Sacramental 'character' and status in the Church

The sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Order are those which bestow different kinds of sacramental status. All three are unrepeatable. Catholic scholastic doctrine, as expressed at the Council of Trent, expounds the change of status brought about by these sacraments in terms of a permanent metaphysical change within the recipient - namely, the imprinting of a 'character' or "a certain spiritual and indelible sign upon the soul". (58) The idea that a

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(56) de Paenitentia, cap. 7. (Dz 903/DzS 1659)

(57) Pastor Aeternus, cap. 3. (Dz 1830/DzS 3063)

(58) Decree on the sacraments, canons on the sacraments in general can. 9. (Dz 852/DzS 1609)

'character' is indelible shows that it is not simply to be equated with an infusion of grace; nor did many theologians accept the idea that reception of a new 'character' merely meant that someone was permanently marked off from others by his function. (59)

The idea of 'character' was in theological circulation well before the Council of Trent. St. Bonaventure saw its imprinting as the imprinting of a disposition in relation to faith: The 'character' received in Baptism belongs to those who are the faithful; the 'character' of confirmed Christians belongs to those who are strengthened in the faith; that of Order is imprinted on those who not only have to live by faith, but also to impart it, as well as carrying on the "ministry of the Temple". (60) This view of 'character' is grounded in faith as a unifying concept - a single reality, of which both ordained and lay Christians are actively possessed in common, although their relationship to it differs. However, the theology of Trent and subsequent centuries relied more upon a Thomist concept of 'character'. St. Thomas saw it as a participation in the sacerdotal power of Christ; those who are endowed with a 'character' can be either ministers or objects of the action of sacramental power, in the manner appropriate to the kind of 'character' they have received. This makes the functional distinction between those with a lay'character', and those with the 'character' of Order, a contra-distinction between those exercising, and those being the objects of, sacramental power. The 'character' of the baptised layman marks him out ontologically as a recipient. Of course, the priest, too, always retains within his soul the receptive 'character' of a baptised Christian (so that he, too, can be one upon whom sacramental action takes effect) but in his peculiarly priestly 'character' he is the 'Alter Christus', the man who administers the power of the sacraments so that others may receive, or be acted upon.

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(59) The influential Roman theologian of the nineteenth century, J.B. Franzelin, was one of those who believed that a purely functional view of 'character' was worthy of censure. (See his work De Sacramentis in Genere (3rd. edition, Rome, 1878) thesis XIII.1, pp. 163-169)

(60) Sent. lib. IV, d.6.p.I., art. unicus, q.4. (Cited by Y.M.-J. Congar in Jalons pour une théologie de Laïcat (Paris, 1953) p. 35.)

The 'character' of Order is, then, the grounds for the exercise of sacerdotal power, with all the possibilities of exercising discipline which are inherent in it. The Church is a society of those who are ontologically unequal. However, as we saw in sub-section (1), although sacramental ststus is the basis for jurisdictional inequality, sacramental degrees are not to be identified straightforwardly with different grades of the canonical hierarchy, and it was superiority in the canonical power structure which mainly determined control in the Church during the post-Tridentine period.

Conclusion

We see, then, in the ecclesiology of the post-Tridentine period an almost complete domination of the concept of authority by the representational motif. The idea of representing God vicariously in the exercise of government, because of the institution by Christ of an apostolic hierarchy on a quasi-legal model, was the prevailing notion. It came to colour even the way in which the kerygmatic and teaching functions were perceived, so that doctrines which had no claim to 'infallibility' could nevertheless require acceptance by an act of obedience. (We shall develop this theme in Chapter IV.) It also dominated over the theory of sacramental 'character' as a basis for the respect and obedience owed to persons. In addition to the idea that persons could represent God in their jurisdiction over the Church, there also developed increasingly strongly the idea that Church teaching, itself, could represent the truth about God with accuracy and perspicuity. This concept reached its highest form of precision and development in the declaration of the 'infallibility' of the papal magisterium, in 1870.

In relation to this dominance of the representational motif, the idea of the Church and her officers as having a witnessing role scarcely appeared in theology or official teaching. The idea that the generality of the Church might embody something of God's authority in themselves was subordinated to the place given to Pope and bishops as those through whom the Tradition of the Church was set forth, under the guarantee of the Holy Spirit's assistance. Thus it was that the clear distinction - typical of the nineteenth century - could be made between the two parts of the Church, active and passive, "the

teaching Church and the learning Church, pastor and flock; and among the pastors, one who is head of all and supreme pastor". (61)

B) Vatican II's Definition and Justification of Institutional Authority in the Church

How did the Second Vatican Council change the way in which structures of authority were conceived and justified in ecclesiology? This is the question which we shall be seeking to answer in the present section of the chapter. We saw in the Preface that Pierre Hégy has argued that the Council Fathers failed to modify the power structure of the Church; (62) similarly, Christian Duquoc has recently writtem that Vatican II did not adequately integrate its theory of hierarchical authority with its picture of the Church as a community: "[The authors of Lumen Gentium] affirmed the primacy in ecclesiology of the Christ-ecclesial community relationship, but they did not sufficiently integrate into this part of their argument the account of the hierarchical structure of the Church, which, judged to be secondary, is still treated as though it were quasi-autonomous." (63)

I shall argue in this section that, although the representational motif was by no means abolished as a justification for the exercise of authority in the Church, there were, none the less, significant shifts towards greater prominence for the motifs of witness and embodiment. Although these shifts were individually small, and can perhaps each be balanced-off against a restatement of the earlier position (64) cumulatively they present a cluster of ideas which link up with indications that another idea as well as that of

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(61) See Leo XIII, Letter to Cardinal Guibert (17 June 1885) ASS 18 (1885-86) pp. 3ff.

(62) See Preface, p. 15.

(63) "Concepts of Ministry", in The Tablet, 24 March 1979, p. 310. (Original French version in Études, January 1979.)

(64) Duquoc gives several examples of the way in which new ideas were not articulated with older concepts. (loc. cit.)

institutional representation, was at work in the way in which authority was conceived and justified by the Fathers of Vatican II. At the end of this section I shall suggest a way in which this new idea might be appropriately characterised.

Like the preceding section, this one will be divided into three major sub-sections, dealing respectively with canonical, magisterial and sacramental power.

1 The canonical office and the power of jurisdiction

In this sub-section we must examine first, how the Council described the origin and justification of the apostolic hierarchy in the Church, and the character under which they conceived it; secondly, we shall consider the way in which they urged that canonical authority should be exercised.

a) The concept of the apostolic hierarchy

Vatican II did not abandon the idea that a structure of authority was instituted by Christ and built upon the foundation of the Apostles. This fact becomes abundantly obvious if one examines Chapter 3 of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, (Lumen Gentium). The doctrine appears, for example in LG 18.1, 19, 22.1, 24.1, 27.1, and 28.1., as well as many other passages. We are told that Christ "instituted various ministries in his Church in order that they might pastor and increase the people of God" (LG 18.1), and that it was the Apostles whom he originally sent for this task (see LG 19); just as the Apostles, with Saint Peter, formed a stable college, so too do their successors, the bishops and Pope (see LG. 22.1); the bishops are "vicars and legates of Christ", and "rule the particular churches entrusted to them," (LG 27.1), and the whole structure of ecclesiastical ministry, in its threefold form of bishops, priests and deacons, was established by God (see LG 28.1). We see, then, a repetition of the concepts of apostolicity, succession, vicarious government of the Church, and institution by Christ. There are, however, factors, even within these passages, which combine to present the picture of Christ's institution of the apostolic hierarchy in rather a new light. The major point which I wish to highlight is the way in which the Council related Christ's institution of this hierarchy of canonical authority to a concept of mission.

In LG 28.1 we are told that Christ made the successors to the Apostles, namely, the bishops, "sharers in his consecration and mission". This phrase is used in the paragraph before one which refers to the divine 'institution' of the Church's ministry; the idea of "consecration and mission" appears to be the controlling notion by which the institution of the apostolic succession is characterised. This point appears yet more clearly if we examine other passages.

The missionary mandate of Christ is quoted or referred to twelve times in each of its Marcan (65) and Matthaean (66) forms either in whole or in part, over the documents of Vatican II taken as a body, while John 20.21 (67) appears seven times. The idea that the Apostles were 'sent' by Christ was not solely related by the Council to their task as preachers of the Gospel, but was also seen as a 'sending' for all the functions of the ministry (see LG 19, SC 6.1, CD 1, and 2.2, AG 5.1). It is the Gospel, however, which should be "at all times for the Church the principle of her whole life" (LG 20.1), and this is why "that divine mission entrusted to the Apostles by Christ is destined to last to the end of time." (loc. cit.) We see here that the hierarchically ordered society which the Apostles took care to institute for the sake of continuity (loc. cit.) exists in order to serve the Gospel. The dynamic of the threefold mission of governing, teaching and sanctifying, and the institutional forms to which it has given birth, spring from the fact that Christ sent men out with a message. Therefore, although the institutional element in the Church is not done away, nor even seriously minimised, it is set in a significantly fresh context, by its association with the idea of mission.

In order to throw this shift of emphasis into relief we may compare a section of LG 19 with a passage from Leo XIII's encyclical

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(65) Mk. 16.15: "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to the whole creation."

(66) Mt. 28.19-20a: "Go . . . and make disciples of all nations, baptising them . . . [and] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

(67) "As the Father sent me, even so I send you."

Satis Cognitum. Both the encyclical and the Council's text speak of the sending out of the Apostles by Christ, and describes them as "sharers in his power". In Satis Cognitum this phrase is followed by a colon, and appears to be a jurisdictional qualification which the incarnate Lord bestowed on them. (68) Only after the colon, and reference to the gift of the Spirit, did Leo XIII go on to speak of the preaching mission. In LG 19, on the other hand, the phrase, "sharers in his power," occurs directly within the context of Christ's sending of the Apostles: "He sent them . . . so that, being sharers in his power, they might make all people his disciples, and sanctify and govern them, thus propagating the Church." Here, "power" appears not so much as a purely jurisdictional qualification, but more as a dynamic capacity by which the Apostles were enabled to propagate the Church through their mission.

The apostolic mission, which underlies the fact of an apostolic ministry, is located by the theology of Vatican II within a wider context - the mission of the whole Church. The first article of Lumen Gentium begins by saying that the Council desired to illuminate all men with Christ's light by proclaiming the Gospel to every creature. It then went on to say that in the constitution which followed the Church would be described in terms of her nature and mission. (LG 1.1) The Church is described as being "missionary by her very nature" during her earthly pilgrimage (AG 2.1, see also AG 35.1) having been sent to all nations by the command of her founder (AG 1.1). She is caught up in the action of God, the mission of the Son and the Spirit (loc. cit.), and we may contrast this picture with that of a society of divinely instituted order upon which the Holy Spirit "began to come" at Pentecost, as though to animate structures already established without him. (69)

One may, however, detect an inner tension in the sections of the documents explicitly dealing with mission, between a theological affirmation that the whole Church is responsible for spreading the Gospel, and one which presents the task as being the inherited duty of

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(68) Satis Cognitum, p. 717: "Since this divine task was to last continually for ever, he attached to himself those who studied his teaching, and made them sharers in his power: and when he had called down the Spirit of Truth from heaven upon them, he commanded them to traverse the world, and to preach faithfully to all nations what he had taught and commanded them."

(69) See, for example, Leo XIII, encycl. Divinum Illud (9 May 1897) ASS 29 (1896-97) p.649 . (DzS 3328)

bishops, in which the rest of the Church "co-operates". (see AG 6.1) This is a tension which arises from the juxtaposition of the idea that bishops are successors of the Apostles (70) with the idea that the Apostles were the founders or "seeds" of the whole "New Israel", as well as of the sacred hierarchy. (AG 5.1) If the Apostles were seeds of the entire Church, how, then, is it that the entire Church does not inherit Christ's command to preach the Gospel, and the authority of mission which accompanied this command? (71) How, and why, is authoritative apostolic preaching to be demarcated from the responsibility which all members of the Church have for "announcing saving truth"? (see LG 17.1)

AG 5.1 attempts to accommodate the tension between different ideas of a share in the evangelistic mission by suggesting that the Church as a whole, and the episcopate as a distinct body, are related to Christ in different ways. The entire Church has a duty of propagating the faith because it is the body of Christ, which is filled with his life, (and we are led to understand that it is because it is Christ's body that it is structured by the existence of various ministries - which would suggest an intrinsic reason why certain members of the Church have a particular role in preaching and mission). The bishops, assisted by presbyters, and in union with the Pope, have

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(70) The succession of bishops to the Apostles is expressly affirmed in LG 18.2, 20, 22.2, 23.2, 24.1, DV 7.2, CD 2.2, 4.1, 6.1, 8.1, 35.1, AG 38.1, UR 2.4.

(71) It is interesting to note that recent New Testament study suggests that the concept of the "Twelve Apostles" is a composite idea, combining the idea of "the Twelve", which originated within Christ's ministry, and which represents his foundation of the eschatological community, with the idea of an "Apostle", a charismatic preacher of the early Church whose office (like that of St. Paul) owed more to individual experience of God's call than to any qualification for government bestowed by the community. (See G. Klein, Die Zwölf Apostel (Göttingen, 1961) and R. Schnackenburg, "Apostolicity: the Present Position of Studies", in One in Christ, 6, (1970) pp. 243-73.)
The significance of this is that it suggests that, already, in the era of the New Testament's writing, there were moves to qualify charismatic preaching in the Church by attaching it to the function of government in the community - a situation which is echoed in modern Roman Catholic history by the fact that preaching was banned to the laity at the Council of Trent, and, except under special circumstances, remains so banned. (See CIC cans. 1337ff.)

inherited an express missionary mandate from Christ through the Apostles (and this suggests a reason extrinsic to the Church community as to why certain of its members have a particular authority in mission). We find, therefore, that the documents of Vatican II retain the traditional idea of an apostolic ministry which has its origins in an impulse extrinsic to the communitarian life of the Church, but supplements this by opening up wider perspectives on the active share in the missionary dynamic which belongs to the entire body of the Church. One might summarise this by saying that the power and mandate which characterise the hierarchy's mission constitute a focused and guaranteed image of an empowering and a task which belong to all. In other words, the representional motif, concerning the office of bishops and clergy, is here supplemented and modified by an increase in emphasis given to the concept of the Spirit's active embodiment in the whole Church.

If we turn to examine more specifically the characterisation of the apostolic hierarchy by Christ's missionary mandate, we find that Vatican II clearly brings to the fore the idea that the bishops' "eminent task" is the preaching of the Gospel (LG 25.1). (72) We have seen in Section A that by the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the universal care of missions had been reserved to the Apostolic See along (see p.89). We have also seen that Pius XII began to reinstate a theory of joint apostolic responsibility for world mission devolving upon the whole body of bishops. Vatican II made this idea yet more explicit through its theology of the episcopal college, (with which we shall deal more fully in Section C, pp.126-31); "All bishops, as members of the episcopal body which succeeds the college of Apostles, are consecrated not only for their own dioceses, but for the salvation of the entire world. Christ's command to preach the Gospel to every creature . . . touches them primarily and immediately, along with Peter, and under Peter." (AG 38.1) (73). Thus, the identity

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(72) The idea that the bishops had the "eminent task" of preaching was expressed at the Council of Trent (see Conc. Trid. Sess. V, de ref. can. 2; Sess. XXIII, de ref. can. 1, Sess XXIV, de ref. can. 4) but was later rather submerged under the emphasis on papal responsibility.

(73) See also LG 23.3, CD 3.1, AG 29.1.

of those participating in the apostolic succession is essentially the identity of those who herald the Gospel to the world. Bishops' canonical authority is organically linked with their inherited mission, which is a mission of service to the Gospel. We shall examine the significance of this shift of emphasis more fully in the conclusion to this section. But now we must consider the way in which Vatican II envisaged canonical authority as being exercised.

b) The exercise of canonical authority

It is often noted that LG 18.1 and 24.1 present the exercise of canonical authority under the description of "ministry", "service" and "diakonia". These terms do not only suggest the way in which canonical authority should be exercised in relation to the community (74) but, more importantly, indicate the fact that all the functions belonging to members of the hierarchy - government, teaching, and sanctification - should be seen together as an integrated task directed to the salvation of men. LG 24.1 clearly shows that this integrated ministry is to be identified with the mission which the successors to the Apostles receive. We therefore find that we can begin to build up a definite cluster of correlated ideas: A share in the apostolic mission is a share in a ministry, in which the threefold office is integrated under the sign of the Gospel for the salvation of men. This mission and ministry has the characteristic nature of serving a community.

Because Vatican II's increased use of the term "ministry" has often been noted, and the ecclesiology of service has been both developed and criticised elsewhere (75) I shall, in the pages which follow, concentrate rather upon another, less noted concept in which there was a significant shift of emphasis at the Council. This is the

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(74) One of Christian Duquoc's specific complaints against LG is that it lacked articulation between the image of ministry as service, as expressed in LG 18, and its concept of priesthood as "sacred power" (LG 10, 18). (Duquoc loc. cit.)

(75) See, for example, Chapters 1-3 of J.L. McKenzie's Authority in the Church (London, 1966).
See also Nicholas Lash's critique of the confusions that may arise from laying too much stress on a concept of authority as service, in Voices of Authority (London, 1977) p. 15.

concept of pastoral authority in the Church. I believe that the way in which the idea of pastoring was used at Vatican II shows the same characteristics as its concept of ministry; that is, the idea of pastoral authority was primarily attached to descriptions of the canonical function, and yet its use indicated clearly that it is impossible fully to separate jurisdiction from the tasks of teaching and sanctifying without artificiality. It also indicated that canonical authority in the Church should be exercised characteristically as service rather than dominion.

'Pastor' is a traditional term used in reference to someone holding authority in the People of God. In its original meaning of 'shepherd' it has good biblical precedent. (76) Catholic theology has identified pastoral with canonical power, but, at the Council of Trent the imagery of shepherding was used as an argument for temperance in the use of this power:

> "The Holy Council of Trent . . . intending to decree certain things concerning the jurisdiction of bishops . . . first considers it fitting to admonish them to remember that they are shepherds("pastores") and not those who make their influence felt by violent means ("percussores"); therefore, they should so preside over their subjects that they do not domineer over them, but rather love them as sons and brothers, and labour for them. Thus, by advice and warning they should prevent them from doing wrong, and so be spared the necessity of punishing transgressors with due penalties. Yet, should it befall some of their subjects that through human weakness they sin, the Apostle's command is to be kept [by the bishops]: They should convince, entreat, and reprove in all goodness and patience, since it is often the case that benevolence achieves more in the way of correction than severity, exhortation more than threats, charity more than power." (77)

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(76) In the Old Testament 'shepherd' was often used to describe both religious and civil leaders of Israel: See Num. 27.17, I Kings 22.17, Is. 56.11, 63.11, Jer. 23.1ff., 25.34ff., 49.19, 50.6, Ex. 34 passim., 37.2, Mic. 5.5, Nah. 10.2f., Zech. 10.2f., 11 passim, 13.7. In Is. 44.28 the term is applied to Cyrus. It was also used to describe God in his relationship to his people: eg. Ps. 23.1, 80.1, Is. 40.11, Zech. 11.7ff.
In the New Testament the term 'shepherd' was applied to Jesus himself: Mt. 9.36, 26.31, Mk. 14.27, Jn. 10.2 and 11ff. It seems to have constituted part of a Messianic claim. R. Torbet notes that Jesus transformed the connotations of the image by associating it with his death for the 'sheep'; "so, too, in John,

cont. on page 103

Leo XIII described pastoral duties in this way: "To provide leadership for the flock, and to nourish it with healthy food, by warding off dangers, warning against snares, protecting from force; in short, ruling by directing the flock, ("regendo gubernando"). (78) We see, therefore, that the idea of pastoral government was firmly lodged in Catholic tradition.

Vatican II, however, particularly sought to be a Council with a pastoral approach, in conscious rejection of one that was juridical or clerical. (79) This pastoral approach was to be one which did not make definitions, nor issue edicts simply for the sake of the smooth running of the Church's machinery or for the enhancement of jurisdictional power. Rather, the pastoral idea was connected with an aim of making the riches of Christian doctrine more easily available both to members of the Church, and to the world. Thus, pastoral reform of the Liturgy aimed to make it more of a pedagogical experience (see SC 33-36) and the Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes) is a "Pastoral Constitution", because "it seeks to express the relation of the Church to the world and to the men of today". (80) In this document, the Church is shown as being in dialogue with the world; this is her pastoral attitude to a sphere over which she has no jurisdiction. Her only authority in the face of secular society is that of one who announces the true answers to men's questions, (see GS 4.1).

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(76) cont from page 102:
when Jesus talks of Peter as shepherd, he immediately goes on to talk of Peter's death." ("Authority and Obedience in the Church Today", in New Blackfriars, 50 (1968-69) p. 584.) See also the use of the term in Heb. 13.20, in reference to Jesus and in Acts 20.28f. and I Pet. 5.2ff., in reference to Church leaders.

(77) Conc. Trid. Sess. XIII, de ref.

(78) Satis Cognitum, p. 728

(79) See John XXIII's opening speech to the Council: "We must find ways of expounding things which correspond better with a magisterium whose nature is, above all, pastoral." (11 Oct. 1962) AAS 54 (1962) p. 792.

(80) Official note on the title "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World".

We find, then, that for Vatican II the words associated with the concept, 'pastor', are very far from being equivalent to words associated with the concept, 'ruler'. The Council would have been disinclined to follow Leo XIII's example, and sum up the pastoral task under the rubric of "ruling by directing", because for them it included a humble approach to men over whom ecclesiastical pastors have no rule. Whilst Leo XIII (and Trent before him) considered the pastoral function primarily as that of canonical control (within the sphere of which teaching and sanctifying might safely go on) the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council saw the pastoral function more generally as an integrated ministry of making the Church's riches available. They were less concerned than their predecessors to specify how and why pastors should react in condemnation of dangerous tendencies in the flock; they were more concerned with leadership, where previous writers had been more concerned with direction.

This is not to say that the verb "pascere" and the word "pastor" were not sometimes used by Vatican II solely in reference to the canonical part of the hierarchical office; indeed, they seem to have been used interchangeably with "regere", "gubernare" and their derivations quite often, in referring to the canonical function. "Pascere" is used in CD 2.2 and PO 7.1, whilst "regere" is used in LG 21.2, 27.1, PO 15.2, AA 2.2 and UR 2.3. However, in some of these latter passages there is also reference to the pastoral motif; for example, in LG 21.2 the bishop is described as acting in the role of Christ the pastor, and in UR 2.3 there is mention of the 'shepherding' role of Peter, while, in this same passage, the role of Christ as pastor of souls appears in very close proximity to an account of the threefold office of the Twelve. Article 16 of the Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church (Christus Dominus) which begins a more detailed study of the episcopal office of government, calls this duty that of a "father" and "pastor". We may also note that the term "government" is qualified by the adjective "pastoral" in LG 23.2 ("regimen pastorale"). It seems, therefore, that Vatican II tended to use the pastoral motif to modify and qualify what it understood by the idea of government. It is my contention that, because the idea of pastoring can be used inclusively, integrating the

concepts of teaching and sanctifying with that of governing in a single notion, and because the Council could also speak of a pastoral approach to those over whom the hierarchy has no jurisdiction, the prevalence of the word 'pastor' and its derivatives in the documents of Vatican II indicates a displacement of the jurisdictional motif from its practical position of dominance in the concept of authority.

Striking uses of the concept of pastoring in an inclusive way are to be found in LG 19, 20.3, and 32.4. We should also mention the parallelisms of scriptural texts, found in LG 8.2: Peter was commanded to "shepherd" ("pascere") the Church, the Apostles were given the task of spreading and ruling it, and the successors of Peter and all the Apostles together have the function of ruling it. The apparent distinctions in the sentence must be held to derive more from the biblical sources used than from real theological distinctions; therefore, Peter's task of shepherding or pastoring includes all the functions of spreading the Church, ruling it, and feeding it with sound doctrine.

Finally, we should note that Vatican II set before clergy the model of Christ, the Good Shepherd, who lays down his life for the sheep (LG 27.4, PO 13.4, 14.2, see also LG 41.2). Here we see the Messianic idea as Jesus transformed it; (81) unlike the Old Testament "shepherds of Israel" (see Ez. 34.2) he came "not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mk. 10.45). At this point, the theme of pastoring most explicitly joins the motif of ministry in describing the ideal nature of authority in the Church. (82)

2 Teaching Authority in the Church (the Magisterium)

We shall be examining Vatican II's presentation of the exact authority of magisterial teaching in Chapter IV and Chapter V. At this point, therefore, we may concentrate upon the way in which the Council justified the existence of authorised teachers in the Church, and described the nature of their function. This will entail considering the use made by the Council of the ideas of teaching and preaching.

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(81) See note (76) above.

(82) Mk. 10.45, itself, is used in connection with ecclesiastical ministry in LG 27.4 and OT 4.1. See also the use of Lk. 22.26f. in LG 27.1 and CD 16.1.

The theme of preaching and teaching has already been broached in sub-section (1), pp. 98-101, above, when we considered the way in which Vatican II grounded the apostolic ministry in a mission of which the Gospel is both the dynamic and the principle. We saw that preaching appears once more as the "eminent task" of bishops, and that this worked out practically into a theory of their corporate responsibility for the evangelisation of the world. I shall now argue that, underlying this practical expression of a concern for preaching in foreign missions, there was a theological shift of emphasis - incomplete, but nevertheless significant - towards a characterisation of the magisterial role by the motif of witness. This shift modifies that understanding of the authority of the hierarchy's ordinary teaching which is based upon recognition of the bishops' authority as representatives of Christ.

In the passage in which Lumen Gentium explicitly refers to the teaching of Vatican I concerning the succession of the apostolic ministry it omits mention of the teaching function. Where Pastor Aeternus says that Christ wished there to be "pastors and doctors" in his Church (83) LG 18.2 says, "he wished their successors, that is, the bishops, to be pastors in his Church". Does this mean that Vatican II played-down an emphasis on the ministry of the Word which is to be found in the documents of Vatican I? By no means. The First Vatican Council speaks of Christ's intention for the Church in a context in which it is considering the foundations of unity in the Christian community; a succession of pastors and doctors was needed to ensure this, because of the significance attributed to doctrine in maintaining Church unity (see p. 87). The Vatican II text, on the other hand, begins by considering the variety of ministries which provide for the good of the body (LG 18.1) and locates unity as only one among many benefits promoted by the hierarchical structure of the Church. Perhaps it is because of a relatively diminished concern with unity as the chief end of ministry and government that the doctoral function of the episcopate is not mentioned here; unity conceived as the chief end of government tended to mean uniformity; unity as one benefit among others may be a different thing - a unity in diversity and richness of

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(83) Prolog. (Dz 1821/DzS 3050)

expression. Diversity and richness are not promoted primarily by magisterial authority from above.

When Lumen Gentium did come to devote an article to the teaching office of bishops, it first of all presented the activity of preaching as that which has primacy: "For bishops are heralds of the faith who lead new disciples to Christ, and they are authentic doctors - that is to say, endued with Christ's authority - who preach to those entrusted to them both the faith they should believe, and its application to moral matters." (LG 25.1) It is quite noticeable that it is the emphasis on preaching which sets the tone for what is said about teaching. Likewise, although the same paragraph later speaks of the "religious obedience of spirit" which is due to episcopal teaching, this comes after the introduction of the idea that the bishops aim to make "disciples" for Christ. The very word 'disciple', as used in this context, may be compared with the phrase which Leo XIII employed to describe the relationship of the Apostles to Christ: Whilst the word in LG 25.1 is "discipulos", Leo XIII uses the phrase "alumnos disciplinae suae". Although this, too, could be translated by 'disciples', I have translated it more closely as "those who studied his teaching". (84) One might also translate it by 'those who studied his way of life'. In either case, it bears with it the connotation of 'pupils'. The term used by Lumen Gentium moves away from the imagery of the classroom to that of active followers of Christ. Finally, in this connection, we should note that whereas Leo XIII saw the Apostles and their successors as preaching "doctrine" and "laws" (85) LG25.1 suggests that the bishops preach the "Gospel" or "the faith" (or, simply, "faith").

We may say, then, that the idea of preaching is distinctly brought to the fore by Vatican II when its formulations are compared with those of the previous century. The activity of representational teaching of divine truth appears to be a development and special qualification of preaching, which is the more basic activity; (we

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(84) See note (68), above, p.98.

(85) Satis Cognitum continues: "by this design the human race might acquire holiness on earth and eternal bliss in heaven, through profession of his doctrine and obedience to his laws." (p. 709).

should, however, note here that CD 12.1 described the entire task under the term "teaching", but expounded this activity as being first of all that of announcing "Christ's Gospel to men . . . calling them to faith"). It is not that Vatican II denied the possibility of expounding divine truths accurately; rather, it continued actively to affirm it. However, such accurate teaching is clearly subordinated to the purpose of pointing men to a single truth and mystery beyond itself; faith terminates in Christ, rather than in the teaching of the hierarchy. The Magisterium "serves" the Word of God (DV 10.2) and listens to it religiously (see DV 1.1); in its representational teaching, it returns to the status of being truth's guardian and kerygmatic vehicle, rather than its formal organ.

We shall see in Chapter V how this shift in the concept of the magisterial activity affected the epistemology connected with the theory of 'infallibility'; here, however, we must note that, in regard to teaching which does not claim to be 'infallible', a shift of emphasis towards the motif of witness, such as that which is conveyed by the renewed stress on the function of preaching, is likely severely to modify the way in which fallible statements of the ordinary magisterium are viewed. Preaching, or witness, which points beyond itself, and beyond those who give it, to a Gospel, and to Christ, gains its inherent authority from the power with which it commends itself to men's hearts (see Chapter I, pp. 35f.). Such a form of invitatory authority is only with difficulty, and with some degree of artificiality, compounded with a requirement for "religious obedience of the mind and will", to be rendered on the grounds of the witness's formal authority as a representative of Christ in the function of government. We shall explore this theme further in Chapter IV when we come to analyse in more detail the nature of the authority which Vatican II claimed for the non-infallible teaching of the Magisterium. However, the tensions which we shall examine there are all fundamentally allied to the fact that the Council located the original justification for the function of a formal teaching authority in the necessity for the Gospel to be preached, and for there to be "witnesses of divine and Catholic truth" (see LG 25.1).

3 Sacraments and the Exercise of Authority in the Church

We saw in Section A that post-Tridentine theology tended to make of the sacraments instruments which could easily be used for

discipline in the hands of an institutional hierarchy. It also defined sacramental status in such a way as to emphasise the powers and activity of one group in the Church, over against the receptive and passive stance of the rest. In the pages which follow, we shall examine Vatican II's treatment of the nature of the sacraments and the stance in which their ministers appear, and then, the question of sacramental 'character' and status in the Church.

a) The nature of the sacraments and the stance of sacramental ministers

The documents of Vatican II stress the centrality of the Eucharist:

> "The other sacraments and all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate are bound to the Eucharist and ordered towards it. For it is in the most holy Eucharist that the whole spiritual good of the Church is contained, Christ himself, our Passover, our living bread, who offers life to men through his flesh, raised to life and giving life through the Holy Spirit. So he invites and leads men to offer themselves, their work, and all created things in union with him. Therefore, the Eucharist is the source and summit of all evangelisation." (PO 5.2)

No statement of the centrality of the Eucharist to the Christian life could be more emphatic than this. Similar emphatic assertions are to be found in SC 10.1, LG 11.1, CD 30.6, PO 6.5, and AG 9.2. Baptism finds its complete meaning in ordaining someone to full eucharistic communion (see UR 22.2); the Eucharist is the central Christian experience, a "mystery" (SC 48, LG 26.1, PC 6.2) in which the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection is proclaimed (LG 28.1), celebrated (PO 13.3), and relived by the faithful (CD 15.2).

Frequent communion at the Mass is "strongly recommended" (SC 55.1), and particular mention of the possibility of even daily communion is made in the Decree on Oriental Catholic Churches

(Orientalium Ecclesiarum) (OE 15) (86).

As the locus of "the whole spiritual good of the Church", the Eucharist has a wealth of meaning. In it, the unity of the Church is both brought about and manifested (LG 26.1), "for sharing in the body of Christ has no other effect than to transform us into that which we consume." (loc. cit.) As those in communion with Christ, and incorporated into him (LG 7.2, AG 36.1, 39.1, see also UR 15.1), Christians can offer themselves in the Eucharist, along with their lives, labours, and praise, in union with the divine victim (SC 12, 48, LG 11.1, 34.2, PO 5.3). Of course, the Eucharist is traditionally regarded as the re-presentation of the redeeming sacrifice of Christ, and the Council of Trent devoted an entire decree to this aspect of it. (87) This aspect is not neglected in the eucharistic theology of Vatican II, but only once, and in an oblique way (CD 15.1), is there immediate reference to the doing away of sin, or to propitiation: GS 38.1 speaks of Christ as "undergoing death for us all who are sinners," and the next paragraph goes on to refer to the Eucharist as a pledge of hope; but the hope that we are forgiven is not explicitly mentioned here. SC 10.2 and PO 4.2 make reference to the covenantal aspect of the sacrifice of the Mass, and SC 10.2, along with PO 13.3, speaks of the sanctification effected by the Eucharist. SC 2, 6, LG 3 and OT 2 mention in general terms the fact that the eucharistic sacrifice actualises the work of salvation, but they do not spell out the relationship of this effectual sacrifice to man's sinful state. Most notably of all, LG 28.1 says of priests that they "re-present and apply the unique sacrifice of the New Testament, that is, Christ offering himself once and for all to the Father as a spotless victim, in the sacrifice of the Mass". This is an explicit citation from the Council of Trent, but there is a significant difference: Trent spelt out what the 'application' of Christ's sacrifice means: "He left a sacrifice in which that which he wrought once

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(86) For reasons peculiar to the form of their Liturgy, not even weekly attendance at the Eucharist is required in all the oriental rite churches. For Catholics of the Latin rite, weekly Mass attendance is an obligation, and, since the pontificate of Pius X, frequent communion has been consistently urged upon them. This was made more feasible by Pius XII's relaxation of the laws of fasting in 1953 and 1957. (AAS 45 (1953) pp. 15ff. and AAS 49 (1957) pp. 177f.)

(87) Conc. Trid. Sess. XXIII, Doctrine on the most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, (de Missa) (Dz 937ff./DzS 1738ff.).

for all on the cross might be re-presented . . . and its saving virtue might be applied in the remission of those sins which we daily commit." (88)

I am by no means suggesting that the doctrine of the propitiatory value of the Mass was expunged at Vatican II. The Council did not set out to alter Catholic doctrine, but to transmit it in ways appropriate to the modern age. (89) However, by virtue of the fact that the Eucharist's connection with the remission of sin was not stressed by the Council we may say that it was submerged under other ideas, which took its former place of primary importance. We have looked at these ideas above, except for one: This is the idea that the Eucharist should be viewed as nourishment, and the communication of grace, for the Christian life. There is a long list of passages which bring this concept to the fore (SC 10, 48.1, LG 33.2, 42.1, 48.2, DV 21.1, 26, PO 18.1, PC 6.2, 15.1, AA 3.1, AG 6.3, GS 38.2). The significant fact is that such a conception of the central Christian sacrament stresses both its invitatory nature, and the character of active dicipleship of those who receive it. (90) "The sacraments, and especially the most holy Eucharist, communicate and nourish that charity which is the soul of the whole apostolate." (AA 3.1) "The Lord left to his own a pledge of hope and food for the journey in the sacrament of faith . . . This is the meal of brotherly communion, an anticipation of the heavenly banquet." (GS 38.2) "He offers life to men through his flesh . . . so he invites and leads men to offer themselves." (PO 5.2) - Such are some of the passages in which the imagery of eucharistic nourishment appears. Communion sustains the spiritual life of the individual, and builds up the communal reality of the Church; it imparts grace for

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(88) de Missa, cap. 1. (Dz 938/DzS 1740) (emphasis mine.)

(89) See John XXIII's opening speech, pp. 791f.

(90) Pius X, too, stressed the fact that communion could be a help in the Christian life; but, if we examine a decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council, issued in his pontificate, we find that the help envisaged was largely conceived as aid in an individual's battle against sin, rather than as aid in the active apostolate and the building up of community: "The desire of Jesus Christ and of the Church that all the faithful should daily approach the sacred banquet is chiefly directed to this end: That the faithful may be united to God by means of this sacrament, and thence derive strength to resist their sensual passions, to cleanse themselves from the stain of daily faults, and to avoid those graver sins to which human weakness is prone. Its primary purpose, then is not that the honour and reverence due to our Lord should be safe-guarded, nor that it should serve as a reward or recompense for the virtue of those who receive it." (Decr., Sacra Tridentina Synodus (20 Dec. 1905) ASS 38, p. 401.)

the active apostolate, and, above all, it invites members of the pilgrim Church to press on to the full, eschatological feast, with whose joyous praise it is already united (see LG 50.4).

This dominant emphasis on the nourishing aspect of the Eucharist, and its invitatory dimension, is likely to form a spirituality which is centred more around the notion of responding to grace received, than around heroic self-preparation for infrequent communions. Vatican II's theology of the Eucharist creates an atmosphere in which the significance of the sacrament lies in pointing forwards to new possibilities, rather than in affecting God's verdict on the past.

Turning to Vatican II's treatment of the sacrament of Penance we find that SC 72 reads: "The rites and formulae of Penance should be so revised as to express more clearly the nature and effect of the sacrament." What are its nature and effect? Again, we may not suggest that the doctrine of Trent disappears completely, but rather that new emphases come to light at Vatican II, and that a new atmosphere is breathed. One of the ideas which comes to the fore at the Council is that of reconciliation with the Church; this ancient notion had largely disappeared in mediaeval theology, following the development of individual confession. Therefore, at Trent, all the weight was placed upon the benefit of Penance which is comprised in pardon from God. The concept of reconciliation with the Church appears in LG 11.2, alongside mention of God's pardon, while LG 28.1 and PO 5.1 refer to the sacrament in general terms as one of 'reconciliation.' PO5.3 says that priests will teach their people "to submit their sins to the Church with a contrite heart in the sacrament of Penance so that they may daily be converted more and more to the Lord." All these passages speak of the idea of pardon in terms that are more personal than juridical, and indicate that the sacrament is something which points beyond itself to the future, to a life lived in reconciliation with God and his Church. Therefore, we may say that even this sacrament, dealing as it does with the sins of the past, has a dimension of invitation. (91)

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(91) The Council of Trent spoke of the sacrament of Penance as one of reconciliation, but saw the fruit of reconciliation purely in terms of a conscience set at ease, and a determination not to sin again. (de Paenitentia, caps. 3 and 4. (Dz 896/DzS 1674 and Dz 897/DzS 1676)) The Vatican II concept of reconciliation, with its inclusion of the idea of reconciliation with the Church and constant conversion to God, gives a more positive concrete content and context to the new life that is to ensue.

The sacraments appear in the theology of Vatican II, then, as being less orientated around the pure idea of remission of sins, and more directed towards the life which the Christian is to live in the future. The experience of life in Christ is conceived in fully social terms, and in personal categories. This theory of the sacraments is necessarily reflected in the image of the sacramental minister and his role.

The minister who presides at the Eucharist "in the person of Christ," (SC 33.2, LG 10.2, 28.1, see also LG 21.1) presides at what is essentially a public and communal offering and experience, (see SC 26.1). The Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy (Sacrosanctum Concilium), like Pius XII's encyclical Mediator Dei (92) takes up the theme of the active participation of all the faithful in the Eucharist. Christus Dominus and the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (Presbyterorum Ordinis) issue exhortations to clergy to encourage such general participation. The Mass is the offering of the entire "royal priesthood" (SC 14.1, LG 10.1, PO 2.1) and in making this oblation the sacramental minister acts in the name of the people (LG 10.2, see also PO 5.3). However, his sacramental priesthood is "different in essence and not only in degree" from that which is shared in common by all the baptised (LG 10.2), and this is because, in the Eucharist, there is a two-way pattern of representation. The sacramental minister represents both the people before God, and also acts as "a minister of him who continually exercises his priestly office for us through the

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(92) Although Pius XII was concerned to promote active participation by the laity, who, "according to their condition . . . share in the priesthood of Christ himself" (p. 554), he was first anxious to make it clear that, "before acting in God's sight on behalf of the people, the priest is the ambassador of the divine redeemer, and because Jesus Christ is the head of that body of which Christians are members, the priest is God's representative for the people entrusted to his care." (p. 538) He later went on to speak of the sense in which the priest was the people's representative, saying, "the priest acts in the name of the people precisely because he represents the person of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . the priest therefore approaches the altar as Christ's minister, lower than Christ, but higher than the people." (p. 553, emphasis mine.) Pius XII's emphasis on headship and superiority was much reduced in the teaching of Vatican II.

Spirit in the Liturgy" (PO 5.1). Christ is, in a sense, present in the person of the priest (SC 7.1, see also LG 21.1, 28.1). In particular, the sacramental minister represents Christ before the people, for he is a steward of the mysteries of God (CD 15.1, see also LG 21.1, 26.1). (93)

As a representative of Christ before the people, the priest partakes by association in the characteristics of the Lord in whose name he acts. In view of the revision in the way in which the theology of the sacraments is put forward, we may say that the authority of the sacramental minister is likely to appear less in a juridical and jurisdictional light, and more in the terms of a power of invitation to new life.

b) Sacramental 'character' and status in the Church

The term 'character' reappears in the documents of Vatican II in relation to the sacerdotal function of people of different ecclesiastical status. There is also a reaffirmation of the existence of "sacred power" inhering in the ministerial priesthood (LG 10.2, 18.1, PO 6.1), and of the difference in "essence" which distinguishes those in sacred Order from other baptised Christians. However, although the Council used the term 'character', it considered it not so much in its ontological connotations as in relation to what people do. All 'character' is seen as a qualification for an activity in the worship

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(93) To illustrate the balance of elements held by Vatican II's teaching we may cite part of an article by O. Semmelroth, in which he comments on LG's presentation of the Church as an "organically structured" worshipping community; "Its organic structure is, in fact, the distinction between the common and the ministerial priesthood; and in the sacraments it shows up in the polarity between minister and recipient . . . both minister and recipient are active subjects in a common activity, even though the minister represents the real priest, Jesus Christ, while the recipient allows himself to be drawn into the ritual action in so far as it is an action of Christ. The sacramental action is a priestly activity directed to God through mutual encounter . . . In [the people's] presence [the priest] is not only a guiding pastor and a prophet of God's Word; he is also the sacramental representative of the sacrificing Christ." ("The Priestly People of God and its Official Ministers", Concilium, 1, No. 4 (1968) pp. 47-51.)

of the Church, including the 'character' bestowed in Baptism. Vatican II accepted without question the idea that there is a permanent differentiation between persons in the Church, and this it expressed through employing the term 'character', or the notion of 'configuration to Christ'; it did so, however, in order to direct the reader's attention immediately on to the function of different 'characters', and not in order to impose a particular scholastic metaphysical idea of a 'sign on the soul'.

For example, PO 2.3 speaks of presbyters as being marked by the Holy Spirit's anointing "with a special 'character'", which "configures them to Christ the priest, so that they are able to act in the person of Christ the head" (emphasis mine). The idea of 'configuration to Christ' reappears in PO 12.1: "Since each priest, according to his degree, assumes the person of Christ himself, he is endowed with a special grace." This sentence, however, is immediately preceded by one which sets the assumption of Christ's person within the context of saving activity: "Being consecrated to God in a new way by receiving ordination, they become living instruments of Christ the eternal priest, so that they can accomplish through all time his marvellous work" (emphasis mine).

Similarly, bishops are said in LG 21.2 to have a "sacred 'character' imprinted upon them so that . . .[they] may assume the role of Christ himself . . . and act in his person." As for the 'character' of Baptism, common to all the faithful, it is viewed not as an object of interest in itself, but as an appointment to Christian worship (LG 11.1).

Trent's decree on Sacred Order had used the idea of 'character' for a particular polemical purpose - to argue that the priesthood is permanent even when its holders do not carry out an active ministry of the Word. (94) This is partly why it had focused upon the notion of a 'sign on the soul'. While Vatican II did not deny this ontological basis for the permanence of different sacramental qualifications, it was more concerned to bring to attention the question of what activities and ministries should normally be attached to the possession of sacramental 'character'. This accounts for the Council's shift of emphasis in its use of the doctrine.

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(94) de sacram. Ordinis, cap. 4. (Dz 960/DzS 1767)

I have already remarked that 'character', seen as being essentially related to action, attributes to all baptised Christians an activity proper to them in the sacramental sphere. The very statement that the ministerial and common shares in Christ's priesthood differ in essence, occurs in a context which stresses that the two forms of priesthood are ordered in mutual relation to each other (LG 10.2). Such an affirmation of mutual relationship might be no more than a restatement of the fundamental distinction between active and passive, the giver and the recipient were it not that LG 32.2 and 3 (whilst firmly denying any "inequality" in the Church) asserts that the basic equality of all Christians refers both to their (passive) relation to rebirth and grace, and also to the call which they have received (actively) to pursue perfection. (95) The passage makes the activity involved in pursuing perfection quite explicit: "There flourishes among them all a real equality as regards their dignity and the activity which belongs to the faithful for the building up of the body of Christ." (LG 32.3) (However, the sentence which follows seems to mute this, by saying that the laity provide merely "collaborative aid", ("sociam operam"), to their pastors and teachers, as though it were to these, in the first place, that activity properly belonged. Nevertheless, this has to be set against a general tendency amply to affirm the proper activity of the laity, an activity which extends to their own share in the priesthood of Christ (LG 34.2, AA 3.1). We shall examine the theology of lay action more fully in Section C of this chapter.)

We may say that lay 'character' is not simply determined over against that of the clergy by mere passivity; rather, it is defined in terms of "exchange"; (96) nor does the difference in essence

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(95) In his encyclical Ubi Arcano (23 Dec. 1922) Pius XI had spoken of a "certain equality of rights which grows and flourishes in the Kingdom of Christ, as all possess the same dignity, and all are marked with the precious blood of Christ." (AAS 14 (1922) p. 695.) LG 32 partly echoes this encyclical, but emphasises not only a passive equality, in respect of salvation through Christ's blood, but also an equality of call and activity.

(96) See O. Semmelroth, art. cit., p. 47. Also, H. Heimerl, "The Laity in the Constitution on the Church", in Concilium, 3, no. 2 (1966) p. 69. Heimerl writes: "This concept [of exchange] deserves to be called 'essential' because it approaches most closely the theological essence of the layman."

which marks off the priesthood common to all Christians from that peculiar to those in Sacred Order, undercut the fundamental equality which all enjoy by virtue of their baptismal 'character'. It was this equality which Vatican II chose to stress, in contrast to the emphasis on inequality evident in earlier documents. (97)

Conclusion

I promised, in the introduction to this section of the chapter, to suggest a way in which the idea which underlay shifts of emphasis in Vatican II's definition and justification of authority might be characterised. The time has now come to fulfill that promise.

Whereas the ecclesiology of the post-Tridentine era came to divide the hierarchical function into three parts, and effectively to give eminence for purposes of authority to the canonical office, at Vatican II we see a shift towards a reintegration of the different functions - a shift which was significant, if not complete. This reintegration moves towards a picture of authority's origin and purpose in the Church which we may characterise by employing the notion of an 'invitatory sign'. Within this concept, two principle ideas balance one another: These are the idea of mission, and the idea of sacramental consecration for action in this mission. The notion which integrates the two may be described as that of an 'invitatory sign' both on grounds of what mission and sacramental status inherently involve, and also on the basis of the moral character of the God who is represented by the authorities of the Church in these functions.

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(97) We have seen the way in which Leo XIII emphasised inequalities in the Church in his Letter to Cardinal Guibert (see pp. 94f.); the idea of inequality was explicitly expressed in the schema for the Constitution on the Church of Vatican I. Although this schema was not fully debated (because of historical contingencies) it expressed succinctly a point of view which was constant in the latter part of the nineteenth century: "Now, the Church is not a society of equals, as if all the faithful in it had the same rights, but it is an unequal society, and this is true not only because some of the faithful are clergy and others are laity, but especially because there is in the Church the institution of divine power, with which some are invested for the purpose of sanctifying, teaching and ruling, while others do not possess it." (Mansi 51, col. 543, or Omnium Concilii Vaticani . . . Documentorum Collectio, edited by Martin (Paderborn, 1873): Schema Const. Dogm. de Ecclesia, cap. X).

To elaborate: We have seen that the idea of mission grounds the existence of canonical authority in a kind of representation of Christ which is not purely that of a quasi-legal institution. Although it remains true that the hierarchy (or ministry) continues to have representational status, so that it can require obedience, the idea that this status is rooted in the apostolic mission indicates that authoritative representation is at the service of the Gospel. The Church, and its leaders, appear as evangelistic heralds to the world, rather than as those who continually seek the expansion of institutional jurisdiction. This, it must be admitted, is a shift in emphasis which affects the atmosphere of ecclesiology rather than any specific delineation of the extent or nature of the authority which Church officers have to require obedience; nevertheless, such a change of atmosphere can be practically significant when it is one of a variety of factors in which there have been shifts.

Secondly, we have seen that there was a shift in the way in which the exercise of canonical authority was propounded; this shift was expressed through the ministerial and pastoral themes. Once again, this is a shift of atmosphere, and depends for its practical effects upon the good will of those who hold office in the Church. None the less, the idea of pastoral ministry is coherent with a shift towards an invitatory, rather than a dominative, concept of authority. Therefore, in sum, Vatican II's presentation of the nature, justification and exercise of canonical authority in the Church suggests that the idea of jurisdiction and rule are shifted to the circumference of theological thinking; canonical authority does not exist on its own account, but as an 'accidental' necessity in the service of the Church's invitatory mission. Because it exists in the Church as a derivative of the Church's invitatory role, canonical authority itself should mainly be exercised in an invitatory, pastoral or ministerial manner. This pastoral stance of invitation will also cohere with the character of the Lord of the Church's mission, who came not to judge the world, but to invite it to salvation.

The theme of mission is continued in Vatican II's presentation of the magisterial office; we have seen that, although the Council did not abolish demands for formal assent, it grounded the

authority of those who make these demands primarily in the preaching, witnessing mission of the Apostles. Once again, the formal requirements for obedience move to the circumference of theological concern, as 'accidentals', while the central picture is occupied by the idea of invitation to the world to participate in a truth and relationship which lies beyond any mere propositions. Members of the Magisterium are not schoolmasters imparting doctrine, but heralds of discipleship. Their message appeals to the inner man, and only secondarily to externalised assent.

We find the theme of invitation taken up again in the way in which Vatican II described the kind of authority which inheres in the sacramental ministry. The sacraments point man to the future, and do not simply focus all his attention upon the fact that God is a judge and redeemer of the sins of the past. Therefore, those who administer these sacraments appear as invitatory signs in themselves, pointing men to new life. When we move on, to consider the basis of sacramental status, we found that the notion of 'character' was employed in such a way as to indicate that sacramental ministry is a concept correlative with the idea of apostolic mission; that is to say 'character' is conceived as a basis for activity, rather than as a static quality which is of interest in itself. We shall particularly examine the extent to which the concept of sacramental 'character' integrates with that of apostolic mission, when we come to study Vatican II's teaching on the office of the bishop in the following section. However, here we must note that the shift towards the idea of Church authority as an 'invitatory sign', in which the characteristics deriving from the nature of mission and sacramental reality are more important than characteristics of a purely jurisdictional type, makes that authority more clearly a nucleus of leadership for the entire Church (for all Christians are caught up in the divine mission, and all are marked by the sacraments for worship and action).

It would be foolish to try to claim too much for this shift of emphasis. Vatican II did not espouse a model of the Church which was purely dominated by the motif of witnessing, nor of embodiment. The status of Church authorities as representatives of Christ remained. However, it was set in a complex and integrated relationship with

newly re-emphasised elements of the witness and embodiment motifs. This new context for the idea of representational authority qualifies its nature, making it conform more nearly to the concept of an 'invitatory sign', as outlined above; it also, potentially qualifies the scope of authority, as the tension between different ecclesiological motifs is worked out in practice. In Chapters III-V we shall trace Vatican II's practical delineation of the concrete scope of representational authority, in its context of integration with the other motifs, and we shall also make brief excursions into the question of the social plausibility of the description of authority which is given. However, before we do that, we must turn in the final section of the present chapter to the way in which the Council described and justified the specific different ranks in the Church.

C) Vatican II's Definition and Justification of Specific Hierarchical Ranks in the Church, including the Status of the Laity

This section of the chapter will have four sub-sections, dealing with the rank of bishop, that of presbyter, the deacon's role, and the status of the laity. There will be no separate sub-section treating of the papacy; this will be dealt with in connection with the episcopate. Our studies of the different ranks in the Church will lay the essential basis for the chapters which follow, in which we shall examine the relationships which the Council thought should subsist between different persons in the Church.

1 Bishops

We shall examine first Vatican II's picture of the episcopal office in itself; then we shall turn to a consideration of the relationship of the episcopate and the papacy.

a) The definition and justification of the episcopal office in itself

We have seen the fundamental importance attached in Roman Catholic ecclesiology to the office of the bishops, the 'successors of the Apostles'. We must now notice an important point which arises in LG 28.1; the passage reads: "The bishops . . . legitimately handed on the office of their ministry in various degrees to various members

of the Church. In this way, ecclesiastical ministry, which is divinely established, is exercised in diverse orders by those who have been called 'bishops', 'presbyters' and 'deacons' since antiquity itself." Hans Küng notes three points about this passage: The first is the use of the word 'ministry', rather than the "unbiblical word 'hierarchy'"; this we have already commented upon in the previous section of the chapter. However, Küng's other points are these:

> "While Trent uses the phrase 'divine ordinance' . . . obviously to refer to the distinctions in office between bishops, presbyters and deacons, Vatican II unambiguously applies the words 'divinely established' . . . solely to the ecclesiastical ministry as such.
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> "While for Trent there is a 'hierarchy established by divine ordinance, consisting of . . . bishops, presbyters and deacons,' Vatican II says that the ecclesiastical ministry is exercised . . . on different levels by those who from antiquity . . . (not, that is, from the very beginning) have been called bishops, priests (presbyters) and deacons." (98)

Küng calls these changes "a result of recent exegetical and historical research, an explicit correction of a canon of the Council of Trent" (99), and draws attention to Vatican II's reference to the research of P. Benoît on the origins of the ministry.

What is the significance of all this? In the light of the passage in question we may say that the ministry of bishops, as particular successors to the Apostles, appears to be the original and essential form of ministry in the Church. The presbyterate and diaconate are therefore seen not as necessary to the Church's structure, which Christ instituted, but as legitimate developments within the human ordering of the community. Divine institution belongs only to "ministry" itself, undifferentiated, but historically

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(98) The Church, (London, 1971) p. 418

(99) loc. cit. The passage from Trent to which reference is made by Vatican II, and which Küng quotes, is de sacram. Ordinis, can. 6. (Dz 966/DzS 1776)

passed dowm from the Apostles through the episcopal line. (100) This is important, because we have seen that the bishops' apostolic ministry is the correlate of an apostolic mission, in which the functions of preaching, teaching, governing pastorally, and sanctifying, are all integrated inseparably. Therefore, if a single, undifferentiated commission from Christ is the originating source of all grades of ministry in the Church, we may expect to find a similar set of integrated functions exercised at every level of ministry. The idea of a separate line of succession from the Apostles in the sacramental priesthood of the Mass becomes untenable. (101)

The idea of a single, originating source of ministry in Christ's commission to the Apostles, and in its inheritance by the episcopate, is matched by Vatican II's teaching concerning the sacramental status of bishops. LG 21.2 says that "the fullness of the sacrament of order is conferred by episcopal consecration". The Council presented this as a "teaching" rather than a solemn definition on a previously unresolved question, but it was to base all its subsequent treatment of the episcopal office on the basis of this teaching. (102)

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(100) We should note that the Council of Trent did not claim that it was the earthly Christ who instituted the threefold (or seven or eightfold) hierarchicalisation of the Church. It only attributes the institution of a 'new 'priesthood' to the Lord's incarnate lifetime, (see de sacram. Ordinis, cap. 1. (Dz 957/DzS 1764)); elsewhere, the Decree on the sacrament of Holy Order speaks of bishops as succeeding the Apostles, without saying that their preeminence was instituted by the incarnate Christ (see cap. 4. (Dz 960/DzS 1768)) Divine ordinance, therefore, as the basis for a threefold hierarchy, must have been attributed to the direction of the Holy Spirit in the early Church. If we contrast Vatican II's idea that the development of the threefold ministry was simply legitimate, God's providence appears to be permissive rather than directive at this point. We may also note that, if any form of ministry appears to be Trent's basic datum, from which all others are derived, it would be the ministry of sacramental priesthood, founded by Christ during his lifetime, rather than the episcopate.

(101) LG 20.2 is not so explicit as LG 28.1 over the originating primacy of the episcopal office. However, in its assertion that the bishops hold first place in the ministry handed on by the Apostles, and that it is they who are the vehicles of the apostolic seed, LG 20.2 does not contradict the teaching of the later passage, but rather prepares the ground for it.

(102) The statement was the consequence of a vote of October 30 1963, in which the voting figures showed an overwhelming majority in favour of this teaching.

It is to be noted that the Council's expression avoids the language of 'rank' and 'highest degree', because of their juridical overtones, considered inappropriate in an affirmation in the field of sacramental theology. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the teaching concerns the bishops' sacramental status first of all, it also brings about a greater degree of correspondence between the sacramental and the canonical orders. Indeed, the idea of fullness of Sacramental Order is used in LG 21.2 as a basis for arguing that a bishop represents Christ not only in his sacerdotal activity, but also by 'playing his part' as teacher and pastor as well. That is to say, all three functions of ministry are related by Vatican II to the bishop's sacramental qualification. Since the preceding article grounded the threefold office in the concept of an apostolic mission, it is clear that the ideas of a mission (of which the Gospel is the principle) and of the sacramental actualisation of Christ's presence and work are treated by the Council as correlated notions.

I have suggested that the ideas of mission and sacrament can be integrated through viewing them in a perspective in which they appear under the heading of 'invitatory signs'. However, there is a tension here all the same. The sacramental sphere of action is one in which the minister's actions remain identified with those of Christ; the spheres of preaching, teaching, and pastoral government and leadership, are fields in which the minister's actions are at the most representational of Christ's activity and will, and may be only witnesses to them. Therefore, despite the invitatory perspective in which sacramental status may be seen as the proper correlate of a general apostolic mission, there is a danger that a theory of ministry which emphasises the sacramental basis of office too much will tend to transfer the immunity which sacramental action enjoys from the effects of human limitations and frailty, to the other functions as well, so that the whole action of the hierarchy becomes identified with the action of God himself.

The documents of Vatican II do not altogether avoid this danger. Indeed, at first sight, one might take the whole of LG 21.1 as teaching that there is identity of action between Christ and the bishops in all three parts of their integrated ministry. Likewise, LG 20.3 makes a reference to the letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch,

saying that "the bishops have undertaken the ministry of the community . . . presiding in the place of God over the flock" (emphasis mine); however, in other contexts where the non-sacramental offices of the episcopate are mentioned, Vatican II was careful to use terms implying that ecclesiastical ministers are not to be identified with their Lord: They 'play his part', as actors would (see LG 21.2); they are "vicars and legates" (LG 27.1); they are his "representatives" (LG 37.3); and - if we now look back more closely to LG 21.1 - we find that it is through their service and witness that Christ preaches the Gospel, for they are "ministers" and "stewards" of the mysteries of God.

There can be, then, a certain unsatisfactoriness about Vatican II's immediate correlation of sacramental status with all the functions of the threefold ministry, although it goes a long way to rescue the Council's concept of ministry from domination by juridical categories and canonical restrictions.

We can notice the way in which the sacramental theme took over from some of the more extreme juridicalising types of ecclesiology by remarking that LG 21.1 attributes all three episcopal functions to the effects of consecration. Where Pius XII had treated the power of jurisdiction as not inhering immediately in the bishop's status, but as being "immediately imparted by the Supreme Pontiff" (see p. 79), Vatican II saw this power of government as being grounded in his sacramental status and apostolic mission. "Hierarchical communion" with the Roman Pontiff is still required if the functions of the bishop are to be exercised (or to be exercised in a church which is recognisably the "Catholic Church", at least) (LG 21.2, 24.2), but the power of jurisdiction is not ontologically derived from the Pope's canonical authority. Lumen Gentium, then, ratified the opinion which is "well founded in Tradition" . . . "that episcopal consecration confers of itself an ontological participation in the sacred functions of the pastoral mission of the Apostles, conceived as an organic whole", (103)

The effect of this theory of the episcopate is to lay new weight upon the idea of the 'local church' of which the bishop is the

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(103) G. Dejaifve, "La Magna Charta de Vatican II", in Nouvelle Révue Théologique, 87. (1965) p. 12. (emphasis mine).

centre (CD 11.1). (104) The jurisdiction of the bishop is not derived from the Pope, but is grounded in his almost mystical relationship to a portion of the greater Christian community. In this - portion though it be in quantative terms - the Catholic Church is "truly present and operative" (loc. cit.) in the fullness of life and function. (105)

It has been argued that the idea of the local church is a more original and significant contribution to the thought of Western Christendom than Vatican II's affirmation of 'collegiality', (see pp. 126-31). Emmanuel Lanne has suggested that the idea of the local church, gathered in eucharistic celebration around its bishop, (as presented in SC 41) can be seen as the natural ground for the bishop's power of magisterium. Not only is the Liturgy the prime locus of Christian teaching (that is to say, doctrinal teaching of the faithful) but also the theology of the local church allows the bishop to be viewed in essential connection with the community which surrounds him. He is located <u>in</u>, rather than <u>above</u>, the People of God, and therefore he can be an authentic interpreter of the witness which his church bears to Christ. He is not only the minister of Christ and his Word, as a messenger sent to the community, but he is also his church's servant. (106) In other words, the theme of the local church situates the authority of the episcopate firmly in a setting of the general embodiment of God's activity and presence by the community.

The theology of the local church is of oriental inspiration, and it is sketched in terms redolent of Platonist thought. The local churches appear as the instantiations of a universal 'form' of the Church: They are "formed in the image of the universal Church; in them and from them the one and unique Catholic Church has its existence" (LG 23.1, see also 26.1). The most outstanding "manifestation of the

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(104) I say "new weight";strictly speaking, this should be qualified by recognition of the constancy of this theme in the Eastern churches, including those in communion with Rome.

(105) We should note that our object of interest here is the diocesan bishop, and not the curial, coadjutant, or auxiliary bishop. The existence of bishops in these other roles, exercising power which is truly delegated and not ontologically proper to them, constitutes a continued effectiveness of a canonical hierarchy separable from the sacramental one.

(106) See Lanne, "Evolution of the Magisterium in the Roman Catholic Church", in <u>One in Christ</u>, 1976, pp. 253f.

Church" is in the episcopal liturgy of the diocese (SC 41.2). The reader will notice here language which suggests that the local church at worship is, itself, an epiphany of God's presence. Such a concept is in tension with the idea that the Church is a continuing mission, a 'movement', because of its static overtones. We find again, therefore, an uneasiness in Vatican II's use of both mission and sacrament as integrating concepts for the unification of its idea of authority. However, behind this uneasy coalescence there is nevertheless a clear determination to move away from a jurisdictional ideology of authority, towards one which stresses more the invitatory function of the Church and its officers.

b) The episcopate and the papacy

Just as the picture of the bishops as the centres of their local churches depends upon a somewhat uneasy combination of the ideas of mission and of sacramental epiphany, so too the concept of a 'college' of bishops contains the same sort of tension. It combines the idea that the unity of the Catholic Church is fundamentally found at the sacramental level, in the communion of the local churches and their bishops, with the notion that the bishops are successors of the Apostles, and inherit not only their mission, but also the formal structure of their interrelationship. This interrelationship is expressed in a college, of which the Pope is the head because he has inherited a particular charge over the universal Church directly from Peter.

We shall examine the notion of the episcopal college firstly in its 'communion', or sacramental, aspect; then we shall consider it under its aspect as an inherited structure in the pastoral government of the Church.

i) The idea of an episcopal college may be so conceived as to allow, in itself, for a certain primacy to be attributed to the Pope, because of his centrality in the communion of the churches. This centrality may even be expressed as 'headship' of the hierarchy. Thus, one of the strongest proponents of the theology of the college at Vatican II, the Melkite Patriarch, Maximos IV, argued that one of the principles which should be made clear at the Council was that the Pontiff's power

is given him "essentially in that he is head of the whole hierarchy, and precisely with a view to fulfilling the primatial diakonia." (107) The Patriarch hoped that the expression of this principle would override the idea that the Pope solely rules the Church by a special and peculiar jurisdiction and power:

> "If the hierarchy in the Church is conceived only in the sense of power, instead of being thought of and expressed in the sense of a service, episcopal collegiality becomes impossible, because, in the face of a universal and direct power - if the Roman primacy is so conceived - all other power can be only delegated and particular . . . The human notion of jurisdiction, applied without adpatation to the hierarchy of the Church, has falsified the nature of apostolic ministry." (108)

We see here an organic linkage of the notion of primacy in a college based on communion of the churches, with the delineation of the exercise of this primacy in terms of service. This is not simply an accidental link, because the redefinition of the papal primacy totally in relation to his headship of the hierarchy, and not at all in relation to a peculiar jurisdiction inherited from Peter 'by a different channel', would locate that primacy completely among the bishops instead of over them. (109)

Karl Rahner, writing before Vatican II, suggested that the papal primacy should be viewed in this way. He said that this would not mean that the Pope would have to have a 'canonical mission' from the rest of the college, nor would it mean that he would be unable to act alone. He would, however, act on behalf of the college, (without thereby being concretely answerable to it,) and therefore

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(107) Intervention of Maximos IV, on 7 October 1963. (See Documentation Catholique, 1964, col. 1460.)

(108) Article by Maximos IV, entitled "La collegialité épiscopale", in Irénikon, 36 (1963) p. 322.

(109) Maximos IV was not arguing that papal primacy should totally be defined in these terms, without any reference to special Petrine jurisdiction. However, he did hold that Petrine jurisdiction does not precede collegial power either conceptually or chronologically, and that the two forms of power should be made to appear as complementary and mutually indispensable. (See art. cit., p. 323.)

all his actions would be seen as service of the communion of churches which the college represents. (110) Concretely, Maximos IV considered that a recast concept of the papal primacy would remove the justification for the existence of a papal 'civil-service', the Curia, by which Peter's successor can administer the affairs of the universal Church as though he were its monarch. (111)

How far did Vatican II's concept of the college of bishops express the purely sacramental concept of the Church's unity in the communion of churches? It expressed this concept, first of all, through its teaching that membership of the college is the automatic consequence of sacramental consecration: "It belongs to the bishops to introduce into the episcopal body through the sacrament of Order those who have newly been chosen" (LG 21.2); "bishops, by virtue of their sacramental consecration and hierarchical communion with the head and members of the college are constituted members of the episcopal body . . . all bishops who are members of the episcopal college have the right to be present at an Ecumenical Council" (CD 4.1). Therefore, consecration, and continuance in communion with the head and members of the college, insert a bishop into that corporate office of supreme authority in the Church, which is "exercised in its solemn mode in an Ecumenical Council" (LG 22.1). Indeed, as Rahner pointed out, the doctrine concerning Councils and their authority had always, if only implicitly, contained the contrine of the college of bishops as "a unified subject of rights and duties". (112) Vatican II merely drew out the consequences of this concept, and showed more clearly how it had significance outside the sphere of solemn Councils. It did this by teaching that, in unanimous communion, and under the instigation or recognition of the Pope, the college of bishops does form a subject of supreme governmental power, even when dispersed throughout the world (see LG 22.2).

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(110) See "On the Theology of the Council", in Theological Investigations, 5 (London, 1966) p. 249.

(111) See Maximos IV, Intervention loc. cit.: "This power is by nature personal and cannot - if it is to remain so - be delegated in any way."

(112) Rahner, loc. cit.

Membership of the episcopal college also has more indefinable effects; we have already seen that it involves a bishop in concern for all the churches, which issues in his participation in the Church's universal mission. (See LG 23.3, CD 6.1, UR 3.5, AG 38.1.)

It is in this sphere of universal concern that the nature of the episcopal college as "a true and obligatory community fashioned entirely from the Church's sacramental reality" (113) becomes plain. This is because mutual concern and aid in the Church's mission is a form of activity which expresses the essence of the Church, and the first impulse which lies behind the existence of ecclesiastical ministry. It does not depend upon jurisdictional commissioning and empowerment. Indeed, LG 23.2 makes it clear that a share in the concern for the universal Church's well-being does not confer on the individual bishop any jurisdictional power over a church which is not his own. It is, rather, a form of vocation to service.

Once the doctrine of the existence of the episcopal college is translated into canonical forms (as it is when the supreme authority in the Church is defined, as above) we at once find reference to the position of the Pope which suggests that his primacy is something other than that which derives purely from headship or centrality in the communion between the churches. We turn now, therefore, to consider the episcopal college under its aspect as an inherited structure of defined interrelationship in the government of the Church.

ii) Even if the reader should have no knowledge of current Roman Catholic ecclesiology, it would be evident to him, from the fact of the continued existence and universal legislation of the papal Curia, that the Roman primacy has not been totally redefined in relation to a sacramentally-defined college. Rather, Vatican II continued to present the Pope as holding universal power of government by virtue of a separate channel of authority, flowing directly to him from Peter. The Roman Pontiff is "Vicar of Christ" and "Pastor of the whole Church".

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(113)J. Ratzinger, "The Pastoral Implications of Episcopal Collegiality", in Concilium, 1, no. 1 (1965) p. 29.

The Council alludes specifically to those promises and tasks which were given to Peter alone, (LG 8.2, 22.2). (114) It is in this light that he has his own proper mission, to procure "the common good of the universal Church, and the good of the individual charches". (CD 2.1) Hence, "he holds the primacy of ordinary power over all the churches". (loc. cit.) (115)

The very term "college" belongs to the jurisdictional sphere, and so, although it is used in order to express the social reality constituted by the communion between bishops, it was also amenable to definition in such a way as to indicate the canonical structure of bishops' relationships; in the usage of the Council it is to be understood as meaning "a stable body, whose structure and authority is to be deduced from revelation". (116) Just as the term "college", therefore, qualifies the notion of sheer communion, so too does the use of the adjective "hierarchical"; the reader will remember that membership of the college depends upon both consecration and continuance in "hierarchical communion with the head and members of the college". (CD 4.1)

We find, then, that the concept of the college does not expunge the independent primacy of the Pope, but incorporates the Pope's headship within itself, making it part of the college's structure, and the necessary condition of its operation. The papacy, itself, appears as being endowed with supreme authority on two

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(114) Dejaifve notes how high is the number of references to Peter's successor in Lumen Gentium: There are 40 such references in passages on the episcopate, and 14 of them are in the articles on collegiality alone. This, along with the official Nota Explicativa, constitutes an effort to reassure the minority that Vatican I's doctrine of the primacy was not being jettisoned. (Dejaifve, art. cit. p. 12.)

(115) For other passages on the papal primacy, see: LG 18.2, 19, 23.1, CD 2.1, 5, AA 5.1, UR 2.3 and 4.

(116) Nota Explicativa 1: The nota is, at this point, explaining that the term "college" is not to be understood in its normal juridical connotation in this context (ie. it does not mean a "body of equals who delegate their authority to a president") but that it is nevertheless amenable to comprehension and definition in such a way as to have a canonical structure which can either be operative or non-operative.

counts - both because of its inherent power, derived immediately from Peter, through succession in his pastoral mission, and also because of its relationship to the college of bishops as a centre and controlling point of communion. In this latter capacity, the Pontiff's power is translated into a ministry of service or a presidency over the "universal community of charity" (LG 13.3, see also AG 22.2) which is made up of the communion of the different local churches.

If the idea of the college were to become the doctrinal norm in the future, under which the Pope's primacy were generally understood and exercised, joint action by the bishops and Pope, accompanied by continual processes of consultation, would become the norm of practice. This would conform the exercise of papal power more closely to the model of invitatory witness. However, this potential situation, **fostered** by Vatican II's enunciation of the idea of collegiality, has to be balanced against the continuing theme of representational jurisdictional power, which is entailed by the alternative concept of primacy.

2 Presbyters

Like the preceding sub-section, this will be divided into two.

a) The definition and justification of the presbyteral office in itself

By teaching that the bishops possess the fullness of the sacrament of Order, Vatican II created a problem in defining the presbyteral order's status. On the one hand, the Council Fathers did not want to deny that presbyters fully represent Christ in their local congregations; on the other hand, the apostolic mission in the local (diocesan) church had been concentrated theologically upon the person of the bishop. Therefore, while presbyters are "brothers" to the bishops (PO 7.1), and "co-operators" in their mission (LG 28.2, CD 28.1, 30.1, see also PO 12.1), they are also their "sons" (LG 28.2, CD 16.3), and their "instruments", (LG 28.2). Indeed, the contrast between these sets of terms does not seem to have struck the Council as stark, since it could describe presbyters as "co-operators" and "instruments" in a single phrase, and when the bishops are asked to

treat them as "sons", they are also enjoined to consider them as "friends" - a term more indicative of equality than sonship. However, although it may not be immediately obvious, there is a real paradox lying behind Vatican II's use of these terms.

The assertion of the bishops' unique possession of the fullness of the sacrament of Order implies that presbyters depend upon them not only canonically, but also sacramentally. The very priesthood they enjoy is derivative; in some sense, a presbyter does not walk away from his ordination with a degree of Order as full and independent as that of the man who ordained him, requiring merely a 'canonical mission' in order to exercise it. Rather, in the very act of celebrating the Eucharist, the presbyter will represent the bishop, the central sacramental minister of the diocese (PO 5.1); at the same time, of course, he will also be representative of Christ (loc. cit.).

It seems, therefore, that Vatican II diminished the status of the presbyterate in the sacramental sphere. However, from another angle, the Council may be said to have attributed more to the nature of the second degree of priesthood: The derivative order of presbyters orientates them essentially not only towards sacramental functions, but towards an integrated threefold office. Their first duty is that of evangelising all men (PO 4.1); their second (chronologically and logically, but not in worth) is the sacramental office in the Liturgy (PO 5); their third function is that of representing Christ the head in their communities (PO 6.1).

The paradox of the presbyteral state appears rather sharply in the way in which PO 6 expresses the function of headship. Presbyters exercise this office "according to the authority which is theirs" ("pro sua parte auctoritatis"). At the same time, they do not exercise this authority which is proper to them in a sphere of jurisdiction which is their own; they "collect together the family of God . . . in the name of the bishop." (PO 6.1, see also LG 28.1).

Wherein, then, does the authority proper to a presbyter lie? First of all, it may be seen as sacramentally based, in the sense that this authority is orientated upon the Eucharist. This is not quite the same thing as saying that the presbyter's very role in the Eucharist gives him such authority (which seems to have been Pius XII's

view, see note (92), p.113) but it is rather a claim that the sacrament's nature as a communal celebration requires of its celebrants an inherent "spiritual power, given for the building up of the Church". It is, then, an authority which is at the service of their invitatory mission and ministry. Secondly, it is an authority which, like the entire presbyteral priesthood, is derivative; it does not therefore have the full scope which belongs to the power inhering in the bishops' share in the apostolic mission.

Concretely, the authority of headship which belongs to presbyters is described not in terms of commanding, but rather in terms of educating their flocks in the faith (PO 6.2), and of leading them to unity in love (PO 9.3). The presbyters are "defenders of the common good, for which they care in the bishop's name". (loc. cit.) Naturally, the defence of the common good in a parish or other Christian group, and the very celebration of the sacraments, make it necessary for presbyters to have powers of taking final responsibility, and of making administrative arrangements. All this is assumed in the Council's description of the way in which they should conduct themselves as "fathers", but also as "brothers" of the laity (PO 9.1). However, outside the special sphere of the confessional, the pastoral activity of the presbyter does not appear as giving commands or making prescriptions which are binding on others on his own behalf.

We must, I propose, separate the proper "spiritual power" of presbyters from the fact of any actual authority which an individual priest may be given so as to make binding demands on others. The power which is inherent in presbyteral order is a pastoral power, having purely invitatory authority. As ministers of the sacraments and Word of God, priests of the second order are responsible for uniting people around the altar and pulpit. It is the authority of invitation invested in them which sends them out to "those who have fallen away from the practice of the sacraments, or even from the faith itself" (PO 9.3, see also LG 28.4); it is this which makes them specially concerned for the poor and unfortunate, for sinners and children (see PO 6.3 and OT 8.1). Their inherent authority is that of servants of the great king, sent out to the highways and byways to compel people to come in (see Lk. 14.23). Theirs is the authority attached to the invitation to the wedding feast, and consequently, to the invitation to a life of holiness in the community of God (see PO 4.1).

It is not, in itself, the power to command certain actions. This latter, administrative authority, depends more upon 'canonical mission' than upon sacramental status; presbyters make demands on people, and binding decisions for their parishes, in virtue of their representation of the bishop. This is clear, because the bishop remains as a court of appeal and a final arbiter, being the locus of truly jurisdictional authority.

Of course, the invitatory authority of the presbyter can only be effectively exercised in the concrete circumstance of his relationship with a specific group of Catholics, to whom he is delegated by the bishop; but the fact remains that, conceptually, his administrative authority as bishop's representative, and his pastoral, invitatory authority, are separable. The practical fusion of the two kinds of authority makes it difficult to distinguish them, and this is reinforced by the fact that, on the sacramental level, and on the level of a share in the preaching mission, the presbyter's powers are also derived from the bishop (but directly, through ordination). Therefore, even the sacramentally-based pastoral authority of invitation, which is 'proper' to presbyters, is only possessed as something derived at an ontologically 'lower' level from the pastoral authority of bishops.

What, then, may we deduce concerning the nature of presbyteral authority seen as a whole? Is the lack of an inherent, sacramentally-rooted power to command among the factors which explain why presbyters do not enjoy the <u>fullness</u> of Order? This seems to be the conclusion towards which the documents point. Fullness of pastoral authority, as possessed by the bishops, must include the power to command, in the end. If pastoral authority is a reflection of Christ's authority (through the fact of an integrated apostolic mission) we must say that his power as Lord and king should be represented in the Church; such a role cannot be expunged. Nevertheless, Christ chooses to make himself known more generally in invitation and appeal to the heart of man. Therefore, the more general and basic element of pastoral authority is the authority of invitation - and this basic power is conferred on presbyters as properly theirs through ordination. (117) The powers of government, of command

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(117) M. Schmaus speaks of "a certain basic element of pastoral authority" conferred in the power of orders, and says that, for a presbyter, the "fullness of pastoral authority" is given in 'canonical mission'. ("<u>Hirtengewalt</u>", LKT, 5, col. 387).

and administrative decision, are secondary, though necessary elements in the Council's concept of authority which is representative of Christ; (part of the necessity for this secondary element is not purely theological, but owes its force to the exigencies of life in human community). Although such authority must always exist in the Church, it is presented as theologically rather marginal in the definition of an integrated threefold ministry. The primary authoritative task of both bishops and presbyters is to "invite all men insistently to conversion and holiness" (PO 4.1).

b) The presbyterium

In LG 28.2 Vatican II introduces the notion of a diocesan 'presbyterium', constituted of presbyters and their bishop. It is an idea derived from St. Ignatius of Antioch, suggesting "a strong and intimate body with mystical overtones" subsisting among the diocesan clergy. (118) It is evidently not a juridical concept, since LG 28.2 leaves its function obscure. It does not imply a body of equals, since presbyters are both sacramentally and canonically dependent on their bishops, who are "fathers" to their presbyteria (CD 28.1). In fact, one function of the idea is to make it clear that 'religious' who are engaged in pastoral work are truly under the authority of their diocesan ordinary, since, in a certain sense, they too belong to the clergy of the diocese, the presbyterium (see CD 34.1).

However, the thinking which is expressed in the idea of the presbyterium is not primarily concerned with the structures for the exercise of diocesan authority. Rather, the concept is proposed as a model of the way in which presbyters, although dependent on the episcopate, do really share in the dignity of priesthood in a corporate and organic mission and ministry (see LG 28.2). Although PO 8.1 speaks of the unity of the presbyterium as deriving from the fact that presbyters are given over to the service of the diocese under their bishop, LG 28.2 uses the word 'with', and presents the dependence of presbyters on their bishop in visual terms as a unity around a central figure, rather than a hierarchical pyramid. That which presbyters

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(118) See F. Haarsma, "The Presbyterium: Theory and Programme for Action", in Concilium, 3, no. 5 (1969) pp. 32ff.

share with their bishop is so significant that they can, indeed, be his "brothers" (PO 7.1), and his "indispensable counsellors" (loc. cit.). The unity of the presbyterium is best expressed in liturgical concelebration, in which the ministry which all share in the sacramental sphere is manifested (loc. cit. and SC 41). In short, the concept of the presbyterium belongs to the sacramental definition of priesthood.

Because of its sacramental form, the idea of the presbyterium tempers an over-hierarchical view of the Church by showing that the ontological dependence of presbyters upon bishops is not too immediately to be translated into a structure of 'higher' and 'lower'; the sacramental sphere has its own rationale, which is not adequately conveyed by ideas of persons being set 'over' others. It is a rationale of communion.

Yet, on the practical level, authority has to be exercised and delegated. As we have seen, distinctions of power to command are, concretely, rooted to a large extent in sacramental status. A theological concept of the presbyterium's communion in the ministry with its bishop cannot win for it anything more than an advisory role (as we shall see in the next chapter). But what it may achieve, if taken to heart, is an atmosphere in which consultation, and advice become a norm in diocesan government. Therefore, although a presbyterium is not equivalent to a scaled-down college of diocesan scope, because its members remain of different sacramental status to their head, the idea of the presbyterium is potentially as significant in its sphere as the doctrine of the episcopal college (within whose processes, after all, the Pope always has a power of veto).

3 Deacons

Little needs to be said on this subject for our present purposes, since deacons are in no way holders of authority in the Church. However, we may note that LG 29 confirms the general tendency of Vatican II to make degrees of ministry equivalent to degrees of sacramental status (thus showing the Council's integrated notion of ministerial mission and sacramental reality). This confirmation appears in the phrase "strengthened with sacramental grace"; it is a slightly ambiguous expression, but it seems to signify the recognition of the

diaconate as a real sacramental status, while at the same time, not casting a slur on the thought of the few theologians who have doubted this. (119)

4 The Laity

We now turn to the subject of the status of the laity in the Church. Lay folk are not inherently involved in the hierarchy of authority, and yet they enjoy their own sacramental status and dignity. The mode of their obedience is dependent both upon this status, and also upon the way in which authority of those who are set over them is conceived. Let us briefly refresh our memory of Vatican II's picture of the nature of hierarchical authority, before we move on to situate the layman's status and activity in relation to it.

I have argued that authority in the Church is attributed a role which is representative of Christ, but representative in a modified way. Modifications arise both because of the inherent nature of authoritative representation, which is seen as justified by the apostolic mission and by sacramental reality, rather than by sheer mandated jurisdiction, and also because of the moral and pastoral qualifications put upon its exercise. Finally, modifications also arise from the complex relationship between ideas of representation, embodiment and witness. In sum, the picture of authority in the Church which appears is that of an 'invitatory sign', in which ideas of jurisdiction and rule are shifted to the circumference of attention and importance (see pp.117-20).

However, even within this modified concept of representation, in which there is a tendency to integrate all three functions of ministry in an invitatory perspective, there exists a tension between the notion of sacramental representation, and the representation of Christ which flows from a share in the dynamic mission of the Gospel. The representation of Christ in sacramental action is conditioned by its association with the eucharistic epiphany, so that it is to be seen as identity of action; representation in the apostolic mission approaches more closely to the idea of witness, for it does not claim

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(119)See H. Vorgrimler, in Vorgrimler, 1, p. 229.

to catch God's action within its own, but points beyond itself to God (see pp. 123f.).

The relationship of those who hold ecclesiastical authority to lay members of the Church is conditioned not only by pure theological theory, but also by the reality of the Church's position in the world. We may say, therefore, that the picture of hierarchical authority as largely invitatory reflects the fact that the Church has no jurisdiction in the secular sphere, so that her pastoral approach to the world must be that of invitation. The laity exist at the interface of invitation, because they both live as part of the secular order, and yet also as part of the Church. They are, then, both subject to the (mainly) invitatory authority of their pastors, and also under the requirement to issue the Church's invitation themselves, for they are caught up in the mission of God to the world through their 'character' as baptised Christians (see p.116).

Vatican II's recognition of the independence of the secular sphere is not presented as the fruit of a regrettable reality, but as a matter of basic theological principle. Whereas Leo XIII had tried to work out a theory of the Church's indirect power in secular matters, as part of his response to the collapse of Catholic royalism in nineteenth-century Europe (120), the Second Vatican Council established that this was a sphere which was the concern of the Christian conscience, without being the concern of the Church as such (see LG 36.4). Christians have a "just liberty" in the affairs of "the terrestrial city", and this the Church's pastors should respect (see LG 37.3). This is not to say that the terrestrial city is beyond the sphere of God's control, but rather that it is the area of what Yves Congar called "legitimate laicity." (121)

In the secular world, the terrestrial city, God's authority will not be known through the Constantinian expansion of the institutional Church in all fields of culture and influence, but through the omnipresence of his witnesses, the members of the

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(120) See, for example, Leo XIII's encyclical, (largely directed to French political problems) Sapientiae Christianae, (10 Jan. 1890) ASS 22 (1889-90) pp. 396f.

(121) Jalons, p. 43.

Kingdom, (see LG 13.2, 33.2) who are instruments of the Church's mission because they issue the Lord's authoritative invitation in the midst of man's secular activities and concerns.

Only at one level is this invitation (although it is part of the Church's mission) an invitation to men that they should join the Church itself. Although the Christian community, the People of God, is destined to include within itself all mankind (see LG 17, AG 9.2) not all human activity is destined to come under ecclesiastical control; the area of legitimate laicity is to remain, and the impact of God's invitation upon this area is meant to be that of a vocation to full humanity, after the pattern of God's design (see GS 4.1, 11.1, et passim.). The boundary of the Church runs through the human heart; the Church has a duty to stimulate that which can never be ecclesiastical in man's life to become, nevertheless, divinely-ordered. In this way, she carries the invitation of Christ to that part of man's life which lies - rightly and essentially - outside her borders.

We find, then, that the invitation of the Church to the world is double-faceted, being both an invitation to faith and membership of the People of God, and also an invitation to men that they should carry out God's purposes. The laity, as members of the Church in its interface with the secular world, are involved with both aspects of this invitatory mission. That is to say, they have both a secular and a 'spiritual' apostolate.

One might suppose that only the secular apostolate belonged properly to the laity, since it is their involvement with the secular sphere which forms the existential content of their distinctiveness. (122) However, the 'spiritual' apostolate of issuing the invitation to faith is also theirs, because they are fully members of the household of faith, and through Baptism share in all three offices of the

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(122)H. Heimerl suggests that there are various ways of defining the nature of the lay state; whilst an abstract definition is given in terms of the layman's relationship of sacramental exchange with the clergy (see note (96, above) the documents of Vatican II also use a "positive existential" concept of the lay status, defined in terms of its properly secular activity. (See Heimerl, art. cit. p. 69.)

Church's mission. We have already seen how their 'character' involves them in the priestly worship of the Church (see p. 113) ; now we are to examine more fully the Council's treatment of other features of lay status as well. We shall conduct the analysis which is to follow under three headings: (a) Baptism and the threefold office; (b) The ecclesial activity of the laity; (c) The secular activity of the laity.

a) Baptism and the threefold office

We have seen that Baptism deputes a Christian to worship, (LG 11.1); it also binds him to the profession of his faith before men, (loc. cit.). Therefore, the layman participates essentially in the priestly and prophetic functions of the Church, and by his continual union with Christ, he is bound up in its mission (AA 3.1, see also AG 5.1). This is expressed by the Council in its teaching that Baptism and the other sacraments depute the laity to an apostolate (LG 33.2, AA 3.1). The very "Christian vocation is a vocation to the apostolate" (AA 2.1), then.

However, we have said that the apostolate of the laity operates in the purely secular sphere, as well as in the spheres of explicit worship and profession of the faith. How does the threefold office, stemming from the Church's mission, qualify the layman for this worldly area of his task?

It is the 'royal' office which the laity exercise when they pursue their secular apostolate; this is made clear by LG 36, which speaks of the royal freedom of Christ's disciples not only in reference to their liberation from the dominion of sin, but also in reference to their freedom to serve others. LG 36.1 goes on to speak of the laity's part in spreading Christ's kingdom of truth, life, holiness, grace, justice, love and peace; "in this kingdom the creation itself will be freed from the slavery of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God . . . For it is a great promise, and a great command given to the disciples: 'All things are yours, you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.'" The rest of the article builds on this theological foundation, to describe the task of the laity in the secular sphere as that of imbuing the world with Christ's spirit, "so that it may attain its end more easily in justice, love and peace" (LG 36.2).

We see, then, that the threefold share in Christ's office and mission belongs to the laity in such a way that their participation in his royal office does not give them a share in the Church's own internal structures of authority, but rather directs them outwards to secular service of the world.

In looking at the Council's treatment of the threefold form of the laity's mission, I have treated it rather schematically; in fact, it is clear from the documents that the Fathers of Vatican II conceived of it in an integrated way, so that the secular apostolate was not seen as really separable from the apostolate of evangelisation or from worship. For example, co-operation with others in the conduct of the world's affairs may prove a preparation for the Gospel (AA 13.2, see also LG 36.1); it may, in fact, lead to the open announcement of God's will, as Catholics explain the values by which they are motivated (see AA 16.5); it will lead the believer to give glory to God (loc. cit.), and in the Mass he will offer himself, his concerns and activities, as "spiritual offerings, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ", along with the divine victim (LG 34.2). The threefold mission of the laity is, therefore, concretely an organic whole, for,

> "there is in the Church a diversity of ministries, but a single mission . . . the laity are made sharers in the priestly, prophetic and royal office of Christ, and play their part in the mission of the whole People of God in the Church and in the world. They carry out an apostolate concretely in their efforts for the evangelisation and sanctification of men, for the penetration of the temporal order with the spirit of the Gospel, and for its perfection. Therefore, their efforts in that order clearly give witness to Christ, and aid in the salvation of men." (AA 2.2)

The reader will bear in mind the integral unity of the different functions of the lay apostolate, as we go on to consider each of those functions in somewhat artificial isolation in the following pages.

b) The ecclesial activity of the laity

We shall consider the ecclesial activity of the laity under the separate heads of their prophetic and their priestly functions.

i) The prophetic function is, as we have seen, grounded in the fundamental Christian duty of professing the faith (LG 11.1); this, itself, is rooted in the experience of sonship of God, known through baptismal regeneration. It is the motive force of the Christian's witness; it should inspire him to announce Christ by word, "both to non-believers, so that they may be led to faith, and to believers, in order to instruct them and stimulate them to a more fervent life" (AA 6.3). This activity is inspired by the love of Christ (loc. cit., see also AA 3.1, LG 33.2) and shows that the laity are involved in issuing his invitation to the world.

However, the prophetic function goes beyond that of sheer invitatory witness. The laity actively embody the presence of the Holy Spirit, and this can give rise to supernatural charisms, which are to be exercised in the building up of the community (LG 7.3, 12.2, 30.1, AA 3.4, PO 9.2). Priests are to judge of the authenticity of these, but they are also to welcome and develop them (PO 9.2). The attitude of the clergy to these gifts is presented in a very positive light by the citation of I Thess. 5.12 and 19ff.: They are not to "quench" the Spirit, but to "test all things, and hold fast to that which is good" (LG 12.2, AA 3.4). AA 3.4, in particular, emphasises the freedom in which gifts of the Spirit are to be exercised. This is a very striking emphasis in the teaching of the Council, and was, to the very end of discussion, a matter of controversy.

The embodiment of the Holy Spirit's active presence in the faith and profession of the laity is also emphasised by the teaching of LG 12.1, concerning the existence of a "sense of faith", which can give rise to an authoritative "consensus of the faithful":

> "All the faithful together, who have the anointing of the Holy Spirit . . . cannot be deceived in their belief; they show this peculiar property by means of a supernatural sense of faith of the entire people when, 'from the bishops to the last of the lay faithful,' they exhibit a universal consensus on matters of faith and morals. Through this sense of faith, roused and sustained by the Spirit of truth, the People of God, under the guidance of the sacred Magisterium, and in faithful obedience to it, receives not the word

> of men, but, in truth, the Word of God . . .
> it adheres indefectibly to the faith once and
> for all delivered to the saints . . . and
> with right judgement it penetrates it more
> deeply and applies it more fully in its life."

Because, then, of the activity and sustaining power of the Holy Spirit, which underlies the very act of believing, the unanimous consensus of the faithful can be a source for knowledge of the truth of the Gospel. We shall be exploring the significance of this affirmation further, in Chapters IV and V. However, here we must note that it is one of the clearest points at which Vatican II gave new emphasis to the motif of the Spirit's embodiment in the whole Church, and thereby modified the concept of representational authority.

ii) The priestly function of the laity is referred to several times in the documents of Vatican II. The phrase, "royal priesthood", derived from I Peter 2.9, is cited in SC 14.1, LG 9.1, 10.1, AA 3.1, 18.1, PO 2.1, AG 15.1. There are two, closely related, consequences of this priesthood for the lay Catholic. The first we have already seen in our study of Vatican II's treatment of the idea of 'character' (see p. 116); it is the fact of the layman's right and duty to full participation in the liturgy, as one who offers the sacrifice of the Mass along with the priest (LG 11.1, PO 5.3), or, (to bring out the other aspect of the same corporate but structured action) as one in whose name the priest makes this oblation (LG 10.2). We have noted the way in which the Council shifts the emphasis away from Pius XII's stress on the fact that, although "the faithful take part in the eucharistic sacrifice [this] does not mean that they also possess the power of priesthood" (123) and the new weight given to the idea of a common, baptismal share in Christ's sacerdotal office. Therefore, this first aspect of the laity's priestly function is already manifest.

The second aspect of the lay priestly function has likewise already been alluded to, when we examined the integration of the

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(123) Mediator Dei, pp. 552f. See also note (92), above.

secular apostolate with the laity's spiritual apostolate and their worship (see p. 141). Apart from the divine victim, those who worship at the Mass also have their own offerings to make, including the offering of all their secular endeavour. This constitutes a consecration of the world by the laity (see LG 34.2). Finally, we must mention the laity's offering of praise in worship, and thankfulness in prayer; this, too, is part of their exercise of a priestly role (see LG 10.2 and 12.1).

c) The secular activity of the laity

I have argued that one may characterise the secular task of lay Catholics almost entirely under the heading of their royal function, following the theology of LG 36; however, I have also pointed out the way in which this secular activity is integrated with worship (because in the Mass the laity can consecrate the world by offering it to God) and with the prophetic task (from which, in practical terms, it is virtually inseparable).

When viewed in isolation, the secular task of the laity appears as something which has a distinct end - the summing up of all things in Christ, who is the cosmic Word (see AA 7.2). The activity directed to this end may be described as a penetration (AA 2.2, 5.2), a perfecting (AA 2.2, 5.2), an ordering (AA 2.1, 7.4), a renewing (AA 7.4, 31.4), an establishing (AA 7.4), a sanctification and animation (AA 16.3), and a building up of the temporal order, and of the conduct of its affairs, in the light of the higher motives inspired by faith (see AA 16.1). All these terms denote what I have described as the lay function of issuing God's invitation in the secular sphere - an invitation to humanity and creation to discover and fulfill their true ends.

Because this task of the laity is carried out fully in the temporal order, it escapes from being under the control or authority of the Church's hierarchy. It is the work of Christians, rather than the work of the Church, and it is related to the hierarchy only through the fact that a Christian conscience should be properly formed, by attention to the Magisterium's teaching; pastors, however, are not to be called upon to give concrete solutions to problems (see GS 43.2). (We shall consider further, in Chapter IV, the kind of significance which the hierarchy's teaching may have, as it enunciates the evangelical principles which Catholics are to apply in the secular order.)

Conclusion

To sum up, we may say that in all three aspects of the laity's share in the Church's mission, Vatican II emphasised the idea that they embody the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit, and that they have a sacramental status which is correlated with this activity and dignity. The Council quite clearly maintained, however, the distinction between the royal office of a layman, and the pastoral and governing functions of the clergy within the Church. Nevertheless, the re-emphasised reality of the laity's status and mission stands in such a relation to the Council's teaching on representational authority as to modify it significantly, by comparison with the teaching of earlier decades and centuries.

This modification of the theory of representational authority stands alongside the other modifications which we have studied, and particularly the Council's tendency to root hierarchical authority firmly in both sacramental reality and also in the activity of mission. Although jurisdictional authority in the Church was not completely redefined in these terms (particularly in the case of papal jurisdiction) the shift of emphasis towards a model of authority as an 'invitatory sign' was distinct enough to be noticeable in the description of each hierarchical rank. We may say, therefore, that despite inner tensions, the theory of Vatican II concerning the nature and justification of the exercise of authority in the Church contains within it a significant shift of emphasis. It will be our task in the following chapters to examine whether the Council's new stress on the motifs of embodiment and witness, and its modification of the concept of representation, were consistently reflected in its treatment of the ideal of Christian obedience.

CHAPTER III: VATICAN II'S TREATMENT OF OBEDIENCE TO CANONICAL AUTHORITY

In this chapter we are to examine Vatican II's picture of the ecclesiastical structures and institutions in which Christian obedience should concretely be practised, and also its concept of the nature and value of such obedience. The chapter will, therefore, fall into two sections, in each of which we shall be asking ourselves whether the Council's modification of the concept of authority, described in the preceding chapter, finds a corresponding echo in its presentation of obedience. In particular, we shall analyse the documents with a view to discovering whether the shift towards a picture of authority as the authority of invitation is correlated with an increasing stress on the interior responsibility and responsiveness of those called upon to obey. We shall also bear in mind the new emphasis given by Vatican II to the fact that all Christians embody the active presence of the Holy Spirit; if this concept is reflected in the Council's idea of obedience it will, once again, be made manifest by an increasing stress on the interior responsibility of Christians, for it is in the response of the inner man that the action of the Holy Spirit should be evident, in the service of God, the Church and the world.

A) Concrete Structures and Institutions in which Obedience to Canonical Authority is to be Practised

The reader will remember that the concept of canonical authority was represented by Vatican II in such a way that its holders continue to be seen as representatives of Christ, although the nature of that representational status is modified. Modifications come about firstly, through the way in which representational authority is placed in close relationship to the Church which, as a whole, embodies God's presence, secondly, through a new stress on the witnessing function of the Church, and finally, through the rooting of representational authority in the ideas of apostolic mission and sacramental status, rather than in a quasi-legal institution by Christ. I have argued that we should see these modifying factors as significant, although each one, individually, only amounts to a change in the

theological atmosphere surrounding the concept of canonical authority.

If I am right in claiming that this change in atmosphere is significant, my claim should be borne out by the concrete picture which Vatican II gave of the norms and structures governing the exercise of canonical authority - norms and structures which also condition the Catholic's response of obedience. They, in themselves, may conform to the atmosphere in which canonical authority appears primarily under the guise of pastoral invitation, or else they may militate against the creation of such an atmosphere in the practical life of the Church; as Charles Davis wrote in 1966, "the relation between bishop and priest and between priest and layman, the pattern of decision-making, the distribution of responsibility, and so on, can be very different sociologically without any difference in doctrinal principles being involved." (1) Do the sociological structures of relationship proposed by Vatican II, therefore, convey and conform to an atmosphere in which pastoral invitation prevails as the primary notion of authority? Or do they continue to stress the idea of representation which is attached to a picture of authority as a quasi-legal institution, operating dominatively?

In order to answer these questions, we shall examine Vatican II's morphology of ecclesiastical relationships in three subsections, dealing, respectively, with the ways in which authority may be delegated in the Church, ways in which collaboration may be fostered and structured in the carrying out of the Church's mission and ministry, and ways in which the freedom of different persons and groups in the Church may be protected.

1 The Delegation of Authority in the Church

Although the Second Vatican Council moved towards a position in which the possession of canonical authority was seen more closely in relationship to specific degrees of sacramental status, it did not thereby abolish the semi-independence of the canonical hierarchy of powers. A legal structure continued to exist, through which authority might be delegated, although the concept of such authority

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(1) "The Theology of the Lay State" in Concilium, 3, no. 2 (1966) p. 76.

was partially modified by the Council's tendency to see it in an integrated way, in the perspective provided by the idea of a single apostolic missionary impulse.

We have already come across the idea of 'canonical mission'. This is the term used to denote the delegation of canonical authority to an individual. In the pages which follow we shall examine the Council's view of this device in more detail; then, we shall turn to consider the delegation of authority or responsibility to groups, particularly analysing Vatican II's treatment of the idea of a 'mandate'.

a) 'Canonical mission'

'Canonical mission' is the term used to describe the delegation of a sphere of authority, together with certain specific responsibilities in that sphere, to someone whose sacramental status does not immediately entail such a concrete position and responsibility. So far, we have seen the term applied in the case of presbyters, who take responsibility for particular parishes or areas of diocesan life under the authority of the bishop; we have also seen that Vatican II made it clear that diocesan bishops do not exercise jurisdiction over their sees by virtue of such a 'mission', but rather by virtue of their consecration and continuing communion in the Catholic Church (see pp.124f.). 'Canonical mission', therefore, is a device which qualifies the exercise of authority and responsibility largely among those of 'lower' sacramental status than the bishops. (2)

The significance of this lies in the fact that the bishops, as those who succeed the Apostles, are the people who are answerable to God for the apostolic mission; their delegation of a concrete share in this mission to others does not prescind from their answerability. Because of this, the bishops do not formally delegate to others the powers of final judgement which are theirs, and which

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(2) However, as we have seen in Chapter II, note (105), p.125, there are bishops whose authority is delegated to them, because they are not diocesan ordinaries. In view of Vatican II's concept of the bishop's inherent sacramental link with the local church, the existence of these bishops (and of retired bishops) creates a certain theological anomaly.

constitute the fullness of canonical authority. The episcopate with the Pope, remains responsible for all the final decisions which delineate the boundaries of the Church; therefore, ultimately the power to command (which is the obverse side of the power to judge and exclude) can properly only rest with bishops, although it may be exercised on their behalf, and under their control, by those to whom it is delegated.

I have argued that the form of authority which is proper to presbyters, by virtue of their sacramental 'character', is essentially the power of invitation, except in the sacrament of Penance, when they exercise the power of the keys by virtue both of their sacramental status, and also of their canonical mission (see Chapter II, note (16), p.78). However, even the sacrament of Penance appears in the teaching of Vatican II in a more invitatory than juridical light. The authority bestowed in 'canonical mission' is superadded to the pastoral authority of invitation so that presbyters may make decisions within a certain area, and have effective administrative faculties. However, normally even the exercise of administration is to be carried out in an invitatory and educative mode, as PO 6's picture of headship makes clear; only rarely might one expect a presbyter to fall back on the legal representational authority which is delegated to him from the bishop, so as to make binding requirements on others. Therefore, we may say that there is a close intermesh between the "sacred power" inherent in the sacrament of Order, and the delegated authority which a presbyter exercises in his administration on behalf of a bishop.

'Canonical mission' can also be bestowed on lay persons, such as catechists (see AG 17) and others who share in the teaching of Christian doctrine, or who partake in certain liturgical actions, or have the care of souls (see AA 1.2 and 24.6). Does such delegation of responsibility intermesh with factors inherent to the lay 'character'? And, can it be said to endow lay persons with authority?

In 1963 J.J. Reed suggested a threefold division of the lay apostolate into (i) the action of the laity in matters properly clerical, (ii) the action of the laity in matters properly laical, but with a mandate and under the direction of the hierarchy, and (iii) the

action of the laity in matters properly laical without such direct intervention. (3) 'Canonical mission' is largely concerned with Reed's first category, which he suggested should cover activity involved in the administration of the sacraments and the care of souls, such as the work of catechists, and those who convey the sacraments. (4) LG 35.4 seems to share Reed's concept of such tasks as being "properly clerical", for it says that some laity "supply a supplementary ministry for certain sacred functions ("quaedam officia sacra pro facultate supplent") when there is a lack of sacred ministers, or when such ministers are impeded by organised persecution." (See also AA 1.2) AA 24.6 refers to the mission of the laity in such spheres as being "more closely joined to the pastors' functions", and elaborates on what is involved - the teaching of Christian doctrine, certain liturgical acts and the care of souls. We see, then, that Vatican II considered that such actions are not really 'normal' for the laity.

However, the Council resisted the idea of actually clericalising those who carry out such functions by conferring 'minor orders' upon them, nor did it follow through a radical suggestion made by Karl Rahner in 1954, to the effect that "anyone who is, in any way, rightfully in habitual possession of any part of liturgical or legal power (over and above the basic rights of every baptised member of the Church) is no longer a layman in the proper sense, i.e. no longer belongs to the simple people of God." (5) The most it did towards giving laity, who are involved in the tasks normally attached to the pastors' functions, a greater basis of authority, was to recommend that catechists should have their 'mission' conferred upon them publicly and liturgically, "so that they may serve the faith with greater authority among the people" (AG 17.5).

The position expressed by Vatican II on the point of the 'canonical mission' bestowed upon laity seems to contain some ambiguity.

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(3) "The Laity in Church Law", in Theological Studies, 24 (1963) p. 616.

(4) ibid. pp. 616f.

(5) English translation of article, "The Lay Apostolate", in Theological Investigations, 2 (London, 1963) p. 320

On the one hand, the Council resisted clericalising such lay people, but on the other it clearly treated them as those who participated in functions which are not strictly natural to their 'character' and status. The issue is, however, elucidated if we turn to consider the authority of such lay ministers.

We have seen that AG 17.5 speaks of the enhancement of the authority of catechists by the public conferral of 'mission' upon them. What is the essential nature of this authority? Basically, it must be understood as the authority of preachers - the power of invitation which calls a community to assemble, to believe and to obey the Lord. At root, then, it is grounded in the invitatory authority which every baptised Christian enjoys as he professes the faith by virtue of his regeneration and sonship. However, in the case of those under 'canonical mission', this authority is enhanced because it is authorised; that is to say, the hierarchy which succeeds in the Apostles' particular responsibility, makes itself answerable for the preaching and teaching given by those upon whom a 'mission' is conferred. The public endowment of this 'mission' and authorisation makes a catechist's preaching more psychologically authoritative, by making visible the answerability which the hierarchy will adopt for what he says. In addition, a liturgical act makes clearer the association of a catechist's preaching with the sacramental nature of the Church. However, it does not make him strictly a representational and authoritative figure who can require obedience; he remains essentially a witness, an inviter. Therefore, he is carrying out an activity appropriate to his status, but in a sphere and under an authorisation and conditions which more usually characterise the functions of clergy.

On the other hand, there are those whose supplementary aid to the clergy includes delegated powers of administrative authority - a share in the government of the Church. It is from this group of people that AG 16.6 suggested that mature, married men might be chosen to be ordained to a permanent diaconate. Clearly, the Council felt that government of Christian communities "in the name of the parish priest and bishops" was most appropriately carried out by those whose sacramental 'character' was not simply that of laymen. These, as well as some of those involved simply in preaching or charitable work, should be "strengthened by the laying-on of hands which has come down from the Apostles, and joined more closely to the altar, so that their

ministry may be carried out more fruitfully, through the sacramental grace of the diaconate."

We find then that despite some 'rough edges', Vatican II was moulding a doctrine of the ministry of commissioned lay individuals which eludes categorisation in terms of 'power', but is rather to be described in terms of 'spheres of authorisation'. The Council seems to have envisaged a real intermesh between activity which properly belongs to the laity (ie. witness) and the specialised, delegated ministry of those under 'canonical mission'; the point of distinction is constituted not by additional 'power', but by an unusual 'sphere of authorisation'. This seems to be the thinking behind the rejection of any clericalisation of lay ministry, and behind the staunch renewal of the refusal to adopt Rahner's contention that such people are not really 'lay' anyway (6). Rahner's argument, it will be remembered, depends upon the idea that lay ministers and catechists exercise liturgical or legal 'power', over and above that belonging to every baptised Christian.

On the other hand, when the Council came to consider those who really do exercise administrative authority, so that they can make binding decisions in the name of the parish priest and bishop, it tended towards the idea that such authority is <u>best</u> bestowed upon deacons. Therefore, the conciliar tendency to ground pastoral authority in the Church in the possession of sacramental status, was reflected (though not rigorously) at this point as well. This may appear to be a step in the direction of old-fashioned clericalism; however, in another perspective, it may equally be argued that the association of administrative authority with the deacon's role lays stress upon the fact that administration and decision-making are <u>services</u> to the community, and should typically be carried out in a diaconal, ministerial manner (see LG 29.1, also 24.1).

The most significant feature of a 'canonical mission' is not that it confers some kind of dominative authority, but rather that it places the one who receives it <u>under</u> the authority of the bishops in a special way, so that they can take responsibility before God and

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(6) Pius XII had already rejected the point of view put forward in Rahner's article, in 1957. (See, alloc. <u>Six ans sont écoulés</u> (5 Oct. 1957) AAS 49 (1957) p. 925)

man for what is done in their name. Because of the nature of the bishops' own mandate from Christ, the 'canonical mission' they confer should be viewed as the delegation of tasks within the general movement of apostolic mission, and, as such, it should share the apostolic characteristic that any authority which may be attached to it is primarily the authority of an invitatory sign.

b) The delegation of authority or responsibility to lay groups, and Vatican II's treatment of the idea of a 'mandate'

Vatican II's resistance to the clericalisation of lay ministers is based upon a respect for what lay Christians can do by virtue of their own sacramental 'character', conferred in Baptism. The power to evangelise is the layman's by right; he does not need authorisation to act as a member of the Church in this way, but only if he is to do it explicitly in the name of the apostolic hierarchy, and under their responsibility.

The situation is similar in regard to the group apostolate of lay people; there is much that they can do entirely on their own initiative and in their own name. However, there are some groups, often arising through lay initiative, (see AA 20d) and carrying out functions within a truly lay capacity, which the hierarchy wishes to "choose and promote in a particular way, assuming special responsibility for them." (AA 24.5) The text goes on to say that, in this way the hierarchy "unites such a form of the apostolate more closely to its own apostolic task, preserving, meanwhile the proper nature and distinction of each task, and not removing from lay people the necessary faculty of acting on their own initiative. This act of the hierarchy is called a 'mandate' in various ecclesiastical documents." (See also AA 20d)

Vatican II's treatment of 'mandated' groups of the Catholic Action type seeks to keep two facts in balance: Firstly, the lay status itself is a basis for apostolic action, with or without explicit authorisation from above. The apostolic action of the laity naturally extends into the spheres of evangelisation and sanctification. Secondly, however, this activity which essentially belongs to lay Christians because of their Baptism, can operate under the immediate responsibility of the hierarchy, so that the bishops are answerable for it. Such responsibility does not remove the essentially lay character

or sphere of group work (and in this, the 'mandating' of groups differs from the 'canonical mission' given to individuals to exercise functions in spheres normally reserved to the clergy), but it is one way in which lay groups may qualify to include the description 'Catholic' in their name (see AA 24.3).

However, we must note that the Council used the concept of a 'mandate' reticently, saying that the hierarchy "may" authenticate Catholic group work with a 'mandate' (see AA20d) and that the term has been used in documents of the past (AA 24.5). It was not suggested that the authorised character of the corporate co-operation of laymen with the ministerial hierarchy should universally be expressed through a 'mandate', nor that such work should universally be termed 'Catholic Action'. There were both practical reasons, associated with the Church's relationship with the government of certain states, and also theological reasons, underlying this reticence.

The concept of a 'mandate' had previously been a source of theological confusion and controversy, largely because it had been seen as a category through which additional powers might be given to the laity. There was, up to the early 1960s, a debate as to whether lay members of 'mandated' Catholic Action groups participate in the hierarchical apostolate (ie. in an apostolate which is not essentially theirs) or whether they collaborate with it, by themselves acting in a thoroughly lay manner. This debate rested upon an artificial reification of the concept of authorisation (7) and some participators in it unfortunately tended, through their exegesis of ideas such as that of the 'mandate' and 'participation', to suggest that Catholic Action was the longa manus of the hierarchy, or a way of making a particular 'order' out of certain laymen. The effect was implicitly to deny that other members of the laity had a proper apostolate at all. (8)

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(7) Heimerl describes the fundamental roots of the debate thus: "Some commentators tried to bring the practical and pastoral instructions of Pius XI, limited as they were by the situation in which they arose, into scholastic categories, thereby arriving at a valueless exegesis of the expressions 'mandate', 'participation in the hierarchical apostolate', etc." (art. cit. p. 72)

(8) See Congar, Jalons, p. 508 and pp. 519f.

Although AA 20.1 uses the phrase "a co-operation of the laity in the hierarchical apostolate" (emphasis mine) - an expression suggesting that Catholic Action groups in fact work beyond the properly lay sphere - the phrase is explicitly put forward as one which has been used in the past. It is not proposed as the ideal description for this kind of group; rather, AA 20b speaks of laity "co-operating in their own way with the hierarchy" (emphasis mine; see also AA 20d). This terminology expresses better Vatican II's stress on the truly lay character of the Catholic Action apostolate. At the same time, the Council did not repeat Pius XII's description of these groups as an "instrument" in the hands of the hierarchy (9), but instead said that the organisations "act under the higher direction of the hierarchy" (AA 20d).

Although the issue of terminology, and whether an explicit 'mandate' is given or not, is not one which practically affects the working of a Catholic Action type of organisation (that is, a group for which the hierarchy takes special responsibility, in such a wise that it is under the hierarchy's "higher direction") and although the question of whether lay people co-operate or participate in the hierarchy's own apostolate, or rather co-operate or collaborate with it, seems to be a matter of rather abstract interest, (10) it is nevertheless true that nuances of language communicate the atmosphere in which relationships are concretely worked out between hierarchy and laity. Vatican II's approach to the question of 'mandate' and authorised lay groups has been criticised as embracing the status quo, "which had been dictated not by the 'People of God' as the main image, but by the hierarchical image of the Church which had developed in the nineteenth century". (11) Nevertheless, the Council's language shows a

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(9) alloc. De quelle consolation (14 Oct. 1951) AAS 43 (1951) p. 789

(10) Pius XII did not consider this a matter of merely abstract interest, but was very careful to 'correct' the terminology of his predecessor from that of 'participation' to that of 'collaboration'. The historical development of the theology of the lay apostolate is excellently discussed by J.-G. Dubuc, in Les Rélations entre hièrarchie et laïcat dans l'apostolat chez Pius XI et Pius XII (Rome, 1967), and by Robert E. Donovan in 'The Modern Theology of the Layman' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Fordham University, New York, 1974) pp. 89-117.

(11) Donovan, op. cit., p. 261.

shift towards an emphasis on the proper freedom of the laity, even in Catholic Action, for "the laity, co-operating in their own way with the hierarchy, contribute their experience and assume their responsibilities in the government of these organisations, in research into the conditions in which the Church's pastoral activity must be carried out, and in the elaboration and execution of programmes of action " (AA 20b). The "higher direction" of the groups by the hierarchy is proportionate to the responsibility taken for them; that is to say, it should extend only to the delimitation and authorisation of fields of activity through the approval of statutes and of organs of leadership; it may also include the approval of the most important decisions which are made.

Vatican II's stress on the properly lay nature of groups of this kind indicates that in no way do they have canonical authority granted to them, although they have canonical responsibilities. What these groups do acquire is the hierarchy's backing for their exercise of Christian kerygmatic, or invitatory, authority (although, of course, the leaders of the groups possess the administrative powers which are necessary for the other functions to be executed smoothly). Rather than being given jurisdiction over other members of the Church, members of Catholic Action are placed more squarely under the authority of the bishops, as is the case of individuals with 'canonical mission'; however, unlike those individuals, members of the lay group apostolate work in spheres which are essentially fields of lay work.

2 Collaboration in the Church's Mission and Ministry

Robert E. Donovan, in criticising Vatican II's treatment of the idea of a 'mandate', said that "what was and is needed are practical suggestions that will take seriously the hierarchical principle but stress the corporate nature of the Church." (12) In the terms of the present thesis, we may express this by saying that the Council needed to find a practical correlate for its renewed stress on the laity's embodiment of the Holy Spirit's active presence, a correlate which would integrate this reality with Vatican II's continuing support of the idea of representational authority (albeit of a modified form).

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(12) loc. cit.

I have already suggested that Donovan's critique of the concept of the 'mandate' passes over a real though subtle shift of emphasis which did occur; I must now turn to examine whether there were other ways in which the Council effectively shifted emphases and changed practices in favour of the corporate collaboration implicated in its underlying ecclesiology.

A structure of corporate collaboration would be one which fostered the situation in which those with representational authority fulfilled their tasks with reference to, and in reliance upon, the active help and advice of persons and bodies of different sacramental status. Such a structure would not echo the pattern of episcopal collegiality, because the college of bishops possesses authority sui iuris, whereas these collaborative structures would possess authority only in virtue of delegation from above.

A significant feature of a structure of collaboration may consist in the fact that it is not necessarily a homogenous body, under the higher authority, but may be a body in which the constituent members are of differing sacramental status from each other, and yet are brought to co-operate in ways which do not reflect the hierarchical divisions between them.

The first structure of collaboration which we may consider is that of the Synod of Bishops, which Paul VI established during the course of the Council in 1965, (13) and which was subsequently mentioned in CD 5. This institution functions as a structure fostering collaboration between bishops and the Pope, without fully actualising the sui iuris powers of the college. It does not actualise the powers of the college, because, by definition, these cannot be delegated to a limited number of bishops; nevertheless, the Synod symbolises the reality of collegial communion, because its members are representatives of the whole group. This symbolic factor gives the Synod a measure of moral authority which may be set in the balance against the monarchical potential of papalism.

In my description of what would be involved in a structure of corporate collaboration, the reader may have been reminded of the idea of the presbyterium (see pp. 135f.). I described the presbyterium

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(13) See Paul VI's motu proprio Apostolica Sollicitudo (15 Sept 1965) AAS 57 (1965)pp. 775-80.

as a sacramental concept related to the reality of mutual communion, more than as an administrative structure in itself. However, the sacramental reality signified in the presbyterium does have a significant effect in the concrete and canonical sphere: Vatican II did not merely recommend, but actually prescribed, the establishment or reform in each diocese of a Senate of Priests. Its job is to "give effective assistance to the bishop in his government of the diocese, through its advice." (PO 7.1, see also CD 27.2.) This Senate should be structured in such a way as to be representative of the presbyterium, but has merely a consultative voice. (14) Despite this, however, it goes some distance towards "filling a gap at diocesan level" which was left by the fact that each diocesan bishop was given greater independence with regard to the general laws of the Church, and thus effectively given greater control over the lot of his priests. (15)

Because the Senate of Priests has its ontological justification in the theology of the presbyterium, the provisions of Vatican II gave it priority over another structure, the diocesan Pastoral Council. This was recommended in CD 27.5, and should consist of specially chosen clergy, religious, and laity, under the presidency of the bishop. The task of such a council is to investigate matters of pastoral concern, and to give considered recommendations on the subject.

Perhaps the major significance of such councils lies in the fact that lay members are placed on an equal footing with clergy and religious, as they collaborate under the bishop. Structures of this kind favour an atmosphere of de-hierarchicalisation in the relationships of a lower level in the Church, even though they do not necessarily qualify the bishop's authority in decision, legislation and jurisdiction over his diocese.

A further provision of Vatican II which heightens the tendency to de-hierarchicalisation in the relations between clergy and laity is

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(14) Paul VI's motu proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae of 6 Aug. 1966 set out norms for the operation of this Senate. See article 15, (AAS 58 (1966) pp. 766f.).

(15) See T.G. Barberena, "Collegiality at Diocesan Level" in Concilium, 8 no. 1 (1965) p. 16.

to be found in the councils which co-ordinate the lay apostolate at every level of the Church's life (parochial, interparochial, diocesan, interdiocesan, national and international). Again, these were only the subject of a recommendation (AA 26) but on all these councils it was suggested that clergy and religious should "co-operate with the laity" - a striking turn of phrase, indeed! These councils differ from the Priests' Senates and the Pastoral Councils because they are directed more specifically to the mutual collaboration of independent bodies than to giving aid to bishops in the exercise of their authority and pastoral responsibility. Therefore, although the Councils for the Lay Apostolate are significant in exhibiting a potential break-down of hierarchicalised relationships at the lower levels, this is because they enshrine the principle of subsidiarity rather than because they enshrine that of a corporate collaboration given from 'below' to those in positions of representational authority.

Before we turn to consider the Council's presentation of the idea of subsidiarity, we must sum up what we have discovered about its ideas of corporate collaboration.

We have found that structures favouring collaboration were set up or recommended by the Council at a variety of levels. However, only the Senates of Priests were made compulsory, being rooted in sacramental status, and even they do not prescind from the final authority which bishops possess to make decisions for the government of their dioceses. Therefore, if a bishop is not disposed to utilise or take account of the collaborative aid and advice of clergy or laity, there is nothing in Vatican II's description of structures of collaboration which might guarantee their effectiveness in expressing the Holy Spirit's embodiment and authority voiced through the generality of Christians. (16)

We may suggest, however, that the very fact that the Council set up and suggested institutions favouring consultation and collaboration contributed to an atmosphere in which such collaboration is more

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(16) Christian Duquoc complains that "no social adjustment is suggested [by Lumen Gentium] which would ensure that the ministry, which is defined as service, might effectively become such. Only the evangelical or moral virtue of this social body conduces it to place its 'power' at the service of the community." (loc. cit.)

likely to be accepted as the norm. It may also be argued that, so long as the theory of representational authority was maintained in ecclesiology in any shape or form, final decisions in government and leadership had to remain vested in the Pope and bishops, who hold this authority through their share in the apostolic mission. Therefore, the structures of collaboration which Vatican II set forward, when seen in combination with its stress on the pastoral and invitatory character which should mark the exercise of authority, correspond fairly accurately to the Council's theoretical delineation of the way in which God's authority is mediated in the Church. However, the further question still remains as to whether structures of collaboration of the limited type proposed can be socially plausible. That is a question to which we shall address ourselves at a later stage.

3 The Freedom of Different Groups and Persons in the Church

Since the time of Pius XI the expression 'the principle of subsidiarity' has been used in Roman Catholic writing; it was first employed in reference to secular affairs, to designate the principle that individuals and groups should have legitimate freedom to carry out activities in the educational and economic fields, without interference from the higher authorities in the state. (17) The term was used in this way at Vatican II several times (see GS 86.5, GE 3.2, 6.2). However, it may also be applied to relationships in the Church, (18) and we shall use it here to denote "the constant effort of the Council to do justice to personal and partial responsibilities in the Church." (19) The term is particularly useful to describe the way in which the Council sought to leave room to the individual to act on his own responsibility and initiative in many matters; where groups are concerned, the phrase may also be applicable, but, as will become clear in what follows, it is not always easy to make a sharp distinction between structures which express the subsidiarity of groups, and structures which involve them in immediate collaboration with the hierarchy.

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(17) See Pius XI, encycl. Quadragesimo Anno (15 May 1931) AAS 23 (1931) p. 203. (Dz 2266/DzS 3738); also John XXIII, encycl. Mater et Magistra (15 May 1961) AAS 53 (1961) p. 414. (DzS 3943)

(18) Pius XII used it in this application in Six ans sont écoulés, p. 927.

(19) A. Grillmeier, in Vorgrimler 1, note on p. 144.

I have suggested that Councils for the Lay Apostolate exist primarily because of the principle of subsidiarity. It is not the councils themselves which are the object of the principle, but the many different kinds of lay organisation which make them up. The independence of these organisations, which is protected by the principle, might tend to fragment the Church's apostolic efforts if no structure of collaboration among the groups existed. Therefore, because of their subsidiary freedom, the organisations should work together. However the councils through which Vatican II suggested they should co-operate are also ultimately expressive of collaboration given 'from below' to the hierarchy, for it was recommended that the lay apostolate should be co-ordinated at the highest level by a Vatican secretariat, which would place the organisations in a special relationship to the Pope. In addition, the fact that many of the organisations which were to collaborate on the local level are of the Catholic Action type involves the interest of the hierarchy immediately in the running of the Councils for the Lay Apostolate. Therefore, we may say that these councils are an example of the fusion of the principles of subsidiarity and corporate collaboration.

What other concrete examples did Vatican II provide of the commendation and enhancement of the idea of subsidiarity in the Church? We may note, first of all, that the Council's theology of the local church was translated concretely into the allotting of a greater scope of subsidiary powers to the diocesan bishops. Various reforms were enacted or prepared at Vatican II which were intended to give them greater independence in their jurisdiction. The Pope no longer delegates certain legal rights to them as a matter of concession, for the previously existing situation is turned on its head, and the 'ordinary, proper and immediate power' of the bishops in their own dioceses becomes the legislative norm both for the enforcement of the general law of the Church, and for dispensations from it (CD 8b) (20). Another important emphasis of the Council is contained in articles 33-35 of

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(20) Compare this with CIC can. 81.
After Vatican II there exists a catalogue of those cases which are to be matters of papal reservation.
This was juridicially enacted in Paul VI's motu proprio De Episcoporum Muneribus (15 June 1966) AAS 58 (1966) pp. 467-472.

Christus Dominus, whereby religious institutes are brought much more firmly within the diocesan structures for co-operation in the apostolate, and it is made clear that 'papal exemption' of certain institutes relates primarily to their internal organisation, and to the disposition of religious personnel for the good of the whole Church: "Exemption does not prevent religious from being subject to the jurisdiction of the bishops of the individual dioceses, according to the norm of law, as far as the fulfillment of the pastoral task, and the right ordering of the care of souls, makes this necessary." (CD 35.3) These measures, along with CD 9 and 10 (the Council's request for a reform of the Roman Curia), CD 40.2 (the recommendation that dioceses formerly linked only with Rome should be incorporated into provinces) and CD 28.1, which deals with the suppression of rights and privileges which hinder the bishops in freely appointing priests to benefices, and therefore touches on certain rights and privileges of the Pope, effectively show that the universal, immediate power of the Roman See was viewed by Vatican II as something which should be accommodated, quite strictly, to the jurisdictional rights of bishops within their own dioceses.

This increased respect for the subsidiary powers of bishops is the concrete expression of Vatican II's attempt to redress the balance between the central government of the Church Universal, and the sacramental reality of the local church, whose bishop is endowed with the fullness of Order.

A further structure enhancing subsidiarity goes beyond the theological foundation-idea that each diocese is a full expression of the Church. This is the structure of Episcopal Conferences, either national or regional, prescribed by CD 37; at the same time as prescribing these, the Council renewed the more ancient institution of solemn provincial Synods of Bishops. (CD 36) (These meet more rarely than Episcopal Conferences, have a wider membership, and can enforce binding decisions on the episcopate of a province.)

The institution of the Episcopal Conference is a particularly interesting example of the way in which Vatican II

extended the application of the principle of subsidiarity. (21) A national Episcopal Conference does not strictly and legally have its roots in the sacramentally based collegial nature of the total episcopate (although, on the affective level, it provides an occasion for the expression of the affectus collegialis - see AG 6.6). Rather, it is an administrative and legal device, designed to enhance the proper personal authority of the diocesan bishops, by bringing them into collaboration with one another for practical purposes (see, for example, the recommendation of CD 18.2 concerning the pastoral care of particular categories of the faithful, such as emigrants, refugees, seamen, etc.). In order that this collaboration may be effectual in achieving its practical ends, Episcopal Conferences are granted certain legislative and executive powers which exceed the sum of the powers of their members. These delegated powers touch upon such matters as the liturgy and the training of clergy (see SC 22.2, CT1, 22, AG 20.5) - matters which had largely been the direct concern of Rome in the past. Therefore, as well as being called for by the necessities imposed by the proper subsidiarity of each bishop individually, these conferences in themselves are treated as bodies which come under the principle of subsidiarity.

Conclusion

Of the different structures set up, recommended or extended by the Second Vatican Council, those which express the principle of subsidiarity are probably the most effective forms of concrete balance to different kinds of centralism. The idea of subsidiarity is theologically rooted in the fact that certain persons have functions which are truly proper to them, and belong to their sacramental definition. Therefore, institutions which seek to translate this sacramental fact into concrete practice have a firm theoretical basis. The actual institutions and structures concerned (Councils for the

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(21) Vatican II did not invent Episcopal Conferences, which had been in existence since the nineteenth century in some areas, and had been given limited practical functions in the Codex (see CIC can. 292). Pius XII had fostered and commended them (see alloc. of 2 Nov. 1954, AAS 46 (1954) p. 675). Vatican II, however, prescribed that they should exist universally.

Lay Apostolate, Episcopal Conferences and Provincial Synods, the codes governing the juridical powers of the diocesan bishops) themselves have a certain contingency. The rules which govern them can be changed, and have been changed in the past. This might mean that structures of subsidiary power seem vulnerable to the encroachments of centralism (as indeed was the case from the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of this one). However, such encroachments have to be through the medium of general laws, or through the permission of the subsidiary bodies themselves, and thus have a public aspect. Any rough-dealing on the part of central authority would now be likely to incur a loss of interior loyalty among many Catholics. We may say, then, that such encroachments would lack social plausibility, because Vatican II so firmly institutionalised and ratified subsidiary freedoms and the atmosphere which protects them.

The other structures and institutions which the Council commended to enhance relationships in the Church are less well entrenched in law. Some of the structures of collaboration remain optional, and all of them depend for their effectiveness on the good will of members of the hierarchy. Nevertheless, as I have already suggested (see p. 160) the Council was at least theologically consistent in the way it drew up its picture of collaboration between those with representational authority, and those who embody the Spirit's presence and power in a more diffuse way. In addition, Vatican II used the pastoral and ministerial themes as ways of showing what authority should be like in practice, namely invitatory and non-juridical. Its ideal picture of the relations between the hierarchy and the rest of the Church is logically coherent in outline, even if details might have been different (for example, diocesan Pastoral Councils might have been prescribed rather than merely recommended).

We see, then, that if the Council's provisions for the structures of relationship in the Church remain open to criticism, it is not first of all on the grounds of internal incoherence, but rather because of social implausibility. The renewed stress on the fact that the entire Church embodies the presence of the Spirit, and the Council's moves towards greater consultation - which were likely to create an atmosphere of expectancy in this respect - contributed to a tide of ideas which was bound to run up against the fixed point of the ultimate representational authority of the hierarchy.

Secondly, we may remark that on the strictly theological level, it is possible that Vatican II's concept of ideal ecclesiastical obedience, and the relationship of this concept to a certain theological model of the Church's role, may turn out to be inconsistent with its treatment of wider areas of doctrine. This will provide the substance of our investigation in Chapters VI and VII of the thesis. Immediately, however, it is our task to examine further the way in which the Second Vatican Council painted its picture of ideal Christian obedience.

B) The Nature and Value of Obedience in the Church

So far, we have examined the structures of the Church in which obedience is to be exercised. In Chapter II we looked at the theological basis for those structures; in the first section of the present chapter we considered the concrete provisions and recommendations which the Council made. It is now appropriate to ask, 'what does obedience itself involve, so far as the Church's practical life is concerned?' In order to answer this question, we shall examine first the extent of obedience which different ecclesiastical persons can require; secondly we shall consider the characteristics of the obedience which Vatican II recommended; finally, we shall assess the significance of Christ's own obedience as a model for the obedience of Catholics.

1 The Extent of the Obedience which Different Persons may Require

Necessarily in this sub-section it will be impossible to do more than merely indicate rather briefly the fields of activity which the requirement of canonical obedience may cover in respect of different persons. We shall begin with the Pope's powers to require such obedience.

a) The obedience due to the Pope

We saw in Chapter II that the Second Vatican Council maintained the doctrine that there is an independent Petrine jurisdictional primacy, inherited by the Pope. This autonomous primacy was, however, juxtaposed with an idea of the papal headship which grounded it in the idea that Peter's successor is the centre of communion in an authoritative college of bishops (see pp.129-31). The two ideas sit rather

uneasily together, but attempts were made to harmonise them on the practical level by the Council, in that it indicated that the primacy should encroach less than previously upon the diocesan jurisdiction of the bishops. However, CD 2.1 also gives a forceful and lapidary formulation of the fullness of scope of papal oversight:

> "In this Church of Christ, the Roman Pontiff, as the successor to Peter, to whom Christ entrusted the task of pastoring his sheep and lambs, enjoys supreme, full, immediate and universal power for the care of souls. Likewise, as he is pastor of all the faithful, with a mission for the good of the universal Church and the good of all the individual churches, he holds primacy of ordinary power over all the churches."

This formula is reminiscent of the teaching of Vatican I, even though it no longer employs the controversial adjective "episcopalis" to describe the Pope's power in respect to all the different dioceses (see Chapter II, note (17), p. 78).

What effect does the difficult balancing-act of Vatican II have upon the type and scope of the obedience which the Pope can require? We may note that CD 2 certainly breathes a different atmosphere from the equivalent passage in Pastor Aeternus (22), for, whilst the latter follows up its statement on the primacy with the conclusion that all Catholics are thereby bound to the duty of hierarchical subordination and obedience to the Pope, the former moves straight from the primacy to a description of the proper status of bishops. (Similarly, in LG 22 the doctrine of the college succeeds immediately to the doctrine of Petrine primacy.)

It must be concluded nevertheless, that, apart from the juridical changes and adjustments made by Vatican II concerning the delineated powers of the bishops, the effect of the Council's teaching upon the exercise of the primacy was entirely in terms of atmosphere. Papal oversight can still involve the Roman Curia in a variety of direct disciplinary interventions when they are considered necessary, (23) and

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(22) cap. 3. (Dz 827/DzS 3060).

(23) It is for Rome to decide when these interventions may be necessary, and there have been some notable cases since the Council in which it would seem that the local hierarchies did not share the Roman view of this necessity!

the Roman See continues to be able to produce general legislation for the Church (although, as we have seen, powers of enforcement and dispensation are more fully in the bishops' hands). The Pope's authority can touch anything with pastoral import - and the Council did not limit the subjects which may be deemed to belong to this category! Therefore, Vatican II did not significantly reduce the powers of the Pope and the Curia, except in the fields explicitly noted on pp. 161f. of this chapter. However, it did create the fully theological basis for a new atmosphere, in which the primacy might be exercised pastorally and with more regard to collegial constraints and courtesies.

b) The obedience due to bishops

Because the primary model for the bishop is summed up in the idea of an invitatory sign, we find that his major influence is portrayed as being through "counsels, persuasion and example" (LG 27.1); all these are addressed to men's hearts, and therefore share the characteristics of invitation. Only secondarily does the same text speak of a bishop's "authority and sacred power", by which he can require and enforce obedience.

Bearing in mind these indications of atmosphere, we may go on to ask what areas are covered by the "authority and sacred power" of the bishops. We have already seen that vis à vis Rome, the jurisdictional status of diocesan ordinaries was enhanced; we have also seen their relationship of "higher direction" in relation to certain organisations of the lay apostolate. In addition to these powers, bishops exercise administrative authority in matters concerning finance, personnel, buildings, education, the liturgy, etc. in their dioceses. Their administrative authority is backed by their juridical and legislative powers, through which they can pass from invitation to command, requirement, and judgement. Vatican II's tendency was not to reduce the power of command which underlies a bishop's authority, but to push it further away from the centre of theological attention, and indicate that it should be subordinated to a pastoral ministry of invitation.

We are given pictures of the episcopal invitatory authority in LG 23.2 (bishops should stir up people to serve in the missions),

LG 26.3 (they should exhort people to take a full part in the liturgy), LG 27.4 (they should arouse zealous collaboration in pastoral work) and in OT 2.2 (they should promote vocations). All these activities have the characteristic of being acts of leadership; they inhere closely with the preaching ministry, and are not, in themselves, acts of government or decision-making. They are the primary, governing images of the bishop's relationship to his people.

As in the case of papal authority, the translation of these images into concrete priorities, depends upon the willingness of people to follow the atmosphere of pastoral invitation indicated both by Vatican II's doctrinal picture of the nature of the Church and its ministry, and also by its exhortations that bishops should take a ministerial attitude.

c) The obedience due to priests

We have seen that the "spiritual power" of presbyters (PO 6.1) is largely a compound of administrative and kerygmatic (invitatory) authority, except in so far as the sacrament of Penance gives them a juridical role in respect of the 'internal forum'. PO 6.1, 2, 4 and 5 captures the sense in which the presbyter's administrative authority is ordered to the invitatory functions of sacrament and preaching, in its image of the priest as "educator" (see pp.132-34).

We have also seen that the documents of Vatican II clarified the nature of the lay apostolate by marking out the freedom of the laity in the secular sphere, on the one hand, and legitimizing their active role in the religious mission of the Church, on the other (see pp.139-44).

The relationship of individual clergy to Catholic lay associations, whether of the Catholic Action type, or of a freer, more self-organised kind, has never properly been one of command or control, because such associations are immediately responsible to the bishops, who are the holders of full pastoral authority in the mission of the Church. However, the episcopal hierarchy frequently appoints chaplains to these organisations, and we may compare what AA 25.2 says about the role of a chaplain with earlier statements on the subject: AA 25.2 treats the role of chaplains as being that of "fostering" and "nourishing" the spiritual life, the apostolic sense, and the unity of the

associations to which they are accredited. They represent the hierarchy in its "pastoral" activity, and are to nurture good relations between hierarchy and laity, and to have a position which involves them in dialogue with members of the associations (see also OT 20). We may contrast with this the picture held by Pius XI of Catholic Action's chaplains:

> "They should direct the laity so that their activity may not stray from the right path which it ought to follow, and so that it always follows the norms of the hierarchy with the necessary faithfulness. Moreover, it belongs to priests to conform members of Catholic Action, especially those who are to take up the task of directing the associations, to Christian moral ideas." (24)

Whilst it must be admitted that the above passage was written at a time of particular political tension, in which the nature of Catholic Action's social role was precarious, and whilst we must note that Pius XI allowed for the direction of the associations by lay people, it must nevertheless be granted that the Pope's tone indicated a didactic and rather authoritarian stance on the part of priests in relation to the lay apostolate; such a stance is far from the atmosphere of AA 25.2. In general, the obedience which is due to priests is described by Vatican II in such a way as to indicate the possibilities of free initiative which properly lie with the laity, and the invitatory nature of priestly authority: Presbyters are "confidently to entrust to the laity tasks in the service of the Church, allowing them liberty and room for action; or better, inviting them to take up works spontaneously when the opportunity presents itself" (PO 9.2).

2 The Characteristics of Christian Obedience According to Vatican II

In this sub-section we shall examine particularly the 'spiritual' aspect and nature of Christian obedience as Vatican II envisaged it, relating the ascetical value attributed to the obedient

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(24) Letter to the bishops of Argentina (4 Dec. 1930) AAS 34 (1942) p. 244.

attitude, to the Council's picture of its practical character. We shall deal particularly with the obedience of presbyters and laity, for little was said by the Council about the proper attitude of bishops towards the Pope - presumably a mental cast of loyalty and willing collaboration is to be assumed within the collegial bond of "peace, love and unity" (LG 23.1).

a) The obedience of presbyters

In 1906, at the height of the Modernist crisis, Pius X wrote an encyclical concerning the clergy of Italy. In this encyclical, Pieno L'Animo, the Pope deplored a spirit of "insubordination" and "independence" among the clergy, reminding them that they were especially bound by the general Catholic obligation of obedience, because they have an outstanding part in the bishops' work. (25) Pius X's anxiety about priestly obedience was, if anything, heightened by the recognition that presbyters are no mere executors of the episcopate, but, because of their share in sacerdotal dignity, they should be seen as "most provident co-operators" of the episcopal order. (26)

Within the more positive, less crisis-ridden atmosphere of Vatican II, it was possible to develop the concept of presbyteral co-operative obedience (27) and to overcome the tendency of earlier days of describing the obedience of secular priests in terms more appropriate to the obedience of religious to their superiors. (28)

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(25) 28 July 1906, ASS 39 (1906-07) pp. 321f.

(26) A phrase from the Roman pontifical's rite of ordination.

(27) The phrase from the Roman pontifical is used or referred to in LG 28.2, PO 2.2, see also OT 9.1; the way Vatican II used it makes clear that presbyters are co-operators not only with the individual bishops who ordained them, but with the entire episcopal order.

(28) The first draft of the decree on priests, produced on 22 April 1963, and at that time called De Clericis, was written before the decision on the fact that fullness of sacramental Order belongs to the bishops. Until that decision had been taken, commission had been able to describe the difference between bishops and other clerics only in terms of their juridical differentiation. Hence, the first draft described their concrete relationship almost entirely in terms of the obedience which the latter owe to the former, and this appeared to be much after the pattern of the obedience which a religious owes to his superior. Ironically, perhaps, it was the very enhancement of the recognised status of bishops which cleared the way for abandoning a description of the relationship in these terms.

cont. p. 171

In their obedience, presbyters should recognise and respect their bishop as a father (LG 28.2, see also 41.3); this respectful attitude is expressed in "faithful union and generous co-operation" (LG 41.3), and an "adherence characterised in the first place by love" (PO 7.2). It leads to an obedience which is both "responsible and voluntary" (PO 15.3). How, then, should the presbyter act? He should interpret his aim of obeying God in terms of accepting and following the commands and counsels of the Pope, bishops, and other superiors, in a spirit of faith (see PO 15.2). But he should also seek out and propose new ways to serve the Church's good, and should insist upon the needs of his flock before his bishop (see loc. cit.). Both obedient submission, on the one hand, and initiative and dialogue with superiors, on the other, are inspired by "pastoral charity" - a concern for the good of the Church and her members which makes the maintenance of hierarchical communion through obedience and loyalty an indispensable condition of ministry (see PO 15.2 and LG 28.2).

The obedience of presbyters, then, incorporates within itself the grounds upon which personal initiatives are formed; initiative has always been accepted as a value in the life of the Church, but usually worth has been ascribed to the movements of initiative after the event. At Vatican II, however, initiative was positively sponsored, and was even encouraged within the education of seminarists (against some opposition (29) see OT 11.2).

Note (28) cont from p. 170
A draft of 22 April 1964 said in its article 2 that "this obedience of priests by its own nature differs from that which,. . . belongs to religious." A new concept of obedience appeared, set in a pastoral and co-operative context, and based on a firm doctrine of the gradations of priesthood which are not merely juridical, but rather sacramental, and therefore rise to a relationship which should be described not in juridical terms, but in the terms of a shared communion and mission. (See P.-J. Cordes's commentary, in Vorgrimler, 4 p. 244.)

(29) The second text of the Decree on the Training of Priests had specifically ruled out any possibility of seminarists' taking part in the administration of their colleges. That prohibition did not reappear in the final text, and instead OT 11.2 rather indicates a gradual growth in such participation. (See the commentary of A. Laplante on this article, in La Formation des prêtres: Génèse et commentaire du décrèt conciliaire Optatam Totius (Paris, 1970). Also P. Dezza, "Obedience and the Spirit of Initiative" in Obedience and the Church, by Karl Rahner and others, (London, 1968) pp. 201f.)

In so far as a personal ascesis is expressed through priestly obedience it is an ascesis of charity: The holiness of priests is firmly attached to their pastoral action (see LG 41.3), and therefore that freedom of God's children which is acquired through obedience grows because obedience is the necessary condition of a ministry in the Church (See PO 15.2). In their responsible and voluntary obedience presbyters are conformed to Christ, for they share the mind of Jesus whose obedience unto death redeemed man (PO 15.3). (30)

b) The obedience of the laity

We have seen how the theology of Vatican II attributes to the layman a proper share in both the social and the religious apostolates, and the dignity which he possesses by virtue of his Baptism. We have remarked, too, on the Council's recognition of the laity's civil liberty (LG 36.4, 37.3, PO 9.2). We must now mention that the Council several times spoke of the secular competences of the laity - areas of competence which give them substantial grounds not only for liberty in their secular decisions (see AA 4.9, GS 43.2) but also give grounds for their active involvement and advice in the running of Church affairs (LG 37.1 and 4, see also PO 9.2).

The emphasis on the laity's active and responsible role contrasts sharply with the picture of passive obedience which was conjured up by Pius X in 1906 (the time not only of the Modernist crisis, but also of a crisis of Church-state relations in France):

> "The Church is the mystical body of Christ, administered by the authority of pastors and doctors; that is to say, it is a society of men in which some preside over others with full and

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(30) In 1908 Pius X wrote to Catholic clergy everywhere, and obedience was among the very first subjects of his exhortation. He cited Leo XIII to the effect that humility of spirit, obedience, abstinence, and self-abnegation are principles of spiritual strength, virtue and fruitfulness. However, he did also warn priests not to seek personal perfection before the fulfillment of tasks for others. (Exhortation, Haerent Animo, (4 Aug. 1908) ASS 41 (1908) p. 562.) Vatican II's teaching goes a step further, in indicating that personal perfection is inseparable from pastoral ministry.

> perfect power of ruling, teaching and judging . . . These orders are distinguished from one another, so that in the hierarchy alone resides the right and authority to move and direct their fellows to the end laid down for the society; it is the duty of the multitude, moreover, to let themselves be governed, and obediently to follow the leading of their rulers." (31)

We must now look at the attitude in which Vatican II held that lay obedience should be rendered, and the spiritual basis for the laity's active collaboration with the clergy.

The confidence with which presbyters were exhorted to entrust tasks and leave freedom to the laity was matched by a call for corresponding confidence and openness on the part of lay folk. This confidence should be linked to courage, which enables them to express both their needs and their opinions sincerely to their pastors (see LG 37.1); it should also, however, give rise to an obedience which promptly embraces the decisions of the pastors once they have been fixed (LG 37.2). The context of the obedience which the laity render is to be a "familiar dialogue" with clergy (LG 37.4); this dialogue is sustained, from the lay side, by love, prayers, aid, and action to assist those set over them (LG 37.2, PO 9.6).

We find, once more, that the attitude of obedience promoted by the documents of Vatican II includes the willingness to take inititatives which contribute to the good of the Church's life and mission, and that the building up of communion and dialogue between the different orders is treated as an essential feature of ecclesiastical existence. However, as in the case of presbyters, the freedom of the laity to express their views and to contribute actively (whether or not they belong to associations for the apostolate) does not remove their ultimate duty of adhering to decisions which are made 'from above'.

The motive for the laity's obedience has a double aspect: Firstly, it is due because of the position which pastors hold as Christ's representatives in sacred office (see LG 37.1 and 2); they will have to give account for the souls of men before God (LG 37.2).

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(31) Ep. Vehementer Nos (11 Feb. 1906) ASS 39 (1906-07) pp. 8f.

Secondly, obedience is to be rendered because the offices which these persons fill are for the common good; for example, the presbyter in the parish uses his authority to bring harmony between persons of different mentality, "so that no one should feel himself a stranger in the community of the faithful" (PO 9.3).

As in the case of priests, an ascetic of obedience for the laity is based upon the idea of imitating Christ, whose obedience was redemptive for others (LG 37.2). The idea of this spiritual discipline is not, however, greatly developed by the Council; noticeably, in article 4 of the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (Apostolicam Actuositatem) which deals with the spirituality of lay people, there is no mention of obedience as part of that spiritual discipline. The lack of stress given to the subject suggests that the Council Fathers were in agreement with a statement of Alois Müller:

> "It does not . . . correspond to the reality of the Church to exaggerate the phenomenon of obedience in general, and to create the impression that the highest and only Christian task of the member without official function is merely to obey the hierarchy. This obedience has its place, but this place is neither the only one nor the principal feature in the Church's life." (32)

3 The Obedience of Christ as a Model for the Obedience of Catholics

In the case both of clergy and laity there is a double motive for obedience, constituted by the representational role of their superiors and by the exigencies of the common life and mission of the Church. The second motive is brought more firmly into the Catholic line of vision by Vatican II, and provides the grounds for describing obedience as including active collaboration, the taking of initiatives, etc. It is presented, we may say, as the normal motive for obedience, and is associated with the idea that those who obey should do so from inner conviction as to the effectiveness of their course of action in promoting the Church's good. Therefore,

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(32) "Authority and Obedience in the Church" in Concilium, 5 no. 2. (1966) p. 47.

the increased stress on this form of obedience corresponds to the increased stress given to the possibility that authority may present itself under the character of invitation, appealing to the responsive decision of the inner man.

However, lying behind this there remains the idea of representational authority, and its inherent formal claim to obedience even though it does not pretend to command in guaranteed unity with the mind of Christ. (See pp. 81-85). Does this not come into conflict with the idea of serving the life of the Church as best as one can, if it should happen that the representational authority gave commands which seemed 'less than the best', or even positively deleterious? We have already raised this question (loc. cit.); it is now time to examine Vatican II's answer.

We shall elucidate this answer by analysing the Council's use of the motif of Christ's obedience, which was proposed as an example and inspiration to both clergy and laity; it combines within itself the ideas of being under (painful) constraint, and of acting for the benefit of others. (33) We shall seek to find out whether either of the ideas predominated in the Council's handling of the motif, for this would indicate the balance of significance which Vatican II gave to the two motives for obedience.

The documents focus sharply upon the concrete life of the man, Jesus; they locate Christ's obedience there, within the span of his earthly existence, and in what he underwent in the flesh. Vatican II does not refer the obedience of the Son to his action in submitting to become incarnate. In its use of the Christological hymn of Philippians 2.7-11 the Council implicitly supports that line of exegesis which sees the whole passage as relating to the this-worldly action of Jesus. The passage is quoted or referred to frequently in the documents (see LG 8.3, 36.1, 37.2, 42.4, UR 4.6, PC 1.3, 5.3, 14.1, AG 24.1 and PO 15.3) along with other New Testament references to

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(33) Christ's obedience is particularly significant in a specifically Roman Catholic doctrine of redemption because, according to Aquinas (following the line of St. Anselm's Cur Deus Homo), it was the loving and obedient spirit in which Christ suffered that made satisfaction to God. (See ST 3a, q.48, a.2). Vatican II assumed this doctrinal base, while emphasising the concepts of man's redemption, liberation, sanctification and human unification, more than that of satisfaction.

the obedience of Christ in action and attitude. For the sake of our analysis in this sub-section we shall concentrate mainly on the use of the hymn from Philippians, as being representative of the Council's treatment of the complete motif.

It is the very fact of concentrating on the concrete and earthly obedience of Christ which makes it possible for the image to be set before Christians as an example to be imitated. It is employed by the Council as a model for the entire Church to follow in relation to God (LG 8.3, UR 4.6), and also, in regard to the individual, Christ is given as the exemplar for two distinct types of obedience. Firstly, there is a group of texts which refer Philippians 2.7-11 to the basic obedience towards God which constitutes a fully Christian life - an underlying willingness to submit one's will to that of the creator and redeemer. LG 36.1, for example, speaks of the power of obedience communicated by the exalted Christ, so that men might be set free from sin through the self-abnegation of their lives. Abnegation, holiness, and freedom express themselves in <u>service</u> to others, but, in the context in which LG 36.1 is presented, there is no immediate concern for <u>obedience</u> to other human beings; it is a question of obedience rendered immediately to God.

AG 24.1 does not actually cite that part of the Christological hymn which refers directly to Christ's obedience, but it speaks of the obedient response of someone who feels himself called to missionary work by God, in terms of his entering upon "the life and mission of him who 'emptied himself, taking the nature of a slave'". Christ's act is here used as an example of the self-denial and faithfulness that is involved in obeying God's call.

The missionary virtue of obedience is mentioned again in the following paragraph: "he should be convinced that obedience is the peculiar virtue of the minister of Christ, who by his obedience redeemed the human race" (AG 24.2) In this text it is not clear whether 'obedience' specifically means submission to human superiors, or is an inclusive description of all that the missionary does and suffers for the sake of God's will. Probably both layers of meaning are present: The Council was not afraid to translate the idea of a general attitude of submission to God in humility into that of a willingness to obey human beings. This we can see by examining LG 42.4.

LG 42.4 quotes part of the Christological hymn once, and refers to an overlapping portion in the footnotes. In the first case, vv.7-8 are used to inculcate the attitude of love and humility which is "the mind of Christ" as a basic requirement of Christian discipleship. In the second instance, vv.8-10 are cited in reference to those who actualise and express these qualities concretely in subjecting themselves "to man for the sake of God, beyond the measure of what is commanded, in order to conform themselves more fully to the obedient Christ." This is a specific reference to the obedience of those under religious vows (see also PC 1.3 and 5.3 for similar uses of the hymn). However, this exemplification of the principle that obedience to God can be expressed through obedience to men introduces us to our second group of texts - those which use the example of Christ's obedience as a model and inspiration for ecclesiastical obedience. (Some of them we have already mentioned, but they will receive fuller treatment here).

PC 14 speaks of the special obedience peculiar to the religious life as being the means of a more permanent and secure union with God's saving will: "After the example of Jesus Christ, who came to do the Father's will . . . and 'taking the form of a servant' . . . learned obedience through what he suffered . . . religious, moved by the Holy Spirit, subject themselves in faith to those who hold God's place, their superiors." (PC 14.1).

While the Council did not treat the obedience of secular priests as being of the same nature as that of members of religious institutes, again it spoke of their spirit of faith in obedience: "They will accept and carry out in a spirit of faith the commands and suggestions of the Pope and of their bishops and other superiors . . . by this humility, and by responsible and voluntary obedience, priests conform themselves to Christ. They reproduce the sentiment of Christ Jesus who 'emptied himself, taking the form of a servant . . . and became obedient unto death' . . . and who, by his obedience, overcame and redeemed the disobedience of Adam, as the Apostle declares: 'For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience they will be made righteous'" (PO 15.2 and 3).

A third text which speaks of the obedience of one group of men to another is LG 37.2, where it is said: "Like all Christians, the

laity should promptly accept in Christian obedience, whatever is decided by the pastors who, as teachers and rulers of the Church, represent Christ. In this way, they will follow Christ's example, who, by his obedience unto death, opened the blessed way of the liberty of the sons of God to all men."

The reader will have noticed that in two out of these last three texts, the attitude of obedience to men is associated with a spirit of faith. In the very last passage, faith is not explicitly mentioned, but its object is implied - it is an object of faith that the pastors of the Church represent Christ. The formal qualification for holding the authority of Christ representationally is contained in their position as legitimate "teachers and rulers" in the Church; that which is required if they are to carry out this task in a way which represents the concrete <u>will</u> of Christ must be the object of the Church's prayer.

The idea of obeying in faith implies that the agent would not necessarily have chosen this particular action himself, on rational grounds and on his own assessment of the best course to take; his obedience, in faith, rests upon the formal legitimacy of the authority which commands him, and upon a generalised confidence in the providence of God as it indefectibly protects the life of the Church. We see, therefore, that by linking obedience to faith in these passages where Christ's obedience is used as a model, Vatican II gives positive value to the very act of obeying the legitimate commands of authority, over and above the individual's assessment of the worth and helpfulness of the action he is asked to perform.

We may go beyond this, however, and discover another significance in the Council's use of the model of Christ's obedience. The picture of the redemptive submission of Jesus to the Father's will is used to indicate that obedience in the Church is <u>always</u> motivated by a redemptive concern to serve others and for the life of the Church, since all acts of obedience which may legitimately be required in the Christian community have an inner, salvific dynamic, whatever their outward content.

The inner, redemptive dynamic of obedience which is rendered in faith results from the fact that it expresses and actualises the Christian's underlying attitude of humility and willingness to obey

God; that is to say, it expresses a union with God's saving will for men. This is made clearest in the Council's treatment of the obedience of religious (see PC 14.1), though even there it is possible to overlook the fact that obedience itself is situated by the Council in the "mystery of Christ" (34) because of the renewed stress on the concrete service of others to which the commands of a superior should lead his subjects. Nevertheless, the theme of union with Christ's mystery is present in the clause, "through the profession of obedience religious . . . are united more permanently and securely to God's saving will", and it must be remembered that all that is said of the value of their service to the Church applies as much to enclosed contemplatives as to those professed for the active life. (Indeed, AG 40.2 stresses the value of contemplative foundations in the Church's mission for the conversion of souls.)

Although the obedience of religious is of a different kind and degree from that of either presbyters or lay folk, it is nevertheless comparable to theirs in that all are modelled on the obedience of Christ. Therefore, although the documents of Vatican II tend to stress most strongly the obvious, functional, and man-directed values attached to obedient actions in the Church's corporate mission, their employment of the model of Christ's submission unto death indicates that there is a 'depth' or mystery underlying the obedience of all Christians. One might say that legitimate obedience effectually 'represents' Christ's redemptive action, and actualises it for the world, just as the representational teaching of Church authority effectively communicates truths about God to men of this age (without actually being an epiphany of truth itself).

Conclusion

At the beginning of this chapter we asked ourselves whether the Second Vatican Council stressed the inner responsibility and responsiveness of those called upon to obey, to a degree which corresponded to the Council's emphasis on the invitatory role of

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(34) See J.M.R. Tillard, "L'obéissance réligieuse" in, Vatican II: l'Adaption et la rénovation de la vie réligieuse (Paris, 1967) p. 467.

authority. We may now, I believe, answer in the affirmative. Obedience rendered out of sheer respect for the formal rights of authority is presented as an unusual state of affairs (indeed, all obedience should also have in view a union with God's saving will, and its effective representation in the world). Normally, the one who obeys should see the point of what he does, in relation to the effective upbuilding of the Church, and the carrying out of her mission; because he is motivated by these goals, his obedience will include the willingness and readiness to take initiatives, and to volunteer help which is rooted in his competence or charisms. Such obedience will even cover the confidence which should be his in making his opinion known, whether he is in sacred Order, or simply a member of the laity. All this constitutes a significant shift of emphasis when viewed against the backcloth of the official teaching of the preceding century. Like the shift of emphasis by which representational authority comes to be seen in terms of mission and sacrament, more than in terms of sheer jurisdiction, I do not believe that Vatican II's nuancing of the idea of obedience should be undervalued or overlooked.

Indeed, the shifts of emphasis which we have noted do not abolish either the representational hierarchy or the ultimate requirement for prompt obedience once decisions have been taken. It is on this ground that the Council's teaching has been criticised for failing to modify its concepts of authority and obedience sufficiently. However, I would argue that, while there are some areas of tension subsisting in Vatican II's attempt to reconcile the authority of representation with the idea that the entire Church embodies the presence of God in a diffuse way, these tensions appear not so much, nor so clearly, upon the <u>theological</u> plane, but rather arise because the Council's ecclesiology does not prove viable or plausible in the Church's <u>social</u> context.

It is because of the social expectations of much of the twentieth-century world, that the theories which attribute greater responsibility to all members of the Church for the community's life are often effectively given a weight which makes them incompatible with continuing doctrines of representational authority and due obedience. The tension of doctrines which might, on the purely theological level be adjudged fruitful, is thereby made a likely

source of real instability for the Church's life, as it is worked out in the social context of the late twentieth century. This instability can only be aggravated by those cases in which members of the hierarchy fail to respond to the call for a fully pastoral, invitatory exercise of authority, but rather fall back upon the use of representational power in a way more suited to a totally jurisdictional notion of authority's nature and justification.

CHAPTER IV: VATICAN II'S TREATMENT OF OBEDIENCE AND ASSENT TO THE AUTHORITY OF THE MAGISTERIUM

In Chapter II we saw that the hierarchy of the Church continued to be treated by the Second Vatican Council as being made up of those who represent Christ in the apostolic office; however, the concept of the apostolic office was qualified by being grounded in mission, rather than in an act of institution with a more sheerly legal aspect. At the same time, the sacramental roots of the bishop's representational function were also brought more fully into view. In Chapter III we found that the representational status of the ministerial hierarchy continued to be a justification for the requirement of obedience in the Church, even in cases where members of the hierarchy have no guarantee of inerrancy or prudence attached to their commands; however, we also saw that other motives for obeying were brought more to the fore, and that the pattern of obedience was conceived in such a way that initiative and dialogue were included in it as normal constituents.

As we turn to the question of the hierarchy's authority in teaching, we enter a new field of problems. To demand assent on a matter of doctrine or moral theory, whether or not those under authority accept the reasoning which leads up to the proposition they are asked to accept, imposes constraint upon their interior processes of thought. It requires that understanding should be subordinate to will, and that the will should be determined on the formal grounds of the authority which inheres in the teacher. As we shall see, this was the concept of magisterial authority which was largely put forward between the First and Second Vatican Councils:

> "According to many textbooks of this vintage, magisterial teaching is itself an act of jurisdiction. Instead of enlightening the mind, as teaching is ordinarily supposed to do, the action of the magisterium is held to impose an obligation on the will. The response is not understanding but rather obedience." (1)

This requirement of obedient assent was not confined to teaching given under the guarantee of 'infallibility' (in the case of

(1) Avery Dulles, "The Theologian and the Magisterium" in Catholic Mind, 75, (1977) p. 10.

which a new element is introduced which makes it possible for the one who accepts the doctrine of 'infallibility' in faith to accept a defined proposition not sheerly through obedience, but also through trust in God's promise and guarantee); the requirement was also applied to teaching given where no such guarantee was claimed. This was the result of allying the teaching function fully with that of representational government. (See Chapter II, pp. 85-88) In this chapter we shall have to ask whether the Council's increased stress on the fact that teaching authority is grounded in the preaching mission of the Apostles modified the inherited concept of obedience and assent in this field.

The question of assent or obedience to the Church's moral teaching is still more complex than that of assent or obedience to doctrinal propositions. The moral teaching of the Magisterium requires not only acceptance, but also that it should be made the immediate principle of action. It is, of course, possible to act according to moral teaching without thinking that it is correct; according to the nature of the case, this might involve the agent in acting in radical contradiction to the demands of his conscience. He might, however, be motivated by a conscientious desire to serve the good of the Church, believing this to be fostered through conformity to authority in a matter of relative indifference or doubt. A series of questions arise, in any case, regarding someone's moral behaviour: Is he obeying his conscience? How has the content of his conscience been determined? How far is it right to allow the content of one's conscience and moral behaviour to be determined by hetreronomous factors, such as the Church's authority and requirements?

In the present chapter we shall examine Vatican II's explicit and formal teaching on the kind of assent and obedience which is required by the Magisterium in matters of faith and morals; we shall then go on to consider those elements of the Council's theology which in fact gave substantive grounds for dissent from the non-'infallible' teaching of the hierarchy in matters of doctrine; lastly, we shall consider the way in which the Council prepared the ground for dissent and pluralism in the field of morals. The issue of the Council's effect upon the way in which the doctrine of 'infallibility' can concretely be understood will be left to the next chapter.

A) Vatican II's Teaching on the Assent and Obedience Required by the Magisterium

In the first part of this section of the chapter we shall examine Vatican II's explicit concept of the kind of assent which should be given to the teaching of the Magisterium when it teaches in the ordinary way, and without the guarantee of 'infallibility'. In the second sub-section we shall consider the Council's theoretical teaching on 'infallibility', and the assent which is due to it (leaving to Chapter V the question whether such assent might be a plausible social reality). In both sub-sections we shall concentrate mainly upon the content of LG 25, which was the Council's restatement of the inherited doctrine of magisterial authority.

1 Assent, Obedience, and the Teaching of the Ordinary Magisterium

Although LG 25.1 begins its description of the hierarchy's prophetic task in terms which denote the activity of preaching and heralding, it goes on to speak of "the religious obedience of the spirit" which is due to episcopal teaching (see p. 107). The half-sentence which leads into the article's treatment of this obedience makes a bridge between the idea that, on the one hand, bishops are witnesses, and the idea that, on the other hand, they are responsible for a formal body of "divine and Catholic truth"; the same half-sentence also introduces the idea that their teaching authority is of the kind which rests on respect for their persons and for the responsibility which is invested in them.

The meaning of the phrase "religious obedience" ("religiosum obsequium") in this context is not a simple one. It is generally taken to cover a variety of degrees of assent, all less certain than the irreformable assent of an act of faith. Such religious obedience may be attenuated to the extent of becoming mere "obedient silence" concerning one's own, contrary, view. (2) This

(2) For useful discussions of religiousm obsequium see Karl Rahner's commentary in Vorgrimler, 1, p. 209; C. Colombo, "Obedience to the Ordinary Magisterium" in Obedience and the Church, pp. 84-86; and J. McHugh, "The Authority of Humanae Vitae" in Clergy Review, 54, (1969) pp. 680ff.

obedient silence, some theologians would argue, may itself only involve desistance from public dissent, for the sake of avoiding scandal among the faithful. It should be noted that LG 25.1 speaks of religious obedience of this kind as being due only to the teaching of one's own bishop and the Pope. It is an attitude, therefore, which is required within the terms of specific pastoral relationships; it is not required in the case of the bishop who puts forward his views simply as a private theologian.

In a very serious matter, in which someone believes that a bishop's official teaching is not that of a "witness to divine and Catholic truth" the matter may be delated to the judgement of the Pope. However, as Leo XIII put it, "whilst [the bishop] remains in communion with the Roman Pontiff, no one, certainly, is permitted to weaken the respect and obedience due to his authority in any way whatsoever." (3) From this we may deduce that the notion of religious obedience to a bishop's magisterium traditionally includes the idea that all public acts of controversy should be avoided, even while a matter is being considered at Rome. However, the fact that a bishop's teaching may be delated indicates that his hearers should retain the faculty to make interior assessment of his words, even to the point of disagreeing with them and finding them alarming. We may say, then, that the notion of "religious obedience of the spirit", used by Vatican II in relation to episcopal teaching carries the connotation that while real, inner assent is normally to be given a pronouncement as being a morally certain interpretation of the Catholic faith, there may come a time when serious motives arise for doubting this. If such doubts should arise, dissent should not be public, for that would destroy the atmosphere of authority surrounding a bishop's teaching, and dissolve the general obedience of spirit which his flock owes towards it.

What of the special degree of "religious obedience of the mind and will" that LG 25.1 says is due to the ordinary teaching of the Pope? There is no higher earthly authority to which papal teaching may be referred, and so there appears to be no safeguard attached to the attitude whereby Catholics "are prepared to accept

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(3) Litt. Est Sane Molestum (17 Dec. 1888) ASS 21 (1888-89) p. 322.

as right and true a great body of teachings and judgements of the popes, without requiring to know that it is guaranteed infallible, trusting to the Providence of God over the teaching authority of the Church, and the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, satisfied that such pronouncements will not be made rashly or without proper care and prayer". (4) Is such trust in the providence of God enough to justify "religious obedience of the mind and will" which has no outlet beyond obedient silence when the papal teaching appears to be erroneous?

At least one nineteenth-century theologian, Franzelin, held that the assent given to the ordinary teaching of the Pope (or of a body immediately representative of him, such as a curial congregation) should be so positive as to be an interior affirmation that the teaching in question is 'safe' for Christians to hold, and that to refuse to embrace it would be 'unsafe', for it would violate the submission which is due to a Magisterium which is not only divinely constituted, but also providentially kept in the path of security. (5) Others, however, have held that even in the case of papal teaching, if sufficient motives for doubt arise, it is prudent to suspend assent, and opt, instead, for obedient silence. In the case of moral teaching, the suspension of assent may even lead to action which is formally disobedient to the teaching of the Pope. (6) We see, therefore, that it has been disputed whether the indefectibility of the Church can be tied down in such a way as to guarantee at least the 'security' of the Pope's teaching as a determinant for the individual's belief and conduct. (The reader may remember that St. Thomas, and other traditional authorities, taught quite positively that conscience should be obeyed rather than the Pope; it seems, therefore, that Franzelin's teaching mentioned above was a step out of the line of earlier Tradition.) Where does Lumen Gentium stand in this debate?

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(4) Cuthbert Butler, describing religiosum obsequium, in The Vatican Council, 2, (2nd. edition London, 1936) p. 227.

(5) See J. B. Franzelin, Tractatus de Divina Traditione et Scriptura (3rd edition, Rome, 1882) pp. 127-133.

(6) See D. Palmieri, Tractatus de Romano Pontifice (2nd edition Prado, 1891) p. 719, and Pesch, Praelect. Dogmatica (Freiburg/Br., 1924) pp. 369f. Also McHugh, art. cit., p. 687.

First, we may note that LG 25.1 uses the expression "religious obedience of mind and will" in reference to the attitude which should be taken to the Pope's ordinary teaching, whilst the attitude due to the bishops' ordinary magisterium is "religious obedience of spirit" (emphasis mine). The first of these seems to be the stronger. Because the mind is specifically mentioned, some such interior assent as that recommended by Franzelin seems to be indicated. However, this statement must immediately be qualified by noticing an important omission which Vatican II made. In order to note this omission, we must once more venture back into history - though this time, not so far as the nineteenth century.

In 1950 Pius XII heightened the concept of security in papal teaching to such a degree that he could say, "if Supreme Pontiffs deliberately pass judgement in their writings on a matter which has previously been an object of controversy, it is clear to everyone that, in the mind and intention of the same Popes, this matter can now no longer be treated as an issue of free debate among theologians." (7) Clearly, for Pius XII, the Church could rest secure with the ordinary teaching of the papal magisterium to such an extent that obedient silence should thenceforth reign even in the restricted spheres of academic debate. It seemed that changes and developments to make the ordinary teaching of the Church appropriate to changing conditions, would only be able to be brought about by the Magisterium's own decision, whilst the pressures of theological criticism would be excluded on all matters on which the Pope had ever pronounced. However, this pronouncement of Pius XII was, itself, very soon challenged in the theological press, so that its unconvincingness was demonstrated both by argument and by act. Although the passage was repeated in the early draft of Lumen Gentium (10 November 1962), it was omitted in the final text. When seven members of the Council requested that there should be an explicit statement of scholarly freedom of investigation, the commission replied that no such statement should be needed, and that approved theological commentaries should be consulted in the matter. In saying that a statement of scholarly freedom should not be needed, the commission

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(7) Encycl. Humani Generis, p. 568. (Dz 2313/DzS 3885).

indicated that those commentaries were in view that allow for further academic debate and publications on questions already treated by the Pope.

The teaching of LG25.1 therefore stands in a rather ambiguous position. It does not overtly mention any possibilities of dissent from the ordinary teaching of either Pope or bishops, and, indeed, it seems to make a very strong claim for the quality of religious obedience which is due to the Pope's teaching. At the same time, scholarly dissent was not explicitly ruled out (and, as we shall see in Section B of this chapter, Vatican II's own theology was the fruit of substantial academic dissent from the official teaching of earlier periods). However, what <u>is</u> clear is that the Council's view of appropriate religious obedience to magisterial teaching aimed at least to exclude <u>public</u> debate of pastoral teaching. (8)

We may question whether such an exclusion of public debate is really socially plausible, and even whether it is <u>theologically</u> plausible. Its social implausibility would seem to arise both from the high value which is given in many - especially Western - societies to the kind of sincerity which moves people both to dissent in practice, and to wish that their dissent may be known and discussed. This desire for discussion does not necessarily arise from aspirations after any personal advantage, nor from a despite of authority, but rather from a conviction that the majority of people are better served if they are not excluded from the debates of 'experts', and that it is

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(8) It is interesting to note the argument against public discussion put forward by Jérôme Hamer, the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, to American bishops in 1978: this argument is that when a theologian cannot, after, effort, agree with the Magisterium, he should go to the competent doctrinal authority to put forward his arguments, inspired by a wish to serve the good of all. "A direct appeal to public opinion to contradict a clear teaching of the magisterium, using for this purpose the resources of press and television, is an act that no theologian can justify. The theologians who, under different circumstances, have not hesitated to do so, have taken a fearful responsibility upon themselves. If so many minds are confused, and so many consciences are perplexed in the Church today, it is partly owing to initiatives of this kind." (<u>Osservatore Romano</u> - English edition - 29 Jan. 1979.)

certainly unnecessary and unwise to let them think that there is no debate at all. In addition, the past history of the Church has led some to fear personal injustices which may occur if ecclesiastical authority and theologians deal with each other only outside the range of public discussion. We may also adduce the fact that even those who would not wish their theories and dissent to be the property of the market-place cannot always avoid the importunities of the press and broadcasters.

Over and above this catalogue of reasons why a ban on public discussion and dissent has an air of social implausibility, there looms the argument that it is theologically difficult to sustain: The theory of obedient silence, in even its most attenuated form, must be allied to some concept of the general security which inheres in the Magisterium's ordinary teaching. A doctrine of security, however, which is content to allow ordinary Catholics to accept teaching which may be substantively wrong or dubious, while restraining debate to academic spheres, seems increasingly to rest upon too narrow a view of what constitutes the indefectibility of the Church. It also rests upon a division of the Church into the teachers and the taught, the cognoscenti and the simple faithful, which is made no more acceptable than the similar divide made in the nineteenth century simply by reason of including the theologians within the privileged circle. All in all, the restriction of debate may hamper the effective exercise of the sense of faith by Catholics, and prejudice the integrity of their belief. To say that the Church is indefectible, in a way that is adequate to truth and sincerity, may have to mean that it lives with shared uncertainties and discussions, rather than that the simple faithful are left in undisturbed peace and questionable certainty. Vatican II, however, did not address itself to these questions.

2 Assent to the Teaching of the 'Infallible' Magisterium

In this sub-section we shall examine first the scope of doctrines which may be deemed 'infallible', and, secondly, the conditions under which these doctrines may come to be pronounced.

a) The scope of 'infallible' doctrines

In LG 25.3 the 'infallibility' of the papal magisterium, as taught at Vatican I, is restated. The conditions of this 'infallibility' are that the Pontiff should be teaching "as supreme pastor and doctor of all Christians", that he should be proclaiming a doctrine concerning faith or morals, and that he should make his definition in an unmistakably definitive act. (LG 25.3). (9) 'Infallibility' of his teaching is, in such a case, the result of the Holy Spirit's assistance, promised to the Pope in the person of St. Peter. LG 25.3 makes it clearer than does the equivalent passage in Pastor Aeternus that the gift of 'infallibility' does not belong to Peter's successor as a personal qualification, but that he is, under these circumstances, one in whom "the Church's own gift of infallibility is present in a singular way". It is because the whole Church is kept by the Holy Spirit in 'infallible' faith that the Council could affirm that the assent of the Church is never lacking to 'infallible' definitions (loc. cit.). This statement is made, however, not as an indication that the Church's assent should be taken as the sign of an 'infallible' pronouncement, nor as an argument that the lack of such assent would signal an errant proposition, but rather as an assertion of faith. The doctrine of Vatican II did not differ from that of Vatican I on this point; the Fathers of the later Council felt able, however, to bring more clearly into view their faith in the consensio of the entire Church, without fearing that they would be misunderstood as saying that the Pope required a consensus before he could make a definition 'infallibly'. (10) Similarly, they felt able to affirm that papal definitions, as well as those of the

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(9) See also Pastor Aeternus cap. 4. (Dz 1839/DzS 3074)

(10) At Vatican I there were calls by various members of the Council for a statement that the Pope is under the norm of revealed sources when he defines, and that the consensio of the Church is a characteristic of 'infallible' teaching. The deputation recognised the truth of these assertions, but would set down no obligatory procedure whereby the Pope should consult revelation and the Church, although it mentioned several which had been used in the past (Dz 1836/DzS 3069). (See G. Thils, L'Infaillibilité pontificale (Gembloux, 1969) pp. 230-233).

episcopal college, are made "according to revelation itself, to which everyone is bound to conform" (LG 25.4), without fearing that any particular method of consulting revelation might thereby be deemed to be required of Pope and bishops before they defined.

Being 'infallible', papal definitions necessarily require the absolute assent of mind and will that a Christian would give to a teaching guaranteed by God. However, 'infallible' statements are divided into two classes in Catholic theology. The first contains pronouncements which are deemed to be the direct exposition of what is contained in revelation; to these are due the assent of "divine and Catholic faith", a "full assent of mind and will to God as he makes revelation". (11) The second type of absolute assent is sometimes known as "ecclesiastical faith", and it is due to truths not revealed in themselves, but necessarily connected with revealed truths ('connexa cum revelatis'). These connexa may also be termed 'tenenda', since they are 'to be held by ecclesiastical faith' rather than 'to be believed ('credenda') by divine and Catholic faith'.

There is a long-standing controversy concerning what constitutes part of the connexa; the idea of necessary connection with revealed truth arises from the idea that the Magisterium must not only expound revelation faithfully, but also guard it religiously (see LG 25.3). The connexa are considered to be those teachings which are necessary for the protection of the truth of revelation within the life and belief of the Church. But what teachings are necessary to the protection of truth? Even at Vatican I there was debate over whether one particular class of pronouncement ('doctrinal dogmatic facts') should figure among the things to be held by ecclesiastical faith. (12) More recently it has been argued that the Church cannot know which of its teachings is necessary to the

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(11) Dei Filius cap. 3. (Dz 1789/DzS 3008)

(12) Kleutgen, one of the official relators at Vatican I, expressed surprise at the debate. He held that the gift of 'infallibility' extends as far as the Pope's power to teach in the Church, and therefore includes judgements concerning doctrinal dogmatic facts. (Mansi 53, col. 325 D). Although this view has great weight, it has not convinced all subsequent theologians, nor did it express the agreed view of all the Council (see Thils, op. cit., pp. 234f.).

protection of faith in revelation (13), while Hans Küng has objected to the indefiniteness surrounding the subject, which allows some theologians to cover all kinds of statements with the mantle of 'infallibility'.(14)

We may take as our example of the way in which the concept may be used, the categorisation given by one influential, though distinctly conservative commentator: J. Salaverri divides the tenenda into three classes: (i) Speculative truths logically connected with matters of direct revelation, whether as consequences or direct presuppositions, (ii) 'Dogmatic facts', whether simple or doctrinal. (This means those facts or assertions about the concrete life of the Church which have a bearing on the way in which dogmas have been defined or expounded. A 'simple dogmatic fact', for example, covers a subject such as the validity of a council; the much more controversial class of 'doctrinal dogmatic facts' comprises rulings by the Magisterium concerning the orthodoxy or heterodoxy of different writings in the sense intended by their authors.) (iii) Decrees concerning dispositions of Church life and worship, particularly the canonisation of saints and the approval of religious orders and their rules. (15) All these classes of pronouncement Salaverri holds to be made up of "secondary objects of infallibility" because he says they have a bearing on the salvation of souls. But do they really have a necessary role in protecting the truth of revelation?

LG 25 does not seem to favour the view that there are no tenenda, nothing which is necessarily connected with the truth of revelation. Its third paragraph says that the Church's 'infallibility' extends as far as the deposit of revelation which has to be carefully guarded and faithfully expounded, while the preceding paragraph

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(13) See, for example, Gregory Baum, "The Magisterium in a Changing Church" in Concilium, 1, no. 3 (1967) pp. 38f.: "The Church often does not know what she knows. It is rather the actual life of the Church, the doctrinal reflection within the Church and the need to clarify certain pastoral issues, that eventually lead to a clearer realization of what the Church holds infallibly."

(14) "What cannot be regarded as forming part of the protection of the deposit of revelation?" (Infallible? p. 60.)

(15) Sacra Theologiae Summa, pp. 688-703.

teaches that the college of bishops, "even dispersed throughout the world", enjoys the privilege of 'infallibility' when "they concur on a single judgement as something which should be definitively held" (emphasis mine). (The condition for the 'infallibility' of the college of bishops is that its members should preserve the bond of communion between themselves and with Peter's successor, and that they should be authentically teaching in matters of faith and morals. We shall return shortly to the significance of this statement attributing 'infallibility' to the college, but first we must pursue our consideration of the importance of Vatican II's attitude towards the question of tenenda.)

While LG 25 does not seem to suggest that there are no tenenda, we may still see it as highly significant that the Council did not define their content and extent; the matter has long been debated, yet Vatican II left it unsettled. The importance of this continuing ambiguity is that it maintains space for theologians to hold that there are very few secondary doctrines with which the central truth of revelation necessarily stands or falls. This means that the Magisterium cannot expect a universal attitude of absolute assent to attend upon any of its pronouncements, unless they are unequivocally said to be solemn definitions of revealed truth itself. At the same time, it remains possible for some Catholics to assent in docility to all teachings of the types which might be considered to be tenenda from a conservative point of view. Such implicit, conservative belief cannot, however, be made a condition of Church membership, nor even of theological respectability. Vatican II's continuing ambiguity, therefore, ratified the existence of a diversity of beliefs concerning the scope of infallibility.

There is one viewpoint from which the inherent ambiguity of Vatican II's position may seem totally unsatisfactory: This is the view that magisterial pronouncements outside the scope of the direct

exposition of revelation (or even within it) are by no means the subject of an indefectible 'security' stemming from Christ's promise to the Church that she would not fail. According to this standpoint, (which is that of Hans Küng), it would be possible for the Magisterium to make pronouncements, capable of being viewed by some Catholics as tenenda, which would not only be untrue, but would also have a really deleterious effect on the life of the Church and the faith of those who assented to them. According to this view, the Church's indefectibility would be displayed only in her capacity to correct such statements in the course of time, and to recover herself from the harm they had done while they stood unchallenged.

We must now return to the subject of the 'infallibility' of the college of bishops: Vatican II appears to have claimed for this body, teaching together in communion with the Pope, a greater range of areas of 'infallibility' than that which Vatican I claimed for it. Whilst Pastor Aeternus said that "when the Roman Pontiff speaks ex cathedra . . . and defines a doctrine on faith or morals to be held ("tenendam") by the universal Church . . . he enjoys that infallibility with which the divine redeemer wished his Church to be endowed in the definition of doctrine concerning faith or morals" (16), the constitution Dei Filius said of the universal, ordinary magisterium of all the bishops that it may propose matters for belief ("credenda"); these must then be believed by divine and Catholic faith, on the same basis as the contents of the word of God in Scripture and Tradition and the definitions of solemn councils. (17) The teaching of the Pope appears to have a more inclusively 'infallible' scope, since the word "tenendam" may be taken to cover a matter either of ecclesiastical or of divine and Catholic faith. The teaching of the bishops appeared, according to the expression of Vatican I, to be 'infallible' only in matters directly concerned with the exposition of revelation. At Vatican II, on the other hand, the magisterium of the universal college is attributed the privilege of 'infallibility' in the area of

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(16) cap. 4. (Dz 1839/DzS 3074)

(17) See cap. 3. (Dz 1792/DzS 3011): Dei Filius was taking up a doctrine on the authority of the universal ordinary magisterium of the bishops which had first been put forward by Pius IX in Tuas Libenter in 1863. (Dz 1683/DzS 2879).

tenenda as well as of credenda. The 'infallibility' of the college has "exactly the same implications as that of the Pope, must be exercised in the same manner and is subject to the same limitations." (18)

The irony of this new attribution is, of course, that the scope of possible tenenda was not defined, and that the statement was made in a period in which increasing numbers of theologians came to hold that this scope should be viewed as minimal. In addition, LG25.2 did not make it clear when it might be said that the college had concurred in a single judgement that something "should be definitively held". Therefore, a new area of doubt and ambiguity is opened up about what constitutes an 'infallible' statement. Many commentators would agree with Karl Rahner in saying that if LG 25.2 is read together with n.4 of the Nota Explicativa (19) it would be best to say that the bishops are 'infallible' not in incidental concurrence in their customary teaching, but only when they resort to an explicitly collegial act. (20) Therefore, while Vatican II expands the theoretical scope of collegial 'infallibility', at the same time it gives grounds for theological commentators to suggest quite a stringent limitation to the conditions under which the entire college may be said to deliver a teaching which requires absolute and irreformable assent. In fact, the notion of a collegial act may even prove a restriction upon the degree to which the 'infallibility' attributed to the bishops even by Vatican I is taken to be operative.

If it did anything, Vatican II's teaching on the scope of the privilege of 'infallibility' increased the areas of ambiguity and debate, by introducing the bishops into the same area of authority as the Pope, while at the same time putting forward the idea that the bishops only teach 'infallibly' under certain undefined

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(18) Karl Rahner in Vorgrimler, 1 p. 210.

(19) "Although the college always exists, it does not thereby always act in a strictly collegial way, as the Church's Tradition makes clear. That is to say, it is not always 'in actu pleno', or rather, it only acts in a strictly collegial way at intervals, and then only with the consent of its head."

(20) Rahner, op. cit., p. 211. See also Baum, art. cit., p. 38. Both Rahner and Baum refer to H. Pissarek-Hudelist, "Das ordentliche Lehramt als kollegialer Akt des Bischefskollegiums" in Gott in Welt (Freiburg/Br., 1964) pp. 166-185.

conditions. I have also suggested that the Council's lack of solution to the question of what constitutes the field of tenenda gives space to minimalist views. To this we must add that the Council's teaching on the college, undefined as it was, effectively shifts the stress away from the impression that the Pope is the major vehicle of truth in the Church. In the pages which follow, we shall consider another element of Vatican II's teaching which also has this effect.

b) The conditions under which dogma requiring absolute assent may be pronounced

A recent writer has said that "the defining role of the papacy is restricted to occasions when there is doctrinal dissension, and when God's revelation cannot be identified by means of either the unanimity of the faithful, or that of the bishops." (21) The same author also implies that it might not be correct to suppose that the definition of the Assumption was an'infallible'act. He bases his argument upon a commentary given at the First Vatican Council by Gasser, on 11 July 1870. These were Gasser's words on that date: "[the Pope] only enjoys the divine assistance promised to him that he should not err on those occasions when he really and truly exercises his office of supreme judge in controversies of faith, and of supreme doctor in the Church." (22)

If Gasser's words on 11 July were the only interpretation we had of the mind of Vatican I, or if they expressed the way in which the doctrine of the'infallibility' of the papal magisterium has been accepted in the Church generally, we might agree that there was a strong case for cutting down our view of the content of the doctrine. However, the statement of 11 July was not Gasser's last word on the subject, and the Roman Catholic Church has not in fact restricted its belief in papal'infallibility' to forensic contexts only. On 16 July 1870 Gasser told the assembled members of Vatican I that in the meaning of the deputation, the word "defines" (as it occurs in the definition

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(21) Garret Sweeney, "The Forgotten Council", in Bishops and Writers, edited by A. Hastings (Wheathampstead, 1977), p. 164.

(22) Mansi 52, col. 1213A.

of the 'infallibility' of the papal magisterium),

> "is not to be taken in a forensic sense, as though it only meant the act of putting an end to a controversy over what is heretical and what is a matter of faith; rather, the word 'defines' means that the Pope directly pronounces, with final intention, on a doctrine of faith and morals, in such a way what every single member of the faithful can be sure of the mind of the Apostolic See - the mind of the Roman Pontiff." (23)

It is hard to sustain the argument, therefore, that the doctrine of the 'infallibility' of the papal magisterium envisages the privilege as only being exercised in a situation of "tension, polarisation, uncertainty, crisis, etc., which puts in danger the communion in faith of a particular Church, or even of the universal Church." (24) Such a concept might make the doctrine more palatable in ecumenical contexts, but it would not represent the meaning of Vatican I's teaching. However, perhaps it might represent the mind of Vatican II?

In order to approach the teaching of Vatican II, we must once more return to the pontificate of Pius XII, and move on from there. That Pope defined the dogma of the Blessed Virgin's bodily Assumption into heavenly glory on 1 November 1950. The dogma was not called forth by acute controversy in the Church, but rather by the demands of the faithful: "Not only individual Christians, but also those representing nations or ecclesiastical provinces, and also many Fathers of the Vatican Council begged earnestly for this [definition] from the Apostolic See." (25) Pius XII called his act a "dogma", (26) so showing that he intended it as an exercise of the 'infallible' magisterium. The conditions under which it was proposed were not those of lively opposing views, threatening to

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(23) Mansi 52, col. 1316A.

(24) P. Huizing, "Magistère: Pouvoir ou témoignage?" in Révue de Droit Canonique, 25 (1975) p. 202.

(25) Const. Apost. Munificentissimus Deus (1 Nov. 1950) AAS 42 (1950) p. 755.

(26) ibid. p. 770. (Dz 2333/DzS 3903).

tear the Church apart, but rather a "singular harmony between Catholic bishops and faithful." (27) This was discerned by a process of consultation which preceded the promulgation of the dogma. However, the Apostolic Constitution was promulgated on the Pope's authority alone, and not on that of the entire episcopate. These were the conditions under which the only, generally acknowledged, exercise of the papal privilege of 'infallibility' between the two Vatican councils came about.

Pius XII's dogma rested on a consensus, which he had ascertained by consultation of the bishops concerning the faith of their churches. This concept of a consensus had gradually been brought to the fore during the last part of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. An exploration of the belief of the entire Church had been one of the means which Pastor Aeternus said that Popes of the past had used before defining doctrine. (28) It had, in fact, been the approach taken by Pius IX before defining the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception in 1854. Therefore, both the most recent non-conciliar definitions had rested on consensus rather than on forensic judgement. This was the historical background lying behind Vatican II.

In LG 12.1 (see pp.143f) the idea of the consensus of the entire Church is mentioned explicitly for the first time in a conciliar document (for the reference to the process of consultation in Pastor Aeternus had only presupposed the concept). In DV 8.2 there is a description of the role of the faithful in the development of doctrine, which is also new in official Roman Catholic teaching. The introduction of these ideas at Vatican II marks a high-point in the modern evolution of the idea that the Pope or bishops make definitions as the mouth of the Church's faith, rather than as separate organs of truth. We shall be examining these passages more closely in the next chapter; here we may simply note that Vatican II held to the fore not the idea of forensic judgement, but rather that

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(27) ibid. p. 756. Pius XII is here quoting a phrase from Pius IX's definition of the Immaculate Conception (see Coll. Lac. 6, col. 842).

(28) cap. 4. (Dz 1836/DzS 3069).

of consensus as the basis of definitive doctrine in the Church. This is a matter of emphasis, but it is an emphasis which gains force from its association with the pattern of the history which preceded it.

Conclusion

We have seen that Vatican II left the question of representational teaching, and the authoritative teaching of representatives, in a state of quite considerable ambiguity and confusion. While continuing to assert the duty of religious obedience of spirit, or of mind and will, to the non-infallible pronouncements of the hierarchy, the Council did not make it at all clear what such religious obedience should involve. The situation was left particularly unclear in relation to the task of theologians, for the Council spoke so positively of the obedience which all should render to the Pope's teaching, and yet did not renew the effort of Pius XII to put theologians under severe constraints whenever the papal magisterium had been exercised on a controversial question. Over and above this, as I have argued, the concept of obedient silence, or of restricted and private debate and objection, lacks plausibility in itself, because of the social context in which so many major Catholic theologians live - a context in which critical enquiry and constant openness are counted as high values.

With regard to the 'infallible' teaching of the hierarchy Vatican II did not so much settle old problems as raise new ones. Superficially it looks as though the Council extended the net of 'infallibility' to take in all teaching universally put forward by the episcopate. However, on closer examination it transpires that it would be hard definitively to establish which teachings of the bishops are strictly collegial teachings, and which touch on matters which are really essential to the protection of the authentic faith of the Church.

When we turn to the main body of the Church - those who are under the obligations of obedience and assent - we find that the doctrine of consensus, attached to the idea of an active sense of the faith, is brought to the fore. The idea of the Holy Spirit's embodiment in the Church is therefore stressed in this field, as we have already remarked (see pp. 143f.). The result of this must be

that increased emphasis is put upon the interior grasp of doctrine which each member of the Church has, and that this concept counterbalances the continuing demands that assent and obedience should be rendered on the grounds of the hierarchy's formal authority.

So far we have not seen evidence that the idea of witnessing substantially modified Vatican II's concept of the concrete authority of the Magisterium, although it was placed at the theoretical root of the hierarchy's teaching authority. However, we shall find the idea of preaching emerging in the following sections, particularly Section C. In these two following sections we shall examine parts of the documents which do not all explicitly deal with the authority of the Magisterium, but whose content is none the less relevant to the way in which non-infallible teaching must be received by Catholics. (As has already been stated, the ideas of Vatican II which qualify the notion of absolute assent to 'infallible' teaching will be dealt with in Chapter V.)

B) The Relationship of the Magisterium's non-'Infallible' Teaching to the Intellectual Life of the Church: Shifts of Emphasis Giving Increased Possibilities of Dissent

We have seen that Vatican II propounded anew the doctrine that a religious obedience is due to the teaching of the Magisterium, even when it does not claim to be 'infallible'. This obedience is due whenever a bishop seeks to put forward the Church's teaching, and not his own private views, and it is particularly owed to the pastoral pronouncements of the bishop of the place, and to the Pope. It is understood by the Council that such pastoral pronouncements should normally win support and adherence as being morally certain, and that at the very least they should not be met by publicised dissent.

I shall now suggest, however, that there were aspects of Vatican II's teaching which positively fostered the roots of possible dissent, or rather, which indicated that the ordinary teaching of the Magisterium should not have the character of being didactic, but should rather take the form of open dialogue with other members of the Church, allowing a pluralism of opinion and expression to flourish. So long as such pluralism and dialogue remain the basis of relationships between the hierarchy and others in whom the sense of faith is

active, dissent should not be a relevant term. However, where religious obedience of spirit, mind, and will is demanded on sheerly formal grounds, the elements of the Council's theology which we are about to consider, are likely to provide the impetus for real tension, and for academic, and even public, dissent.

First, we shall examine Vatican II's teaching concerning the proper intellectual independence of Catholics. Second, we shall consider elements of the Council's teaching which positively fostered the existence of theological pluralism in the Church. Thirdly, we shall review ways in which Vatican II in fact validated dissent as an authentic Catholic stance.

1 The Intellectual Independence of Catholics

In the first part of this sub-section we shall highlight the freedom which Vatican II explicitly gave to the study of theology. Our analysis will mainly concentrate upon the Council's theory of the proper methods of biblical study, and the relationship between exegetes and the Magisterium. This is a subject which was treated fully in the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Dei Verbum), and we must particularly notice that it was the area of biblical study whose opening-up to critical methods was most thoroughly treated by the Council. The lack of a correspondingly detailed treatment of freedom of method in other spheres of theology is a significant unevenness in Vatican II's approach, with great potential for producing problems in the post-conciliar era. However, we shall see that there were indeed openings to criticism and freedom in theology in general, despite the fact that the rules governing non-biblical subjects were not so fully mapped out. In our second sub-section we shall find that these general openings result partly from the Council's teaching on the relationship between theology and secular disciplines, and on the question of the autonomy of such disciplines when carried out by Catholics.

a) The conditions under which theological study should be pursued

Both GS 62.7 and GE 10.2 speak of the access to theological study which should be available to lay people. Although this was not strictly a new possibility (for Pius XII had spoken warmly of such study in the very moment of warning that it should not

extract itself from the control of the Magisterium, (29)) the practical provisions made for it in GE 10.2 were new, and represented a substantial step towards overcoming the effective barriers between teachers and taught in the Church. (30) At the same time, GS 62.7 made a very significant statement concerning the proper conditions of theological study of both clergy and laity: "So that they can carry out their task effectively, the faithful, whether clergy or laity, should be allowed a just liberty in enquiry, in thought, and in expressing their ideas humbly and courageously in those fields in which they enjoy expertise." We see renewed here a theoretical respect for the responsibility, if not for the authority, of expertise - a respect which had earlier been eclipsed in Catholic thought by the rise in prestige of the hierarchical Magisterium as a body which led the way in giving theology its approved forms. (31)

We are to turn now to Vatican II's particular approach to the question of scriptural study. The Council's treatment of this subject was mainly significant in that it ratified in a solemn setting a process of liberalisation in the official attitude over the preceding years. In particular, it followed the lines of an Instruction given by the Pontifical Biblical Commission in 1964 concerning the critical study of the Gospels. (32) The Council not only followed this line of approach, but also extended it, by applying it to the whole Bible, and also, in an important phrase in DV 11.2, went beyond it in the principles it lays down for biblical study. The phrase is this, "the books of Scripture teach firmly, faithfully and without error, that truth which God wished to have consigned to holy writ for the sake of our salvation." (emphasis mine). The addition of the phrase which I have stressed "made it possible to restrict

(29) Six ans sont écoulés, p. 931. In 1954 (three years previously) Pius XII had felt it necessary to oppose an independent "lay theology"; then, he had also spoken of the possibility that lay people might deepen their theological knowledge, but his tone had been less encouraging. (See alloc. on canonisation of Pius X (31 May 1954) AAS 46 (1954).)

(30) Even in 1967 F. Klostermann could note that it was still not possible everywhere for women to take theological degrees in Catholic faculties. (Vorgrimler, 3 p. 335.)

(31) See Congar, "Bref historique des formes du 'Magistère'", p. 103; also p. 105: "The encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XII give theology. They are not purely expressions of apostolic witness according to the needs of the time, but doctrina of the 'cathedra magistralis' assuming data of natural law, human wisdom and classical theology."

(32) (21 April 1964) AAS 45 (1964). pp. 712-718. (See DzS 3999).

inerrancy to the essential religious affirmations of a biblical book made for the sake of our salvation." (33) This allows not only that the Bible is not a text book for science, (34) or for ancient history in general, but even that a critical view may be taken of some of the religious assertions in Scripture.

Within this large space for critical study, what were the principles which Vatican II laid down for the conduct of such work? DV 12.1 teaches that the meaning of God in Scripture is to be ascertained by investigating the meaning of the sacred writer. This is a sophisticated development of the idea that the 'literal' sense of Scripture should be preferred to any allegorical or symbolic sense. (35) It is an important statement because it clearly gives the pre-eminence to scholarly investigation over any meaning which the Magisterium might impose upon a text in the name of Tradition or

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(33) R. E. Brown, Biblical Reflections on Crises Facing the Church (London, 1975) p. 115.

(34) Leo XIII had been the first to note officially that the Bible should not be looked to to provide information of no importance for men's salvation, such as the inner constitution of visible things. Rather, the biblical writers used common terms and expressions of the time to describe things as they appeared to be. This, said Leo, was God's way of speaking to men comprehensibly. The Pope then went on to treat the historical content of Scripture, prefacing his remarks with the sentence, "it will help to transfer these principles to cognate disciplines, especially history." (Encycl. Providentissimus Deus, p. 287 (Dz 1947-49/DzS 3288-90).) We shall examine the historical development of the road first opened by Leo XIII in sub-section (3) of the present section of the chapter.

(35) The necessary pre-eminence of the literal sense of Scripture was forcefully stated by the Biblical Commission in 1941 in a letter to Italian bishops. (20 Aug. 1941) AAS 33 (1941) pp. 466ff. (DzS 3792ff.) See also Pius XII's encyclical Divino Afflante (30 Sept. 1943) AAS 35 (1943) p. 310. (Dz 2293/DzS 3826).

the sense of faith's witness to God's deeper meaning. (36) The means of scholarly interpretation are summed up in the idea of investigating literary genres, and historical modes of thinking and communicating (DV 12.2).

The critical exegete of the post-Vatican II era has, then, varied tools at his disposal, and two major objects in view. First, he aims to discover the history behind Scripture, and then, on the basis of this, to elucidate the theology expressed in the Bible. The boundaries within which he must work are summed up in the injunction that he should have respect to the unity of Scripture, understood in the light of the living Tradition of the entire Church and the 'analogy of faith' (DV 12.3); finally, "all these methods of interpreting Scripture are ultimately subject to the judgement of the Church, which exercises the mandate and ministry of preserving and interpreting the Word of God." (loc. cit.)

To accept the unity of Scripture according to the 'analogy of faith' (37) means to work on the presupposition that the established points of the Catholic faith are rightly established. However, to accept that they are rightly established may or may not include the idea that they can be reinterpreted. We shall be considering the question of the reinterpretation of dogma in the next chapter; here let it suffice to say that it is not straightforwardly simple to determine when an exegete has departed from the 'analogy of faith'. It is not a fixed, external criterion which can be unambiguously applied in

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(36) Despite Pius XII's insistence on the primacy of the literal sense of Scripture, the definition of the Assumption reinforced other views. Thus, an author could, in 1954, defend the superiority of the sense of faith as an interpreter of the Bible, over against elucidation of the literal meaning alone, by saying, "the basis of dogmatic development . . . is not only what God has said, but also what he intended to say in his profoundest intentions in the inspired text." The author argues that therefore it is not sufficient to analyse the text by human reason alone, for the richness of the revelation communicated by God to the Church "surpasses in extent the understanding which the inspired authors had of it themselves" (emphasis mine.) (C. Dillenschneider, Le Sens de la foi et la progrès dogmatique du mystère marial. (Rome, 1954) pp. 39 and 73.)

(37) The 'analogy of faith' (the 'proportion of faith') decrees that those presuppositions which, of themselves, would be hostile to established Catholic dogma, be rejected as unserviceable. But if Catholic dogma may be reinterpreted in some way, the bare concept of the 'analogy of faith' does not tell us which presuppositions are unacceptable criteria of reinterpretation.

judgement; to ask scholars to work with it is to ask them to work in good faith as Catholics. (38)

If we turn to the "living Tradition of the entire Church" as a criterion by which biblical scholars' work may be judged we run into similar difficulty. The critical approach to Scripture is, we may say, itself effectively incorporated into the concept of the Church's living Tradition. Because Vatican II envisages the theological and critical disciplines as being made more accessible even to laity (see p. 201) one can expect an acquaintance with the fruits of modern biblical study to be much more general throughout the Church. Since DV 8.2 makes of all the faithful the vehicle of Tradition and its development, we may expect the critical principles they learn to be incorporated into the pattern of that development. Although it might be argued that DV 8.2 concentrates on the contemplation and a 'spiritual' inner experience of believers in their contribution to the Church's understanding, we must note that the word "study" also appears. Moreover, I believe it is impossible for the critical and discerning attitudes of study and debate simply to be divorced from the prayerful meditation of Christians upon the content of their faith, when once these critical attitudes have been adopted. Therefore, we find that Vatican II's picture of living Tradition is not that of a body of belief which can be set against scholarly opinion, or used to provide 'additional information' of a supernatural kind which is closed to academic access; it is, rather, a picture of a corporate process of investigation and understanding, into which critical principles are fully integrated. (39)

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(38) During the Modernist crisis it was alleged that Loisy worked outside the 'analogy of faith' by, for example, taking as a presupposition the denial that Christ had any transcendent knowledge.

(39) We may compare with this the picture of the sense of faith, and its relationship to academic scholarship, contained in the following quotation: "The theologian, like any good Catholic, gives his assent [to a magisterial definition], but he does so only on extrinsic grounds, namely that the Church has defined the proposition . . .he himself does not have the keenly developed sense necessary to seize the truth directly and by itself." (P. Rousselot, cited by G. Philips in The Role of the Laity in the Church, p. 78.) The implication of the passage is that academic attitudes inhibit the sense of faith which, in a non-critical member of the laity, enables him illatively to affirm the truth of a doctrine even before it has been defined.

Ultimately, then, it is the "judgement of the Church" which Vatican II sets up as the control over the work of biblical analysis. (40) We should note here the use of the term "Church", rather than "Magisterium". It expresses the idea that, although the Magisterium has been entrusted with the task of "authentically interpreting the Word of God, whether in Scripture or Tradition" (DV 10.2), this body is not set over God's Word "but serves it, only teaching that which has been handed on." (loc. cit.) That is to say, the Magisterium does not impose on Tradition, but expresses it - and the faith and understanding of all the faithful is, as we have seen, the dynamic vehicle of Tradition.

This is a very significant shift of emphasis away from the idea that the Magisterium is the major organ of Tradition, looking back only to the unanimous consent of the Fathers for a near rival. (41) The hierarchy is placed in a position where it, too, will learn from the critical scholars of the Bible, for "exegetes should work . . . at the task of penetrating and expounding the sense of Holy Scripture most profoundly, so that the judgement of the Church may mature by using their work in some way as a preparation" (DV 12.3). The Magisterium thus stands in a relationship of dialogue with exegetes.

Nevertheless, there remains a "vigilance" (DV 23) which the living teaching authority is to exercise over biblical study. And here we reach the nub of the problem which Vatican II left behind in this area, as in all areas of theology: The Magisterium appears to be both a player and the referee in the game of developing biblical insights. The Council's emphasis on critical study and dialogue

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(40) DV 12.3 gives a reference to Dei Filius, cap. 2. (Dz 1788/DzS 3007), which also speaks of the Church's mandate to judge of the true sense and interpretation of Scripture. But in this passage, "the Church" represents the Church of the past - the criterion of interpretation is the sense which has always been held by mother Church. The First Vatican Council did not come to grips with the problems of development in doctrine and understanding. DV 12.3, by contrast, is explicitly concerned with the deepening understanding of faith which can be brought about by the Church's attention to biblical exegesis.

(41) The passage of Dei Filius mentioned in the note above concludes: "No one therefore may interpret sacred Scripture in contradiction to this sense, or even in contradiction to the unanimous consensus of the Fathers."

creates an atmosphere of expectation that the Magisterium will blow the whistle on scholarly biblical investigation less and less often, and that it will certainly never take disciplinary action simply to restrain critical methods in themselves, since it was these very methods that the Council promoted. Indeed, it may even be supposed that views which are canvassed by a significant number of thorough biblical scholars on good, critical grounds, carrying the conviction of responsibility in argument, are unlikely to be censured by the Magisterium, however difficult it may be to harmonise them immediately with generally received doctrine. On the other hand, there still exists the potential negation of this atmosphere and expectation, in the form of the Magisterium's power - perhaps arbitrarily - to call a halt to discussion on any particular scriptural point.

Finally, we must note an important omission in the Council's picture of the biblical scholar's role: While Leo XIII's Providentissimus Deus had already given the exegete the task of preparing the way for the Church's judgement to mature in the same way as DV 12.3, it had also said that "in the case of passages which have already been defined, the private doctor can . . . render service by expounding them more clearly to the simple faithful, more subtly to the learned, and by vindicating the definitions more outstandingly in the face of adversaries" (42). We have seen in Chapter II (p. 86) that this principle was taken up by Pius XII in Humani Generis, and extended, so that he could even say that theologians have the task of "showing in what way the teachings of the living Magisterium are to be found in holy Scripture and divine 'tradition', whether explicitly or implicitly." It is highly significant that no such statement is to be found in Dei Verbum, for the constitution's approach to Scripture is thereby delivered from the taint of a priorism. Rather than imposing a meaning on the text (43) and rather than acting as a 'proximate norm of faith', the Magisterium is to "listen reverently" to God's Word in Scripture and Tradition before it expounds it (DV 10.2, see also DV 1). This listening is aided by

(42) p. 280 (Dz 1942/DzS 3282).

(43) Hégy notes several uses of Scripture by the Magisterium in which the meaning was imposed against the sense of the original text. Among them, the use of Acts 19.19 in Gregory XVI's encyclical Mirari Vos (1832). Hégy also notes that a large part of the Modernist crisis constituted a conflict between a view of Scripture in which the Church could impose such dogmatic meanings, and the protest against this aroused by the genesis of modern scientific criticism. (L'Autorité, pp. 47f.)

the exegesis furnished by scholars. We find, then, that the Council invested them with a primary role of responsibility in the Church without depriving the Magisterium of its final authority.

b) Theology and secular disciplines

Both Vatican I and Vatican II were concerned to establish that the arts and sciences should enjoy a "just liberty" in the use of their own proper methods and principles, since these differ from the methods and principles of theology. GS 59.3 takes its point of departure from Dei Filius, cap. 4 (44) in making this affirmation. However, the whole issue of the relationship between theology and other disciplines occurs within the context of remarkably different problematics in the thought of the two councils.

Vatican I's concern was mainly with the theoretical relations between faith and reason. In Dei Filius the Council argued that there is a role for natural apologetics, based on the philosophical evidences for God (although the nature of these evidences was not specified) but that the supernatural assent of faith to divine mysteries is qualitatively different from the assent of reason in the natural sphere. Therefore, as principles of knowledge, faith and reason inherently have different objects - the truths discoverable by natural reason, on the one hand, and revealed mysteries on the other - and so they form a "twofold order of knowledge." (45) The knowledge which faith attains is direct cognitio of its supernatural object; however, if reason is applied to the mysteries which faith presents to it, it can come to a limited but fruitful understanding ('intelligentia') of them. (46) This understanding is reached by the use and analysis of analogy, and by examination of the interconnections between the mysteries, and their relationship to man's final end. (47)

At this point we may pause, and note that at Vatican I, the prevailing idea of reason's function in the science of theology was that which was held in the neo-scholastic system of the day. The understanding of divine mysteries which the redactors of Dei Filius had in mind was that which could be achieved through an Aristotelian method of speculation. While a divine mystery, known through

(44) Dz 1799/DzS 3019.

(45) Dz 1795/DzS 3015.

(46) Dz 1796/DzS 3016.

(47) loc. cit.

revelation, might provide a major premise, reason might provide a 'natural' minor premise, from which a theologically certain conclusion could then be drawn. In this way, theology could develop through an ever-expanding chain of speculative understanding. (48) At the same time, philosophical reason could form the apologetic prologomena to this study of revealed truth.

Returning to the text of Dei Filius as it stands, we find that faith is superior to reason as its object is superior, and that faith gives greater certitude. If a clash should seem to arise between the conclusions of the two, it must either be because the dogmas of the Church have not been understood according to the mind of the Church, or that the inventions of mere opinion have been mistaken for the verdicts of reason. (49) In reality, there can be no clash, because the one God is the God of both orders of knowledge. Because of the superiority and higher certitude attained by faith, the Council could say that "every assertion which is contrary to a truth of enlightened faith is completely false". (50)

We find, then, that the autonomy allowed to the arts and sciences by Vatican I rested on a theory that reason's sphere is distinct from that of faith. What this theory failed to take into account was the fully historical nature of Christian faith, and the fact that God's revelation has taken place in historical conditions which can also properly be investigated by secular means, while the Church's understanding of the divine mysteries is couched in terms

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(48) The importance of neo-scholastic thought for the teaching of the Magisterium in the late nineteenth century is particularly evident in Leo XIII's encyclical Aeterni Patris (promoting neo-Thomism in particular). (4 Aug. 1879) ASS 11. (1878-79). The encyclical is widely believed to have been drafted by Kleutgen and Liberatore, the first of whom was also chiefly responsible for the final form of Dei Filius. In Aeterni Patris we read of the part played by philosophy in making theology a "true science" and in collating the many and diverse parts of heavenly teaching. (p. 101)

(49) Dz 1797/DzS 3017

(50) loc. cit.

which are open to cultural and historical variation and criticism.

Let us look a little more closely at the areas in which it was admitted that seeming clashes might appear: First, there are the occasions on which mere opinion has been put forward as the verdict of reason; we may associate with this supposition the confident assertion of Dei Filius that faith frees reason from errors. (51) The faithful, it is said, should not defend conclusions which contradict the doctrine of faith, especially if the Church has reproved them; rather, they should hold them to be complete errors, having only a deceptive appearance of truth. (52) But is it not true that the Church has reproved positions which it later had to accept as right? The case of Galileo immediately springs to mind. Are the faithful then to make up their minds, and change them again, only on the word of the Magisterium, without regard to their own assessment of the arguments? This seems to be a real threat to the independence and integrity of Catholics practising the secular disciplines.

The case of Galileo is really a model of the second type of seeming clash: The Church did not, at the time, understand how his conclusions might be accommodated with her doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture. In addition, as Franzelin remarked, Galileo could provide no demonstration of his theories which would satisfy the Church authorities that one ought to interpret the Scriptures in a figurative sense; (53) therefore he was forced to retract. The difficulty of the case in historical retrospect lies in the fact that it was the official teachers of the Church who had effectively misunderstood the import of the Church's doctrine; it was not until they could be persuaded of the possibility of understanding Scripture figuratively, and of the soundness of Galileo's case, that it could be considered acceptable for a Catholic to propound a solar-centric view as something convincing to himself. Franzelin justifies the action taken by the Inquisition in regard to Galileo by an appeal to the Church's need for security in believing, saying that the Cardinals acted with the "authority of ecclesiastical providence" in

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(51) Dz 1799/DzS 3019

(52) DZ 1798/DzS 3018

(53) Tractatus de Divina Traditione et Scriptura, pp. 150-152.

requiring his obedience. (54) The fact that Dei Filius could show no clear mechanism whereby the teachers of the Church might necessarily be persuaded to accept the neccesity for reassessments of doctrine in cases such as this, displays the fact that Vatican I had not truly found a way to protect the legitimate independence of method and conclusions in the secular disciplines; Catholic practitioners of them might still remain under pressure from an obsolescent understanding of faith entertained by Church authorities.

Turning to Vatican II's treatment of the autonomy of the secular disciplines, we find that this Council was not concerned to apportion different objects to faith and reason (55), but rather to explore faith's relationship to the world in which man lives. In other words, the matter arises in connection with Vatican II's theology of the secular.

Faith itself was differently conceived by Vatican II than by Vatican I. It was not seen as being comprised purely of supernatural assent to revealed mysteries given in propositional form. Rather, DV 5 defined "the obedience of faith" as that by which man "freely commits himself totally to God, giving 'full assent of mind and will to God who reveals' and assenting voluntarily to the revelation given by him". By integrating the idea of full personal self-commitment in the concept of faith (rather than treating it separately as the action of charity), the Council laid the ground for seeing theology (faith's formal discipline) as itself integrating both practical and theoretical concerns. That is to say, the distinction between systematic and moral theologies was partially dissolved, so that it becomes more difficult to treat them in isolation. In no case is this more true than in that of Vatican II's treatment of the nature of man's secular concerns and activities; these become matters of properly theological interest, for they are seen to be immediately integrated with man's grasp of the mystery of God.

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(54) loc. cit. The fact that the Inquisition would have had to act otherwise had Galileo satisfactorily demonstrated his theory is an admission of Franzelin's which does not appear in Dei Filius.

(55) It is notable that GS 59.3 echoed Dei Filius in speaking of the proper methods, principles, and fields of human arts and sciences; it did not speak of their distinct objects, however.

What aspect of God's mystery forms faith's principle when it is applied to human secular activity? Is it a principle which compromises the autonomy of the methods of secular disciplines? The constitution Gaudium et Spes and the decree Apostolicam Actuositatem present it as being of a complex nature; it is compounded of the assertion that God is creator (GS 36.3, see AA 7.2), and that man is the centre and summit of all earthly things because he is made in the image of God (GS 12.1 and 3). All things will find their final perfection in and through Christ, God's Word made flesh, the perfect man (GS 45, see also AA 7.2). These elements of faith are, respectively, drawn from the doctrines of creation, of moral value, and of the last things (in so far as these doctrines can be artificially separated). None of these elements immediately draws upon the evidences of history, and yet their place in the theology of the secular shows that they have an immediate bearing upon the Christian's view of historical activity. Their bearing, however, is not of the kind that necessarily robs secular disciplines of their autonomy. Rather, all man's activity in the world which can be carried out in the light of this faith is confirmed both in its proper autonomy (AA 7.2) and in its value, because the world is the theatre of a history in which goods and values are to be nourished which will reappear in God's Kingdom (see GS 39.3); this orientation is what gives secular activities their proper, theologically-based, significance. And this significance, viewed within the horizon of creation, morality and the last things, enhances the Christian's respect for their autonomy. However, this autonomy is not to be misunderstood as meaning that temporal things are not in themselves dependent upon God, their creator (GS 36.3), nor are they to be used without moral reference to this relation. Faith is to provide the englobing attitude in which human activity is carried out, but within this englobing attitude there can be real and fruitful dialogue between man's immediately theological ideas and his knowledge in other fields. The faithful, GS 62.6 says,

> "should marry knowledge of the new sciences, theories and discoveries, with morality and Christian teaching, so that their religious sense and moral rectitude may progress at the

> same rate as their knowledge of the sciences and the daily progress of technology; in this way, they will be able to test and interpret everything with an authentically Christian awareness."

The projected dialogue of secular knowledge with theology, within the broad horizons of attitude and moral value dictated by faith, has two results for Christian thought. The first is that theology must continually engage itself in new investigations, arising from movements in other fields; the second is that, traditional doctrines must sometimes be re-expressed to remain comprehensible and credible. By giving better grounds for the independence of method of secular arts and sciences, and by showing how closely these disciplines are of interest to Christian faith, Vatican II laid the foundation for a clearer acknowledgement of the fact that the Church's theology must for ever remain under obligation to take account of secular thought and come to terms with it. The only conditions that the Church lays down, are that the broad principles inhering in the attitude of faith should not be denied. On historical, epistemological, and factual grounds, theology's immunity from the pressures of dialogue is considerably reduced.

We see, then, that Vatican II suggested much more room for manoeuvre for Catholic scholars in fields where faith should be integrated with their secular knowledge. This room for manoeuvre is largely parallel to the Council's admission of the critical impulse and method in the sphere of biblical study. Indeed, the two areas of concern cannot really be separated, for the critical disciplines employed in study of the Bible are only specific applications of the general approach and method of modern academic sciences. In nearly all spheres with practical import, men start from the data of the universe and of history, rather than from first principles of a transcendent or abstract kind. Meanings and conclusions are not imposed upon evidence, but drawn from it by patient attention both to the evidence itself, and to the structures of human understanding. This patient attention creates, in almost every academic discipline, a flux of opinion and debate. In very many cases, working hypotheses take the place of settled conclusions, and where fixed agreement is reached, it only serves as a stepping-stone to yet further hypothesis, debate and experimentation. This constant flow is likely to make itself felt in the field of theology, because of its universal scope, and its

responsibility to situate in the realm of meaning and value the ideas which are thrown up in the course of human activity and study. What, then, is the significance of this for the kind of obedience which the Magisterium can require?

The Magisterium is set in relation to a field of theological endeavour in which the substance of a plurality of ideas and approaches is foreshadowed. Pluralism in theology is likely to arise both from the uncertainties and flux within other disciplines with which it has to do, and also from the fact that different theologians will respond to the pressures and demands of secular knowledge and circumstance in different ways. By approving critical methods in matters directly touching revelation, and by enhancing the autonomous basis of secular disciplines, the teaching of Vatican II suggests that the ordinary exercise of the teaching office should neither attempt to prescribe a route for theological thinking, nor infringe the independence and integrity of the work of Catholics in other fields. The authority of the Magisterium should be engaged to guard the rights of faith not in disputable particulars of history and science, but in faith's fundamental grounds, conclusions, and consequences. However, it also remains true that the Magisterium is the body which retains the power to decide what <u>is</u> the real expression of faith's fundamental principles. That is to say, whilst theology's dialogue with other disciplines was strongly promoted at Vatican II, this was done on the condition that the Magisterium might remain the referee, and even, to some degree, the rule-maker. We may say, then, that the Council contributed to Catholic theology the idea that a large area of freedom for manoeuvre exists, whereby the Catholic intellectual is less hampered in thought over a wide variety of subjects than he was even thirty years ago. But what the Council did not contribute was a set of clear rules to govern the limits of this freedom; rather, it left the matter for the Magisterium to settle in the heat of controversy and discussion.

2 The Fostering of Theological Pluralism

We have already broached the subject of theological pluralism in our analysis of Vatican II's approach to biblical study and the relationship between theology and other disciplines. I have suggested that by nurturing the grounds for pluralism in these fields,

Vatican II indicated a shift in view of the Magisterium's authoritative role; it becomes less the organ of theology for the Church, than the protector of faith's fundamental principles. In the present sub-section we are going to focus on two further ways in which the Council fostered the growth of theological pluralism in the Church: In both these cases, pluralism is likely to arise not because of differences or debates over the contingent matter with which theology has to deal, but because of differences in human ways of expressing and understanding faith itself. Such pluralism can give rise to debate within the Church concerning the appropriateness of different modes of expression for conveying the truth of God.

The two kinds of pluralism of expression which we are to examine are, respectively, pluralism arising from the admission of different philosophical conceptualities within the Church, and that which springs from the expression of Christian faith in a variety of cultural contexts.

a) Vatican II and philosophy

From 1879 the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church particularly promoted the use of a neo-Thomist framework for philosophical and theological speculation in the Church. The encyclical Aeterni Patris set forward St. Thomas as the "prince" among the scholastics (56), working with "the serene conviction . . . that scholastic philosophy was a single metaphysical system, common to all the scholastic doctors." (57) The encyclical spoke of the essential relationship of philosophy to theology, bringing about as it does "that more accurate and more fruitful knowledge of matters believed, and that more lucid understanding (as far as possible) of the mysteries of faith themselves . . . It belongs to philosophical disciplines religiously to guard divinely handed-down truths, and to resist those who dare to attack them." (58) For these purposes, the scholastic philosophy which reached its crown in St. Thomas was recommended both for use in the education given within the Church, and also as a basis for the evangelisation of alienated intellectuals. (59) So great was

(56) p. 108.

(57) G. A. McCool, Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Century (New York, 1977) p. 233.

(58) Aeterni Patris pp. 101f.

(59) ibid. p. 112.

Leo XIII's confidence in the Thomist metaphysic and epistemology, as they were understood at the time, that he could claim that their promotion would aid all human disciplines, including the natural sciences. (60) However, this restoration and promotion was not to take the form of mere imitation, but was to be a renewal and extension in which necessary corrections might be allowed: It was primarily the wisdom of St. Thomas which was commended, rather than individual doctrines. (61)

> The result of Leo XIII's move was that henceforth "Catholic speculative theology would evolve in its dialogue with the modern world, but, for decades, its intellectual evolution would take place within a Thomistic framework. The achievements, reverses, and painful conflicts of Thomistic theology's dialectical development would become the leitmotif of the history of Catholic theology during the decades between Aeterni Patris and the Second Vatican Council." (62)

The pre-eminence of neo-Thomism was confirmed by further measures of later Popes, reaching a pitch of insistence during and after the Modernist crisis. (63) What is the significance of this for the kind of obedience which the Magisterium could require for its teaching?

A positive doctrine (i.e. one that is not simply a proscription of another position) must have a form of words which evokes positive concepts in the hearer; if we lay on one side those doctrines which are frankly paradoxical in both form and intention, we may say that a positive doctrine must be thinkable within the terms of a coherent conceptuality. However, the same form of words may be thinkable in different ways, according to different conceptual

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(60) ibid. p. 113.

(61) ibid. p. 114.

(62) McCool, op. cit., p. 236.

(63) Pius X required that scholastic philosophy, especially Thomism be the basis of all seminary studies (encycl. Pascendi (8 Sept. 1907) ASS 40 (1907) p. 640), and this was followed up by further measures in 1910, 1914, and their summary in canon law in 1917 (CIC, can. 1366.2).

frameworks; for example, the statement that Mary was, "at the end of her earthly life, assumed body and soul into heavenly glory" (64) is capable of being understood in different ways, according to the connotations attributed to terms such as "body", "soul" and "heaven" in different conceptual systems.

Although the Roman Catholic Church has favoured and promoted the "perennial philosophy" of the scholastics, and borrowed terminology from their scheme of thought, (65) it has never absolutely claimed that theology is bound to this philosophy (66). Sometimes, indeed, the Magisterium has been careful to phrase its definitions in such a way as not to impose a particular conceptuality; both the Marian definitions were objects of this care. (67) We find, then, a theoretical openness concerning philosophy accompanying the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' concrete insistence on the education of all the clergy according to neo-Thomist principles and methods. Concretely, for a long time, the great mass of theology was worked out according to this system, while the 'instinct' of most Catholic faithful was imbued with neo-scholastic assumptions.

The significance of the practical ascendancy of neo-Thomism lay in the fact that it created a generally uniform mode of theological discourse in the Church at the very time that the Magisterium was propounding theology, moulded according to this

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(64) Munificentissimus Deus, p. 770. (Dz 2333/DzS 3903).

(65) Notable uses of scholastic terminology occur in the teaching of Trent, for example concerning sacramental 'character' (see Chapter II pp. 92-94) and the doctrine of transubstantiation (Sess. XIII, Decree on the most holy Eucharist (de eucharistia) can. 2. (Dz 884/DzS 1652).)

(66) "It is allowed that the Church cannot be bound to any single system of philosophy which has a limited life-span". - Humani Generis p. 566. (Dz 2311/DzS 3883).

(67) Just before the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was defined solemnly, Pius IX removed a clause relating the doctrine to the philosophical idea of the infusion of the soul into the body. Similarly, the choice of words "heavenly glory" in the dogma of the Assumption, was specially made to avoid including a necessary spacial connotation in the doctrine.

pattern, for general acceptance, through the device of encyclical letters. (68) The promotion of neo-Thomism created the conditions in which the religious obedience of Catholics could be won for an increasing body of doctrina issued mainly by Rome; some of this teaching took the form of decision on disputed questions - decision reached on the basis of neo-scholastic argumentation - and in other cases the doctrine of the ordinary papal magisterium led the way for Catholic thought - again, through neo-scholastic reasoning. A break-up of the shared conceptual world of Catholicism would constitute a grave limitation on the power of the ordinary Magisterium to give so much doctrine, filled with positive content, in a way which would find easy acquiescence and understanding throughout the Church.

In the field of philosophy, the teaching of Vatican II introduced elements which presaged the break-up of the common conceptual world of neo-Thomism. Most significantly, these elements are largely to be found in the provisions of the Council for the education of future priests. The decree on the Training of Priests (Optatam Totius) ratified the reduction in the status of Thomistic philosophy in relation to other patterns of thought, although it by no means projected St. Thomas' expulsion from the curriculum. OT 15.1 advocates a philosophical education for seminarists which should rely upon "the perennially valid philosophical heritage", but which should also take account of the "philosophical investigations of the more modern era, particularly those which are especially influential in their own lands. They should also have a knowledge of the modern progress of the sciences." The aim of this is that seminarists should have "a solid and coherent knowledge of man, the world and God." (loc. cit.) The second paragraph of the same article speaks of history of philosophy, which should be taught so that seminarists can grasp the foundational principles of the various systems, and hold on to what proves true in them, while being able to detect and refute their errors at the root.

At this point, St. Thomas is not mentioned by name, and the phrase "the perennially valid philosophical heritage" replaces the phrase given in an earlier draft - "the principles of the perennial philosophy". This change, requested by Cardinal Léger, implies that

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(68) See note (31), p. 202, above.

scholasticism may be perennially valid, but this does not mean that it is perennially apposite for the Church's expression of her faith. In addition, the new phrase does not suggest that there is a single, scholastic system of philosophy to be 'swallowed whole' in its Thomistic synthesis, or even to be extended and corrected as though it were a unified body of thought ready to be updated. One commentator says of this passage that it means that seminarists are to be taught to "make fruitful the lasting insights of the scholastic heritage".(69)

In the case of dogmatic theology we find that St. Thomas's place as the foundation-stone of study is to be taken by the Bible, whose themes are to be expounded first in the curriculum. Later, the mysteries of faith can be more deeply investigated with the help of speculative theology, and it is here that St. Thomas is to be the students' master, as they seek to gain a profounder knowledge of the mysteries and of their interconnection (see CT 16.3). The way in which this paragraph is phrased suggests that although Aquinas's insights are of permanent value, the effort of the student is to be directed towards his own penetration of the mysteries of faith, and not simply towards learning the Angelic Doctor's system. St. Thomas is a 'master' chiefly in his systematic and coherent approach.

A similar point is made in GE 10.1, which speaks of the task of co-ordinating theology and secular knowledge "so that it may be more profoundly understood how faith and reason work together in revealing the one truth". To do this is to walk in a path already marked out by the Church, "especially by St. Thomas Aquinas". It is clearly the saint's aims and synthetic approach which are the model here, rather than his actual conclusions.

We see, then, that St. Thomas still continues to hold an honoured place in Roman Catholic education, but, having ceded his foundational role to the Bible in the sphere of theology, and being taught alongside other philosophers in the seminaries, the all-embracing grasp of Thomistic systems on Catholic thought is loosened. The result of this is the Church's openness to theological pluralism in systematics:

> "The nineteenth century debate over theological method, which the official option of Aeterni Patris seemed to have

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(69) J. Neuner, in Vorgrimler, 2 p. 396. (emphasis mine).

> closed definitively, has been reopened. The disciples of St. Thomas and the partisans of the 'new theologies' are free once more to submit their diverse theological methods to the judgement of their fellow theologians". (70)

b) Vatican II and cultural diversity

Having noted the shift away from a unified conceptual universe which was signified in the Council's treatment of scholastic and neo-scholastic philosophy, we may now turn to its introduction of an entirely new factor into doctrinal calculations. (71) This is Vatican II's recognition of the existence and significance of different social and ethnic cultures, which influence the way in which the Gospel is understood. In the decree on Ecumenism (Unitatis Redintegratio) the Council admitted the radical effect that such differences of understanding might have: "The heritage handed on by the Apostles has been received in diverse ways and forms, and since the Church's very origin has been understood in various ways, according to the diversity of human character and conditions of life. All these things . . . have been the circumstance of separations, because of lack in mutual comprehension and charity" (UR 14.3). Of course, one of the greatest barriers to mutual understanding is the claim made by some cultures to represent 'Culture' itself; Vatican II's recognition of the existence and equal validity, of a variety of cultures therefore represents a groundwork of charity, which may provide necessary conditions for unity in diversity. But how did the Council view the cultures of the world, and what precisely is the effect of this view upon its concept of the theology which may legitimately go on within the Church?

GS 53.2 defined 'culture' in general as meaning "everything by which man refines and develops the multiple attributes of his body and spirit"; in the following paragraph the text goes on to spell out

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(70) McCool, op. cit. p. 6.

(71) On the newness of this treatment of cultural diversity, see A. Dondeyne, "L'Essor de la culture" in L'Église dans le monde de ce temps, 2, edited by Y. M-J. Congar and M. Peuchmaurd (Paris, 1967) pp. 456-458.

the sociological and ethnological signification of the word: "The diverse life-styles and scales of value" which arise out of different ways of using things, of working, expressing oneself, practising religion, and formulating morals, legislating and setting up judicial institutions, developing science and the arts, and cultivating beauty. The existence of diverse cultures is not only acknowledged, but even welcomed in Gaudium et Spes; GS 56.2 says that the different cultures of the world give access to ancestral wisdom and form the genius of different peoples. It is through various cultures that the nature of man is more fully disclosed, and new ways of reaching truth are opened up (GS 44.2). The contributions of different cultures, therefore, can be taken into Christianity in a purified and elevated form, finding their consummation in the Church (LG 17, AG 9.2, 22.1). In a universal Church, composed of individual local churches, the cultural riches of all may be shared (see LG 13.2 and 3, AG 15.4, SC 37).

The cultural elements derived from many sides do not simply accrue to the Church as additions, for it is through the concepts and languages of different peoples that the Church has always expressed the message of Christ, trying to illuminate it by the wisdom of the philosophers (GS 44.2, see also 58.1 and 2). The reader should notice here the acknowledgement that the Church uses not only different languages, but also different forms of conceptuality; this, of course, is the source whence dissension may arise. Nevertheless, GS 44.2 teaches that this adaptability in expression of the Gospel should "remain the law of all evangelisation." Discernment and even deeper understanding in this field is the task of the entire Church, so that the Church and the different cultures may have a lively exchange of influence.

What are the problems requiring discernment which arise from the Gospel's relationship with various cultures? They arise, for the theologian, mainly in the field of judgement concerning the adequacy of different kinds of concept, because the relationship of human concepts to a central idea or notion is a complex one. In order to express the Gospel in different cultural contexts, one may search for equivalent concepts through which to express the central idea, identifying concepts cross-culturally. For example, one might seek in African culture for a concept of a supreme being, and identify it with the central idea which the classical Judaeo-Christian

concept has traditionally expressed for the Western world. However, to do this without any qualifications would generally be considered inappropriate, for the connotations of the different cultural concepts may differ in important ways. Therefore, if the Gospel is preached by way of identification, it must be identification with explicit qualifications. Importantly, this procedure should raise for the European evangelist the question, 'how far is my concept of God the bearer of connotations which may not properly belong to the idea of the Father of Jesus Christ?'.

A parallel instance of complexity occurs because central themes of the Christian message are traditionally expressed through specific analogies, which are recognised as such, but are deemed to be appropriate for expressing ideas for which there are no individual evocative words. For example, the meaning of Christ's death is often described in terms of sacrifice and reconciliation. When it is acknowledged that such analogies are culturally conditioned, one may seek alternative analogues in non-European cultures - which leads to the problem of determining whether they do, in fact, convey the same truth successfully. The problem is further complicated by the fact that even in the context of traditional Christendom and its culture, the original analogies will have evoked differing responses and contents of understanding from different believers. Although there are strong arguments against the view of cultural relativism which suggests that men can <u>never</u> imaginatively enter into the understanding of another culture, and <u>never</u> adequately convey ideas to one another, the project is undoubtedly fraught with difficulty, and productive of debate and dispute.

Finally, with regard to the Church's need for discernment concerning different cultures, we may instance the problems associated with the adoption or adaption of rites and 'events' from other religions into the Christian Tradition. Here, the question may be raised as to whether these rites and practices harmonise with what we

already know of God through the Gospel, or whether, on the reverse, they evoke responses which distort the Christian's grasp of faith. It cannot be doubted that the Church has 'baptised' practices, customs, and even beliefs belonging to those she converted in the past; indeed, she adopted the religious history of Israel as a type of her relationship to God, and made it part of the very foundation of faith. Can the religious histories and practices of other communities also provide types and insights which will strengthen men's grasp on the Christian message?

There are two kinds of problem, then, arising from the Church's acknowledgement of the validity of cultures other than that of Christian Europe: Firstly, there are problems arising because the same ideas are to be expressed in different ways; and secondly, there are problems arising from the fact that different cultures may be deemed to have additional contributions to make to the general store of Christian wisdom. (As in the case of theology's relationship with secular disciplines, the contribution of new ideas leads to the kind of pluralism which arises from the process of coming to terms with new data.) Although Vatican II gives an expansive welcome to the contributions and different modes of expression which various cultures can bring to the Church, it did not allow their value without qualification. There are, among the nations, "seeds" of goodness, to be healed, elevated and completed by the preaching of the Gospel (see LG 17); it is a secret presence of God, which must be freed from connections with evil (see AG 9.2), and all kinds of syncretism must be avoided (see AG 22.2, and also NA 2).

The pluralism of theology which arises from the Gospel's contact with many cultures is twofold. First, there is that which the Council envisaged, when it said that

> "in each great socio-cultural region . . . it is necessary to encourage a renewed consideration and investigation of the deeds and words revealed by God, which are contained in Scripture and explained by the Fathers of the Church and the Magisterium. This is to be done in the light of the universal Church's Tradition. In this way, it will be more clearly seen by what routes faith can seek understanding through taking account of the philosophy or wisdom of the nations." (AG 22.2)

This is the pluralism of expression which represents the breakdown of a single conceptual system in the Church, in much the same way as the pluralism which arises from the use of different philosophical frameworks in the training of clergy. But there is a second source of variability here, too: It is the diversity which must arise as different people come to different assessments of the appropriateness and significance of the additional contributions which the cultures of the world may be allowed to make to Christian Tradition, and especially to Christian practice.

While our study of the significance of Vatican II's attitude to philosophy indicated most clearly the extent to which pluralism in expression should lead to a withdrawal of the Magisterium from some of the areas in which it formerly exercised its authority, the analysis of the Council's treatment of cultural diversity highlights the kind of situation in which ordinary magisterial authority is still likely to be engaged. By allowing pluralism of expression generally, Vatican II indicated that it is not primarily the Magisterium's role to give positive leadership where the content and direction of theology is concerned; but by opening the field to pluralism in an area so delicate as inter-cultural interpretation, and by allowing that there are contributions which different societies may make, the Council stirred up a hornets' nest of potential debate and disagreement. Because the pluralism which arises from cultural differences and contributions is not likely to be confined to speculative theology, but may impinge directly on liturgy and other practices, there arises an immediate, practical need for a referee in this debated area. It is the Magisterium, of course, which reserves to itself the final authority to make such judgements, as part of its government of the life of the Church.

The overall result of the different ways in which Vatican II fostered the growth of theological pluralism, therefore, is to shift the emphasis away from the idea that the ordinary exercise of the magisterium should be the occasion for positive and content-filled teaching, given in an authoritative way and requiring religious obedience. However, pluralism does not abolish the need for the Magisterium to act as a disciplinary referee, making discerning judgements as to the propriety of different forms of expression, and different ideas and practices assimilated from outside the Church's

traditional borders. On the basis of such discernment the hierarchy makes decisions with practical effect. We see here, quite clearly, a re-expression and clarification of the idea that the exercise of the magisterium at this level is part of the function of governing the Church.

Whether the use of a disciplinary referee's authority in this way is to be socially plausible depends upon the delicacy with which the Magisterium pays respect to the pluralism which it, itself, has encouraged. Insensitive decisions and censures will run up against the tide of expected freedom which Vatican II's own teaching unleashed. In addition, positive teaching, utilising the arguments of one particular conceptual scheme, will not appear plausibly able to demand religious obedience which precludes debate and reinterpretation. If members of the hierarchy are to give positive direction to thought in the Church, rather than simply acting as restrained though vigilant watchdogs over theology and liturgy, their role in communicating ideas should be that of preachers (appealing to inner assent through the inherent persuasiveness of their argument and invitation) rather than that of teachers who can require obedience of mind, will, and spirit on a formal basis. The documents of Vatican II do not make this distinction clear, and failed to work out adequately a categorisation of the different roles which the Magisterium may take, but the relief pattern of their different arguments and admissions suggests that the way the Magisterium should normally play the theological game is through the medium of preaching; occasionally and discreetly it may make disciplinary decisions relating to the practice and teaching of others; it should not normally, however, put forward formal and positive doctrine which claims obedient acceptance simply on the basis of the representational status of members of the hierarchy.

3 The Validation of Dissent as an Authentic Catholic Stance

We have already briefly remarked that Vatican II's theology was largely influenced and formed by thinkers who had earlier been seen as dissident from the official position of the Magisterium. As Avery Dulles says,

> "Indirectly . . . the council worked powerfully to undermine the authoritarian theory and to legitimate dissent in the church . . . Vatican II quietly reversed earlier positions of the Roman magisterium on a number of important issues . . . As a result of . . . revisions of previously official positions, the council rehabilitated many theologians who had suffered under severe restrictions with regard to their ability to teach and publish . . . By its actual practice of revisionism, the council implicitly taught the legitimacy and even the value of dissent. In effect the council said that the ordinary magisterium of the Roman pontiff had fallen into error and had unjustly harmed the careers of loyal and able theologians." (72)

Among the revisions of the Council, Dulles instances reversals of position on ecumenism, religious freedom, the theology of secular reality, and biblical study. Among theologians rehabilitated he mentions John Courtney Murray, Teilhard de Chardin, Henri de Lubac, and Yves Congar.

If we turn once more to the subject of biblical study, we shall see a concrete example of the way in which the Council's teaching put the seal on a reversal of position. It is important to note that decisions of the past which Vatican II marked off as definitely "archival" (73) had once been binding, under the Catholic obligation of religious obedience to the ordinary teaching of the Magisterium. The decisions were originally taken on the grounds of 'security' for the Church's faith, but we shall see that they not only involved stifling frustration for eminent and loyal scholars, but also had deleterious pastoral effects in the long run.

The critical study of Scripture has had a chequered history in the Roman Catholic Church. Since the pontificate of Leo XIII there has been a gradual opening up to textual, literary, and historical criticism of the Bible, but the progress of this movement has not always been smooth. Both Benedict XV's encyclical of 1920, Spiritus Paraclitus, and a warning from the Holy Office in 1961, marked steps

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(72) "The Theologian and the Magisterium", pp. 10f.

(73) Brown, op. cit. p. 110.

back towards conservatism from positions which had previously seemed acceptable. If we focus on the effect of Spiritus Paraclitus, we find that it had an important influence in retarding the growth and refinement of historical criticism. We saw that in Providentissimus Deus Leo XIII had said that the principles which should be applied to the Bible's description of natural phenomena might also helpfully be applied in relation to history (see p.203 note 34). Some biblical scholars saw Leo XIII's words as an encouragement to go ahead with treating historical problems in Scripture by appeal to the idea that they arose because the writers of the Bible had employed conventional usages, forms of speech, and records. However, this approach was discouraged by Spiritus Paraclitus, which censured as erroneous any idea of a "relative truth", created by the opinions of the era in which Scripture was written; (74) Benedict XV upheld a theory of history as correspondence to facts.

Among those who felt that Benedict XV was closing a road which they had believed that Leo XIII had opened to them was the pioneer scholar M.-J. Lagrange. He wrote in his memoirs, "I . . . believed that I could discern in the encyclical 'Providentissimus' an invitation to make these distinctions [between popular modes of expressing history, more detailed and systematic accounts, etc.]. But I was mistaken, since H.H. Benedict XV interpreted his predecessor's words in another sense." (75) Lagrange's response to papal censures and restrictions was that of obedient silence; 1920 was not the only occasion in his life when he withdrew from fields of study which had come under official suspicion.

The results of the position taken up in Spiritus Paraclitus, as well as in a series of decrees of the Pontifical Biblical Commission given from the time of the Modernist crisis, (76) was that

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(74) (15 September 1920) AAS 12 (1920) p. 395. (Dz 2187/DzS 3653).

(75) Au service de la Bible (Paris, 1967) p. 129.

(76) The decrees began to be issued in 1905, and came in great spate till 1915. T.A. Collins and R.E. Brown say of them, "these decrees were precautionary in intent and, while conservative in tone, were often phrased with perception and nuance." ("Church Pronouncements" in Jerome Biblical Commentary (London, 1970) p. 625.) The decrees took the form of questions and answers on particular points, which enabled the Commission to establish the nuance it wished in its formulation of official position.

a decline in Catholic biblical exegesis became more and more marked, and scholars were unwilling to treat the Bible as a whole or to tackle major problems. Their attitude became defensive, and the lack of biblical education among clergy became a source of pastoral embarrassment when, during the inter-war period, the Catholic lay movements stimulated a return to Scripture among the faithful. (77)

It was in 1943 that a papal encyclical, Divino Afflante Spiritu opened the way forward again, giving instructions for future work rather than warning against dangers. The encyclical recognised the necessity of knowing the circumstances of a writer in order to understand what he had to say, (78) and sanctioned the analysis of literary forms (79). It acknowledged that exegesis should accord with established conclusions of secular disciplines as well as with Church doctrine, (80) and reminded scholars of the freedom that is theirs because little of Scripture has had its meaning authoritatively declared by the Church. (81)

Following Divino Afflante, in 1955 the secretary of the Biblical Commission declared that Catholic scholars now enjoyed full liberty with regard to matters treated in the Commission's earlier decrees, except where they touched on faith or morals - and few of them did directly. (82) This openness to critical conclusions was the position ratified and extended at Vatican II, (despite a setback in 1961). The significance of this is that the earlier measures, which were now fully superseded, had all, in their time, been binding on the consciences of Catholic scholars. (83) They had been promulgated

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(77) See J. Lévie, The Bible; Word of God in Words of Men (London, 1961) pp. 70 and 122-24.

(78) p. 314 (Dz 2294/DzS 3829).

(79) p. 315 (Dz 2294/DzS 3830).

(80) p. 319 (DzS 3831).

(81) loc. cit.

(82) See this statement in Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 18 (1956) pp.23-29.

(83) Pius X spoke of the decisions of the Pontifical Biblical Commission in these terms in a motu proprio of 1910: "All are bound in conscience to submit to the decisions of the Biblical Commission . . . and they cannot be free from the stigma of disobedience and temerity, nor be free from grave guilt whenever they impugn them these decisions either in word or writing." (Praestantia Sacrae Scripturae (Nov. 18 1907) (Dz 2113/DzS 3503).)

for the sake of 'security', but their value for the life of the Church had been dubious. We may say, then, that the history of Catholic biblical study, and the course of official pronouncements as they culminated at Vatican II, does not provide a strong and plausible recommendation for the use of disciplinary measures in controlling scholarship, while the concept of 'security' is shown to be ambivalent in relation to academic research of integrity.

Conclusion

In this section we have seen all the ways in which Vatican II's teaching pointed towards the idea that the Magisterium's ordinary role should be reduced by comparison with its exercise in the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. In particular, the Council both acknowledged and welcomed forces which would break up the single conceptual system of Catholicism and provide the basis for substantial theological pluralism. This dissolution makes it considerably less plausible for members of the hierarchy to lead the way in theology through authoritative statements argued according to the pattern of a particular culture and set of formal conceptual referents. Rather, they are given the role of vigilant protection of the Church's faith and practice, by making discerning judgements and provisions concerning the creative work of theologians. However, the complexity of the philosophical and cultural factors which the Council admitted into the formation of theological thought makes this task a very delicate office, open to much debate and challenge, particularly if it should seem to be exercised arbitrarily.

The ground is laid for the existence of vocal dissent in the Church both by the ways in which the Council encouraged Catholic scholars to act with liberty, and by its acknowledgement of the weighty autonomy of secular disciplines. These moves, together with the fact that Vatican II drew upon the fruits of what had previously been deemed dissent, create an impetus and an atmosphere in relation to which obedient silence in the face of over-reaching magisterial decisions seems increasingly implausible.

So far we have seen the extent to which the Second Vatican Council indicated that the members of the hierarchy should withdraw from a formal, representational teaching role (except in the sphere of infallible statements, which we shall consider in the next chapter) and the way in which it highlighted their task in simply guarding

broad boundaries of acceptability for the Church's belief and expression. We have not, however, seen substantial indications as to the force of their invitatory preaching, despite the fact that the Council located the origin of the Magisterium primarily in a preaching mission. The section which follows, however, will throw the apostolic commission to preach into sharper relief, and we shall consider the significance of the fact that this aspect of the magisterial task is made most clear in relation to the hierarchy's authority over the moral decisions taken by Catholics.

C) The Relationship of the Ordinary Magisterium to the Moral Decisions of Catholics: Shifts of Emphasis at Vatican II

In this section I shall argue that Vatican II posited a more modest role for the Magisterium than that which it previously held in the field of ethical authority and direction. However, in this field, the shift in the Council's effective concept of the Magisterium's authority was not so pronounced as the shift which we have already noted in its idea of the normal exercise of doctrinal authority. In the field of ethics and moral teaching the Fathers of Vatican II still clearly envisaged that the Pope and bishops might put forward positive, content-filled teaching on occasion, and that it might be expected to gain the obedient assent and application of the faithful. The pressures of pluralism which the Council admitted in the doctrinal sphere were not so fully acknowledged in the area of moral decision and direction; the Magisterium does not so markedly retreat here from its position of authoritative leadership, to one of merely marking out broad boundaries of acceptable behaviour and belief in the Church. There is a shift, then, but it is a smaller shift than that occurring in the doctrinal sphere - and because this shift in the moral sphere was less complete and less explicit than the other, it was quickly to become the source of tensions which were even more acute.

What were the points of relaxation and shift in Vatican II's picture of the Magisterium's authority over moral questions? Firstly, we shall take note of the fact that the Council allowed greater freedom of decision and choice than had been normal at some

points during the preceding century, but that this greater freedom for Catholics was allowed specifically in certain areas of ethical decision, and not in all. Secondly, we shall note that, just as in the sphere of doctrinal formulation and understanding the Council admitted a principle (that of critical, historical awareness of the cultural conditioning of Christianity) which was potentially explosive in the context of traditional, authoritative teaching, so too in the area of ethical understanding Vatican II introduced principles of thought and behaviour whose momentum and influence might eventually override the claims of traditional, authoritative teaching. The seeds of acute tension and dissension over moral questions are therefore quite clearly visible in the position put forward by the documents of Vatican II.

The section will be divided into three sub-sections. The first of these will deal with the way in which the Council partially withdrew the authority of the Magisterium from certain areas concerning the concrete application of moral principles, thus leaving Catholics more freedom in regard to these matters. The second subsection will deal with Vatican II's use of a modified natural law theory, since this modification of the basic pattern of Catholic ethical thought constituted one of the principles which was potentially explosive of the claims of authority. Finally, we shall focus upon the Council's stress on the importance of the Christian's interior attitude for the value of his moral actions, for this stress, too, prepared the ground for the challenges to magisterial authority which were to ensue after the Council.

1 The Withdrawal of the Magisterium from some areas of Detailed Precept

It is particularly in the sphere of social ethics that we can note a certain withdrawal of the Magisterium from the field of detailed precept in the teaching of the Second Vatican Council. Previously, although it had been theoretically acknowledged that the Church's general competence in formulating natural law principles did not always amount to a competence to make detailed practical judgements in 'mixed questions', the Popes had nevertheless often not desisted from giving rather precise injunctions in matters of politics

and social ethics: "When we look back . . . we are struck by the wealth of pronouncements, based on natural law, which went into detail on every issue. Natural law included not only first principles, but also all corollaries which were deduced from these principles." (84) Vatican II laid out the groundwork of a position in which the laity were more fully entrusted with responsibility for their decisions in political and social matters; this aspect of the Council's teaching must be associated both with a growing confidence on the part of the Magisterium, leading it to be less defensive and dominative, and also with Vatican II's more highly developed theology of the laity and of the autonomy of the secular sphere (see Chapter II, pp. 144f.).

In order to illustrate the shift in thought concerning political matters we may look back to Leo XIII's encyclical of 1890, Sapientiae Christianae. Leo wrote this:

> "besides the perfect concord that must reign in thought and deed, the faithful should accept religiously as their rule of conduct the political wisdom of ecclesiastical authority." (85)

The Pope's aim in 1890 was not specifically to support particular political parties, but at least to exercise an indirect power over the outcome of individual issues through the obedience of enfranchised Catholics. (The encyclical Sapientiae Christianae had as its most immediate aim the winning over of French Catholics to the existence and legitimacy of the Republic.) The theory of the indirect power was further promoted in several countries by the birth of movements of "Catholic Popular Action" and "Christian Democracy" during the pontificates of Leo XIII and Pius X. The Popes intended these movements to remain above party strife, but to influence the course of events indirectly by putting forward the Catholic position on social and political questions. This position was laid out in quite some detail from the time of Leo XIII onwards in the great series of social

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(84) P. Herder Dorneich, "How can the Church Provide Guidelines in Social Ethics?" in Concilium, 5 no. 4 (1968) p. 43.

(85) ASS 22 (1889/90) p. 400.

encyclicals which began with Rerum Novarum in 1891. (86)

By the time of Vatican II the series of social encyclicals had by no means come to an end, but the theological approach of the Council makes it unlikely that a Pope might in future speak of "political wisdom" as residing in the Magisterium, or that he might claim overall authority to make "judgements on social and economic matters". (87) Rather, the pattern put forward is more clearly that by which ecclesiastical authorities preach the principles of social and political justice in very general terms, leaving it for the layman, whose special sphere it is, to make concrete decisions in the light of the hierarchy's preaching:

> "Secular duties and activities belong to the laity particularly (though not exclusively) . . . Recognising what their faith requires, and strengthened by it, let them zealously take new initiatives at suitable moments, and carry them through. It is a matter for their properly formed conscience to inscribe the divine law on the life of the earthly city. Indeed, the laity may expect light and spiritual strength from priests, but they should not look upon their pastors as being so expert in every question that arises, however grave, as to be able to provide an immediate concrete solution; nor should they think that such is the pastors' mission. Rather, they, the laity, enlightened with Christian wisdom and paying respectful attention to the teaching of the Magisterium ('ad doctrinam Magisterii observanter attendentes') should shoulder their own part." (GS 43.2, emphasis mine).

This is the explicit teaching of Vatican II, and it is accompanied by the picture of the hierarchy as a body of preachers;

> "Now the bishops, who have received the charge of governing the Church of God, should so preach the message of Christ, along with their

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(86) 15 May 1891, ASS 23 (1890-91) pp.641-70 (see Dz 1938/DzS 3265-3271).

(87) Pius XI, encycl. Quadragesimo Anno (15 May 1931) AAS 23 (1931) p. 190 (see Dz 2253-70/DzS 3725-44).

> priests, that all the earthly activities of the faithful are bathed in the light of the Gospel." (GS 43.5) (88)

It is interesting to note that the language of Vatican II represents a shift of emphasis by comparison not only with the expressions of Leo XIII and Pius XI, but even by comparison with the teaching of John XXIII. In GS 43.3 there is a passage which deals with the legitimacy of different views among Catholics concerning secular matters; it is very similar to a passage in John XXIII's encyclical Mater et Magistra. However, where Pope John went on from his discussion of legitimate differences to say:

> "it is clear that when ecclesiastical authority has made pronouncements on a subject, Catholics are plainly bound to conform to its directives, because the Church has the right and duty not only of defending principles of morality and religion, but also of intervening authoritatively when it is a question of judging the application of these principles to concrete cases . . ." (89)

Gaudium et Spes, on the other hand, has no parallel strong statement concerning the Magisterium's authority over practical applications. All that we find within the article we are particularly studying is GS 43.2's reference to the "respectful attention" which Catholics should pay to the Magisterium. "Respectful attention" is not quite the same thing as the "conformity" to directives which John XXIII mentioned. There is, therefore, a distinct, if slight, shift in emphasis concerning the role of the Magisterium with regard to social and political matters.

It would be wrong to claim that this was anything more than a shift in emphasis, since the "prompt obedience" of the laity

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(88) For further passages relating to the responsibility of the laity in the secular sphere, see LG 31.2, 36.2 & 3, AA 4.5, 7.5, 13.1, 16.3, 31.4, AG 15.6, 21.3.
Concerning the hierarchy's duty to preach moral principles, see AA 7.4, 24.7, GS 76.3.

(89) p. 457 (emphasis mine).

to the hierarchy is mentioned elsewhere by Vatican II. (LG 37.2). However, the general conclusion may legitimately be drawn that the Council's concept of the hierarchy's task in secular matters is more closely allied to the idea of preaching than of teaching. The general principles of justice and respect for humanity which the Church puts forward are to win the hearts of the faithful through their inner relationship to the Gospel; any more concrete proposals enunciated by the Magisterium in the social and political area generally have the nature of suggestions or invitations to action. On the occasions on which the hierarchy does deal with this area of concern in a formally authoritative way, we may expect the obligatory character of what is said to inhere in negative injunctions ("this must be changed", "this is unacceptable in the light of the Gospel") which function to mark out boundaries of acceptability for Catholic moral behaviour. (90)

Finally, we should notice that because the shift of emphasis is integrally related to Vatican II's developed theology of the lay task in the secular sphere, it is by no means surprising to find that the laity themselves are to work for the development of the Church's social doctrine, as well as for its application (AA 31b).

2 The Modification of Natural Law Theory

We noted in an earlier section of this chapter that the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas and the other scholastic doctors was removed from its place of dominion in Roman Catholic philosophy by the measures of Vatican II. One might therefore expect that the theory of natural law, the child of classical thought which was so thoroughly hallowed and systematised by the scholastics, would perhaps be treated, along with the rest of scholasticism, as a valid but

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(90) see E. Schillebeeckx, "The Magisterium and the World of Politics" in Concilium, 6 no. 4 (1968) pp. 20f.
In the same article, Schillebeeckx points out the necessity for the positive, but invitatory kind of social teaching by the hierarchy, because the mere abstract statement of general principles is not sufficient to galvanise Christians into action. (p. 15) Vatican II creates a situation in which it is appropriate for the Church's leaders to act as social prophets, though not as social legislators.

replaceable conceptual scheme for ethics. In fact, Vatican II revitalised the idea of natural law as a current moral norm. Its use of the concept, however, owes much to post-Enlightenment humanism as well as scholasticism, and undercuts nineteenth-century neo-scholastic interpretations.

The idea of natural law was not dislodged from its normative role by the Council because it is a concept which permeates all that is distinctively Catholic in Christian thinking; it is directly intertwined with the assertion that human reason has a capacity to attain the truth concerning God and the world, on the basis of nature's evidence. In the case of natural law, it is asserted that men can know what is morally right through the witness of a law inscribed on their hearts. The idea is founded scripturally on Romans 2.14-16, and at Vatican II this passage was cited in GS 16, on the subject of conscience: "Man possesses a law inscribed on his heart by God; it is in obedience to it that man's dignity consists, and it is in accordance with its standard that he will be judged." Similarly, we are told in DH 14.3 that "the principles of the moral order . . . flow from human nature itself." (91) The Second Vatican Council, therefore, held to traditional assertions concerning natural law. However, there has been a distinct shift of emphasis concerning the character and criterion of the law which human conscience naturally perceives, and which the Church clarifies. The documents of the Council were by no means the initiators of this shift, for it was already to be found in the social encyclicals of John XXIII, preceding the Council, and even before that, the teaching of Pius XII provided a bridgehead to the new approach.

The essence of the renewal of natural law theory is this: Conscience is not treated as something which responds so much to abstract principles of nature, but rather is seen as finding its criterion through dialogue and relationship, and particularly through 'openness' to the transcendent: "Conscience is the most secret centre and sanctuary of man, in which he is alone with God, whose voice echoes in his heart" (GS 16). This capacity for relationship is the apex

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(91) The natural law, or the natural moral order, is referred to at several points in the documents of Vatican II. See, for example, IM 5, 7, AA 7.2, GS 89.1 .

of a hierarchy of values which form the shape of the moral law; therefore, the qualities which make men open to one another and to God are the overriding criteria by which moral decisions should be reached. Man, then, and more specifically, man-in-relationship, becomes the central point of ethical thought.

We may say that Pius XII provided a bridgehead into this kind of humanistic thought because he brought forward the idea that "human rights" forms a first chapter in social morality. (92) However, from another point of view, Pius XII may be called the last proponent of classical natural law ethics, for he saw the concept of a hierarchy of values as being dangerous - it might lead Catholics to relativise the precepts of natural and divine law which are based on aspects of man's nature other than those of openness and relationship. (93) Admittedly, Pius XII condemned a concept of a hierarchy of values which, he believed, attached to an ethic which simply made man the creator of his own moral law; (94) he did not conceive of the possibility that there might be a

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(92) Pius made "the dignity and rights of the human person" the first of his five points for the pacification of society in his Christmas message in 1942. He included among human rights those of access to social structures which permit and guarantee entire personal responsibility in the temporal, as well as in the eternal order (AAS 35 (1943) p. 19). This may be contrasted with the earlier, more paternalistic view of Leo XIII concerning what is due to the dignity of man; employers, for example, were told in Rerum Novarum not to treat workers as slaves, but to respect their human dignity: "It is for employers to ensure that the worker has enough time to consecrate to religion, that he is in no way made prey to corrupting temptations and incitements, that nothing weakens the family spirit in him, nor habits of economy . . ." (p. 649)
Despite the contrast between the part ascribed to active responsibility as a constituent of human dignity's expression, we should note Leo XIII was the father of the movement which brought consideration of human dignity more and more to the fore in Catholic thought.

(93) See alloc. to World Federation of Catholic Young Women (18 April 1952) AAS 44 (1952) pp. 413-19.

(94) ibid. pp. 414-16

mediating point between traditional concepts of abstract natural laws and the "situation ethics" which he denounced. Yet such a mediating position is possible, and was developed through the encyclicals of John XXIII who used the idea of a "law printed on man's heart" interchangeably with that of a hierarchy of values. (95) Similarly, Pope John located man's dignity and central place in ethics both in the fact that he enjoys a status of relationship - being a creature, a son of God, first and last cause of the whole creation - and also in the fact that man possesses the abstract qualities of intelligence and free will. (96)

In this way, then, Pope John prepared the way for Vatican II, which stresses the relational concepts of the Bible in its description of man (97), and tends to neglect the classical definitions of humanity in terms of abstract notions. We may term the chief emphasis of Vatican II, 'personalism', because it stresses the fact that personality, the capacity for openness in relationship, is the crown of ethical values. Although sub-personal values do not lose their status as part of the objective moral order, it is clearly stated that "the order of things must be subject to the order of persons" (GS 26.3).

Although the Second Vatican Council represented a step forward towards a more personalist concept of natural law, the teaching of the Council was not unambiguous; there are points at which we see

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(95) For example, in Mater et Magistra John XXIII spoke of the need for Catholics to retain a lucid and vivid consciousness of the hierarchy of values in their approach to the idolatry of modern life (p. 457). In Pacem in Terris (encycl., (11 April 1963) AAS 55 (1963)) he spoke of the laws inscribed on men's hearts which should govern international relations (p. 258), of the law of nature (p. 264) and also of the fact that the foundation of the moral order is found in a personal, transcendent God, whose attributes he described with the help of a quotation from St. Thomas (pp. 266f.).

(96) See Pacem in Terris p. 259 and Mater et Magistra pp. 452f.

(97) Vatican II's Christian anthropology makes extensive use of the motif of God's image in man, and expounds this in terms of capacity for relationship (see especially GS 12). This theme will be investigated more fully in Chapter VII of this thesis.

a personalist view struggling to come to terms with an ethical structure which was erected on the foundations of a classical concept of natural law. This is particularly the case in Gaudium et Spes' chapter concerning marriage and the family.

The tension between traditional concepts of natural law, and the newer stress on relationship between persons, appears most clearly in GS 50 and 51, which deal with questions of marriage and parenthood. Some members of the Council hoped that these articles would form the preamble to a new papal teaching on birth control, and elements of the newer style of ethical thinking appear in them which appear to open up that possibility. At the same time, however, the Council Fathers were not allowed to make a definite and clear-cut decision on the issue, which would cut across previous magisterial teaching; indeed, reference is made in these articles to earlier teachings, which had relied on concepts of traditional natural law, based on the essence of things.

Concretely, then, the tension is one between two sets of criteria for ethical decision-making: On the one hand, there appear the norms which are based on the essence of things - norms to which married couples should conform their consciences, remaining docile to the Magisterium of the Church, which is the law's authentic interpreter (see GS 51.3 and 50.2) - and on the other hand there appear the demands which arise out of responsibility for the future and from the requirements of self-giving love (see the same passages). The members of the Council explicitly recognised this tension (GS 51.1) and attempted to find a point of reconciliation between the two sets of moral criteria. To do this, it utilised the concept of the human person:

> "When the question arises of finding the moral way in which conjugal love and the responsible transmission of life should be harmonised, the answer is not dependent solely upon sincerity of intention and motivation; it also depends upon objective criteria, drawn from the nature of the person and his actions - criteria which respect the full sense of mutual self-giving and fully-human procreation in the context of true love." (GS 51.3, emphasis mine).

It was in this concept of the human person that the Council tried to find a norm which would combine the idea of an eternal, fixed order of morality, with that of responsible openness to the present and future demands of loving relationship. The logic behind this use of the notion of the person appears to be unassailable, in a formal sense, because the human person may be said to be that part of creation which is open to the future precisely because of the nature which it has been given from all eternity. However, the formal solution does not in this case really resolve the tension concerning the practical determinants of action: Is the eternal nature of the person, which acts as a norm, to be located by reference to a biological 'given', or by reference to experimental and relational factors?

The argument of GS 50 and 51, for all its ambiguity in practical terms, represents a distinct shift in favour of what we have termed personalism, for, despite its references to the eternal nature of things, it attempts to integrate such older-style teaching within a framework which makes the human person in relationship as the prevailing norm, rather than impersonal or abstract 'nature'.

The significance of the shift, which we have just traced through one concrete case, is this: Whereas in the sphere of doctrine the Council opened up the possibility of re-expression and reinterpretation of Catholic faith according to a variety of conceptual schemes, in the sphere of moral teaching Vatican II itself set out upon the road of a specific kind of reinterpretation. The classical natural law theory was brought into dialogue with post-Enlightenment humanism, to give birth to a Christian humanism of persons - persons who are essentially and not merely 'accidentally' social, and whose dignity lies in their capacity for relationship.

This modification of the theory of natural law is potentially subversive of the authority of future magisterial teaching for two reasons. Firstly, although the Council did not consistently work out the application of its ethical theory in regard to every issue (and it particularly failed to do so in relation to the moral decisions of married couples, as we have seen above) its shift towards the adoption of this theory is too marked to be reversed. That is to say, the Council helps to create a situation in which it

becomes socially implausible for the Magisterium to enforce moral teaching solely based on a concept of 'law' with its corollary of 'offence against God'. A simple return to appeals to traditional natural law ethics would fail, because it would fail to take account of the sense (which most modern ideologies express) that man is the subject of his history, both collective and personal, and that human history and relationships are the centre of moral concern.

Secondly, we must note that the concept of a hierarchy of values in which the values of personhood-in-relationship form the crown, encourages the elevation of the individual conscience as a criterion in ethical decision. Conscience expresses personal freedom, and also (as it is presented in the theology of Vatican II) a capacity for dialogue with others, with God, and with the situation it faces. The exercise of conscience becomes, itself, a value to be protected and nurtured, because it bespeaks the existence of fully personal life. Once the exercise of conscience begins to appear as a value in itself, and not simply as the means to an end which is essentially external to the individual's freedom, there arises a tension between personal decision and the demands of heteronomous authority.

This second point must not be overstated, because the aim of a moral theory such as that expressed in the documents of Vatican II is to trace a middle way between abstract legalism and an individualist ethic of autonomous decision. In doing so, it aims to preserve the idea that there <u>are</u> objective normative principles, and that the individual does not simply manufacture his own hierarchy of values. Nevertheless, it is clear that the status of freedom and conscience are heightened as ethical objects, and it is significant that they are particularly heightened in relation to values from a lower place on the scale than those which are immediately concerned with personality and relationship. Therefore it is not to be wondered at, in this context, if the exercise of conscientious decision over matters such as birth control has been widely championed against the Magisterium's insistence that biological, natural factors should be accepted as sacrosanct norms - norms which the Magisterium integrates uneasily within the theory of human relationships' necessary conditions.

We find, then, that the approach taken by Vatican II to the matter of moral theology, and particularly to the character of natural law, effectively reduces the scope of authoritative ethical teaching which can plausibly command assent. In the first place, it restricts the theology of the teaching which can plausibly be given, to pronouncements which express a broadly person-centred ethic, (or at least some ethic which comes to terms equally well with post-Enlightenment humanism). Secondly, within the terms of such an ethic, teaching is likely to be concretely authoritative precisely in proportion to its concern with the central values of personhood-in-relationship.

3 The Importance of the Christian's Interior Attitude

In Chapter II we saw that the traditional teaching of the Church has always suggested that one should obey conscience rather than the voice of the Church, if there should be a clash between them. It remains for God to adjudicate whether the person who follows his conscience in such a case is culpable - because of a failure to conform his reason to what is objectively morally true - or whether this is a case in which the Magisterium is objectively at fault (see pp. 81f.). However, because of the theory of indefectibility, the idea which has been prevalent has strongly given the balance of probability to the rectitude of the Church's official pronouncements. With Vatican II, however, a principle has been introduced which not only tilts the balance towards conscience as a norm, but also makes the exercise of conscience into an object and aim of moral endeavour and nurture.

We move now from the question of the importance of conscience seen from the point of view of those who might be excluded from the Church because of their obedience to it, and turn instead to the question of the interior attitude of those who are to remain within the Church, obedient to its teaching. LG 14.2 proclaims that "someone who is incorporated in the Church, but does not persevere in charity, is not saved; he belongs to the Church 'in body' but not 'in heart'."

It is very significant that Lumen Gentium's teaching takes this form; it shows a real concern with the question of the Christian's interior attitude. Pius XII, for example, had felt it necessary to stress a very different point - namely, that not every

evil deed, not even mortal sin, necessarily breaks someone's incorporation in the Church. (98) His argument focused upon the outward reality; Vatican II prefers, however, to direct its attention to inward relationships.

A second point of contrast can be drawn between LG 14.2's statement and the assertion of Pius XII: While the latter described the one who cuts himself off from grace as one who commits "gravely evil sin" ('admissum . . . grave scelus'), Vatican II, on the other hand, speaks of a failure to persevere in charity. Now, of course, the distinctively Catholic notion of mortal sin derives precisely from the idea that certain acts, by their very nature, cut one off from the life of charity and grace; therefore, Vatican II's phrase might be understood in a restrictive sense as referring simply to the commission of formal mortal sins. However, the concept of failing in charity also has wider connotations, for it removes the emphasis from particular acts and concentrates it rather upon man's inner disposition. Even outwardly correct actions can lack charity, and it is charity which counts for salvation.

This stress on man's inward disposition raises a further question concerning the implications of the Council's teaching, which we shall have to leave open at this point: Namely, can charity not only subsist alongside objectively sinful tendencies (which is St. Thomas' teaching (99)), but even also be expressed through acts which do not in fact conform objectively to the natural law as it is taught by the Church? For example, might involvement in abortion be undertaken in 'good faith', although in error, and be suffused with a real, though misdirected charity?

We can sum up Vatican II's position on the importance of practising obedience in the Church (without attempting to answer the above question) by saying that the text which deals most directly with the connection between Church membership and salvation threw the emphasis very firmly onto the issue of human disposition as the determining factor. While the importance of man's inner disposition has always been recognised by the Roman Catholic Magisterium,

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(98) Encycl. Mystici Corporis (29 June 1943) AAS 35 (1943) p. 203 (DzS 3803)

(99) See Aquinas ST 1a 2ae, q. 65, a. 3.

the teaching of LG 14 differs from that of some previous documents of the hierarchy, in that it does not suggest that inner disposition is primarily to be measured against a formal, extrinsic table of the degrees of sinfulness of actions. This shift is very slight, and takes place without offending any of the canons of classical Catholic moral theory. The life of charity in the Church can still be understood as a life of conformity to the Magisterium's teaching, moved by virtue within. However, an opening is also left for another possibility, and for a wider notion of the charity which leads to salvation. In addition, the stress on interiority harmonises well with the Council's enhanced teaching on conscience, and also with the idea that many of the Magisterium's moral pronouncements take the form not of command, but of prophetic appeal and invitation, because they deal with 'mixed questions'. The authority of an appeal lies not in its formal power to require conformity, but in its substance, and in its capacity to commend itself to the inner dispositions of the hearers' hearts.

Conclusion

I have argued that Vatican II did not withdraw the teaching authority of the hierarchy from the field of morals to the same extent as it pulled back this authority in the area of doctrine and theological expression. Only with regard to social and political issues was there a clear shift towards the role of preaching rather than teaching; as regards other kinds of moral decision, the Council continued to envisage that the Magisterium should have the concrete capacity to give quite detailed teaching in the form of precepts based upon divine and natural law. However, by modifying the traditional concept of natural law, and by stressing the importance of personalistic and interior criteria for the formation of ethical decisions, Vatican II effectively introduced principles which were potentially subversive of heteronomous, magisterial authority in moral questions.

Why was it that the Council did not explicitly allow for greater freedom of interpretation in relation to moral law? Partly, of course, because it has always been recognised that in individual

cases calling for moral decision there is necessarily an exercise of prudence in application of the law. Therefore, to some degree, the individual's freedom is written into basic Catholic presuppositions about morality; this degree of freedom in minute application is so clearly understood that it need scarcely be adverted to in documents such as those of Vatican II. Nevertheless, the crucial point at issue here does not concern the well-understood necessities for the use of prudence and for acts of conscience; rather, it concerns the question, why were these forms of freedom and individualisation not explicitly extended by the Council in any area other than that of social ethics?

The answer must lie in the nature of human action, as contrasted to the nature of human belief and profession: Whilst the man who re-expresses traditional doctrines through the medium of different cultures or conceptual schemes may be attributed the quality of 'good faith' in his efforts to reinterpret the traditions positively, the man who, on the other hand, reinterprets the norms of actions, may carry through his 'reinterpretation' into acts which, only too clearly, directly contradict the settled requirements of Church membership. There is an 'either/or' quality about many forms of human action, which does not inhere in human language and expression. For this reason, the Catholic hierarchy, actualising the authority to define boundaries of what is acceptable in the Church community, appears able to be more directive as concerns moral issues than it does in regard to doctrinal issues. Only in the field of secular concerns, where Vatican II had developed a more thorough theology of the autonomy of that which is worldly from that which is churchly, does the Council overtly allow greater scope to the individual's interpretation and decision. It must also be said that in the field of social morality, issues are rarely clear-cut in terms of 'either/or'; this is an area of what has been termed 'mixed questions', involving expertise and judgement of facts, as well as purely moral decision.

It is outside the field of what are acknowledged to be 'mixed questions' that particular problems arise, for the effect of the Council's elevation of conscience, interiority, and values of personhood, is to create an area in which Christians may claim

that they have a right and duty to form their own judgements; their possession of active conscience gives them the capacity to make such judgements, while the idea of a hierarchy of values gives them room for assessing the claim of one value against another. These two factors combine to create an area in which the laity may be expected to dispute the Magisterium's moral expertise, seeking to extend the boundaries of independence, and to reduce the area covered by precept. An extension of the Christian's moral independence would, in turn, implicate an extension of the boundaries of what is acceptable in the Church. This is one of the points of greatest tension bequeathed by the Second Vatican Council; we shall refer to it again in the chapter which follows.

CHAPTER V: VATICAN II AND THE NATURE OF THE ASSENT IMPLIED IN ITS TREATMENT OF INFALLIBILITY

The purpose of this chapter is to develop our analysis of Vatican II's concept of Catholic obedience in relation to the Council's presentation of the doctrine of 'infallibility'. It will not be a long chapter, and it will approach the subject of 'infallibility' only from those angles which are connected to our concern with obedience and assent. Although it is not appropriate here to deal with all the manifold philosophical and theological implications of the idea, it is yet necessary to give a limited treatment of the doctrine of 'infallibility' within the context of this thesis, because the distinctive Roman Catholic appropriation of the notion holds such a pivotal place in the theology of that communion.

As I have indicated since the beginning of the thesis, the issue of social plausibility is a dimension of discussion which will particularly come to the fore in this chapter. This is because the issue of absolute assent to teaching which claims inherent 'infallibility' provides a particularly interesting example of the problem of plausibility in a post-Enlightenment age: The idea of 'infallibility' ultimately suggests that authority need make no appeal to any functional, experimental, or historical validation before it demands assent to certain teachings. This is a dramatic claim. We shall consider what kind of assent might nowadays plausibly be expected as a response to 'infallible' authority, and the extent to which Vatican II's picture of appropriate assent matches up to that which we might plausibly expect Catholics to yield, in the post-Conciliar era.

In setting the agenda for this chapter we are not intending to undertake an exhaustive exercise in the sociology of ideas, nor are we assuming that twentieth-century Catholics all share the same plausibility structures, nor that their response to the demands of the Magisterium will be similar. If something is described as 'implausible' this does not mean that it would seem so

to all - or even to a majority - of Catholics. Rather, it means that the doctrine or idea described in this way is likely to be unacceptable to a significant number of Roman Catholics - a number whose exit from the Church would make a major statistical difference in some countries at least. Thus, something which is plausible in Poland or Zaire might be seriously implausible in the United States, and its implausibility within that country alone would have implications for the nature and effectiveness of Church authority in general. Further, to clarify our use of the idea of implausibility in this chapter, we must note that one effect of an implausible teaching may not be the exterior defection of Church members, but rather an 'interior emigration', whereby loyalty to doctrinal authority is rescinded without the repudiation of Church membership or even, perhaps, of other forms of warm loyalty towards the Church's leaders. At this point we may recall what was said in the Preface: "The doctrine of obedience put forward might have concrete effects which were not intended or envisaged, as it comes into interaction with the Church's social context" (p. 9). It is in this perspective that questions about the social plausibility of Vatican II's idea of 'infallibility' and absolute assent will be examined.

A) Assent to Definitions Made in the Past

When we analyse the question, 'What kind of assent should be afforded to past statements of the 'infallible' Magisterium?', we find that we are dealing with the issue of reinterpretation and re-expression of formal definitions. How far do dogmas and definitions require reinterpretation if assent is to be a plausible requirement throughout the Church? If they do need reinterpretation or re-expression, who is to control it, and what is the force of the statements through which such control is exercised? The first of these two questions is the starting point for sub-section 1; in sub-section 2 we shall examine some examples of the way in which the Magisterium has concretely acted as controlling referee in the activity of reinterpretation and re-expression of the deposit of faith. This will lead us to consider the social plausibility of this control, and of the disciplinary decisions based upon it.

1 How far do Definitions of the Past require Reinterpretation?

In this sub-section we shall partially retrace some of the ground covered in Chapter IV, when we considered the factors leading to pluralism of theological expression which Vatican II allowed (see pp. 200-30). We shall here be examining the effect of these factors upon the way in which defined doctrine is to be understood and expressed in different generations. For the sake of clarification, we shall begin by setting up three models of ways in which the language of dogma may be said to function in relation to the divine truth which it expresses.

Three theories of the nature of dogmatic language:

Theory (i) The language of dogma reflects what is true in such a way that the relations between one truth and another dictate the structure and form of the language used, so that other structures and forms of language would be less accurate.

Theory (ii) The language of dogma is culturally-conditioned, and may therefore change, but man's grasp of divine truth (which he expresses through a variety of different cultural forms) is objectively accurate, and may successfully be communicated through the use of a conceptual form appropriate to the hearer. There is, then, an unchanging **true** sense, or central idea, underlying different kinds of expression through which it is communicated.

Theory (iii) The language of dogma is man's attempt to articulate an attitude or experience which has been evoked by divine reality. The divine reality itself, however, remains ultimately inexpressible, eluding the grasp of language.

These theories have been very crudely delineated, and we shall see that they shade into one another to some extent. In particular, Theory (ii) and Theory (iii) may easily be confused with one another, since both support efforts constantly to re-express doctrine. However, there is also an interesting area where Theory (i)

shades into Theory (ii) in connection with the idea of limitation in doctrinal statements, and their need for development.

The philosophy underlying Vatican I's treatment of Church doctrine was primarily related to Theory (i); the First Vatican Council did not envisage the replacement of definitive formulae by others, but instead tried to fix in a permanent way the sense in which the formulae of the past should be understood: "If anyone says that, because of the progress of knowledge, it might sometimes be possible to attribute to the dogmas which the Church has proposed a meaning other than that by which the Church has understood them, and by which it continues to understand them, anathema sit." (1) Although the text of Dei Filius quoted Vincent of Lérins to the effect that the Church might have an ever-deepening understanding of its own doctrine (2) the prevailing neo-scholastic concept of this deepening understanding, was that an ever-increasing body of deductions, might be reached by Aristotelian syllogisms from first premises afforded by fixed, and well-understood formulae. (3) Therefore, for Vatican I, any limitations in the Magisterium's solemn definitions did not derive so much from the historical relativity of the concepts and language used, but rather from the incompleteness of a chain of deductions which might always be further extended and polished within the terms of the original conceptual framework.

We find this idea of incompleteness very clearly expressed by Pius XII in his encyclical of 1950, Humani Generis: "Anyone can see that the expressions of this kind of idea which are given to us either by the schools or by the Magisterium are capable of being completed and polished," he acknowledged, (4) but nevertheless, the

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(1) Dei Filius, cap. 4, can. 3 (Dz 1818/DzS 3043).

(2) "There is a growth . . . and a great strengthening in the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom of both individuals and of us all corporately, both of each man, and of the entire Church, as age or the centuries progress; but always according to its proper kind, that is, according to the same line of teaching, according to the same sense, and the same meaning"('in suo . . . genere, in eodem scilicet dogmate, eodem sensu eademque sententia'). (Vincent of Lérins, quoted in Dei Filius, cap. 4, (Dz 1800/ DzS 3020).

(3) See G. A. McCool, Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Century, pp. 9f.

(4) encycl. Humani Generis, p. 566 (Dz 2311/DzS 3883).

terms of definitions which have been reached by the common agreement of Catholic doctors over several centuries:

> "do not rest on such a fragile basis [as that of a passing philosophy]; of this there is no doubt. They rest, rather, on principles and notions deduced from a true knowledge of the nature of created things. In making these deductions and coming to this knowledge, the human mind was enlightened by divinely-revealed truth, which shone upon it like a star through the Church." (5)

Therefore, while Pius XII admitted that the Church's official and traditional formulae of faith might be limited, it was a limitation in the extent of human knowledge which he saw as the root cause, rather than a limitation caused by the historical and cultural relativity of different conceptual schemes and linguistic forms. His picture of the nature of dogma derived primarily from the premises of Theory (i): The nature of created things is changeless, and a true understanding of them provides man with a changeless conceptuality which is a fit analogical vehicle for conveying divine truths and their relationship to each other and the world. The Church's language enshrines the universally true conceptuality, and sets forth teachings which - although analogical - are not dependent for their lucidity and accuracy in conveying truth upon any historically contingent factors.

By contrast, Vatican II moves more fully towards Theory (ii), allowing that the form of our analogical knowledge about God is affected by factors of culture, history, and the advance of studies in non-theological fields. This is why the Council did not merely admit pluralism into the area of undefined doctrine, but also spoke of the need to re-express the content of the central deposit of faith:

> "theologians . . . are invited always to look for a more fitting way of communicating doctrine to the men of their time; for the deposit of faith is one thing, but the way in which it is expressed is another, providing it is always according to the same sense and meaning." (GS 62.2)

Because of the insistence of this passage upon the "same sense and meaning, (6) it is clear that Vatican II did not espouse

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(5) loc. cit., emphasis mine.

(6) 'eodem . . . sensu eademque sententia' - compare note (2), above. This passage of Guadium et Spes follows a lead given by Pope John XXIII in his opening address to Vatican II on 11 October 1962 (see AA 54 (1962) p. 792).

Theory (iii). At the same time, however, it did not follow Pius XII in identifying all moves towards re-expression and re-interpretation of the defined deposit with an ineluctable drift into sceptical relativism. (7). The problem remains, of course, of determining the one true meaning and sense which attaches to Catholic doctrine, and which must survive the process of re-expression and reinterpretation. Who is to say what are the essential truths contained in Catholic dogma? And how can the appropriateness of new forms of expression be evaluated?

Before we turn to consider the Magisterium's role in controlling and vetting possible forms of re-expression, we must briefly take note of the fact that Vatican II's theology of faith has a bearing upon its theory of dogmatic language. We have seen that the Council treated faith as an integral whole, in which both assent and attitude are intimately united (see pp. 211f.). By and large, it abandoned talk about 'the mysteries' of faith, and

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(7) In the following passage from Humani Generis we find a progression of thought which, by association, finally links proponents of our Theory (ii) with thorough-going relativists:

> "they say that the way lies open to satisfy the necessities of the day by expressing dogma according to the concepts of modern philosophy . . . In addition to this, some even claim that it is possible and necessary to be bolder still, because the mysteries of faith can never be expressed adequately in correct concepts ('notionibus . . . veris') but only in 'approximate' ideas as they call them; and these are always changeable, indicating truth in some way, but always, perforce, distorting it, too. Therefore they see no absurdity in substituting new concepts for old, holding, rather, that this is completely necessary for theology, which should, over the course of years, use various philosophies as tools. Thus, in different ways (and sometimes even through contradictory ideas all of which are said to have equal value) the same divine truths are rendered into human terms. They even go on to say that the history of dogma consists in translating the various forms which revealed truth has taken into the forms which succeed them, according to differing doctrines and opinions which have arisen in the course of the years.
> "It is clear . . . that endeavours of this kind do not only lead to dogmatic 'relativism', as it is called, but in fact contain it; indeed, it is very much favoured by any disrespect for the traditional common doctrine, and the forms in which it is expressed."
> (Humani Generis, p. 566 (Dz 2310f./DzS 3882f.).

instead stressed a single, central 'mystery', which is the object of relationship as much as of objective knowledge. (8) In doing this, the Council Fathers did not by any means adopt a theory of man's knowledge of God which conforms to Theory (iii) in our scheme, but they did stress the fact that our objective (or abstractive) knowledge of divine truth - expressed in the analogical language of doctrine - exists in immediate relation to a horizon of personal (and not fully expressible) knowledge of the divine mystery. What man can say about God must ring true with what he knows of God in the personal, inexpressible knowledge of love. This renewed emphasis given by the Council to the human being's interior relationship with the mystery of God's love and action, tends to indicate that the individual's inner experience must, to some degree, be taken into account as a criterion for adjudging the validity of any re-expression of Christian doctrine.

In order to answer briefly the question posed on p. 248, namely, 'how far do dogma and definitions from the past require reinterpretation at all?', we may say that Vatican II gives the answer: They require re-expression in so far as the conceptual schemes in which they are couched do not remain clearly comprehensible in relation to changing cultural and epistemological conditions. They require re-expression simply in order to continue to communicate the same essential truths to men of different generations and cultures.

2 How can the Magisterium concretely and effectively apply Criteria Controlling Doctrinal Reinterpretations?

So that we may clarify the issues surrounding the Magisterium's control of the reinterpretation of doctrine, it will be helpful to have a concrete case before us. After examining this, we may ask what theological questions it raises, and how far magisterial control of this kind is socially plausible. We shall take as our example the debate in the Roman Catholic Church con-

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(8) For example,

> "This conversion, although it is to be considered only a beginning, is enough for man to see himself as turned away from sin through it, in order to be introduced into the mystery of God's love; for God calls man to enter into personal relationship with himself in Christ." (AG 13.2)

cerning monogenism - the doctrine that the entire human race is descended from a single couple, from whom, in some way, original sin is transmitted. This debate is particularly interesting for us, because important episodes in it occurred both before and after the Second Vatican Council.

The issue of monogenism relates to questions concerning both the relationship between the Bible and dogma, and also the relationship between dogma and natural science. As regards the first of these, we should note that Pius XII reminded scholars in 1943 that only relatively few scriptural passages were, in themselves, the subjects of definitions concerning their meaning and significance. (9) In 1948, a letter of the Pontifical Biblical Commission clarified what this meant in relation to the early chapters of Genesis: The details of the Genesis stories do not belong to the body of defined truth, because they belong to the field of "popular description" of the origin of the human race, and they take the form of "simple and figurative language, suited to the understanding of less sophisticated peoples"; (10) however, within the 'husk' of these details are enshrined "fundamental truths presupposed in the economy of salvation". (11) We see, then, that dogma is not necessarily lifted directly from the pages of the Bible, nor even from any other pre-existent 'source of revelation'; dogma is not always immediately vulnerable to the effects of criticism directed against the literal accounts afforded in Scripture.

With regard to the origins of the race, however, there has been a certain ambivalence over the question as to whether a single proto-couple's existence is a necessary part of the body of fundamental Christian truth. Pius XII could not, in 1950, see how the doctrine of original sin could be kept intact if Catholics came to accept that the human race was descended from more than one couple:

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(9) encycl, Divino Afflante, p. 319 (DzS 3831).

(10) Letter from the Secretary of the Pontifical Biblical Commission to Cardinal Suhard, (16 Jan. 1948) AAS 40 (1948) p. 47 (DzS 3864).

(11) loc. cit.

> "It is by no means clear how such a view can be made to accord with what the sources of revealed truth and the teachings of the Magisterium propose concerning the original sin which proceeds from a sin actually committed by an individual, Adam, and which is transmitted by generation to all men, so that it is present in every individual." (12)

Because of this incompatibility, as he saw it, between polygenistic theories and the dogma concerning original sin, Pius XII said that Christians could not hold the view either that men existed after Adam who were not descended from him, or that 'Adam' signified a multitude of men. (13) However, the careful phrasing of the Pope's assault on polygenistic theories indicated that such prohibitions sprang from the motive of 'security' for the Church's doctrine. If this 'security' could be maintained in another way - that is, if it could be shown how polygenism might be made to accord with the Church's essential dogma - the need for the prohibition would disappear. The idea of a single first couple, and its parenthood of the entire human race, could then be disposed of, if necessary, by being deemed merely a further layer of the symbolic 'husk' in which a central core of essential truth had been communicated inviolately throughout the centuries.

We have examined some of the theological problems associated with the idea of 'security', as well as its social implausibility, in Chapter IV (see pp.184-89). One of the effects of Vatican II was to make the principle of 'security' relatively even less weighty than formerly, particularly in a case such as that of the debate over monogenism. This was because of the Council's strong statement of the autonomy and value of secular disciplines and their conclusions (see pp. 211-14); in the face of this affirmation, the idea of prohibiting Catholic anthropologists from supporting academically respectable theories in their own field, becomes less and less plausible if the motive is that of doctrinal 'security' alone.

It is significant, therefore, that after the Council, in

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(12) encycl. Humani Generis, p. 576 (Dz 2328/DzS 3897).

(13) loc. cit.

1968 when a Commission of Cardinals produced a declaration on the contents of the controvertial Dutch Catechism, the position of Pius XII was not taken up. Instead, a greater area of acknowledged uncertainty was allowed among Catholics concerning man's origin. The Cardinals did not specifically prohibit theories of polygenism; instead, they set out the bare boundaries within which Catholics must think if their ideas are to be compatible with what is seen as an essential core of the doctrine of original sin. Namely, it must be maintained that "man . . . rebelled against God at the beginning of history", and the impression must not be given by Catholic teachers that the effect of original sin is mediated to the individual simply through his environment. Within these boundaries the scientific debate of anthropologists concerning human origins is open to Catholics. (14)

The example of the debate over monogenism is particularly instructive for us, because it shows that the atmosphere fostered by Vatican II was one in which it had become more possible to admit that the Church had, in the past, mistaken the symbolic 'husk' of a doctrine for the essential truth which lay at its core. Furthermore, the Council's encouragement of honest dialogue and mutual enrichment between theology and other disciplines tended to make any insistence upon the maintenance of the 'husk' of dogmas, for the motive of 'security', look outmoded. If real autonomy is truly to be allowed to the secular disciplines, and if theology is genuinely to step from its protected pinnacle into the arena of dialogue, reinterpretation of dogma is bound to take place. Wide areas of potential debate and uncertainty, concerning the exact meaning and scope of essential dogmatic truth are thus opened up by the Council.

Where does the authority of the Magisterium stand, and what is its concrete power? In relation to the atmosphere which Vatican II fostered, a foreclosure of areas of debate through the exercise of sheer authority looks increasingly implausible. Whilst a decisive prohibitive move would not exceed the theoretical scope

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(14) Declaration of the Commission of Cardinals (15 October 1968) AAS 60 (1968) pp. 687f.

of magisterial power as set forth by the Council, it would almost certainly overreach the Magisterium's effective power to elicit assent from all Catholics.

We find, then, that the fruit of Vatican II's admission of the necessity for re-expression and reinterpretation of the truths of faith has an inbuilt potential to create a situation in the Church rather different to that which the Council intended; for, whilst the Council Fathers held that there was a constant and unchanging meaning to doctrine which might readily be expressed through different forms in relation to man's increasing and changing knowledge, it seems, in fact, that this constant meaning may be difficult to locate. Not only may one debate whether or not a meaning is appropriately communicated in any particular setting, but one may also question whether a particular idea belongs to the essence, or merely to the 'husk' of Catholic dogma. Because Vatican II ratified the social and cultural pluralism which sparks off such debates and questions in the first place, it contributed a powerful element to an atmosphere in which the halting of debate through sheer authority increasingly seems arbitrary, even when the concept of 'security' in believing is called upon as justification for the Magisterium's action.

What, then, must be the concrete results of Vatican II's teaching? Either the Magisterium must be prepared to leave many areas of debate and uncertainty open, even at the risk of seeming to cede ground over what is essential in the Church's doctrine; or else, it may use the powers which Vatican II left to it for the taking of decisions with disciplinary effect - decisions which uphold its own interpretation of the defined body of doctrine inherited from the past. In taking such decisions, particularly if they should seem to have been taken without delicacy, the hierarchy runs the risk of creating a set of demands for belief which are implausible to a significant body of Catholics, and which may therefore prompt either interior emigration from the norms of obedience, or else large-scale public defections from the Church. We may say, then, that the Magisterium can only apply criteria controlling reinterpretation and re-expression of dogma effectively if it does so with the greatest delicacy, and with arguments which convince by their own merits; otherwise its theoretically great authority may become increasingly ineffectual in the hearts and minds of Catholics.

Conclusion

We return to the overarching question of this section: What kind of assent should be afforded to past statements of the 'infallible' Magisterium? Clearly, assent does not amount to mere verbal repetition of formulae of the past; indeed, Vatican II shows that active assent may involve a degree of reinterpretation and re-expression. Clearly, too, the Magisterium of the present has an interest in such reinterpretations and re-expressions, and the Council does not rescind the Catholic's duty to be guided by the boundaries which the hierarchy sets upon the hermeneutical process. However, there are factors within the Council's own teaching which add impetus to rebellions against the Magisterium's decisions - namely, the factors which encourage pluralism, enhance the autonomy of secular disciplines, and make the idea of 'security' a more questionable ecclesiastical value than it used to be. Finally, we should add that most decisions of the Magisterium concerning the interpretation of defined doctrine inherited from the past do not themselves have the form of 'infallible' pronouncements. Therefore, although any such decision may have immediate and concrete effect upon the disciplinary activity of the hierarchy, it is not itself immune from debate - by theologians at least! (See Chapter IV, pp.187-89).

B) The Plausibility of Future Dogmatic Pronouncements

Karl Rahner has asserted that the Magisterium may not, in future, be able to formulate new emphatic doctrinal pronouncements, because the unity of theology, which is their presupposition, no longer exists. (15) We have already examined in some detail the ways in which Vatican II contributed on several fronts to the break-up of a common conceptual scheme among Catholics, and thus to pluralism in theology. To this, we must add the fact that the Council so strongly emphasised the role of consensus in the formation of dogma (see pp. 196-99). I promised in Chapter IV to consider further the importance of Vatican II's concept of consensus, and the time has now come to do so. In the present

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(15) See "Pluralism in Theology and the Unity of the Church's Faith" in Concilium, 6, no. 5 (1969) p. 56.

section, therefore, we shall first examine in the abstract the relationship of the idea of consensus to the plausibility of the proposal of future dogmas; secondly, we shall consider the links between consensus and pluralism in theology, and look at the combined effect of these factors upon the Magisterium's capacity to give plausible definitions.

1 Consensus and the Proposition of Dogma

I suggested in Chapter IV that Vatican II's explicit treatment of the role which consensus plays in the formulation of Church dogma should be viewed in intimate combination with the actual history which preceded the Council - namely, the fact that both the definition of the Immaculate Conception and the dogma of the Assumption had been pronounced by Popes after they had carried out a process of consultation, aimed at discovering the mind of the faithful. I hinted that, in terms of social plausibility, this association of events with Vatican II's teaching on consensus has the effect of creating an atmosphere in which a groundwork of harmony in the Church is the normal and necessary condition for the acceptability of a new solemn definition. Strictly speaking, the Magisterium continues to reserve to itself the power to make definitions without a preceding consensus (and this is clearly stated in LG 25.3, in connection with the Pope's 'infallible' teaching authority); nevertheless, it seems highly unlikely, if not absolutely impossible, that a magisterial statement which did not embody or cohere with the previously existing belief of the great bulk of the Church could, in the future, create conviction through the force of its sheer authority.

It might be argued that this assertion in fact claims nothing that is new. There have been occasions in the past when the definitions of the Roman See have failed to win universal assent in the Church. This has not prevented Peter's successor from giving such teaching, even though the result has been to strengthen or create barriers of belief, communion, and discipline between those of the Roman obedience, and those who could not accept it. Why should there be new significance in the fact that any conceivable future dogmatic pronouncement would probably cause a rift between those who are at present united in communion with the Petrine See?

The answer to this is twofold: In the first place, we must note that the teaching of Vatican II confirms the Roman Catholic Church's place within the modern ecumenical current. This current, driving towards the visible unity of all Christians, runs absolutely counter to any moves which would create or formalise new divisions among Christians. The ecumenical atmosphere which Vatican II endorsed, therefore, gives added sharpness to questions about what is or is not plausible within the Roman Catholic Church. Secondly, the problem of creating heartfelt conviction through the sheer authority of solemn pronouncements is much more complex in the light of the Council's theology than it was in earlier contexts: Because of the new emphasis on interior belief - the individual's sense of faith - and on the value of the Church's corporate consensus, those who wish to remain loyal to the teachings of the Roman See and the bishops may nevertheless be open to an inner tension in the face of controversial decisions given from on high. The weight of external authority has to be put in the balance against the weight of other factors in a sincere Catholic's mind; conviction is less easily attained than it used to be through the bare requirement for assent.

To illustrate this argument, we shall examine more closely Vatican II's teaching on the role played by the individual's sense of faith, particularly in the development of doctrine. It is, after all, in the course of doctrine's development that new definitions are born.

The term 'sense of faith' ('sensus fidei') is used in LG 12.1 for the first time in a magisterial document. However, this is not to say that the idea was new in Catholic theology. An interior sense of the faith had long been recognised by theologians as being an essential characteristic of the Christian life. It is a grace-given capacity for the apprehension of Christian truth; it has never been seen as the guarantee of each individual Catholic's 'infallibility'in belief, but the use of the concept indicated that:

> "the Christian . . . enters into the truth in an interior way, and his active relation to it is never that of a stranger. It is, indeed, the task of each member of the People of God to appropriate the content of the Church's

> faith so profoundly that he becomes - in the unity which he maintains and develops with the magisterium - a living depositary of this faith, and an aware witness of its object." (16)

The consensus of the faithful, of which LG 12.1 also speaks, is the corporate manifestation of the interior activity of the sense of faith in all catholic Christians. It is in this corporate form only that the sense of faith is deemed to give 'infallible' witness to what is true. Clearly, however, the corporate witness depends upon the reality of individual faith from which it springs.

How does the individual's sense of faith operate? This is the question at issue. Franzelin saw it as being a chiefly receptive and reflective capacity; through the sense of faith which he possesses the individual Catholic is enabled to receive and to reflect back the teaching of the hierarchy. Corporately, the entire Church reflects this teaching with indefectible accuracy. (17) If we turn from this example of classic nineteenth-century thought to the teaching given by Vatican II, however, we find that the individual's sense of faith is conceived very differently; indeed, it is attributed an active role in the development of doctrinal understanding in the Church:

> "The Tradition which comes to us from the Apostles progresses in the Church under the assistance of the Holy Spirit; this is because the apprehension of both words and other things which have been handed down increases by means of the contemplation and study of believers, who mediate on these things in their hearts . . . also through the deep knowledge of spiritual matters which they attain through experience, and also through the preaching of those who have received a sure charism of truth with their succession in the episcopate." (DV 8.2)

Although the precise term 'sense of faith' is not used in this passage, we see here a very clear picture of the active operation of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and minds of

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(16) G. Martelet, Les idées maîtresses de Vatican II (Paris, 1969) pp. 56f.

(17) See Tractatus de Divina Traditione et Scriptura, pp. 103-106.

believers, giving them a dynamic relationship to the things they receive through Tradition. The order in which the passage mentions the different factors involved in the development of Tradition - putting the contribution of the hierarchy's preaching last (18) - serves to stress the high significance which Vatican II gave to an active sense of faith among Christians.

What is the Tradition which is developed by the contemplation, study, and experience of believers? The use of the word 'Tradition' has at least a double-sided meaning in Dei Verbum. On the one side, it designates a process of transmission, and on the other, the content which is transmitted by that process - that is, the content of the Gospel and the Christian way of life as they are received and understood throughout the ages. Therefore, the believer's sense of faith is related to Tradition in two ways: Its activity is a part of Tradition, in as much as Tradition is a process; it contributes to Tradition, and helps to form it, in as much as Tradition is the content or object of a process.

Within the content of Tradition is to be found Scripture, the "speech of God" ('locutio Dei' (DV 9)), but Scripture is not all there is to the "Word of God" ('verbum Dei' (loc. cit.)) which Tradition transmits. Scripture is the guiding norm for the Church, as Dei Verbum freshly emphasises, but it cannot be understood apart from the living Tradition which passes it on and deepens the Church's apprehension of its meaning.

What does this mean for the authority of the Magisterium? The answer must be that the hierarchy's responsibility for the formulating of developed doctrine is not removed, but that it cannot make solemn formulations in isolation. DV 10.2 says that the Magisterium is not above God's Word; in the context of the Council's teaching on Tradition we see that this suggests that the teaching authority has to 'hear' God's Word from the community, as well as from Scripture itself and from the great teachers of the past. There is a complex interplay between the Bible, the Magisterium,

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(18) The fact that there is any mention at all in this passage of the hierarchy's role in developing the Church's understanding of doctrine is the result of a late addition to the text. See B.-D. Dupuy, "Histoire de la constitution" in Vatican II: La Révélation Divine, 1, ed. Dupuy. (Paris, 1968) pp. 113f.

theologians, and the interpretation of life and faith which makes sense to the great bulk of Catholics.

This is not to say that the voice of the majority has been made straightforwardly normative for magisterial teaching. However, as part of the great stream of Tradition, it is a factor which cannot be ignored or simply overruled. Vatican II's teaching on the nature of Tradition entrenches the active role of the generality of Catholics in bringing new understandings and dogmas to birth. In doing so, the Council may be said to have made a significant contribution to a new atmosphere in the Church - an atmosphere in which Catholics may find the Magisterium plausible as the voice of their developing faith, rather than as an independent interpreter of revelation, or as the judge of the community's developing understanding.

2 Consensus, Theological Pluralism, and the Plausibility of Future Definitions

As we have seen, the Council brought the concept of consensus in belief firmly to the fore. At the same time, however, its openness to theological pluralism made it more difficult to conceive that such a consensus might ever be reached with regard to any point of faith which is as yet unestablished. Not only does a breakdown in unified conceptuality and language militate against the finding of universal satisfactory formulas for new definitions, as Rahner pointed out (see p.258), but we may also note that the questions and issues raised for Christian theology in the context of varied cultural and philosophical settings seem likely to differ radically, so that it becomes hard to envisage a unified world-wide desire for a single solemn pronouncement arising, in the way that a consensus -desire for the definition of the Assumption existed prior to 1950. Finally, we should also comment that the Council's openness to critical approaches in biblical study, and its encouragement of theology's dialogue with other disciplines, shifts the emphasis towards the analytical exposition of what is given in Tradition, and particularly towards the endeavour of hermeneutics, so that the construction of dogmatic certainties loses its pride of place in the pattern of Catholic theology.

It might be argued that this shift is of interest only to academic theologians, and that the 'simple faithful' are less affected by elements encouraging pluralism in faith and its expression. One might suggest that the non-academic body of believers is united in spiritual certainties which are universally communicable, and that these certainties are elaborated and penetrated more deeply through interior contemplation, rather than through the culturally-conditioned and historically limited discussions of theology. During the period surrounding the definition of the dogma of the Assumption a similar contrast - between the intuitive faith of the simple faithful, and the logically based movements of scholarship - was certainly drawn. (19) It was suggested that theologians should properly record the verdict 'not proven' upon a doctrine which was supported only by an ensemble of converging indications; the simple faithful, on the other hand, could wholeheartedly affirm this doctrine's truth, by virtue of the intuitive grasp upon divine reality afforded by their sense of faith. Once the doctrine came to be defined solemnly by the Magisterium however, it was the theologians' attitude which had to change, for they had now to accept the doctrine as certain because of the papal act. The sense of faith of the laity, on the other hand, was merely confirmed and vindicated by the magisterial pronouncement.

If this contrast is translated into the terms of the contemporary situation, one might suppose that a great body of popular belief could be reinforced by the Magisterium's declaration, in such a way as to provide a definitive barrier against any further critical study or philosophical debate on a certain point. A popular acclamation might provide the substance of a new dogma, despite hesitations and controversies among theologians concerning the definition's appropriateness.

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(19) For example, P. Rousselot contrasted the assent given by theologian and layman to a dogma such as that of the Assumption in this way: "The theologian, like any good Catholic, gives his assent, but does so only on extrinsic grounds, namely that the Church has defined the proposition . . .he needs the mediation of the authoritative Church inserting the verb est and offering her testimony to satisfy him, for he himself does not have the keenly developed sense necessary to seize the truth directly and by itself. He is in harmony with the truth, but in its more dilute and less personal state." (Note sur le développment du dogma" in Récherches des Sciences Réligieuses, 37 (1950) p. 120). It appears here that theologians are at a positive disadvantage, as compared to laymen who have not blunted their intuitive ('illative') sense of faith by too much logic!

Against this argument we may bring these points: Firstly, as has already been noted, belief exists in people's minds alongside a great variety of different questions and concerns. As Vatican II fostered the sense of individuality of local and regional churches, so too, by implication, it fostered a sense that Christian faith must come to terms with local issues and forms of thought - in the minds of simple believers as much as in the work of theologians. Secondly, we have seen that the Council enlarged the access of lay people to the arenas of formal theological study (GS 62.7, GE 10.2), speaking clearly of the freedom which students - both clerical and lay - should enjoy in their thinking, and in expressing the fruits of their considerations (GS 62.7). The results, therefore, of all the shifts we have noted towards critical and analytical attitudes, and towards hermeneutics and pluralism in theological expression, are not to be confined to a closed, clerical circle. This kind of thinking is to be accessible to the laity too, in so far as they take an interest in theology. Indeed, through the education of their pastors, the laity are bound to be influenced by the moves towards pluralism to some extent, even when they do not consciously set out to broaden the scope of their thinking and contemplation. Finally, we must notice that Vatican II made no artificial divide between a spiritual apprehension of the truth and an academic understanding, for in DV 8.2 the Council explicitly said that doctrine progresses both through the contemplation and also through the study of believers. The two stand together, and cannot really be separated, for it is impossible to divorce one's spiritual understanding of faith entirely from the effects of any convincing critical approach to it which one has imbibed, whether consciously or unconsciously.

We find, then, that the factors making for pluralism in Christians' concerns and means of expression, are by no means debarred from influencing any part of the Tradition-process in the Church. Critical pluralistic, and analytical attitudes were given the possibility of becoming embedded in the very heart of Catholic believing and thinking. As a result, it is difficult to envisage a smoothly unfolding movement of near-universal belief and expression, such as might be the basis for a new dogma evoked by consensus.

So far we have discussed the likelihood (or rather, the unlikelihood) of a consensus being achieved on a new formula for the definition of a doctrine; we have not, however, considered the issue of consensus in the Church on a moral question, and to this we must now turn.

I suggested in Chapter IV that there is an 'either/or' quality about many forms of human action - a quality which does not inhere in the same way in forms of language and expression (see p. 245). It is because of this that the individual may not be so free to reinterpret points of official moral teaching simply by sheltering under the claim of 'good faith'. There are moral sticking-points, at which one either obeys or disobeys the ethical norms of the Church. These sticking-points of established teaching may serve to rally consensus in the Christian community, so that the hierarchy does not act in a controversial way if it excludes from the sacramental life those who transgress certain commonly accepted and officially established norms.

However, we have also commented upon the fact that there are pressures for pluralism in moral understanding and behaviour, but that Vatican II did not cede sufficiently to these to avoid tensions between the Magisterium and the individual in the era following the Council (see Chapter IV, p.230). These pressures arise both from the fact that ethical decisions have to be taken in areas where practical expertise and judgement concerning the results of any action may be decisive (the area of 'mixed questions'), and also from differing evaluations of the relative weight of different a priori moral values (see pp.235-46). These factors making for pluralism are probably forceful enough to inhibit the proclamation of new moral definitions on many, as-yet unresolved questions. However, there may be some cases where an activity which has not yet been proscribed explicitly nevertheless appears to be so plainly in contradiction to the established patterns of Catholic morality that there is a basis for definitive action to be taken by the hierarchy without antagonising any significant section of Church opinion. Such definitive action may take the form of excommunication rather than of a solemn, universal pronouncement on the matter in question. However, we may see excommunication as the practical expression of

that power which defines the boundaries of the Church. Therefore, the plausible and effective use of the authority to excommunicate individuals or groups must be correlated with a broad consensus in the community which supports such judicial action, in the same way as a solemn definition would have to be correlated with a consensus.

I suggest, then, that in regard to the moral teaching of the Church the definitive action of formally excommunicating someone remains effectively open to the hierarchy in cases where the defence of 'good faith' in the reinterpretation of teaching cannot be adduced. The offender may either incur excommunication for actions which clearly contravene explicit and established teaching, or he may have committed actions of such a kind as to be plainly incompatible with any moral system measured by a Christian hierarchy of values. The hierarchy's decision to cut him off from the sacramental life of the community may well express a broad consensus within the People of God on such issues. On the other hand, if the relationship of the action in question to the moral values of the Gospel is a matter of controversy within the Christian community, the hierarchy's act of excommunication might seem implausible to some other Catholics, and lead either to a state of 'interior emigration' from loyalty, within the minds of people who would yet remain officially within the Church, or to open defections.

Conclusion

In this section we have followed a line of argument which leads us to broad agreement with Karl Rahner's statement that the Magisterium may not, in future, be able to formulate new emphatic doctrinal pronouncements, because of the breakdown in unified theological discourse. We have also seen that this breakdown in the unity of discourse gains force through association with Vatican II's stress on consensus, and the atmosphere of expectation which this fostered concerning the relationship of the Magisterium to the sense of faith of the universal community of Catholics.

On the other hand, I have argued that there may be some areas of moral decision in which unity of thought and expression within the Church is attainable, enabling the Magisterium to take a judicial stand which is generally found plausible. Such areas

will be rare, because so many new ethical problems arise precisely because moral thought must come to terms with more and more 'mixed questions', in which factors of technical and practical judgement are closely bound up. In addition, the concept of a hierarchy of values throws some of the traditional Catholic patterns of thought into doubt and debate. Nevertheless, there may be new moral questions whose elements bear a sufficiently analogous relationship to established and accepted moral positions and prohibitions for there to be a new consensus within the Catholic community, giving plausible grounds for definitive action by the hierarchy in its guardianship of the boundaries of Church membership.

The argument of this section does not amount to a claim that the Roman Catholic Church after Vatican II is likely to be held together more by orthopraxis than by orthodoxy. It does not amount to such a claim precisely because a wide variety of concrete ethical decisions and attitudes remain acceptable within the broad boundaries which the hierarchy guards. There is, then, no single orthopraxis on many, many issues. Nevertheless, we may tentatively suggest that one of the results of the teaching of the Second Vatican Council is to make the Catholic Church relatively more intolerant of un-Christian behaviour than of unfamiliar expressions of faith amongst its members.

CHAPTER VI: A REVIEW OF VATICAN II'S CONCEPT OF OBEDIENCE IN THE CHURCH, AND A CONSIDERATION OF ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DOCTRINES OF GOD AND MAN IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP

In Chapter I of this thesis, I put forward the argument that the idea of obedience which appears within the context of any ecclesiology should be amenable to correlation with a consistent set of doctrines concerning the nature and relationship of God and man. This is because ecclesiology is the major area of theology dealing with the conditions of the divine-human encounter (see p. 32). I went on, in the same chapter, to give a typology of correlations between different ways in which ecclesiastical obedience may be presented, and the various concepts of God and man which they entail. Since we have completed our examination of the doctrine of obedience in the Church which the Second Vatican Council put forward, we may now review the results of this study in the light of Chapter I's typology of correlations.

The reader will remember that the first part of our typology was concerned with the Church's mediatorial role - that is, the way in which the Church functions as a sign of God's authority and truth, or the way in which it mediates the conditions which are necessary if man is to have a conscious and explicit relationship with God. I put forward three motifs by which we may analyse different presentations of the Church's mediatorial role. They were: (a) The idea of the Church as a witness; (b) the idea that the Church embodies the divine presence and authority; and (c) the idea that God is represented in the Church. These motifs are relevant to the idea of obedience because they qualify the concept of ecclesiastical authority's source and justification, according to its mediatorial function in relation to God's own authority.

The second part of the typology presented four pictures of God which should be correlated with the different possible kinds of 'content' in the obedience which the Church may require. The pictures in question were: (a) The God who is eternal king and judge; (b) the God who is creator and legislator of the universal natural

order; (c) the God who is liberator and covenant lord; and (d) the God who shares his creative activity with man. We also explored the correlations between these four pictures of God and one aspect of the Church's mediatorial role - namely, its role with regard to revelation.

Finally, in the third part of the typology we focused particularly upon man, in his relationship to God, drawing out the concepts of man entailed in the different ideas of ecclesiastical obedience. We made a special study of the history of man's relationship to God; in connection with this we particularly examined the concept of sin and its effects upon man's openness to the divine at different 'moments' - namely, in the basic human condition of createdness, in the condition of fallenness, in the state of grace which may be enjoyable in this world, and in the state of final salvation.

The present chapter will fall into three sections, corresponding to the three parts of the typology. In each section we shall review the teaching of Vatican II which has been studied in Chapters II-V, and try to draw from it the concepts of God and man which are its proper correlates.

A) Obedience and the Church's Mediatorial Role

This section will be divided into three sub-sections, in each of which we shall explore the implications of one aspect of Vatican II's ideal of ecclesiastical obedience. The aspects which we shall examine are: (1) The Council's concept of the canonical obedience which is due to the government of the hierarchy; (2) the Council's teaching on the assent and obedience which it is proper to render to the doctrinal teaching of the Magisterium; and (3) the Council's teaching on proper obedience to the Magisterium in ethical matters.

Because we are considering the question of the ideal of obedience which the Council intentionally put forward, we shall no longer be concerned with the issue of the social plausibility of its teaching. Our analysis at this stage of the thesis bears upon the question of inner, theological coherence in the documents of Vatican II,

rather than upon issues of the document's external consistency with the factors of social behaviour.

1 What Kind of Mediatorial Role Belonging to the Church is Implied by Vatican II's Ideal of the Canonical Obedience which Should be Rendered to the Government of the Hierarchy?

In Chapter II of this thesis I suggested that the Church was pictured by Vatican II as having no jurisdiction over the secular affairs of the world; her approach to the world must therefore be a pastoral and invitatory one, as she seeks to stimulate the growth of the terrestrial city towards its true end - the summing up of all things in Christ (see pp. 138f. and 144). This theological elaboration of the idea that the secular world has its own autonomy and destiny was worked out particularly in connection with the Council's treatment of the status and role of the Christian layman. He invites the world to find its true end both by witnessing to that end (pointing to the kingdom which is yet to come), and also by embodying in himself something of that kingdom, through his baptismal character, which gives him real participation in the present activity of God towards the world. The Church, then, being made up of such Christians, is both a witnessing, inviting sign in the face of the secular world, and also a substantial sacrament of the world's salvation, participating already in the divine unity to which the whole created order is called by God's authority. (1)

I argued that the Second Vatican Council's concept of the authority of the hierarchy was modified, at least partly, by the

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(1) LG 1 - "the Church is, in Christ, like a sacrament, or sign and instrument, of communion with God, and of the entire human race's unity." (see also GS 42.3).

LG 9.3 - "God . . . called the Church together, and founded it, to be the visible sacrament to one and all of this saving unity." (see also SC 26.1).

LG 48.2 - "through [the Spirit] he founded his body, the Church, to be the universal sacrament of salvation." (see also AG 5.1 and GS 45.1).

GS 43.6 - "the Church . . . has never ceased to be the sign of salvation in the world"

location of this authority within a Church which has such a primarily invitatory function: "The picture of hierarchical authority as largely invitatory reflects the fact that the Church has no jurisdiction in the secular sphere" (p. 138). The hierarchy has to relate its authority to persons who clearly have their own sphere of theologically guaranteed autonomy, that is, to the laity which lives at the interface between the Church and the world, and whose task it is to issue God's invitation there. The hierarchy has to exercise canonical power over those who, in themselves embody something of God's active presence, and witness to his invitatory authority in a way proper to themselves. This is the contextual constraint which modifies the Council's picture of the hierarchy's role in representing God's demands to men.

It is not only this new context, however, which modifies Vatican II's concept of hierarchical authority. The Council also qualifies the idea of representational authority's origin, and sets forward a renewed and modified picture of the way in which canonical power should properly be exercised. Together, these qualifications and shifts of emphasis combine to suggest that it is representational authority's primary function to be an invitatory sign within the Christian community itself (see pp. 117ff.).

The qualification in the Council's concept of the original nature of representational authority stems from the fact that it correlates the bishop's role as vicar and legate of Christ with the doctrine that all his powers flow from his sacramental consecration (see p. 124). Here we find the idea that a substantial embodiment of God's power (through sacramental consecration) is the grounds for the exercise of representational authority. We also find an immediate association of this embodiment and representation, on the one hand, with the role of being a witness, on the other. Therefore, because the hierarchy's representational role is so closely and organically linked with other modes of expressing God's presence and authority, we may say that canonical authority comes to share largely in the invitatory qualities of sacrament and preaching (see pp. 122-26).

The qualification in Vatican II's delineation of the proper exercise of canonical authority is found in the Council's great

emphasis upon pastoral and ministerial themes (see pp. 101-05). One might say that this emphasis on a certain way of acting when in ecclesiastical office amounts to no more than mere exhortation; however, as exhortation it is deeply rooted in theological ideas - it is not, therefore, merely cosmetic. Nor does it lack parallels in the Council's concept of obedience, for we saw that Vatican II stressed that the Christian under authority should show qualities of initiative, responsibility, readiness to make his views known, and active love (see pp. 171-73). In this way the Catholic may actively contribute to the ministry and mission of the Church, which is his concern as well as the hierarchy's.

Both the internal qualification in Vatican II's concept of the very nature and source of representational authority, and also the qualifications in its description of the practical exercise of authority and obedience, constitute significant shifts on the theological plane. They should not be overlooked or undervalued simply because the Council gave these modifications no power to impose themselves on behaviour, save through the influence of theological argumentation and the atmosphere it promotes. The limited concrete constraints which Vatican II did place upon the exercise of representational authority in the canonical sphere arise more from the logical development of its doctrine that the entire Church embodies and witnesses to the presence of God - that is, from the ecclesiastical context within which the hierarchy exists - than from any aim to give concrete expression to modifications in the doctrine of representational authority in itself (see pp. 156-64).

We find, then, that the Second Vatican Council's picture of canonical authority and obedience is linked to a very complex notion of the way in which the Church mediates the presence and authority of God. In relation to the rest of the world, the Church speaks with the authority of a witness to what God has done and will do, yet its authority is greater than that of a mere witness pointing only to something beyond itself, because the Christian community also embodies the divine presence, (albeit in a diffuse way which does not admit one strictly to identify the actions of the Church with the actions of God). Because the Christian community mediates God's presence to the world in this complex way, compounded of witness and

diffuse embodiment, it speaks to the world with the authority not of command, but of invitation ('We witness that this is the way of the kingdom; accept it if you will, and so be ordered according to God's purpose.' 'Come, share with us the divine resources which God has embodied in the Church.')

Within the Church, there is a group of people who mediate the divine authority by representing it to all who will obey. Their representation is not solely based on an exterior, quasi-legal commission to stand in Christ's place of authority; no, their commission is also grounded in the particular degree to which they participate in the consecrating presence of God, and in the peculiar nature of their vocation to the apostolic mission of witness. However, even these components of their qualification to stand as God's representatives in authority do not have the effect of guaranteeing identity of their commanding activity with the commands which God himself would issue. The capacity to make requirements, and to exercise discipline, does continue to inhere in the holders of representational authority in such a way that, as persons, they set forth the pattern of relationship subsisting between God and men: He can impose limiting requirements upon his saving relationship to individuals, and he holds the role of judge. In the same way, the hierarchy can limit enjoyment of the benefits of Church membership, and can act in the role of a disciplinary judge. This is not to say, however, that the hierarchy's concrete decisions necessarily correspond to the divine decision concerning the conditions of salvation, nor that its judgements reflect with complete accuracy the judgements of heaven.

If there is pain involved in obeying the decisions and demands of the ecclesiastical authorities, this pain may have its source in one of two facts: either, it may originate simply from the inherent cost involved in fulfilling the divine will (cost from which the incarnate Son was not exempt); or it may originate from the fact that, at any given time, the commands of the hierarchy may indeed rightly offend the individual's assessment of what is necessary for the good of the Church community and for its mission. Whatever the real grounds of the pain, however, the Council continues to teach that obedience has, of itself, representational and redemptive value in

the world. This value is correlated to the hierarchy's representation of the pattern of God's authoritative relationship to men (see pp. 175-79). We find, then, that in the sphere of canonical authority and obedience the Second Vatican Council ultimately pinned representational significance onto persons and their typical roles in relation to one another, rather than onto the representational validity of these persons' specific, concrete acts.

2. What Kind of Mediatorial Role Belonging to the Church is Implied by Vatican II's Ideal of Assent and Obedience in Matters of Doctrinal Teaching?

As in the case of canonical authority, we find that the Second Vatican Council effectively qualified the earlier idea of representational teaching both by setting it within a new context - in which the entire Church's function of embodying God's truth, and of witnessing to it, is emphasised - and also by nuancing the very concept of the nature of doctrinal formulation.

The modification in context comes about through the Council's renewed stress on the creative role of the sense of faith in appropriating and developing doctrine within the understanding of the People of God (see Chapter II, pp. 142f. and Chapter IV, pp. 197-99 and p. 205). This concept of the Christian's sense of faith brings to the fore the interiority of faith; faith constitutes not just a formal profession, but an entire attitude to life in which the springs of both action and of outward confession are integrated: "DV 5 defined 'the obedience of faith' as that by which man 'freely commits himself totally to God, giving 'full assent of mind and will to God who reveals' and assenting voluntarily to the revelation given by him.' " (p. 211). Faith is defined by relationship to God, and it is in the context of this relationship that the sense of faith comes to ever deeper understanding of doctrine, and is able to test the contemporary adequacy of outward expressions and formulations. This is the living Tradition through which doctrine is developed, until it is manifested by a consensus on a certain formulation - a consensus which gives

witness to the interior perception of a truth by the whole People of God (see pp. 198f.).

I have used the phrase 'gives witness' on purpose here; it expresses a shift in Vatican II's concept of the function of even representational language. Such language points to something beyond itself. It does not enshrine truth in an unalterable way, although it should convey it or evoke its recognition. The language of dogma may, in itself, be expendable if it becomes culturally obsolete: This is the position towards which the thought of Vatican II moves (see pp. 214-25 and Chapter V, pp. 249-53). However, in order to examine more fully this nuancing in the notion of the very nature of representational mediation of truth, we must first consider Vatican II's treatment of the wider motif of witnessing.

The idea of the witness which is borne to God's revealing acts is immediately to be correlated with Vatican II's increased stress on the interiority of faith. Not only does the person who bears witness give testimony to that which he knows and understands through the knowledge of love within himself, but he also makes his appeal or invitation directly to the heart of his hearer. The effectiveness of witness is not usually to be measured by the accuracy with which the formulae used are adopted and reproduced by the hearer, but rather by his interior response, to which outward fruits bear evidence. It is only in some cases that accuracy of formulation may be counted among the necessary outward fruits. These special cases are those in which witness, or preaching, takes the form of a sub-species - 'representational teaching'. Even in these cases, accuracy of formulation must be relative to cultural and epistemological context.

Since Vatican II treated appropriate representational teaching as a sub-species of the wider function of preaching, we find that the dynamic function of doctrinal teaching is brought to the fore in the Council's thought. Similarly, the Magisterium's special teaching role is located within a general apostolic context of mission, and we also find that the hierarchy's missionary endeavour is posited within a general movement of witness belonging to the whole Church (see Chapter II, pp. 98-100 and 106-08).

Our analysis of the relationship between witness and interiority of belief gives us the necessary background against which to consider the particularly problematical area of doctrine concerning the nature of dogmatic language. This language should be a guaranteed expression of the truth which the entire Church conveys when it witnesses to its faith, or at least an expression to which all Catholics may assent as a proper statement of the condition and form of their interior relationship to God. It is the task of the Magisterium to supply, or protect the form and signification of dogmatic language.

Vatican II's modification of the idea of dogmatic language arises through the Council's acceptance of the notion that human language only conveys concepts adequately and accurately when it is understood within its appropriate context. Contexts of expression and understanding change and vary from culture to culture, and in relation to the knowledge attainable in the broad sweep of other disciplines. We have seen that one of the particular problems raised by the shift in modern contexts of understanding takes the form of a pressure to reduce the essential details to be believed as part of certain dogmas. I have described this pressure as one which leads to the search for a real kernel of a dogma, while the husk is stripped away (see Chapter V, p. 256). This search for the kernel or heart of a dogmatic truth creates a shifting ground concerning what is acceptable as an expression of that truth within the Church. The control of that shifting ground lies ultimately with the members of the Magisterium.

The Magisterium's control and discipline in relation to the re-expression of doctrine is ultimately founded in the hierarchy's power to command 'religious obedience'. That is to say, it is ultimately founded in the authority invested in Pope and bishops as persons. When Vatican II opens the door to reinterpretations and re-expressions of the truths which dogmatic formulations proclaim, it necessarily throws a greater potential weight of responsibility upon the monitoring and controlling activity of members of the hierarchy, and this activity is rooted in their role in representing the authority of God in their persons. We find, once again, therefore, that the teaching of Vatican II invested value in the roles of persons in their relationship to one another, while, at the same time modifying its

concept of the absolute representational nature of particular acts (in this case, linguistic formulations).

To sum up: the mediatorial role which the Council attributes to the Church as a whole through its doctrine of assent and obedience in matters of belief is a complicated one: The Church witnesses to a faith which is experienced as an interior relationship with God within each believer. It witnesses to elements of history and the interpretation of history which create the necessary conditions for such a faith and relationship. At certain points, the witness of the Church is 'guaranteed' by God as being incontrovertible; such 'infallibility', however, is only valid when the guaranteed expressions of the Church's faith are understood within their proper context. The defence of such proper understanding is constituted by the fact that, at the centre of the Church's life, certain persons are endowed with authority to represent the 'yea' or 'nay' of God himself. The particular acts of these persons require obedience because of the divine constitution of the Church; they are not themselves, however, acts which always carry the guarantee of 'infallibility' in themselves.

3 What Kind of Mediatorial Role Belonging to the Church is Implied by Vatican II's Ideal of the Obedience which should be Rendered to the Moral Teaching of the Magisterium?

As we have already reminded ourselves, Vatican II's concept of faith integrates the springs of both belief and action in the interior relationship of the Christian to God who reveals. Everything which has so far been said about the Church's witness to this encounter applies to its moral implications, as well as its doctrinal expression. The hierarchy gives voice to something which coheres with the experience of the corporate sense of faith, and which may be developed through the deepening understanding which the sense of faith acquires through study and contemplation.

In addition, we may note that Vatican II's concept of the hierarchy of values effectively promotes the importance of personal conscience as the locus of moral response to God, and therefore enhances the Council's emphasis upon Christians' interior grasp upon God's reality - their embodiment of his truth for the world (see Chapter IV, p. 241). This high valuation given to the operation of

conscience is expressed in the way in which the Council treated the relationship between Magisterium and individuals in matters of social and political decision (see pp. 231-35).

However, as in the case of doctrinal pronouncements, there stands at the centre of the Church's embodiment and witness concerning God's moral invitation, a body of persons whose teaching may sometimes claim to represent moral truth, and who, in themselves, are invested with God's authority to require obedience. We have noted that the 'either/or' quality of human actions tends to make the authority of the Magisterium in this area more clear-cut than in others (see p. 245), whether that authority takes the form of actually defining in a dogmatic way what the law of nature demands, or whether it takes the form of simply exercising discipline in accordance with what is or is not to be accounted acceptable within the Church. (We have also noted the tensions to which such claims and disciplines are likely to give rise, when faced with the rival claims of interiority, see pp. 245f.).

As in other spheres of mediation, therefore, Vatican II's teaching on the way in which the Church conveys knowledge of God's will for man's moral life holds in tension the representational motif, and the ideas of witness and embodiment. The representational motif comes to the fore when it is said that the Magisterium can give the correct exposition and application of natural and divine law. The other ideas are brought forward when the Magisterium is seen to be witnessing to the evangelical principles of morality, and inviting Catholics, and all men of good will, to respond by searching out appropriate ways of acting.

Conclusion

Our examination of the Church's mediatory role, as it is entailed in Vatican II's concept of proper Christian obedience, illustrates very clearly the fact that there has been a shift of emphasis in ecclesiology, but not a fundamental change of doctrine. Among the different motifs which may be used to characterise the Church's role in making God and his will known to men, the idea of witness and embodiment have been brought into greater prominence than that which they enjoyed during the preceding century.

Nevertheless, the Church as a whole still carries out its functions of witnessing to the acts and presence of God, and of embodying that presence in a diffuse way, in dependence upon a central structure of authority which represents divine truth and God's demands upon men.

In our analysis of the representational structure we have distinguished two elements, or modes, of representation: The first, an extrinsic representation of God's authoritative status over men, this pattern of authority being exemplified in certain persons; the second, a capacity for human acts or words actually to mirror or represent God's revelation and will to men. It is with regard to this second category of representational thought that the most significant shifts of emphasis are apparent in the teaching of Vatican II, although the origin and character of the first mode of representation were also treated in ways that differed importantly from the emphases of previous documents.

Despite all shifts of thinking, however, Vatican II continues to put forward a picture of the Church in which man may locate a central point at which God provides truth about himself and his will in human language and concepts. What is admitted, however, is that the expressions of this truth only make sense within a proper matrix of understanding. It is to preserve the Church's grasp on this matrix of understanding that the personal form of representational authority exists. We may put forward a parable of the hierarchy's two-fold role: the Pope and bishops are like the servants of the great king who held a wedding feast. Their primary task is to go out and invite men in, by describing the character of the feast and the enjoyment which all the participants experience. It may also fall to their lot, however, to preserve the character of the feast by ejecting from the hall anyone who refuses to don any one of the range of garments which the servants deem to be suitable to the occasion. In doing this, they represent their master's authority; they may **fail, however, accurately to represent his taste.**

B) Obedience and Pictures of God

As in the previous section of this chapter, we shall approach our topic from three perspectives: Firstly, we shall draw

together threads of our analysis concerning Vatican II's treatment of the content and character of canonical obedience; secondly, we shall examine the formal nature of the doctrine which the Magisterium proposes for assent; finally, we shall sum up what the Council indicated about the content of obedience in matters of moral decision. Each sub-section will go on from its summing-up, to suggest what picture of God is most strongly entailed by the content of obedience which the Council described.

1 What content of Obedience do the Documents of Vatican II describe as being Appropriate in the Canonical Sphere, and what Picture of God does it Entail?

The Second Vatican Council was not, by and large, occupied with questions of discipline. Therefore, it sketched only broadly the nature and content of obedient action as it should be practised by members of the Church. It also presupposed the general acceptance of certain, well-known tenets of Roman Catholic obedience to ecclesiastical law and custom, such as the obligation to worship on Sundays and holy days, and to make confession. By way of comment upon these types of obedience presupposed by the Council, we may say that such actions quite clearly set Christians apart from secular society. Only if religious acts such as Church attendance are interpreted in the most broadly functionalist terms of the social sciences (in such a way that they are seen as analagous in social purpose to other ritual acts of assembly, etc.) can they be seen as continuous with the demands of the secular life. Once the avowed purposes of religious acts of obedience are taken into account, their discontinuity with purely **secular reasoning and needs becomes clear.**

Moving on from this, we may say that the very fact that the Christian community has ultimate aims and purposes which differ from those of secular social groupings gives to <u>all</u> acts of obedience within the Church an orientation which differs from that involved in achieving non-religious objectives. Nevertheless, within the general orientation of the Church to ends other than those of a secular group there may yet be areas of obedience which can be explained most readily by canons of appropriateness which are common

to all groups existing for the achievement of corporate purposes. Among such types of appropriate obedience we may number those acts which foster social collaboration and the communication of ideas among members, those which build up or maintain harmony among members, and, in sum, all acts of obedience whose primary object is the good of the group in its nature as a community. Obedience which is directed towards a clearly definable social good in the Church, in the way just described, may be said to be in harmony with secular norms of behaviour.

We have seen in Chapter III that Vatican II brought the idea of serving the common life of the Church more centrally into the theological line of vision in describing obedience (see p. 180). It was in this perspective that obedience was described as including active collaboration, the taking of initiatives, the communication of ideas and needs, etc., by persons at every level of the Church's life. However, the Council also maintained the idea that obedience has an inherent value, as something which is due to God's representatives, by virtue of their formal role. This continues to be the case even when obedience does not have any immediately obvious value for the upbuilding of community. The motif of Christ's obedience is introduced at several points to indicate that there is a higher logic to God's action in the life of the Church than that which is obviously apprehensible through the normal course of human interaction. Therefore, ascetical acts of sheer obedience <u>do</u> serve a common good, but it is a good which transcends any ultimate goal which a secular community might conceive for itself (see p. 179).

We may say, therefore, that the picture of canonical obedience which Vatican II puts forward is, in formal outline, both harmonious <u>and</u> disjunctive with secular social behaviour and requirements. It is harmonious with them, in so far as it increasingly holds in view action which contributes to normal communal growth and effectiveness. It is disjunctive, in so far as it includes an explicitly ascetical element, and in so far as the restraints put upon men by those in authority can be made to bear an ascetical character, and to have a value transcending their outward nature and immediately observable effects.

What picture of God is entailed in this delineation of the content of canonical obedience? First of all, it is a picture which

allows value to the prescriptive indications of human nature; God's representatives in the Church exercise authority very largely, though not completely, for the sake of a common good which is humanly apprehensible and assessable. But beyond this, they exercise a degree of authority which transcends human reasoning, and which has goals beyond those indicated by the nature of persons in earthly community. However, the kind of obedience which they require within this perspective is not a set of actions or self-negations which is orientated towards gaining a reward beyond this life, in a heaven which is completely cut off from earthly conditions. No; it is an obedience which enters into the saving will of Christ for others, and which looks for the beginnings of its own fruition in the present life of the Church, its members, and even those outside it (see p. 179). The act of obedience, of itself, enters into the redemptive mystery of Christ, and is taken up into the service of the Church and its mission.

According to the pattern of correlations which I built up in Chapter I, the content of canonical obedience as described by the documents of Vatican II entails a picture of God which combines features of the one who shares his act of creation with men (and therefore the obedience which may be required in the Church is usually directed towards the building up and creation of natural human community), with features of the God who is a supernatural liberator and covenant lord (and thus there is a fruition promised to acts of obedience - a fruition which transcends purely human expectations, a fruition which takes the form of the milk and honey of a promised land which the Church may even now enter).

2 What is the Nature of the Church's Authoritative Doctrine According to Vatican II, and what does this suggest about the Council's Picture of God?

This sub-section is something of an excursus, because when the four typical pictures of God were put forward in Chapter I, they were derived from the different possible kinds of <u>active</u> obedience which the Church might require (see pp. 45-47). It is true that we then went on to consider the correlation of the possible picture of God with different concepts of the Church's role in regard to revelation (pp. 47-50), but we approached even this correlation by way of a study of the nature of <u>moral</u> teaching. Here, however, I

want to consider the contribution to a picture of God which is made not by the content of the moral teaching of the Church, but by the nature of its doctrinal teaching. In this regard, it is not possible to ask exactly the same kind of questions about disjunction and harmony, conformity and orientation towards future goals, as those which we pose when examining the content of the action which the Church may require of its members. Therefore, this sub-section will not produce an answer to the question 'what is Vatican II's picture of God?' in quite the same way as the sub-sections which precede and follow it. It will not give us an answer framed in terms of the types set up in Chapter I - but it will help to elucidate aspects of the Council's picture of God which will enrich the ideas which we draw from our four types or categories.

The Council's shift in the theology of faith lays more emphasis than did the thought of earlier magisterial documents upon the immediacy of God's encounter with man. This immediacy of encounter is the correlate of the totality of human self-commitment which is involved in "the obedience of faith" (Chapter IV, p. 211). The act of faith is only partially constituted by free, rational assent to abstract, discursive information about God. Such assent forms an essential factor in faith, indeed, but the nature of the object of such assent has changed; no longer is it a set of propositions which analogically represent the truth about God in the only way possible - the way determined by the internal structure of intelligibility afforded by the world - but rather, assent is given to a knowledge of God which may be conveyed through a kaleidoscope of changing formulae. This kaleidoscope is created by the historical conditioning of the structures of human conceptuality.

In the theology of Vatican II it is maintained that the re-expression of the Church's teaching about God need not affect its substance, and should not, therefore, affect the certainty which the assent of faith affords. However, I have suggested that the very fact of change and re-expression must introduce some element of subjective uncertainty within the Church, because there always remains room for debate as to whether particular expressions continue successfully to convey their original meaning, or whether they should not

rather be reformulated.

We may say, then, that the result of Vatican II's admission that Christian doctrinal formulae may be culturally and historically relative, is a picture of God in which he is less amenable to the kind of description which universally conveys shared, abstract certainty about his nature and relation to us. In the abstract sense he seems to elude us more than before. But in another sense the Council has laid stress upon his closeness; he stands in immediate encounter to the individual's interior attitude of faith. God is near to us, then, precisely through being immersed in the historicity of the world - or rather, man's knowledge of him is a direct one, but a knowledge which is immersed in historicity. We encounter a mystery which expresses itself in and through the patterns of human history, rather than a set of trans-historical 'mysteries' which were once-upon-a-time objectified in a moment of revelation and have ever since been immutably conveyed as the content of a divine deposit of truths which are universally comprehensible.

Because God is known under the conditions of human historicity, and because he is immediately present to the man of faith, his picture emerges as one of a God who is in constant dialogue with human beings. He invites them ever anew to discover the meaning of his mystery and his will. They must use the formulae provided by the past to point them back to the fact of the incarnation (a mystery immersed in the contingencies of history); but they must also look outwards to the prospect of the world which is at present available to them. These two views must be united to provide the perspective necessary to grasp and communicate the truth and the presence which are unchanging, yet which must be re-expressed in accessible terms.

3 What Content of Obedience do the Documents of Vatican II Describe as being Appropriate in the Moral Sphere, and what Picture of God does it Entail?

We have seen in Chapter IV that the moral requirements of God were still conceived by Vatican II as being capable of objective,

representational expression by the Magisterium on occasion (see p. 230). We saw, too, that the Council could demand docility from Catholics in regard to such teaching (see p. 239). Yet we also saw that in some areas the teaching function of the Magisterium was partially withdrawn, in favour of preached principles of the Gospel which should enlighten the secular activity of Christians, without giving detailed precepts (see pp. 231-35). Finally, we noted the Council's increasing use of an ethical backcloth which was broadly humanistic, or personalistic, and against which the value of the exercise of a free conscience was highlighted (see pp. 235-40); it is to this latter theme - that of the 'new humanism' - that we must return in order to consider the content of the Church's moral teaching in relation to secular systems of moral thought.

Because Vatican II maintained the necessity of docility towards the Magisterium's moral teaching, it suggested that there is some degree of disjunction between the Catholic grasp of ethical issues, and that which is accessible to human reason outside the sphere of the Magisterium's authoritative teaching. Man's apprehension of the objective moral law is imperfect without the light of the Gospel and the Church's doctrine. However, the disjunction between human ideas of morality and those ideas which stem from the Gospel and divine law is not total, for the Council's stress on the new humanism makes it clear that there are many elements in common between the Church's moral principles and a secular hierarchy of values. Both believers and unbelievers recognise that all things on earth should be ordered to man as their centre and summit (GS 12.1), and while the conscience naturally recognises a law which finds its fulfilment in love (GS 16), it is the fulfilment of this law in love which is also the message of the Gospel (see GS 38.1). Vatican II therefore shed new light on the ancient Thomist idea that the revealed law covers the same points as the natural law, and has the function of being a corrective promulgation of this law, purifying, clarifying, and elevating human morality. (2)

(2) According to St. Thomas, the new law of the Gospel does more than simply reveal the true consequences of the eternal law to man (who would otherwise apprehend these consequences only imperfectly); the new law also directs man to a higher end than that implied in the eternal law - an end which is supernatural, over and above man's natural capacity (see ST 1a 2ae. q.91 a.3). It does not do this, however, by prescribing any further external works, apart from participation in the sacraments, but rather by being "the very grace of the

cont. p. 287

Through its stress on the centrality of persons, and the supremacy which it attributed to communion between them (see pp. 236f.), Vatican II did not simply assert that there can be agreement between Catholic moral teaching and the ethical systems which can exist outside the Church; it did, in fact, substantially unite magisterial teaching with central aspects of some modern humanisms, or personalistic philosophies. However, the union was not complete, nor all-englobing, because Vatican II's presentation of the Catholic hierarchy of values has a greater extent than that of secular ethical thinking. At its highest level, the Catholic scale necessarily includes values flowing from man's capacity for communion, not just with his fellow-man, but also with God. At the other end of the scale, the Magisterium's teaching unambiguously affirms values which are not immediately those of personal communion and relationship, but which are derived from seeing all things, and all aspects of man's being, as God's creation (see GS 36.3). We could express this another way by saying that while, for a secular humanism, the values of personhood might be both the concrete and the formal criteria of ethical thinking, for Catholic theology they are the highest concrete criterion upon this earth (and they include values relating to man's communion with God), but the formal criterion of moral thinking remains the fact of God's relationship to the universe as its creator.

The content of the Church's moral teaching appears, then, as being partly harmonious, and partly disjunctive, with moral ideas which can be arrived at outside the Church. The disjunction arises from two sources: Firstly, from a restriction in the non-Christian's view of the relaity of human nature in its capacity for communion with the divine, and in its status as a created being; secondly, from actual errors which may arise in conscience's apprehension of certain issues because of ignorance and weakness. However, it remains true that the fundamental orientation of the law which may naturally be known through conscience is towards love of both God and neighbour. In this sense, the Gospel and its ethical consequences come as the

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Note (2) continued from p. 286

Holy Spirit given to those who believe in Christ" (ST 1a 2ae q.106 a.1). The principle of the new law in in fact an inner disposition - faith, working through love (ST 1a 2ae q.108 a.1).

fulfillment of the very law of human nature.

Turning from the question of the harmony and disjunction between Catholic moral teaching and ethical ideas attainable outside the Church, we must now ask what is the connection between the content of morally obedient action and Vatican II's concept of the way in which man achieves his eschatological destiny.

The passages which we have studied in Chapters II-V of this thesis are rather reticent on the question of morality's connection with final salvation. In the cases in which the Council documents speak of the Magisterium's task of preaching and teaching in the ethical sphere they do not usually indicate the consequences of obedience or disobedience in ultimate terms. However, there is one passage which we have already examined which does make a rather vague reference to a life beyond this one: "It should certainly be known by everyone that human life, and the office of transmitting it, cannot be understood and measured restrictively by reference to this age alone, but they always have reference to man's eternal destiny." (GS 51.4) In this passage it is not at all clear as to whose destiny is the primary focus of concern - that of the parents, or that of the children. Nor, if we take the passage to refer to the eternal consequences which may be experienced by the parents as a result of their decisions, is it clear what the exact relationship will be between their moral choice and their attainment of a heavenly destiny.

In order to make a little more progress in understanding Vatican II's idea of the connection between morality and eschatology we may refer to the Council's treatment of the nature of human secular activity. We have seen the way in which the secular sphere of both knowledge and action was treated as having its own consistency and autonomy, and yet as being orientated towards the kingdom of God, or a final consummation of all things in Christ (see Chapter II p. 144 and Chapter IV p. 212). We may elucidate this observation by looking a little more closely at article 39 of Gaudium et Spes, to which I referred on p. 212.

In GS 39 we find that the Fathers of Vatican II stressed the saving significance of an interior principle of human actions,

namely, the principle of charity. In paragraph 1 of the article they speak of "charity and its works" as forming the thread of continuity between this world and the final kingdom, and in the third paragraph they say,

> "We shall find anew these goods of human dignity, brotherly love, and liberty, all these good fruits of our nature and industry which we have nurtured on this earth in the Spirit of the Lord and in accordance with his commandment. But we shall find them then purged of every stain, illuminated and transfigured . . . The kingdom is already present on earth in a mystery, but when the Lord comes it will be consummated."

This paragraph evidently sets out in greater fullness the implications of the phrase "charity and its works". The works of charity are those actions which foster the values of dignity, communion, and freedom. Charity is not something superadded to such works; it is the principle from which they take their form and impulse. The phrase "fruits . . . of our industry" suggests that the works of charity which are to be found anew in the kingdom of God are those which are orientated towards very specific results in this world; for example, the building up of a community is a work of both charity and human industry. Charity is not a nebulous, abstract reality, but is concerned with the stuff of human action in all spheres of life; it is expressed through the better ordering of society, and this, says GS 39.2, is of very great importance for the kingdom of God.

We find, then, that Vatican II uses the idea of the fruition of human action in the eschatological sphere as its way of expressing the connection between man's obedience and his experience of final salvation; the principle of continuity uniting this world and the kingdom is the interior reality of charity. This theme of fruition, then, is intimately connected with the Council's stress on the interior disposition through which men belong to the community of grace (see pp. 242-44).

We must note, however, that the idea of the fruition of the works of charity is accompanied by words concerning their redemption and transfiguration as well.

How can we sum up Vatican II's delineation of the content of moral obedience, and how can we relate it to the Council's picture of God? Our answer must be very complex because it was in the area of moral theology that some of the most starkly unresolved problems of the Council's thought lay.

On the one hand, moral obedience to the teaching of the hierarchy can involve docility to its representation of natural law, even where it seems to cut across the conclusions which conscience might reach when having the future in view; on the other hand, the Catholic lives with a moral system which is increasingly determined by the concept of future goals - goals, such as that of 'the better ordering of society in view of the kingdom', which are at least partially comprehensible in terms of non-Christian aspirations. However, to give these goals their full, eschatological dimension, the Council also draws upon the idea that there will be a time when the kingdom breaks in upon the world, and transfigures and redeems the very fruits of loving human action. We may say, then, that at least three of our pictures of God are entailed in the Council's complicated presentation of moral obedience.

Firstly, the God who is the legislator of a stable natural order, demanding conformity, appears in those aspects of magisterial teaching which simply require obedience to principles said to be derived from the very nature of things but which do not have immediate reference to future goals. This picture, however, is subordinated to that of a God who has given men the capacity to share in his work of creation, for Vatican II introduces strongly the theme that all men have the tendency, innate in their consciences, to seek creative goals, particularly in the social sphere. The third picture which appears in the Council's thinking is related to this future-orientated concept of morality; it is the picture of God as liberator and covenant lord, who does not simply bring human action to fruition, but redeems and transfigures it by his sovereign act, the bringing-in of the kingdom. Amongst these three pictures of God, the greatest area of tension is to be found between a picture based on conformist morality, on the one hand, and the pair of pictures based

on future-orientated morality, on the other. Finally, we should note that the Council does not do anything to suggest that God should be pictured as the eternal king and judge whose requirements bear no immediate relation either to the evidence of human nature, or to man's strivings for the future (see Chapter I, p. 45).

Conclusion

We have seen in our examination of the content of canonical and moral obedience that Vatican II worked with a variety of pictures of God; of these, the most dominant are those under which he is viewed as a God whose commands orientate man towards the future - towards the consequences of his actions. The achievement of God's will through obedient human actions is partly comprehensible in purely natural terms, and is partly comprehensible only in relation to mystery of God's own redeeming action. The redeeming action of God is located both in the mystery of the cross - which provides the supernatural 'environment' for Christian choice - and also in the future consummation of the kingdom. That is to say, it provides both the presupposition of man's effective obedience, and also the term towards which human obedience strives.

Alongside the pictures of God associated with a view of obedience orientated on goal-seeking, there subsists also the picture of God in which he appears as the eternal creator of a stable moral order. This picture is entailed most clearly in the Council's tackling of sexual morality, although it also appears in other areas where the Council gave more detailed teachings (see, for example, Inter Mirifica, (Decree on the Media of Social Communication)). This picture sits uneasily alongside the others.

When we examined the implications of Vatican II's presentation of the nature of doctrine, we found that it shed this light upon the Council's picture of God: He appears as one who makes himself available to men's apprehension through a mystery. This mystery's meaning has to be expressed and understood under fully historical conditions. This historical dimension to man's knowledge of God (which enters the Council's theology specially in the contribution of Gaudium et Spes) reinforces those pictures of God which refer to his invitation and command to man to create a new future. It reinforces them by suggesting, as they do, the fact that God is constantly involved in the processes of human history. History has meaning and direction, because it is the context in which God makes

himself known. His involvement is not merely episodic (at creation, at the incarnation, at the end of time); nor is it the involvement of a God who superimposes the reality of a supernatural order upon the relatively stable workings of a natural order; history is not merely the theatre of human activity, from which we must escape to a higher realm, of which we have been allowed a glimpse. No; human history is the very stuff through which the presence of God is constantly mediated, and what is more, it is the very stuff of the coming kingdom.

C) Obedience and the Doctrine of Man in his Relationship to God

The reader will remember that in the third part of the typology presented in Chapter I we drew upon elements of correlation found in both the preceding parts of the typology. Therefore, in the present section we shall summarise some of the conclusions of the first two sections of this chapter, in order to draw from them implications concerning man's relationship to God, as this doctrine is entailed in Vatican II's ecclesiology. First, we shall draw out the anthropological implications of the Council's treatment of the Church's mediatorial role; secondly, we shall examine the content of obedience required in the Church from the point of view of anthropology; thirdly, we shall bring these considerations together, indicating what patterns of man's relationship to God through different 'moments' of human history are entailed in Vatican II's picture of authority and obedience.

1 What Doctrine of Man in his Relationship to God is Implied in Vatican II's Concept of the Church's Mediatorial Role?

In Section A of this chapter I have argued that the Second Vatican Council continued to maintain that the hierarchy of the Church represents the authority of God in three spheres - canonical, doctrinal and moral. I also made the distinction between representational acts, and representational persons; it is in the spheres of doctrine and morality that the power of the hierarchy may take the form of representational acts when, under certain restricted

circumstances, the Pope and bishops give formulae of teaching deemed to be 'infallibly' true about God and his will. In the sphere of canonical authority, however, the hierarchy acts with the authority of representational persons, the servants of the great king who are empowered to make decisions, but whose decisions are not guaranteed to reflect inerrantly the mind of the monarch himself. I have further suggested that because of a shifting epistemological theory, which affects the way in which representational verbal acts are received and interpreted, we may see more clearly the crucial role which members of the hierarchy play through their designation as representational persons, because the authority of persons is called into play to preserve the boundaries within which acceptable interpretation of representational acts may go on.

I have also argued that the documents of Vatican II supplement and partially modify the picture of the representational role of the hierarchy in mediating divine authority, by giving increased emphasis to the ways in which the hierarchy, together with the entire body of the Church, witness to divine truth, while at the same time they embody the presence of the Holy Spirit in a diffuse way and in varying degrees, through sacramental participation in his powers. However, since, as I suggested, the fundamental doctrine of representational authority was not abolished nor radically changed by this shift of emphasis, we shall concentrate here upon the Council's continuing use of the representational motif in both its aspects (ie. as it relates to persons and to acts). Even though we shall concentrate on the representational motif, it should also become clear during the course of this examination that the increased emphasis on the ideas of witnessing and embodiment is not without significance for the Council's concept of man's relationship to God.

We turn first to the questions raised by the idea that members of the hierarchy can be representational persons: This idea does not entail a clear-cut concept of the capacity of human nature to convey God's will to other men. On the one hand, representational persons are not attributed such an affinity with God as to identify their actions and words with his; yet, on the other hand, their acts and decisions are deemed to be sufficiently open to the influence of God for the guarantee of the Church's indefectibility to hold true.

However, it is not clear whether the acts and decisions of representational persons should always be seen as adequate instruments in positively preserving and furthering the Church's mission and constitution, or whether one should rather say that the promise of indefectibility relates merely to the fact that the exercise of authority can never ultimately destroy that mission and constitution. (For discussion of the scope of indefectibility, see Chapter II, p. 84.) What we may say, however, is that in general the actions of a representational hierarchy are deemed to assist and protect the Church in the fulfillment of God's purpose for her. This is the usual grounds upon which members of the hierarchy can require obedience from Christians - the obedience which God's children owe to the purposes of his providence.

The capacity to represent God's authority is, then, bound up both with guarantees of extrinsic protection, and also with the real possibility of positive assistance from the Spirit in the formation of concrete actions and decisions. These guarantees, and this possibility, are operative within the Church in a peculiar way; a secular ruler cannot represent God's authority under exactly the same conditions. What is it, then, in the constitution of the Church which creates these conditions?

As far as the extrinsic condition of protection from the ultimate destruction of the Church is concerned (indefectibility understood in its negative and most restricted connotations), we may say that this condition is correlative to the formal, quasi-legal status of members of the hierarchy. They stand in an office instituted by Christ through the Apostles, and the negative guarantees of indefectibility are attached by God to this office. However, with regard to the possibility that men may represent the authority of God in a more positive way - actually preserving, guiding, and furthering the Church's fulfillment of her mission - we may say that some conditions must exist whereby the inner being of members of the hierarchy is affected; they are laid open to the influence of the Spirit in the formation of their decisions. Again, as in the case of the negative guarantees of indefectibility, this inner assistance may simply be seen as being attached to the quasi-legal status of the Apostles' successors; that is to say, the positive guidance of the

Spirit is the subject of a promise conjoined to Christ's institution of the apostolic ministry. On the other hand, we have seen that Vatican II increased the stress put upon the sacramental conditions under which bishops and priests are representational figures; this shift of emphasis towards the intrinsic, sacramental grounds for representational authority highlights the theological idea of embodiment. The indwelling of the Spirit, through sacramental participation in his presence and power, is the source and explanation of the positive use of authority in the Church's life.

In the case of bishops, the Spirit-given authority is rooted in their sacramental participation in the fullest reality of priesthood, and it intersects with the negative guarantees which are attached to their quasi-legal institutional status, and which protect their decisions extrinsically from ultimate harmfulness to the Church. However, we can see too that in the case of all Christians there is also an embodiment of the Spirit's presence through baptism. All, therefore, represent Christ in their persons in the sacramental sense. In addition, all Christians live under the umbrella of indefectibility, negatively understood (that is, none of them can destroy the Church by his actions or decisions); but it is given to the hierarchy in particular to exercise representational authority which is guaranteed in this way.

We turn now from the subject of personal representation of God in the Church to that of representational acts of moral and doctrinal teaching. Here we have found that the Second Vatican Council effectively admitted the historical conditioning of even dogmatic formulae, whilst at the same time reasserting the possibility that man may have inerrant knowledge of the divine through the medium of such statements. In this way the Council reaffirmed, and even reinforced, the classical Catholic assertion of the epistemological gap which exists between man and God's mystery. (The traditional assertion is found in St. Thomas' theory of analogy.) By showing that human knowledge of God must remain tied to structures of understanding which are derived from historical existence, and which may change as the conditions of that existence alter, the theology of Vatican II illustrated in a fresh way how it is that man's creatureliness debars him from immediate participation in the divine

self-knowledge. Man's linguistic formulae give him access to an objective knowledge of God, it is true; but because this objective knowledge may have to be conveyed through a kaleidoscope of changing expressions there is room for constant debate about the meaning of divine truth. This debate seeks to conquer certainty ever-afresh, rather than to produce an expanding chain of 'theologically certain' truths, reached by a process of Aristotelian deductions from fixed principles.

The structure of representational teaching about God and his will in the Church is, then, characterised both by the historical conditioning of human subjectivity, and also by the inner mysteriousness of God. It is the vehicle of objective or abstractive knowledge only, and this knowledge does not seem to be as accessible to extension through sheer logical development as was once thought possible. However, we have also seen that the representational teaching of the Magisterium, as well as its preaching and the witness of ordinary Catholics, give testimony to another kind of knowledge of God. This is the knowledge of God which is constituted by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The constitution Dei Verbum speaks of the conversion of the heart in man's encounter with the revealing God (DV 5), and when the same document speaks of the development of doctrinal understanding in the Church it refers to "the deep knowledge of spiritual matters which [the faithful] attain through experience" (DV 8.2). These references to the knowledge gained by experience, the knowledge grounded in conversion of the heart, speak of the immediate encounter of man with God. This is the encounter of God's action and man's response in love; it is the context of experience in which abstract, discursive or objective knowledge of God's revealed truth makes sense, and in which man's apprehension and expression of its meaning may develop. Indeed, the abstractive formulae of doctrine may 'trigger' the interior knowledge of the heart, just as the Church's witness to the historical encounters of God and man which stand at the fount of its faith may do so. Nevertheless, the immediate experience or apprehension of God's reality and truth is not to be identified with the knowledge conveyed in linguistic formulae.

We find, therefore, that Vatican II characterised human knowledge of God in two ways, drawing upon the motifs of representation, on the one hand, and of witness and embodiment, on the other. What does this suggest about the structure of man's relationship to God?

It suggests that the most immediate affinity of the Christian with his creator is not in the dimension of objectified knowledge. Objectified knowledge is limited, in that it never penetrates to the heart of the divine mystery, and also in that the representational language in which it is expressed is irreducibly conditioned by its historical and cultural matrix, even though its adequacy within that context may be guaranteed by the extrinsic conditions of 'infallibility'. The intrinsic openness of man to God's reality is, on the other hand, to be found in the Christian's openness to encounter with the Holy Spirit who can indwell him as the principle of personal knowledge, love, and action. The capacity to be indwelt and moved by the Spirit is a trans-historical and trans-cultural characteristic of human nature; it is the true dimension in which the temporal creature finds an affinity with the heart of the mystery which is God.

2 What Doctrine of Man in his Relationship to God is Implied in Vatican II's Concept of the Content of the Obedience Due in the Church?

If the capacity to be indwelt and moved by the Holy Spirit is the fundamental dimension of the Christian's openness to God, we may ask whether this openness is something which is created entirely anew in the context of Church membership - is it an openness which can come about only because human nature is entirely recreated and refashioned through ecclesiastical grace? Or is there a more fundamental openness still, inhering in all human nature as it concretely exists, and making it potentially receptive to God and his ways? To answer this question we must re-examine the extent to which Christian activity - activity which is obedient to the Spirit's moving as it is known in the life of grace and in the representational authority of the Church - is harmonious with the kind of action which

would be prompted by 'natural' human motivation.

I have argued in the second section of this chapter that the documents of Vatican II exhibit a great degree of harmony between what is considered appropriate as the expression of Christian morality and what is considered appropriate according to the canons of human reason operating outside the Church. The Council allied Catholic morality very largely with the perspectives of a new humanism , an ethic which is centred on the human person as the highest concrete criterion, and which tends to orientate action towards the creation of a new future. This ethic was described as something which was already influential in the world, apart from the Church (GS 55), but Vatican II saw the Christian message as a means through which humanism might be extended, clarified, and stabilised upon the foundation of God's intention. Most significantly, the Council treated conscience as a natural locus of human contact with God. This was the major thrust of the Council's ethical theory. However, we also saw strands of thought relating to a static concept of natural law (conformity to the inner nature of things), and to the redemption of human actions and aspirations in the kingdom of God. These strands of thought introduce, in different ways, the possibility for Catholic morality to be radically disjunctive with the conclusions of secular or natural reason.

As concerns the issue of canonical obedience (as opposed to obedience in the strictly moral sphere) we find that here, too, the Council indicates a great extent of harmony between what is appropriate in the Church and what is appropriate in the context of other kinds of human community. The Christian's obedience is largely orientated upon the common good, which he seeks to foster through responsible activity, decision, and co-operation - means which are all accessible to the valuation of secular thought. However, the common good of the Church also has a paradoxical dimension, a dimension of redeeming grace which is bestowed upon human beings when they open themselves up to it through self-denial. Therefore, the logic of Christian obedience goes beyond that of secular action, and embraces the salvific logic of the cross. However, I have suggested that we should notice that Vatican II does not present self-denial in obedience as being the condition of an individual's eschatological reward; rather, it is shown to be the condition of participation in Christ's redemptive

will for others. Therefore, even this paradoxical kind of obedience is analagous in its motivation to the obedience required in other groups, for it is directed towards the common good.

In both the moral and the canonical spheres Vatican II described the principles underlying the obedience of Catholics in such a way as to indicate that it should lead to the fulfillment of universal and innate human aspirations, even though man's movement towards these ends should sometimes need to be radically reorientated. Whether the Council was describing the kind of decision which would be totally harmonious with a secular personalism, or indicating the paradoxical nature of redemptive self-denial in obedience, or even prescribing to an established and immovable law of nature, it affirmed the high value of human dignity within community, justice, brotherhood, and the transcendent importance of the person. These are also the objects of 'natural' human concern and moral aspiration. Therefore we may say that Vatican II presented Catholic obedience as being the fulfillment, even through radical reorientation, of the innate desires of human nature.

What does this mean in the context of our consideration of the structure of human nature as it exists outside the Church? It means that man is seen as fundamentally open to God's coming and to his ways. The action of the Holy Spirit as he encounters and indwells an individual is one of healing and redirecting, but it is not the total recreation of a nature which would otherwise be closed and opposed to the divine. God's action elevates human aspirations to an eschatological end, but the kingdom is a sphere in which all moral actions are not **put aside,** but are rather brought to fruition even through being transfigured.

3 A Synopsis of the Correlations between Vatican II's Concept of the Obedience Due in the Church and the Doctrine concerning Man's Relationship to God at Different 'Moments'.

By examining the structure of human relationship to God as Vatican II sees it existing in the Church, we have come to the conclusion that the closest affinity of humanity to the mystery of God consists in the immediate presence of the Holy Spirit within the

spirit of man. This indwelling presence is the principle of charity, and therefore of Christian obedience; it gives a horizon of personal encounter which is not fully expressible in language, but which makes sense of the Church's objective doctrine, as well as of her witness to the historical encounters of man and God, by locating them within a personal context of experience and action. In contrast to this immediate knowledge of the Spirit's presence and action, the Church's objectified doctrine is simply extrinsic (though guaranteed) language about the mystery-language which never penetrates the essence of God's self-knowledge.

Having located the intrinsic affinity which the Christian has with God in the area of an unobjectified experience, which gives rise to action in charity, we then went on to consider the basis of this affinity in concrete human nature as it exists outside the Church. I argued that the theology of Vatican II suggests that there is a fundamental openness to God in the consceince and aspirations of even non-Christian man as he strives towards communion and love. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the life of grace answers to this striving, whilst at the same time reorientating it, healing it, and pointing it towards the kingdom in which the fruits of human industry and nature are to be transfigured.

It is the classical teaching of Thomist theology that grace elevates nature, and does not cancel its activity, but perfects it. There is, then, traditionally in Catholic thought an openness to God, an 'obediential potency' in human nature. The significance of Vatican II's treatment of this theme is that it locates the root of this openness rather clearly in the active principle of human life, in the area of interiority where man is moved to actions of love. To put it another way, the natural law known to conscience is not self-enclosed, prescribing a set of virtues which have no 'supernatural' reference at all. Rather, it opens out into man's need to love God and his neighbour. Human virtue is not simply heightened by grace; it is fulfilled. It could have no lower perfection which might subsist independently of this fulfillment; the obediental potency of human nature is not a passive receptivity to the coming of the Spirit, but an active aspiration.

By locating man's fundamental openness to God in the need

which human morality has for fulfillment by charity, the Second Vatican Council rejected the idea that a state of 'pure nature' might be conceived, a state in which humanity could find a self-enclosed perfection in the 'natural order' which would be distinct from the higher perfection which grace might bestow in a separate 'supernatural order'. The structure of man's being, even from creation, has included a moral openness to God, consisting of nature's aspiration after charity. Human beings were made for a communion of love with one another and with their creator, and this characterises their personhood as those made in the image of God.

We have, then, looked backwards from the standpoint of man's relationship to God in the Church, and we have discovered that Vatican II's concept of this relationship presupposes an active aspiration for the divine as the characteristic structure of created human nature - a structure which persists even in the state of fallenness. We must now turn to look forwards from the vantage-point of the life of grace known in the Christian community, and explore the implications of the Council's teaching on obedience for its doctrine of the eschatological structure of the divine-human relationship.

I have argued that the concept of obedience put forward by the Council highlights the way in which the experience of salvation is to be a fruition of obedience, rather than a disjunctive reward. Even in those cases where the action of the obedient Christian is unlike any action which secular rationality would commend, and where the connection between act and fruit is not humanly comprehensible, the Council's stress upon the significance of such obedience for the corporate life and mission of the Church indicates that these acts are conjoined to the redemptive grace of God in a directly fruitful way. They are not gestures of submission undertaken solely to render honour to the will of an external king; rather, they are part of a covenant relationship in which man's deeds form part of the necessary substance of his community's corporate experience of liberation.

The concept of fruition (even through transformation) coheres with the idea that human nature finds its true affinity with God through its aspiration after charity. The Christian's imperfect participation in the presence of the Spirit, who is the principle of charity within, is the root of effective obedience now. That

obedience will reach full fruit when man shares completely in the Spirit's activity of charity - the activity of full communion - in the kingdom of God, when all the acts of earthly love will be caught up and transfigured in their essence and effect. This will be the channel through which human nature is divinised: Love, which on earth has reached out for its goal in the kingdom, will find it, and in the activity of communion will make man like God. "We shall be like him," says St John, "for we shall see him as he is." (I Jn. 3.2; quoted in LG 48.4.)

The idea of 'seeing' God is parallel to that of knowing him. We have found that knowledge of God has a double aspect, and that the objectified knowledge of the earthly reason is not the kind of knowledge which penetrates to the heart of the divine mystery. Only the unobjectified, inexpressible knowledge found in the encounter of love touches it. The Council's admission of all the ways in which human rationality is determined and characterised in its objective knowledge by its context in history, suggests that this kind of knowledge would dissolve apart from the historical transcendentals from which it derives its structure. The theology of Vatican II does not draw the conclusion of this train of thought, but the drift of its thinking indicates a tendency to give the primacy to the knowledge of love rather than to the objective, abstractive, knowledge of rationality. One might say, then, that the idea of man's eschatological relationship to God which the Council suggests is this: In the kingdom "mystery constitutes the relationship between God and Man, and hence the fulfilment of human nature is the consummation of its orientation towards the abiding mystery". (3) The concept of 'seeing God' at the last which coheres best with Vatican II's epistemology is, therefore, the concept of knowing the divine mystery intuitionally through love, rather than that of applying the activity of abstractive rationality to his essential nature.

Conclusion

The anthropology implied in Vatican II's ecclesiology is one

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(3) Karl Rahner, "The Concept of Mystery in Catholic Theology" in Theological Investigations, 4 (London, 1966) p. 49.

in which man is seen as being open to God through all the 'moments' of his existence. Sin does not destroy the fundamental openness of the human conscience and of human moral aspirations; it distorts and warps it, or - to change the metaphor for a dynamic one which better suits the goal-seeking character of moral obedience described by the Council - it disorientates the active tendency of the human heart in its aspiration after God. However, the openness and the dynamism remain within human nature. They are a constituent part of the character of the person, the image of God, who was made from the beginning for communion with his neighbour and with his creator.

The communion of charity is brought about incipiently in this world by the indwelling presence and activity of the Holy Spirit. He is the principle of the Christian's action in love. The actions of love, which constitute the inner nature of Christian obedience, will find their fruition in the kingdom when they will be transfigured and renewed in man's final relationship to God. It is love, or charity, then, which is the intrinsic bond between man and his creator at every stage of human existence. At creation and in the state of fallenness the bond is a potential one, an openness to be moved by God's love; in the life of grace known in the Church, and in the final kingdom of God, the bond is that of a substantial inner affinity between the redeemed human spirit in its activity, and the activity of love which characterises God himself.

The Church creates the extrinsic conditions in which men may have objective, abstract knowledge of God - knowledge which can be transmitted and interpreted from one conceptual scheme to another. However, this kind of knowledge never penetrates the essence of the divine mystery, because it is dependent on historical transcendentals which structure it and give it the material of analogy by which it becomes objective. Therefore, objective knowledge about God and his will, although it may attain to certainty and security within the structure of the Church's guaranteed authority, does not form the inner bond which unites the Christian to the mystery of redeeming love. The Church's representational structure and function simply exists as the extrinsic conditions of temporal actualisation of an interior affinity between God and man.

This suggests that the Church, in so far as it remains in the final kingdom, remains not in its authoritative structure, but as the fruit and expression of love. The aspect in which the Church is a communion of persons is its truly eschatological dimension. Its representational, mediatory structure will fall away, when the form of obedience is cast off in the activity of pure love, as man is united to God and his neighbour in the eternal, unmediated communion of the kingdom.

CHAPTER VII: AN EXAMINATION OF VATICAN II'S DOCTRINES OF GOD AND MAN IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH EACH OTHER, FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THESE DOCTRINES' CONSISTENCY WITH THE COUNCIL'S CONCEPT OF OBEDIENCE IN THE CHURCH

We now reach the final stage of this thesis, in which we shall test the teaching given by the Second Vatican Council concerning the overall nature of the divine-human relationship for consistency with the Council's picture of the ideal obedience which the Christian should render in the Church. On what grounds do we do this? The answer is that systematic theology forms a circle of interrelated ideas; an ecclesiology should entail a set of anthropological presuppositions and a certain doctrine of God, and both of the latter should also have important implications for each other. It is therefore generally impossible to treat any one doctrine totally in isolation from the others.

Because of this circularity of ideas, although up till now we have tried to treat the ecclesiology of Vatican II separately from its overt anthropology and doctrine of God (trying to draw implicit anthropological and theological presuppositions from its ideal of ecclesiastical obedience) it has nevertheless been necessary to examine already certain issues which might be said to belong strictly to the wider doctrines of man and God. For example, we have considered the Council's teaching on human conscience in relation to the question of the harmony of ecclesiastically-taught morality with the ethical ideas of non-Christians; we have also examined the Council's theology of the secular, in relation to its teaching on the laity and to the question of authoritative Catholic moral and doctrinal teaching. In the present chapter we shall study these issues again, in more detail, as we analyse the Council's anthropology and doctrines of God and Christ.

Before we move on to consider the Council documents further, let us first remind ourselves in more detail of the purpose of this chapter:

In so far as it has been possible to separate the ecclesiology

of Vatican II from other areas of doctrine, we have analysed the Council's concept of obedience in the Church in Chapters II-V of this thesis. We have discovered certain significant shifts of emphasis appearing in Vatican II's ideal of Christian obedience when it is set against the background of the teachings of the preceding century. We have also derived from the Council's concept of obedience a fairly complex implicit anthropology, and a set of pictures of God. It is now my purpose that we should review a wider spectrum of passages from the documents, in order to test them for consistency with the doctrines which we found to be implicit in the conciliar teaching on obedience.

In the Preface I suggested that the field of ecclesiology is one in which the intermesh between theology and social determinants is particularly tight (see p. 8); therefore, it might be quite possible for shifts of emphasis to come about in ecclesiology - through pressures arising from the social environment of the Church, and changes in the intellectual atmosphere in which Christians live - which would not be reflected by corresponding shifts of emphasis in areas of theology which appear to be more speculative and less immediately involved in social reality, with all its problems of plausibility. The major aim of this chapter will be to ask, 'does the explicit anthropology of Vatican II, and does its doctrine of God, correspond to the pictures of man and God entailed in its ecclesiology, and particularly in its concept of obedience in the Church?' We might find that the shifts in the doctrine of obedience are mirrored in the doctrines of God and man, or, on the other hand, we might find that these latter areas of thought have not experienced so much shift, because of the conservative effect of dogmatic formulations concerning fundamental issues.

We shall examine the Council's doctrines of man and God in their relationship according to the 'moments' which were used in the preceding chapter; that is to say, we shall consider the divine-human relationship as it is conditioned by the 'moment' of creation, as it is conditioned by the fact of man's fallenness, as it is conditioned by the gift of grace bestowed through the incarnation and the Church, and finally, as it may appear in the 'moment' of eschatological fulfillment. It will become clear during

the course of the chapter that some of these 'moments' in fact overlap in the thought of Vatican II, for the Council's Christology has a scope which shows grace to be co-extensive with human history. Nevertheless, the articulation of this chapter into four sections, corresponding to the four 'moments' mentioned above, will remain a convenient analytical device, particularly because it will enable us to compare the Council's anthropology and doctrine of God against the ideas which, we concluded, were implicit in its ideal of obedience.

The reader will realise that there has been some unevenness so far between my treatment of the doctrine of man entailed in Vatican II's ideal of ecclesiastical obedience, and the pictures of God which were derived from the same source. The reason for this is the fact, mentioned above, of the close interrelationship of doctrines of God and man in any system of theology. If I had articulated the doctrine of God entailed in conciliar ideas of obedience in all its fullness, I should have repeated much of the same material again in my derivation of the corresponding anthropology. Instead, bare pictures of God were elicited from our study of the content of ecclesiastical obedience, whilst more complex doctrinal statements were left to the anthropological sphere. The time has now come, however, to expand more fully upon the pictures of God which we have examined, incorporating them into a more extensive doctrine of God. Therefore, in the sections which follow the reader will find that the order of attention is reversed, by comparison with previous chapters, so that we shall consider first the Council's doctrine of man; then, drawing upon this as well as upon the pictures of God which we have used so far, the doctrine of God will be dealt with. Thus, the organic relationship between the two areas of doctrine should be absolutely clear.

It will be necessary at the beginning of some sections of this chapter to examine yet more closely the material which afforded our conclusions in Chapter VI. By this closer examination of the doctrine of man and the picture of God entailed in Vatican II's concept of ecclesiastical obedience we may hope to clarify the questions which it is relevant to pose when considering passages from the Council documents which concern the wider pattern of divine-human relationship.

A) Vatican II's Doctrines of God and Man in the 'Moment' of Creation and Createdness

1 A Closer Examination of the Doctrine of Man in the 'Moment' of Creation, as it is Entailed in the Passages which we have so far Studied

According to the ecclesiology of Vatican II as we have viewed it, from the standpoint of its teaching on obedience, man is founded from his creation in a moral openness towards God. This openness is constituted by his natural apprehension of God's law and will through conscience, and by his aspiration after the values which are summed up in love of God and neighbour. Such is the nature of the human being to whom the Church addresses its message; he is one who has been made, from his creation, for communion with God, a communion in which love of his fellow-men will also be caught up. This is the destiny which will fulfill him; it is towards this destiny that all his truly moral actions tend, although in order to reach this end they must be completed by charity and find their transfiguration and redemption in the coming of the kingdom.

This doctrine of man as one who is made for communion (see Chapter IV pp. 236-38) is encapsulated by Vatican II's use of the biblical phrase "made in God's image" (GS 12.3), expounded as meaning "capable of knowing and loving his creator" (loc. cit.). This definition which is given to the meaning of "God's image" is, in fact, an expansion upon Genesis 1.26, and it owes its form to a background of patristic theology.(1) Even up tothe time of St. Thomas, the idea of the 'image' was associated with man's activity in knowing and loving God, rather than with static or abstract qualities of his nature. (2) However, in neo-scholastic

(1) See Ph. Delhaye, "La dignité de la personne humaine" in L'Église dans le monde de ce temps, 2, edited by G. Baraúna (Bruges, 1968)p. 344.

(2) See Aquinas, ST 1a. q.93. St. Thomas' thought represents a turning point on the subject of the 'image', for he says that man is the image of God by reason of his intellectual nature (an abstract quality), but that this nature is the grounds for man's imitation of God in being and life because of the processions of the word from intelligence, and of love from the will. That is

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thought the concept of the image of God in man had firmly become that of "a rational nature . . . endowed with free will". (3) The idea of the image as an active openness to dialogue, then, represents a breakthrough by Vatican II to older ways of conceiving the matter. We shall see that the patristic orientation in the idea was of profound significance both for the Council's anthropology, and also for its Christology.

We may expand our analysis of the concept of God's image in man here by considering its link with the Council's use of the notion 'person', for it is the human person who is the subject of the description, 'man, made in God's image' in GS 12, and it is "the Dignity of the Human Person" which is the subject of the chapter of which GS 12 is the introduction.

The term 'person' has different meanings in different conceptual schemes; in particular, the meaning attached to the term in neo-scholastic thought and in post-Enlightenment humanisms should be considered in relation to the term's use at Vatican II. The most important difference between these meanings attaches to the value and role given to freedom and reason as attributes of the person. In the neo-scholastic picture, freedom is subordinate to reason, for it is rational nature which distinguishes man. Late nineteenth century Roman theology follows St. Thomas in taking up the dictum of Boethius, "the person is the individual substance of a rational nature". (4) However, the neo-scholastics understood "rational nature", or "reason", in a particular and restricted way; "rational nature" is that which can and should conform to the norms of objective truth; its dignity lies in doing so under the power of its own initiative. (5)

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to say, man is the image of God because he imitates him in action. Therefore the concept of the image for St. Thomas is on the level of analogy, whereas for Bonaventure, for example, man is the image of God through being a 'living mirror' of his very being (see II Sent. d.16. a.1.q.1. concl.).

(3) This description is drawn from the first draft of the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (unpublished notes presented to the Co-ordinating Commission, May 23 1963, p. 14)

(4) This text of Boethius is cited by St. Thomas as the basis of his own concept of the person in ST 1a. q.29 a.1.ad.1; q.30. a.1. ad.1. (vol. 6, pp. 41 and 65).

(5) See Aquinas, ST 1a. q.29. a.1 resp.: "particularity and

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This is the point at which freedom is important: Freedom constitutes the power to conform to truth rationally, rather than in a sub-personal way. It is not, essentially, simply the power to act according to one's own volition, whether rationally or not.

This way of conceiving freedom appears in Leo XIII's encyclical Libertas Praestantissimum (6) which the Pope introduced by saying that freedom belongs solely to natures which possess intelligence or reason, and it gives to men the dignity of being under their own counsel and of having power over their own actions. But, he went on to say, "this dignity's greatest significance lies in the fact that it is exercised by reason". (7) The weight of this last comment appears when Leo addresses himself to the question of liberty in society:

> "Therefore in human society, liberty which is true to its name does not subsist in the power to do what you please . . . but in the fact that the civil laws make it easier for you to live in accordance with the prescriptions of the eternal law." (8)

From this, he goes on to draw the conclusion about religious freedom:

> "Men widely preach what they call freedom of conscience. Now, if this is understood to mean that everyone should worship, or not worship, God equally, according to his own opinion, the arguments given above are sufficient to prove that this idea is mistaken. But, it is acceptable in this sense: A man should suffer no obstacle in the state which

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individuality are found in a still more special and perfect way in rational substances which have control over their actions, and are not only acted upon as other beings are, but act of their own initiative. For to act is proper to individual or singular substances. Hence, among all other substances individual beings with a rational nature have a special name, and this is 'person'." (vol. 6, p. 43).

(6) 20 June 1888, (ASS 20 pp. 593ff.).

(7) ibid.,p. 593 (DzS 3245).

(8) ibid., p. 598 (DzS 3250).

> would prevent him from following the will of God and doing his commands according to his awareness of his duty. Now, this is true freedom, worthy of the sons of God, which protects the dignity of the human person most properly." (9)

We see then, that despite a shade of ambiguity, the basic idea shines through that the freedom which gives men dignity is the freedom to live worthily as God's children, as beings who follow the law of rationality given to them through their consciences and through the Church. Rational nature, which is the universal suppositum of humanity, is the norm of the individual person's dignity in his exercise of freedom. Freedom does not have a self-subsistent dignity.

The thinkers of many forms of post-Enlightenment humanism begin their understanding of man's dignity not from the point of view of a universal human nature, but from the point of view of the individual subject as a superconscious unity of intentional acts. This individual subject becomes the norm of ethics, and freedom (the power of self-determination and intentionality) is an essential part of his dignity.

Between these two conceptual schemes there opens up a mediating possibility (as we have already seen in our study of passages from Vatican II). Man's ethical norm may be neither purely objective (a 'law'), nor purely subjective. It may, rather, be the norm which is imposed upon the individual by his own character as a being who essentially exists as one in dialogue with others. That is to say, the subject only fully finds his identity in relationships, and ethical reality cannot be abstracted from this relational character of the human person.

This is the position which begins to appear in GS 16 on human conscience, for in conscience is heard the "voice" of God; (10) it is, therefore, a locus of dialogue. In addition, although the article also draws upon a concept of a divine, objective law, inscribed upon man's heart (in obedience to which

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(9) ibid., p. 608 (DzS 3250).

(10) The idea of the "voice of God", heard in conscience, was not entirely new within magisterial theology at Vatican II;

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he attains dignity), this law is to be fulfilled in relationships of love with God and neighbour. Therefore, such relationship, or communion, becomes the norm of human freedom and dignity.

The concept of loving relationship requires as its concomitant the existence of true freedom in the subject. Whilst rationality may be constrained (that is, I may be persuaded by argument or demonstration to acknowledge something as true, even against my will), love, on the other hand, loses its value if it is not a free self-donation without constraint. Freedom, then has a dignity of its own, the dignity of being the potential for love, even when it is abused, and turns away from communion with God and neighbour.

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indeed, GS 16 gives a direct reference to a radio broadcast of Pius XII using the same image. However, Pius's use of the idea that the voice of God echoes in conscience did not really break through to a dialogical concept of conscience, because he went on to speak of it as a "pure reflection of the norm of human acts", and to use the language of 'enlightening' conscience through education on the subject of Christ's will, law, and life. These, then, are expressions which introduce more fixist, legalistic notions of the content and function of conscience. (See Radio broadcast, 23 March 1952, AAS 44, pp. 271f.)

We have, of course, seen that GS 16 uses the idea of a law in conscience, as well as that of a voice (Chapter IV, p. 236). However, it is very important that GS 16 orientates this law upon its fulfillment in charity (rather than simply in obedience to the 'Golden Rule' of M.7. 12f., which was a favourite traditional definition and summary of the content of the natural law), and we may also note the contrast between the ideas of the education of conscience in accordance with norms derived from the past, and the more future-looking idea contained in GS 16 of "searching together for the truth, and solving the great number of moral problems . . . in the truth". This contrast is not a stark one, for the 'educated' conscience must necessarily apply norms learnt from the past to the problems of the present and future, and, as we have seen, in other passages Vatican II speaks of the education of conscience, and of docility towards the Church's teaching. Nevertheless, the shift of emphasis between Pius' broadcast and GS 16 is appreciable.

Turning to conscience, we find that it derives its dignity not only through the fact that it expresses freedom, but also from the fact that it is the faculty whereby man apprehends the law of love and the voice of God. The dignity of conscience, then, consists in freely seeking that law and trying to understand that voice - in displaying the attitude which is orientated towards love. It does not lose its dignity if it errs invincibly with regard to the objective moral law (see GS 16), although it does lose its dignity if it turns aside from its proper orientation through sinful neglect of the question of what is good (loc. cit.).

Human dignity, therefore, exists on several different levels; man has a dignity on the level of mere potentiality for love, which is expressed in the fact of his genuine freedom; he has a dignity which consists in following his conscience, whether or not it accurately conforms to the law and voice of God; finally, his fullest dignity blossoms when he fulfills the divine law through charity, in a communion of love with God and neighbour.

We find, then, that we have moved away from the problematic of truth and rationality to that of communion and love when considering ethical norms and human dignity. This is how Vatican II's concept of the human person provides a philosophical counterpart to its doctrine of man as made in God's image. From the beginning, man has possessed freedom and the capacity for moral knowledge of God's will; these together constitute an openness to love of God.

In addition to this moral openness to God, the human mind also has a created capacity to attain to knowledge of the creator from the evidence of what he has made (see DV 6.2). However, within the general structure of the Council's theology of man's relationship to God it is clear that this intellectual capacity is subordinate to, and supportive of, man's openness to love. Human dignity subsists in the moral spheres of freedom and conscience, whether or not the intellectual possibility of knowing about the creator is taken up. Correct beliefs about God (or even about his will) are not the means whereby man gains his fundamental dignity as a person, although they do enable him to live according to the fullness of that dignity.

2 A Closer Examination of the Doctrine of God the Creator, as it is Entailed in the Passages which we have so far studied

When we examined the ideal of obedience which Vatican II presented, in order to elicit the picture of God underlying it, we found that he appeared most predominantly as one who shares his act of creation with men, and as one who is liberator and lord of a new covenant. However, we also saw that there is a picture of him as legislator of a stable moral order requiring conformity contained in some aspects of the Council's teaching on obedience. Therefore, whilst the documents of Vatican II stress most strongly that it is the future which provides the criterion and goal for moral and ecclesiastical obedience, they also assert that certain unchangeable norms exist within the universe - norms which are determined by the essence of how things are in God's creation.

The future-orientated pictures of God, and that which shows him in relation to a stable, fixed order do, of course, stand in tension to one another. When they are correlated with human actions the former pictures set the moral criterion for the Christian more in effects, while the latter direct his attention to that which pre-exists him as the essence of what is good. However, to say that these pictures of God are in tension with one another is not to say that they are completely irreconcilable. We have seen in Chapter IV (pp. 239f.) how the Council sketched out the formal structure of a reconciliation by correlating its picture of God with the idea of the human person, "that part of creation which is open to the future precisely because of the nature which it has been given from all eternity".

Therefore, on the formal level at least, a basis is provided upon which the different pictures of God may be synthesised: God the creator relates to man the person through eternal norms, through inviting him to share in creating a new future, and also by redeeming and liberating human action so that man's future may be that of the kingdom and not merely of this world. In the human person an eternally decreed structure of being opens out (according to its own norms) to communion and futurity,

However, if the personhood of man is the correlative concept which may serve to hold together the different elements of a composite picture of God, it is also a concept which imports some new elements into the doctrine of God with which it is co-ordinated. If God relates to men as persons, destined for communion with him by the very structure of their being, the entire creative act which brought them into existence begins to appear as an act of love. Whether this creative act and ordinance is seen primarily in terms of a process which is directed towards a goal in the future, or whether it is seen as being fundamentally a once-for-all determination of a stable physical and moral universe, it appears as an act in which humanity comes to be because God wills to have loving communion with it.

How does this compare with the doctrine of God put forward by magisterial documents of the preceding hundred years? Looking back to Vatican I's teaching concerning creation we see no explicit mention of love:

> "This one only true God, of His own goodness and almighty power, not for the increase of His own happiness, but to manifest His perfection by the blessings which He bestows on creatures, and with absolute freedom of counsel, created out of nothing, from the very beginning of time, both the spiritual and the corporeal creatures."(11)

Now, this passage mentions the goodness and blessings of God, but it does not mention the sort of love which seeks communion with the objects of its creation. The act of creation appears to be something occurring very much outside God's self-subsisting essence, and having no fundamental effect upon it. It is an occasion, simply, for the manifestation of the divine perfection. The creatures upon whom the blessings are bestowed have the role of witnesses to this perfection more than that of partners in loving communion. This suggests that the glorification of God consists in the rational apprehension by men and angels of

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(11) Dei Filius, cap. 1, (Dz 1783/DzS 3002). (Translation from C. Butler, The Vatican Council, 2 (London, 1936) p. 255).

God's perfection, and their due response of giving honour to him to whom it is due.

The stress of Dei Filius on the fact that God was free from all necessity in creating the world is, if anything, sharpened in the canon which is attached to the constitution:

> "If anyone . . . shall say that God created, not by His will free from all necessity, but by a necessity equal to the necessity whereby He loves Himself; or shall deny that the world was made for the glory of God; let him be anathema." (12)

We see, then, that the major thrust of Vatican I's teaching on the nature of God as creator is concerned with affirming his freedom and glorification in creation.

In 1887 the Holy Office specifically opposed the doctrine of God's freedom to the concept of a necessity imposed upon him by love, when it condemned the proposition (alleged to be drawn from the philosophy of Rosmini-Serbati) that "the love by which God loves himself even in his creatures, and which is the determining principle of creation, constitutes a moral necessity, and a moral necessity always comes to effect in the most perfect of beings". (13) A similar issue cropped up again among the "new theological tendencies" reproved by Pius XII in 1950: Among their consequences he included the contention that "the creation of the world was necessary, because it proceeds from the necessary liberality of divine love". (14)

We should view the implications which we have drawn from Vatican II's ideal of obedience against this background of polemic, in which the Magisterium avoided explicitly stating that the creation flowed from divine love, lest it might imply that God was constrained by an inner necessity.

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(12) ibid. Canones de Deo Creatore, can. 5 (b & c) (Dz 1805/DzS 3025) (Butler's translation, p. 269).

(13) Decr. S. Officii, Post Obitum (14 Dec. 1887), Error 18. (Dz 1908/ DzS 3218).

(14) Encycl. Humani Generis, p. 570 (Dz 2317/DzS 3890).

Vatican II did not avoid all mention or implication of love in creation in this way. It suggested that men were made for communion with God, and thus because of God's love. This is not to say that the idea of inner necessity or moral constraint upon the creator is part of Vatican II's doctrine; nor is it to suggest that the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council would have denied the proposition that if the universe had not been brought into being God would nevertheless still be "of supreme beatitude in and of himself". (15) However, the idea that he created out of love, and with a view to loving communion, does suggest that in the act of calling the world into being he surrenders something of his self-subsistent beatitude freely, and henceforward makes it somehow dependent upon communion with the object of his love and creation. From this point of view we may suppose that the glorification of the creator consists in more than the mere honouring of his perfection by created witnesses, but rather in the substantial response of the creature to him in the fullness of communion.

Summary to sub-sections 1 and 2

By examining the pictures of God which were derived from Vatican II's concept of ideal Christian obedience, and by showing that both the future-orientated pictures, and also that which posits God as the author of a stable order, are correlated by the Council with the doctrine of the human person, we have been able to explore further dimensions of that doctrine of God which best co-ordinates with the conciliar ideal of obedience. We have found that the idea of divine love as the motive force behind creation is brought forward when God the creator is set in relation to the human person. The doctrine of God's love, in turn, modifies the concept of what glorification might mean: Just as the human person will find his fulfillment in the perfect communion of the eschatological kingdom, so too this will constitute the final glorification of God. He cannot, then, be indifferent about the fate of the creatures which are made in his image, for their attainment of communion with him is intimately involved in his glory.

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(15) Dei Filius, cap. 1 (Dz 1782/DzS 3001).

We can set out a series of questions, relating to these conclusions, and use then as a way of finding out whether the passages of conciliar anthropology and doctrine of God which we have not yet studied harmonise with the anthropology and doctrine of God entailed in Vatican II's concept of the Christian's proper obedience in the Church:

i) Do the documents consistently attach human dignity to human freedom in the way which we have seen in sub-section 1?

ii) Do they consistently teach that the human person is open to God by the very structure of his nature?

iii) Do they present God's act of creation as an act which is radically orientated towards the attainment of loving communion with man?

iv) In what do the documents locate the glorification of God?

3 Vatican II's Treatment of the Doctrine of Man in the 'Moment' of Creation in those Parts of the Documents which we have not yet Studied

The Christian anthropology of Vatican II is, to a great degree, found in the final document of the Council, The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes). For example, the article devoted to the specific consideration of human conscience, which we have already analysed in some detail, belongs to that constitution. It was from Gaudium et Spes, too, that we drew the Council's concept of the human person as a creature made in God's image.

In order to test the consistency of Vatican II's anthropology it will be necessary in this sub-section to carry out a double operation: First, we shall examine the doctrine of man the creature as it is found in documents other than Gaudium et Spes, in order to see whether it harmonises with the doctrine which we have already unearthed from that constitution. Secondly, we must study further areas of anthropology contained in the Pastoral Constitution, in so far as they have not already come under our scrutiny, in order to ascertain whether the themes we have seen were developed evenly throughout the document. This two-fold approach

will indicate whether the theology of the Council's last constitution stands apart from that of the documents which preceded it in regard to the doctrine of man (which is Gaudium et Spes' major concern). (16)

a) The Christian anthropology of documents other than Gaudium et Spes

The presentation of man's status and condition as a creature is fairly sparse in documents apart from Gaudium et Spes; nearly all that is said on the subject elsewhere is said 'in passing', in the context of the treatment of other themes. We may begin by considering two short references which are cast in rather neo-scholastic terms.

In IM 6, the Council addressed the question of the relationship between art and morality. Insisting upon the primacy of the demands of the objective moral order, the text asserts:

> "only the moral order touches man in his whole nature as a rational creature of God who is called to a supernatural destiny ("ad superna vocatum"); likewise, if it is kept completely and faithfully, it leads man to his perfection and to the full attainment of his beatitude."

The two pairs of concepts used in this passage (rational creature/called to a supernatural destiny; perfection/full beatitude) are drawn from the neo-scholastic division between 'pure nature', on the one hand, and 'supernature', on the other. Of these, the former appears to have self-enclosed, created possibilities of attaining a purely natural perfection, whilst the supernatural grace of God supervenes upon it as an addition, as a power which elevates it to a higher destiny. This articulated view of man is also found in the following passage:

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(16) In introducing Text 6 of the constitution on 21 September 1964, Archbishop Garrone said "the whole scope of the schema is summed up, as it were, in man and the human condition; this is the real soul of the schema". (Quoted by J. Ratzinger in Vorgrimler, 5, p. 118).

> "God, creating and preserving all things through his Word, continually offers to men a testimony of himself in the things he has made; and determining to open up the way to a higher ('supernae') salvation, he also showed himself to our first parents from the beginning." (DV 3)

The two-fold view of man which is expressed through the pure nature/supernatural distinction was founded upon the philosophical rigidity with which an Aristotelian concept of nature was treated by commentators upon St. Thomas from the time of Cajetan onwards. (17) The philosophical division between that which is 'natural' and that which is 'supernatural' - genuinely useful in as much as it expressed the sheer gratuitousness of man's salvation - came so to dominate the thinking of the school of commentators upon St. Thomas that it fractured into two parts the theological concept of God's will for man. It came to seem that human nature had a double destiny arising from a two-fold relationship to God - through creation, first of all, and then through elevating grace; the creation and elevation of human nature came to be seen as intrinsically different acts.

This double-layered concept of man was overcome, as we have seen, in Vatican II's return to the biblical and patristic idea of the creature who is made after God's image, that is, a being who finds fulfillment only when his knowledge and actions are completed in the love of God which comes as grace. Are we, then, to see the two short passages which have just been quoted as fundamentally inconsistent with what we unearthed earlier of the Council's anthropology? Not necessarily. The two-fold form of God's relationship to man may be seen as merely an expression of two aspects, or 'moments', of a single determination. God calls man to a supernatural destiny because of, and through, the structure of

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(17) See H. de Lubac, Surnaturel (Paris, 1946) p. 105. De Lubac defined the concept of 'pure nature' thus: "The concrete possibility of an order of things in which man, left by the creator to his own strength, or using natural aids only, could lay claim to an inferior destiny, limiting his rational desires to a 'natural' state of felicity." It was de Lubac's argument that this concept contained an erroneous understanding of St. Thomas' teaching, and a misrepresentation of Christian anthropology.

rational human personhood; the perfection which man pursues through the moral order opens out into fulfillment in charity; man was created in and through the Word of God, and therefore destined from the start for a heavenly end.

We may see in the second and third articles of Lumen Gentium a pair of statements in which the first articulates the 'moments' of God's relationship to man, but the second views the whole synoptically:

> "The eternal Father, through the absolutely free and secret plan of his wisdom, created the entire world, determined to elevate men to a share in his divine life, and did not desert them when they had fallen in Adam." (LG 2)

> "Therefore the Son came, sent by the Father who chose us in him before the foundation of the world, and predestined us for adoption as sons, because it pleased him to restore all things in him (see Eph. 1 4-5 and 10)." (LG 3, emphasis mine.)

We may say, then, that although the neo-scholastic notion of pure nature, and of a double human destiny, is hinted at in one or two short passages of Vatican II, these passages may, even yet, be patient of another interpretation which would make them conform to the integrated anthropology which we have already discovered underlying the Council's concept of obedience. We may also note at this point the significance of a Christological theme (that of God's predestination of man in Christ) as the lens through which we gain the synoptic view of the Father's intentions and actions towards us. This theme will reappear later in the chapter and be treated in greater detail; but now we shall consider just one aspect of the idea of God's choice of us in Christ - an aspect which arises from study of LG 3.

The article, LG 3, which is quoted above in part, gives an exegis of the thought of Ephesians Chapter I which suggests that the persons whom God chose in Christ are not a restricted group, but rather, all mankind. I say this because the article moves on from the passage which we have quoted (speaking of the restoration of all things in Christ) to a description of the relationship of Christ to the Church, and of the Church's existence as "the kingdom of

God already present in a mystery". It then proceeds to indicate that the Church and the kingdom have a universal dimension: "All men are called to this union with Christ . . . from whom we proceed, through whom we live, and to whom our lives are directed". From the beginning, then, all men exist within the sphere of God's choice, with a vocation to the Church and the kingdom, a vocation which is rooted in their predestination to sonship in Christ.

In one aspect man's vocation consists in the call to become part of the people of God, the Church, as noted above (see also LG 13.1 and 4), but the call also has a scope which is wider than the merely ecclesiastical. In AA 7.2 we find the phrase, "man's integral vocation", (see also AG 8) and here the context is that of a discussion of activity in the secular order, and of the proper autonomy of that sphere. AA 7.2 argues that all things are to be summed up in Christ at the end, but that this does not deprive the natural order of its autonomy or own proper ends. Rather, the final summing up perfects the secular order, and makes it "correspond to the integral vocation of man on earth". The term 'integral' appears in order to show that the use of the natural order in human life is part of the fulfillment of a calling which is not restricted in its orientation to this life alone. At the same time, however, activities in the natural sphere are not merely <u>instrumental</u> in forming a supernatural perfection in man for the sake of a higher life. Rather, man is called to a response to God in which his earthly activities will maintain their own intrinsic value, yet at the same time being open to consummation in Christ at the end. The human vocation is one and indivisible; God addresses us in the totality of our relations, and calls us to a fulfillment which is not 'higher' in the sense of being separate from our natural fulfillment, or imposed upon it, but which is the completion and transfiguration of our lives in all their natural relationships and activities.

In this context it is interesting to note how the Council treated the idea of "self-perfection" through work (LG 41.5). The very phrase 'self-perfection' seems to be redolent of the older

conceptuality in which the natural order first contributed to man's inferior, natural perfection, and was only secondly subordinated in an instrumental way to the higher perfection which might be attained in the supernatural order. However, in this passage, self-perfection is attached to the idea of "moving the whole of society and creation forward to a better state", We see, therefore, that activity in the secular sphere is given a value which is more substantial than that of being a mere instrument of the individual's perfection, whether merely natural or even supernatural. The work through which sanctity is attained is directed towards future goals. LG 41.5 therefore suggests that man's response to God is one and indivisible: It must be through the totality of his relations with the world, and it will find its fulfillment along with the fulfillment of all things in Christ.

We are beginning to see the outlines of the great Christological theme of Vatican II which will form the subject of a later section of this chapter: Man's vocation is founded in God's choice of him in Christ; it is in the same Christ that God wills to sum up and restore all things at the end. Therefore man's vocation is not only rooted in his interior nature as a person, but also involves all his exterior contacts with the rest of the natural order, which is to find its consummation with and through man, "for whose service [it] was created" (AA 7.2).

Although the theme of the integral vocation of man is not one which we have already explicitly seen in the anthropology of Gaudium et Spes, it is clear that it is closely related to the doctrine of God's image in the human person: Man is called in the totality of his relations: what is he called to? He is called to that communion with God and his neighbour in which all secular activities will find their proper orientation and finally their consummation. The call is implicitly written into the very structure of his being, in that he is open to the love of God, and aspires after the values of the kingdom which are shown forth perfectly in Christ:

> "In showing forth Christ, the Church at the same time reveals to men the real truth about their condition and integral vocation; for Christ is the principle and example of that

> renewed humanity which is imbued with brotherly love, sincerity, and a peaceful spirit, and after which all men aspire." (AG 8)

In exploring the theme of man's vocation, therefore, as it appears in documents other than Gaudium et Spes, we have been examining a concept which can be organically co-ordinated with the anthropology of the pastoral constitution.

Before we turn to consider the teaching of Gaudium et Spes in greater detail, however, we must first notice that the idea of the human person's dignity is to be found also in the Declaration on Religious Liberty (Dignitatis Humanae).

This declaration first defines the concept of human dignity in terms which aim to sum up the general modern view of the subject - "that men should enjoy the possibility of acting according to their own opinions, in responsible freedom and without coercion, but guided by their awareness of duty" (DH 1.1). It is this right to dignity in freedom which the declaration affirms, because men are persons - that is, "because they are endowed with reason and free will, and therefore possessed of personal responsibility" (DH 2.2). The reader will notice here the definition of personhood in terms of abstract qualities rather than in terms of man's concrete openness to relationship with God. From the qualities of reason and free will is derived the moral obligation which lies upon men of "seeking the truth , especially in matters concerning religion", and of "adhering to the truth which is found" (loc. cit.). This problematic of truth forms a different context from the idea of love which we saw in Gaudium et Spes; (18) it forms a context which is less

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(18) The argument of Dignitatis Humanae is, of course, compatible with that of Gaudium et Spes: Man's power to 'know' God is one of the constituents of his openness to the divine, and, as we have seen, rational assent is part of what is meant by knowing God in this world. In DH 3.3 the character of religion is described as that by which man "orders himself directly to God in voluntary, free, interior acts." This description approaches, although it does not fully attain, the concept of love as the essence of religious acts. We may say, then, that Dignitatis Humanae lays down abstract foundations, whereas Gaudium et Spes presents the concrete concept of communion in love as the reality of man's structure of openness to God.

theologically rich inasmuch as it is nearer to secular moral philosophy.

It is also a problematic which resembles that which led Leo XIII to quite other conclusions concerning religious liberty than those reached by Vatican II. (19) In order to differentiate their approach from that of Leo, the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council had to call upon the idea of "psychological liberty" as the necessary condition for the responsible exercise of freedom (loc. cit.). We find here, therefore, a shift of thinking in comparison with the neo-scholasticism of the nineteenth century, which is concentrated in a shift in the use and connotations of the ideas 'reason', 'rationality', and 'freedom'. Reason appears, in the thought of Vatican II, as an activity which has its dignity in its free exercise, rather than as a pattern of conformity to objective truth - a pattern which the human mind is called upon to display.

Freedom is assimilated to the definition of man's rational activity more emphatically than to the concept of love in Dignitatis Humanae. Of course, the free and reasonable act by which man puts his faith in God (see DH 10) leads to an adherence to God in the adoption of sonship (see loc. cit.) which goes beyond mere rational assent. However, it is not the love which man may have towards God, but rationality working within the conditions of "psychological liberty", which is the focus of the declaration's argument that human dignity demands freedom in matters of religion.

The stress on the activity of human reason is correlated with a view of man's participation in "the eternal, objective, divine law", the "unchangeable truth" by which God governs the whole world and the ways of human community (see DH 3.1). The idea is highlighted that participation in this truth is achieved through gradual growth in knowledge of God's law, and that this growth comes about through free and social means of inquiry such as teaching, education, communication, and dialogue (see DH 3.2). The declaration thus suggests that man's ethical responsibility for what he believes is discharged when he enters into the activity of seeking what us true, and not

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(19) See above, pp. 310f.

simply when he attains to conformity with that which is, in fact, the objective and divine truth. This picture corresponds with that of GS 16, when it claims that the dignity of human conscience is not lost through actual error, but through neglect in seeking out what is true and right.

We may say that the treatment of the dignity of the human person given in Dignitatis Humanae approaches, but lacks the concreteness of, the governing concept of loving communion which we saw in GS 12 and 16. The argument of the declaration depends largely upon a redefinition of the nature and ethics of rationality. This redefinition is effected by introducing the notion of "psychological liberty", and that of a dynamic quest after truth, as qualifications of what is meant by acting rationally.

In sum, then, there is a certain unevenness in the treatment of anthropology outside Gaudium et Spes; this unevenness bears relation to the different subjects tackled in the various documents, and the constituencies to which they primarily addressed themselves. On the one hand, Lumen Gentium, Apostolicae Actuositatem and Ad Gentes are highly theological documents, addressed to the Church itself. Their contribution to anthropology is made through a biblical stress on the vocation by which man is eternally called to participate in the divine life. On the other hand, Dignitatis Humanae is a document addressed to an immediately practical issue which concerns those outside, as well as those within, the Catholic Church. The document directs its arguments, then, to both groups, and draws upon both philosophical and biblical concepts. However, in that section of the declaration which discusses the dignity of the human person, it is the philosophical argument - accessible to non-Christians as well as Christians - which predominates, and it is ideas drawn directly from a modern picture of human rationality which effects changes in Catholic thinking.

By comparison, in what we have seen so far of Gaudium et Spes, there is an explicit attempt at synthesis between the Catholic philosophy of man, developed along the lines of a personalism, and a biblical and patristic stress, which contributes the idea that man is made after God's image, a being who finds the law of his heart

fulfilled in love. It is the concept of love which provides the context of the synthesis in which human dignity and freedom are affirmed as being necessarily conjoined. In the pages which follow we shall examine further passages from Gaudium et Spes, in order to see whether the constitution consistently maintained this synthetic position.

b) The Christian anthropology of Gaudium et Spes

My suggestion that the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World provides the point of explicit synthesis between Vatican II's philosophical and theological anthropologies was made on the basis of a very few texts, all of which we had previously studied in connection with the question of obedience in the Church. It is now our task to consider the constitution's picture of man, God's creature, further, and to ask the questions: (i) How far did the personalist emphasis on relationship condition Gaudium et Spes' overall picture of man? (ii) What connections were made between human liberty and dignity? (iii) How does the anthropology of the constitution relate to the biblical idea of vocation which we have discovered in Lumen Gentium, Apostolicae Actuositatem, and Ad Gentes? We shall address ourselves to each of these questions separately.

i) How far did the personalist emphasis on relationship condition Gaudium et Spes' overall picture of man?

The idea of the human person is particularly related to the essentially social nature of man. This immediately becomes clear within GS 12 when the mutual society of man and woman is described as "the primary form of the communion of persons"; the text goes on to say, "for man is, by his deepest nature, a social being, and can neither live nor develop his gifts without relationships with others" (GS 12.4).

It is significant that the constitution locates sociability within the very centre of the person's being, and shows its orientation towards communion as its fulfillment, for this shows a profound congruence between the anthropology of personalism and the idea that obedience in the Church is aimed towards the building-up of the community, first of all (see Chapter III, p. 180). We may

contrast this treatment of the social nature of man with the way in which earlier magisterial documents had posited society as an innate and necessary, but nevertheless an instrumental, good for human beings: Leo XIII, for example, taught that it is innate in man to live in society because "he cannot attain perfection of mind and spirit in solitude", (20) and Pius XI similarly stated that:

> "Man is endowed with a social nature and placed on this earth to live in society . . . and thus to cultivate and develop all his faculties to the creator's praise and glory, and to attain both temporal and eternal felicity by faithfully fulfilling the work to which he is called." (21)

With Pius XII we find a breakthrough to the view that society, in itself and not merely instrumentally, has a value, but the idea of the communion of persons as its end-term does not yet appear, and the Pope's language tends to remain that of 'perfection'. Society exists, said Pius XII,

> "to preserve, develop, and perfect the human person, helping him to realise as perfectly as possible the principles and the religious and cultural ideals assigned by the creator to each man in particular, and to the whole of humanity together, in all its ramifications." (22)

It is with John XXIII that the way is eventually prepared for the full theology of GS 12, for in his encyclical Pacem in Terris he founded his statement of the harmony which should prevail among men on a theology of God's image in man. (23)

For Gaudium et Spes the concept of the person is intimately connected with that of communion among men, and this, in its turn, is the counterpart to the capacity for communion with God which constitutes the other dimension of the person. The theme of the community of human persons is the keynote for the second chapter of Part I of the constitution (see GS 23.1), and the significance of this community is shown to lie in the fact that it is bound up with man's response to his vocation (GS 25.1); this

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(20) Encycl. Immortale Dei, p. 162 (DzS 3165).

(21) Encycl. Quadragesimo Anno, p. 215 (Dz 2270/DzS 3743).

(22) Christmas Message, 1942, AAS 35, p. 12.

(23) p. 258 (DzS 3855f.)

response consists in his self-expenditure for God and others (GS 31.2), or the "sincere gift of himself" (GS 24.3). A human community founded on such self-giving is both a place wherein men find their true selves, and also, in their self-giving, one where they show some likeness to the unity of the Trinity (see loc. cit.). The person is, therefore, by the very structure of his being, open to others to the same extent as he is open to God.

Nevertheless, the person is not fully defined through his outward relationships, for he is also constituted by an 'interiority' to which he can withdraw; it is the place where God awaits him, "and where he makes his decision as to his own destiny under the eyes of God" (GS 14.2). (24) This relationship to God in man's innermost being appears to be the primordial fact which conditions his other relationships. It is, of course, the primordial fact of being made after God's image.

If we look at the attributes of the human person as they are presented in Gaudium et Spes, we find that there is consistently a shift from descriptions which lean on classical, neo-scholastic formulae, to those which are drawn more from the pattern of theology established in the idea of the person made in God's image. For example, GS 15.1 begins in the classical vein with the assertion that man participates in the light of the divine mind, and goes on to reaffirm the doctrine of Vatican I (already asserted in DV 6.2) that human intelligence can attain to intelligible reality, despite the obscurities left in it as a result of sin. Nevertheless, it should be noted even here that Vatican II does not speak of the operation of bare rationality ('ratio') (25), but rather of the more englobing faculty of knowing, man's intelligence ('intellectus'). This tiny, verbal shift is followed in the second paragraph of the

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(24) In GS 14.2 there is a tension which is parallel to the tension in GS 16 between the concept of "the voice of God" in conscience, and an objective law. The tension of GS 14 is that between the "interiority" of man, which is constituted by the idea of his inner dialogue with God, and the traditional idea of the "spiritual and immortal soul". However, the structure of the article indicates that the concept of the soul is to be understood in terms of the way man's interiority is described. The possession of a soul, then, indicates the person's openness to God.

(25) Compare Dei Filius, cap. 2 (Dz 1786/DzS 3005).

same article by an even more definite move away from any stress on mere ratiocination, for it is said that the intelligent nature of man must be completed and perfected by wisdom, "which gently attracts man's mind to seek after the true and the good, and to love them, so that being imbued with [this wisdom] man is led through what is seen to what is unseen".

Wisdom is given the aspect here of a moral quality or attitude, and the Council's use of it recalls the **Dionysian** tradition, mediated through St. Bonaventure, wherein wisdom is the gift through which men achieve contemplation of God; in this mystical tradition, wisdom is only partly a cognitive gift, and also partly affective. Wisdom begins in knowledge and ends in love. This penumbra of meaning attached to the idea of wisdom suggests - as does the concept of the image - that man's most fundamental openness to God lies elsewhere than in sheer rationality; it lies in the moral orientation which qualifies the conditions of human knowing. Josef Ratzinger, in his commentary upon this passage, notes however, that the Council separates off the gift of faith from the attitude of wisdom (GS 15.4). He says that behind this separation there is "an attempt to keep the natural and the super-natural orders separate". (26) Indeed, if we compare this passage with GS 16 we do find that the latter posits only a two-fold division - between man's knowledge of God's law in conscience, and its fulfillment in charity - whilst GS 15.4 adds a third term to the degrees of openness to God which are found in knowledge. We may cautiously suggest, however, that there is appropriately in both the spheres of conscience and of knowledge the possibility of differentiation into a three-fold pattern of openness which does not necessarily follow the hard and fast distinction between the natural and the supernatural. First, there is man's capacity to know what is moral through his conscience, and what is true, through his intelligence; secondly, there is, perhaps, the openness to God which is expressed through divine, if inarticulate, charity towards men, and through grace-given wisdom about life which does not rise to an explicit knowledge of the creator. Finally, there is that overt affinity with God in the Spirit when man "contemplates the mystery

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(26) Vorgrimler, 5, pp. 133f.

of the divine will in the wisdom of faith" (GS 15.4), and loves God explicitly, thus fulfilling the law of his heart in complete awareness, and recognising the voice which he hears in conscience to be that of the creator. This three-fold division depends on the idea that men can share in the grace of wisdom and charity without conscious Christian faith. This question is to be explored further in the next section of the present chapter.

If we turn from the cognitive attributes of man to the attribute of natural equality we find, once again, a classical neo-scholastic formulation modified by its conjunction with personalist ideas:

> "Since all men possess a rational soul and are created after God's image, and all have the same nature and origin; and since, through their redemption by Christ, they rejoice in the same vocation and divine destiny, a fundamental equality between them should gain greater and greater recognition . . . although there exist legitimate differences among men, their equal dignity as persons demands that they should attain more human and equal conditions of life." (GS 29.1 and 3)

Here it is obvious that the themes of the person and the image dominate over the conceptuality which focusses upon the "rational soul" and "nature". Indeed, the latter ideas are integrated within a theological personalism which is itself integrated within a view of man founded upon the history of salvation.

Finally, we should look at Vatican II's picture of the relationship of man to culture. The reader will remember the view of the relationship of social life and the development of human faculties put forward by Leo XIII, Pius XI, and Pius XII (see p. 328, above). The same idea appears in Gaudium et Spes, but here under a consideration of the place of culture. Culture is not, itself, considered as a universal norm - that is to say, the Council did not support the idea that the cultural synthesis of Europe expresses the very essence of human cultivation - but rather, culture is recognised in its ethnological sense as a term denoting "a diversity of ways of using things, of working, of expressing oneself, of practising religion and formulating morals, of legislating and setting up judicial institutions, of developing

science and the arts, and of cultivating beauty" (GS 53.3). It is through this diversity of culture that man attains to "true and full humanity" (GS 53.1). Attaining to true and full humanity is the key idea explaining the development of man's gifts (see GS 53.2); it takes the place, in this context, of the neo-scholastic idea of 'attaining perfection of mind and spirit', or of 'realising as perfectly as possible principles and ideals assigned by the creator'. Verbally, the shift is slight, but within the context of Vatican II's concept of the person and his integral vocation, the idea of attaining to full humanity is significantly different from that of reaching perfection. The former integrates the fundamentally social nature of man into its goal in a way that the latter does not. Therefore, it is not surprising to find GS 59.1 saying that culture should be subordinated not only to "the integral perfection of the human person", but also to "the good of the community and of society in its entirety".

We have examined the presentation of the idea of the human person in Gaudium et Spes, and we have found that the constitution consistently carries through the personalist theme. Even where older styles of anthropology appear to emerge, such formulations are taken up and integrated within a broadly personalist pattern of thought which coheres with that which we discovered when examining the Council's ideal of Christian obedience. This pattern of thought founds its concept of the human person on the idea of openness to communion, communion primordially with God, but also with man. The possibility of this second kind of communion, and men's aspirations after the values in which it is expressed, constitutes the grounds of dialogue between Christian humanism and the 'new humanism' (GS 55) of the secular world. However, for the Council it is the primary fact of man's being made in God's image, and so open to him, which is at the root of anthropology and the description of man as a creature.

ii) What connections were made between human liberty and dignity in Gaudium et Spes?

I have suggested on p.313 that human dignity, as we have so far seen it in the Council documents, is a three-layered concept. The fundamental dignity of man - that which is the object of respect in ethical norms - consists of his potential for openness to God; of this potential, genuine freedom of choice is a necessary part and condition. The highest dignity of man, on the other hand, consists in the fulfillment of this potential in the affinity of charity. In between, there lies a certain dignity inhering in human conscience and man's obedience to it, even when it errs with regard to the objective truth about God's will. Is this three-fold picture of human dignity consistently expressed in Gaudium et Spes?

If we look first at GS 14.1, we find the statement that "the very dignity of man requires him to glorify God in his body, and not to allow it to serve the evil inclinations of the heart". How is this to be understood? Clearly, the glorification of God represents the highest kind of openness to the creator, and therefore we may say that it is man's highest dignity which demands this of him. But the reference to the human body also throws our attention back to the fundamental form of dignity, that of potential; man's bodily existence is to be numbered among the necessary conditions of his personal openness to God; it is not 'accidental' to the human capacity to be God's image in knowledge and love. Rather, it is an essential part of the fully human conditions of openness that, in man, are summed up "the elements of the material world, so that, through him they may achieve their highest dignity ('fastigium') and find a voice in free praise of the creator" (loc. cit.). We see here how the Council grounds its idea of man's fundamental dignity (his potentiality for God in freedom); this constitutes a true dignity because of its relationship to the rest of the universe and the role which it gives to man vis-à-vis the material world. By virtue of his freedom he is "the centre and summit" (GS 12.1) of all things on earth.

Turning to GS 21.3, we see that Vatican II affirms the link between the recognition of God and true human dignity. In this passage, both the fundamental and the highest forms of dignity are asserted, and we see clearly how they are articulated:

> "The recognition of God is in no way opposed to man's dignity, since this very dignity is both founded and perfected in God. For man was created by God as intelligent and free, and as a member of society; but above all, he is called to very communion with God as a son, and to share in his divine felicity."

Man's fundamental dignity is associated with his created nature, but its perfection or fulfillment is associated with the fact of his vocation; indeed, the two are hardly separable, except as 'moments' of the same divine intention.

In GS 41.3 we find mention of the conditions under which human dignity perishes; this occurs when man disengages himself from every norm of divine law in the name of his rights. Clearly, the meaning here is similar to the statement of GS 16, with regard to the culpably neglected conscience: Man deprives himself of that degree of dignity which consists in obeying his conscience if he intentionally turns his back on all restrictions which are ultimately founded in the authority of divine law. It is purposefulness in this rejection which does damage to human dignity, and not mere error as to the content of divine law.

There is, then, in Gaudium et Spes, a consistently articulated, complex concept of human dignity. Freedom belongs to that dignity as a fundamental condition. It is the object of protection in a proper ethical system. We find a synthesis of these thoughts in GS 17, an article devoted to "the excellence" of freedom":

> "Now, true liberty is the highest sign of the divine image in man, for God wished to leave man in the power of his own counsel so that he might, of himself, seek after his creator and freely attain full and blessed perfection by adhering to him. It is the dignity of man, therefore, which requires that he should act by conscious and free choice, moved and guided personally from within, and not under the pressure of blind interior impulse, nor of exterior coercion. Man obtains this dignity

> when he frees himself from all captivity to his passions and pursues his end by free choice of what is good, and by laying hold on suitable aids to this end by his diligence and skill."

This passage moves from the freedom of choice which exists in man as a sign of God's image, to the dignity and freedom which are achieved when this potential is rightly used. A similar affirmation of the sacredness of freedom is found in GS 41.2 in which, once again, the Church's message appears as the protector of liberty, because it reveals the heights of the dignity for which freedom is the potential and condition.

The affirmation of freedom as an essential constituent of human dignity, and therefore as an object of ethical decision, has very practical consequences. We have already seen how the argument of Dignitatis Humanae connected man's dignity with his right to religious freedom in the state. In GS 71.2 we find another consequence which flows from the exigencies of liberty: "Private property . . . assures to everyone a necessary zone of personal and familial autonomy, and should be considered as an extension of human liberty". This idea of the connection between property and freedom is linked with the assertion in GS 71.1 that private property "contributes to the expression of the person". The person, as we have seen, is the being whose liberty should be respected and protected, and so, in this case, his right to ownership should be fostered. But man's freedom only gives him dignity because it is a condition for his response to his vocation; therefore, in the case of property, freedom must be linked to responsibility (see GS 71.2). Indeed, the requirements of the common good can be the basis for legislation concerning property (see GS 71.4). Thus, by a gradual process, Roman Catholic theology as it has come to be expressed at Vatican II, has virtually reversed some of its ideas of the powers the state should possess. For Leo XIII, the responsibilities attached to freedom should be more enforceable in the case of religion than in the case of property. (27) For the Second

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(27) We have seen on pp.310f. Leo XIII's argument against the legitimacy of real religious liberty. With regard to the question of property, he was the first Pope to issue a systematic attack on

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Vatican Council, freedom remains a primary norm, but because it is viewed as a quality which should direct man to communion (more than to truth) the responsibilities which should be socially enforceable are those relating to ownership and exploitation in social relations, and not those concerning the profession of religion.

Social relations, then, are the context in which man should "come to an awareness of his dignity" (GS 31.2), because the liberty which is enshrined in this dignity exists for the sake of communion with others. This is the human vocation; awareness of dignity, and awareness of vocation, are one and the same. Therefore, we turn now to a fuller treatment of Gaudium et Spes' concept of the integral human vocation.

iii) How does the anthropology of Gaudium et Spes relate to the biblical idea of vocation which we have discovered in Lumen Gentium, Apostolicae Actuositatem, and Ad Gentes?

The theme of vocation is one which we derived from documents other than Gaudium et Spes, and yet we have already seen that constitution mention something to which man is called. However, as well as the concept of man's calling, there also appear notions which express a similar thought, but in the form of ontological assertions. Just as in GS 14 the notion of the soul lies alongside the concept of interiority and dialogue with God, and in GS 16 there is a duality between the ideas of a law inscribed on the heart and a voice of conscience, so too, in GS 18 we find the notion of "a seed of eternity" in man, lying alongside the idea that "God has called, and continues to call man to adhere to him with the whole of his nature in the perpetual communion of an incorruptible divine life" (see GS 18.1 and 2).

In earlier cases we have found that the traditional language which designates ontological notions (such as law, and soul) is

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Cont. p. 335

the exploitation associated with nineteenth century liberal capitalism, and to enjoin the duty of paying a "just wage"; but he did not see the powers of the state with regard to the distribution of property as being very great. Indeed, he particularly stressed the idea that only moderate taxes should be exacted on private property. Generally, he preferred private solutions to the problems of social injustice, rather than imposed and enforceable civil solutions. (See encycl. Rerum Novarum, especially the passage quoted in Denzinger at Dz 1938/DzS 3265, 3267, 3269, 3270.)

subordinated in meaning to the theme of God's dialogue with man. The law of the heart directs man to the relationship of charity; his soul is to be understood as being the capacity for openness to God which gives him particular significance in the universe (see note 24, p.329). So, here too, the "seed of eternity" in the human person is to be understood in terms of the total structure of one who exsits as a being whom God has called. This is clear from the fact that in the article "all the emphasis falls on the historical consideration that eternal life is made possible by the saving work of the Lord". (28) In other words, the metaphysical idea of a soul, or seed of eternity, is not developed, while the action of God on behalf of man is the central focus of what is said. However, although the central focus is clear, it must be noted that the synthesis between classical ontology and the theology of vocation and salvation is not effected altogether happily.

A clearer and less ambiguous assertion of the idea that personal existence is constituted by God's call is found in GS 19.1: The highest argument for human dignity consists in the fact of man's "vocation to communion with God . . . For man is invited to join in dialogue with God from his very origin". This call is something which characterises every man; it is also the norm of worthy human activity (see GS 35.2). As in Apostolicae Actuositatem and Ad Gentes, the vocation of man is an integral one, touching and gathering up all his relations with the world.

It is as an integral vocation that man's calling to communion with God opens out into a vocation to serve his fellows, and to be in communion with them; every part of human life is involved in responding to this calling, and particularly social relations, for we are all called "by the same human and divine vocation", and our principle and end are the same - God (GS 92.5).

Associated with the idea of human vocation is that of God's purpose in history. It is the divine purpose that man should subdue the earth for the sake of better living conditions, and thus develop ('evolvere') the work of the creator (see GS 34.1 and 2); so it is emphasised that that to which man is called is an affinity

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(28) J. Ratzinger, in Vorgrimler, 5, p. 142.

with God which is expressed through an affinity of activity (see also GS 57.2 and 67.2). (29)

We are led, then, full-circle; the theme of vocation which appears in Gaudium et Spes, as well as in other documents, links up fully with our conclusion that the capacity to love God constitutes the fundamental dimension of man's openness to him, for the capacity to love is rooted in the conditions of human action - freedom and the possession of a moral conscience.

I have suggested that the structure of man's being as the image of God constitutes a desire or aspiration after God and the values of the kingdom. We have already seen in AG 8 that the revelation of Christ is said to be the revelation of that pattern of humanity after which men aspire (see p.323). Similarly, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World affirms the real desire which lies at the heart of man for the reality to which he is called:

> "The Church knows that her message corresponds to the most secret desires of man's heart when she defends the dignity of the human vocation, thus restoring hope to those who despair of any higher destiny. Her message by no means diminishes man, but sheds light, life, and liberty on his progress; and without it the heart of man can never be satisfied." (GS 21.2, see also 41.1)

The theme of man's vocation, therefore, is found in Gaudium et Spes in close correlation to its theology of the image of God in the person, with all its connotations of openness to God as the fundamental structuration of the creature, an openness which is expressed through man's desire, albeit an inarticulate one, for affinity with God in the activity of charity. Man struggles for brotherhood; Christ affirms it as something which becomes possible in the power of divine love. Man struggles to transform the world, and Christ shows that the law of this

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(29) Klein suggests that the use of the term 'propositum' (purpose) rather than the term 'voluntas' (will) in GS 34.1, expresses the idea that God is concerned with the substantial results of human activity, and not simply with its moral worth as a formal quality. (See Teilhard de Chardin und das Zweite Vatikänische Konzil (Munich, 1975) p. 253.)

transformation is the new commandment of love (see GS 38.1). This love - this communion with our fellows comprised within our communion with God - is what we were made for, and what we are called to from the moment of our creation.

In its theology of vocation, then, as in its personalism and its concepts of dignity and freedom, Gaudium et Spes is broadly consistent, both within itself, and also in relation to the ideas which we have discovered in other documents. We must now move on to consider Vatican II's picture of the creating God - the one in relation to whom man stands as a called and free person from his very origin - and we turn to consider the doctrine of God the creator in those passages of the documents in which we have not already considered this theme.

4 Vatican II's Treatment of the Doctrine of God, Man's Creator, in those Parts of the Documents which we have not yet Studied

I suggested that the doctrine of God which emerges from Vatican II's ideal of Christian obedience is one in which various pictures of God are all formally united by the fact of being correlated with the doctrine of man the person. However, this very correlation bears its own connotations, suggesting that God should appear as one who created men for the sake of loving communion, and as one whose very glorification is involved in the issue of whether his creatures enter into that communion. In our study of further passages relating to the creator we must ask whether the Council's doctrine consistently presents him as creating out of love and for loving communion, and as looking for the substantial glorification which would arise from that consummation.

The affirmation concerning God's freedom which were so central to the teaching of the previous century reappear in the documents of the Second Vatican Council when they treat of the divine creator, but they reappear in a new context in which the emphasis is markedly altered:

> "The eternal Father, through the absolutely free and secret plan of his wisdom, created the entire world, determined to elevate men to a share in the divine life, and did not desert them when they had fallen in Adam." (LG 2)

We have already examined this text in relation to the question of the created status of man (see p.321), but now we must notice the traditional affirmation which it contains concerning God's freedom in creating. However, this is immediately conjoined with the doctrine of his saving and elevating will, and, as I have already argued, in the light of what follows in LG 3 we are directed to see the actions of God whereby he founds the world and is turned lovingly to man as being of a single piece, and rooted in a single determination.

In AG 2.2 the freedom of God in creation is set more explicitly in relation to his love, and is once again conjoined to the vocation of man. The paragraph says that the design of God which is unfolded in the missions of the Son, the Spirit, and the Church, "flows from the 'fountain-like love' or charity of God the Father who . . . freely created us out of his immense and merciful goodness and, in addition, graciously called us to communion with himself in life and glory". Once more we see the doctrine of creation treated in the same breath as that of man's elevation to divine life in the purposes of God. The two acts are not strictly identified, but they are so closely knit together that they cannot be separated, and both are marked by merciful goodness and charity.

As in matters of anthropology, the synthesis of Vatican II's thought is most fully worked out in Gaudium et Spes. Creation and salvation have the same Lord, it proclaims (GS 31.2), and the order of salvation confirms the order of creation in its proper autonomy (loc. cit.). Since salvation issues from love and confirms the order of creation, we may infer that the latter proceeds from love as well. Indeed, the fact is openly stated at two points: "This is the world which Christians believe to have been founded, and to be preserved, by the love of God" (GS 2.2); "[Man] only exists because he is created by the love of God, and always preserved by love" (GS 19.1).

We find, then, that the final document of the Council presented most explicitly the role of God's love in creation, but that the idea was already present in earlier documents. The assertion of divine freedom is not cancelled by the affirmation of the part played by love in creation, but the way in which this freedom appears is altered, by comparison, say, with the doctrine of Vatican I (see p.315). Creation is no longer presented as an almost totally disinterested display of perfection; the God who creates by love must, in some way, be involved in the fate of his creatures. This is why the close linking of God's creative and salvific decrees in passages such as LG 2 has such an inescapable inner logic.

If we turn from the question of God's freedom in creating to that of his glorification in his works we find, once again, that the teaching of magisterial documents of the preceding hundred years reappears, but once more set within the context of God's love.

"The faithful should recognise the inner nature of all creation, its value, and the fact that it is ordered to the praise of God;" so reads the first sentence of LG 36.2. This amply affirms the traditional idea that God created for his own glory; but the sentence goes on to speak of the world as reaching its goal in justice, charity, and peace - all of them values associated with communion among men. Several lines later the text urges Christians to work "so that created goods may be cultivated . . . for the benefit of absolutely everyone, according to the creator's ordination and the illumination of his Word". This implies that God's praise is linked with the substantial good of mankind, and that his glory consists not simply in the worship and acknowledgement which is rendered to perfection, but intrinsically in the human values which are fostered on earth.

A text we have already examined, AG 2.2, similarly links God's glory with human happiness, the end towards which the creator works in his integral disposition of love towards mankind. Likewise, GS 37.3 speaks of human progress, saying that the Church, "trusting in the plan of the creator", recognises that this progress "can be of service to men's happiness". This leads us to infer that human

happiness forms the object of God's plan. Another passage which we have already considered from the point of view of a different issue, GS 34.1, shows that human efforts to better living conditions correspond to the purpose of God. It then goes on to say that the end of all human activities is the subjection of all things to man, so that through him, and in the recognition which he gives to the creator, they may be referred to God for the glorification of his name (see also GS 14.1). In this passage, the fact that God's glory is linked with human happiness and well-being is only implied, in the idea that the improvement of human living conditions corresponds to the divine purpose. It is also clear that the praise of the divine name depends upon conscious recognition and worship of God on the part of man; in this, traditional theology is echoed. However, man does not appear as a mere witness in the act of glorifying God, nor as a simple recipient of blessings. Rather, he is an active partner in the process through which God will be glorified, so long as human action is accompanied by recognition of the divine source and end of creation.

It is clear from all the above passages that the glorification of God has a substantial content - that of the fulfillment of his creative and loving purpose through human activity. But is this substance of God's glory to be identified or connected with the communion for which man was made? We have already seen how the Council developed the idea of an integral human vocation, in which final communion with God includes and transfigures all man's relations with the world. So far in this sub-section we have seen the aspect of that final fulfillment which concerns the consummation and perfection of all man's natural relations; now we must turn to a passage which displays the inner connection between human activity, natural values, and the final communion which we are to enjoy directly with God:

> "Through . . . missionary activity God is fully glorified when men consciously and fully accept his saving work, which he accomplished in Christ. So, through this activity the purpose of God is fulfilled - the purpose which Christ obediently and lovingly served to the glory of the Father who sent him. It is that the entire human race should form one people of God, should come together in one body of Christ, and should be built into one temple of the Holy Spirit. This indeed corresponds to the deepest desires of all men, for it restores

> brotherhood and peace. So at last the plan of the creator, who formed man in his own image and likeness, will really be brought to completion, when all who share human nature, having been reborn in Christ through the Holy Spirit, will gaze together on God's glory and be able to say, 'Our Father'." (AG 7.3)

In this passage we see, clearly laid out before us, the connections between the glorification of God, human values of brotherhood and peace, the happiness of the entire race, and its full and conscious worship of the Father. These connections are finally to be established in the eschatological consummation, but the Church's present mission, man's fragmentary longings, his striving for peace and brotherhood, his acceptance of salvation, and his earthly worship, all point to the kingdom already. It is clear that in these presentiments, as well as in their fulfillment, the creator is glorified not only through the elements of conscious praise and worship, but also through men's substantial enjoyment of the life and grace which transfigure and fulfill their natural human aspirations.

Before concluding what we have to say about the doctrine of God as creator as it appears in the documents of Vatican II, we must pay some attention to the question of the witness which God gives concerning himself to men, through the things which he has made.

We have already noted that DV 6.2 echoes the teaching of Dei Filius that "God, the principle and end of all things, can be known with certainty by the natural light of reason, from the things that he has made". This passage (together with the affirmation of the metaphysical endeavour which is found in GS 15.1), suggests a process of inductive reasoning which is open to man, taking its starting point in the evidence of God to be found in the world. Vatican I envisaged the universe as something fundamentally stable, a dominion which God "protects and governs by his providence" (30), and therefore the evidences of God which would be found in a creation so conceived would have been unchanging facts or regularly recurring patterns. When the passage is quoted at Vatican II it might equally refer to such evidences of stability and order.

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(30) Dei Filius, cap. 1, (Dz 1784/DzS 3003).

However, as we have seen, the Council also recognised that there is change and progress in the universe, particularly in the human sphere where men "develop the work of the creator" (GS 34.2, see also 77.1). Is there, then, any corresponding indication that Vatican II attributed to processes of change and development a particular revelatory role?

If there is, it is not a very clear indication. We may, perhaps, locate it in GS 36.3, which deals with the continual dependence of all things upon their maker. This passage affirms that "all believers, of every religion, have always heard the voice and manifestation [of God] in the language of his creatures". This statement might bear the weight of the idea that processes of change form the 'language' of creation, thus providing the evidences from which human intelligence may attain to knowledge of God. But there is, perhaps, something more important to be gathered from this passage: It suggests that we think of God not so much as an abstract idea accessible to inductive reasoning. Rather, he is a living God who uses creation to carry on a continual dialogue with man. A similar point is made in DV 3: "God, creating and preserving all things by his Word, continually offers to men a testimony of himself in the things he has made." Here, the divine witness, constantly given in creation, is presented as the first stage in a history of revelation which has man's salvation as its end.

We may say, then, that even if Vatican II did not explicitly incorporate the idea of a changing universe into its reaffirmation of the doctrine of natural revelation, it did nevertheless modify the doctrine by integrating it more closely with an epistemology of encounter, the growing and developing encounter of God with man, which opens out into the history of salvation.

Conclusion

The time has now come to answer the questions posed on p. 318. First of all we must say that the documents of Vatican II do consistently attach human dignity to human freedom, but it is only in Gaudium et Spes that the full philosophical and theological

synthesis is attained, when the dignity of freedom is explicitly located within the problematic of communion. In Dignitatis Humanae, on the other hand, we see only part of the final synthesis, for freedom is located within an argument about the nature of rationality. However, this argument, focusing as it does on man's moral responsibility for the activity of his reason, coheres with the concept of communion as being the fulfillment of human moral activity.

Secondly we asked, "do [the documents] consistently teach that the human person is open to God by the very structure of his nature?". To this we must give the answer that the doctrine of Vatican II was not totally consistent, for elements of an ontology of pure nature appear here and there, and the synthesis of this kind of formulation with transcendental personalism is not always smooth. Nevertheless, the general drift of the argument, both in its patristic and its biblical foundations, both in the idea of the image and in that of man's integral vocation, is such as to suggest that the passages which seem inconsistent should, nevertheless, be assimilated to the personalism of openness.

Our third question concerned God's act of creation, and asked whether it was presented at Vatican II as an act radically orientated towards the attainment of loving communion with man. To this we may give the unequivocal answer, 'yes'; and to the fourth question, "in what do the documents locate the glorification of God?", the reply must be that God's ultimate glorification will consist in the universal communion of men with him and with one another. In this communion they will fulfill their integral vocation, and refer all things to the creator in love and praise for the divine purpose in which they have had their share, and of which they have been the conscious focus. Thus all things will be summed up in Christ through the redemption of man, the "centre and summit" of everything on earth.

We find, then, a substantial consistency between Vatican II's explicit doctrine of the foundational, created relationship between God and man, and the doctrine which is implicit in its ideal of Christian obedience. The documents' anthropology and doctrine of God show that it is because of the divine purpose in

creation that the Lord turns to us in an invitatory way, calling us to final communion in glory. It is because of this divine purpose for man's well-being and the Father's glorification that Christ's work for our salvation became necessary in view of human fallenness. It is to the subject of fallenness that we must now turn.

B) Vatican II's Doctrines of God and Man in their Relationship as it is Conditioned by the Fallenness of Man

So far we have examined the fundamental structure of man's existence as a creature of God, and the character of the creator. We must now move on to ask what are the concrete conditions of man's life in history, and how is the structure of sin and fallenness to be described. That is our first question in this section, and the second is this: Can men outside the Church achieve a real affinity to God through charity? Thirdly, how does God relate to man the sinner? And, finally, what is the divine intention regarding the general world of humanity as it exists outside the Church? We shall be looking back over some of the Council material which we have already studied, but in this section we shall focus on the areas of discontinuity between the Catholic ideal of obedience and other concepts of moral behaviour. Thus we should elucidate what the Council saw to be the difference between a redeemed pattern of life and a fallen one. We shall also study the documents' treatment of God's universal purpose in more detail than we have done hitherto, and consider its relation to the idea of judgement.

Our approach in this section, as in the preceding one, will be to devote the first two sub-sections to drawing out the specific elements which concern us here from the anthropology and pictures of God which we derived from our initial study of Vatican II's idea of obedience. In the third and fourth sub-sections we shall analyse other parts of the documents which deal with the divine-human relationship in history.

1 A Closer Examination of the Doctrine of Fallen Man as it is Entailed in the Passages which we have so far Studied

We have two questions to ask concerning fallen man as he exists in history: First, what does Vatican II's delineation of Christian obedience imply about the structure of sin and fallenness? Secondly, can men outside the Church achieve a real affinity to God through charity - an affinity which has a saving significance? Accordingly, the sub-section will fall into two parts.

a) What does Vatican II's delineation of Christian obedience imply about the structure of sin and fallenness?

Vatican II's treatment of the ways in which the actions and ideas of men outside the Church are discontinuous with the obedience of faith suggests that the morality of natural man is vitiated by ignorance; this is not a total ignorance of what is right, but an incomplete grasp of how things are. Unawareness of the human relation to God results in a misapprehension of what conscience is, and of what the full meaning of human personhood is. Outside the sphere of the Christian message man does not understand the redeeming work of God, nor the eschatological goal of his action; therefore human aspirations are foreshortened and distorted, and the scope of moral thinking is restricted to that which may be attained within this foreshortened perspective. This ignorance is bound to work out in misdirected actions, even when man strives to obey his conscience, for he is divided against his true self and fails to fulfill his full personhood. However, as we have seen, it seems that the possibility of following even a distorted conscience remains open to man as a source of dignity, and human freedom subsists as an outstanding mark of the divine image; the person can still be aware that the law of his heart needs to be fulfilled in charity. There is, then, no complete break between the state in which man was created and that in which he now finds himself, just as there is not a total discontinuity between secular moral insights and the teaching of the Church, the community of grace.

I have suggested in Chapter IV (pp. 235-42) that much of Vatican II's theory of moral obedience stresses the continuity

between Church teaching and the 'new humanism' (GS 55) prevalent in much of the world. (31) We can add to this explicit continuity of thought the fact that the Council did not issue condemnations of modern thought-forms. Communism was not overtly condemned, although atheism was reproved (see GS 21.1) (32); indeed, there was an effort made to enter the mind of the atheist to track down the causes for his disbelief - causes which, to some extent, may show elements of protest of which the Church can approve, such as protest against the evil of the world, or against false images of God (see GS 19.2). Bad faith and malice was not attributed whole-scale to non-Christian man; rather, he appeared in quite a favourable light, as a possible ally in moral endeavour (see GS 16, 92.5, et passim). Does this mean that Vatican II underplayed the extent of human fallenness, and of man's need for grace? In order to approach an answer to this, we shall examine the traditional Catholic doctrine on the nature of fallenness, so that the Council's teaching may be measured against it.

In the Tridentine picture of fallen man, he stands as one affected by the penalties attached to the first sin of Adam:

> "All men lost their innocence in the transgression of Adam, 'being made impure', and (as the Apostle says) 'by nature children of wrath' . . . so that henceforward 'they were servants of sin', under the power of the devil and death. Thus, the Gentiles could not free themselves or raise themselves from it by the strength of nature, nor could the Jews through the letter of the Law of Moses, even though free will was by no means destroyed in them, but weakened in its power and inclined towards evil." (33)

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(31) See also Paul VI's speech at the last session of the Council: "The religion of the God who became man has met up with the religion . . . of man who makes himself God. What happened? A clash, a struggle, an anathema? That could have happened, but it did not . . . The discovery of human needs absorbed the Council's attention. At least allow it this merit, you modern humanists who deny the transcendence of the greatest things, and recognise our new humanism: We too, we more than anyone else, possess the cult of man." (Quoted by G. Martelet in Les Idées Maîtresses de Vatican II (Paris, 1969) p. 187.)

(32) It is true, however, that a final amendment to GS 21.1 added a footnote referring to earlier magisterial condemnations of communism on the religious plane.

(33) Conc. Trid. Sess. VI, Decree on Justification (de Justificatione) cap. 1 (Dz 793/DzS 1521). See also Conc. Trid. Sess. V., Decree on Original Sin (de Peccato orig.) caps. 1 and 2 (Dz 788f./ DzS 1511f.)

Here we see the classical acknowledgement of the weakness and malfunctioning of human will, which is coupled with the idea of moral ignorance to give the traditional picture of the fallen state which pre-exists any actual sin of the individual. So far in what we have seen of the teaching of Vatican II this issue of the weakness of the human will has not emerged. A reason may be that in our study of Christian obedience we have considered the question of what is required, but we have not examined the theology of grace which would make it clear how membership of the Church makes it possible to obey. That is to say, we have considered harmony and discontinuity in moral theory, but we have not devoted attention to the question of moral ability. Nevertheless, it remains true that we have seen various indications of the idea that non-Christian man has the capacity to do certain things which are "of interest" to the kingdom of God (see GS 39.2, and Chapter IV, p. 212, and Chapter VI, p. 289). We may say, then, that the Second Vatican Council's picture of man in history is generally favourable, and leaves us with little explanation for the fact and depth of actual sin.

If we have unearthed little explanation for the fact of concrete sinfulness as yet, we have, at least, acquired a picture of the morphology of such sinfulness. Sin is a refusal of the indications of conscience, whether those indications are understood in terms of a law, or in terms of a divine dialogue with man. The sinner is the one who contravenes the moral knowledge which is available to him. At another level, he is the one who does not exercise his rationality properly; that is to say, he neglects to investigate the question of what is right and wrong, or he makes his conscience blind by overlaying it with the veil of habitual sin (see pp. 318f. and GS 16). We have seen that Vatican II tended to stress the character of moral responsibility as an activity of the inquiring mind rather than as fixed conformity to the ideal of objective law. The pattern of sin, therefore, appears as that of self-betrayal in moral action (or lack of it) and the concept of offence against God's law, as such, is reduced in significance and emphasis.

b) What does Vatican II's delineation of Christian obedience imply about the possibility that men outside the Church might achieve a real, saving affinity to God through charity?

Non-Christian man lives with a restricted and distorted moral knowledge, and yet there is available to him in conscience the echo of God's voice, the possibility of discovering the law which is fulfilled in charity. I have suggested that human knowledge of this law should be taken with man's aspirations after brotherhood, etc., to indicate the conclusion that there is, in human nature, a desire for God and his charity, even though this desire may be implicit and inarticulate (see Chapter VI, p. 300). The picture which we have seen of the role of human action in the world, in relation to God's final glorification in the kingdom, confirms the fact that the Council saw mankind as living with an innate drive to serve the divine purpose, a purpose of loving communion.

It does not necessarily follow that, because man has a natural desire and drive towards God, this desire and drive can be satisfied outside the communion of the Church. There are only suggestive indications (derived not so much from our study of ecclesiastical obedience as from our considerations earlier in the present chapter) that the aspiration of human interiority for God is, apparently, matched by an immediacy of the divine presence to that interior desire in conscience and the heart.

If we look back to the teaching of magisterial documents for the hundred years preceding Vatican II, we find that there has been acknowledged a possibility of salvation outside explicit membership of the Church. Pius IX taught that,

> "Those who labour under an invincible ignorance of our religion, and who diligently keep the natural law and its precepts which are inscribed upon the hearts of all by God, being ready to obey God, and leading a good and honest life can, by virtue of the operation of divine light and grace, attain to eternal life. For God, who sees into all men's minds, spirits, and thoughts, would not, on account of his great goodness and mercy, allow anyone to be punished eternally who had not willingly incurred guilt." (34)

(34) Encycl. Quanto Conficiamur Moerore (10 August 1863) (Dz 1677/ DzS 2866); see also Pius IX, alloc. Singulari Quadam (9 Dec. 1854) Coll. Lac. VI, col. 845d.

In this passage we see a stress on the objective keeping of the requirements of the natural law, and also a suggestion that the just man should be some kind of theist who is "ready to obey God" in so far as he knows his will and nature. (This latter point should not be pressed too hard, but it is unlikely that Pius IX would have attributed good faith to professing atheists, or allowed, concretely, that they might be in a condition to receive grace.)

Moving on to the more recent teaching of the Magisterium, we find the Holy Office under Pius XII setting the problem of the salvation of non-Catholics in a more explicitely ecclesiological context:

> "It is not always required that someone who is to obtain eternal salvation should actually be incorporated as a member of the Church; but this, at least, is required - that he should belong to it by will and desire. Now, this desire does not always have to be an explicit one as it is in the case of catechumens; where a man labours under invincible ignorance God imputes an implicit desire as contained in the fact of a good spiritual disposition, whereby the man wishes his will to be conformed to the will of God . . . It is not to be supposed that just any desire to enter the Church will suffice for man's salvation. For it is required of the desire by which someone is ordered to the Church that it should be informed by perfect charity; and an implicit desire can have no effect unless the man has supernatural faith." (35)

In this case it seems even clearer that the individual who is to be saved should at least hypothetically concede that there might be a God to whose will his own should conform. We may also note that here the virtue of charity is mentioned as a necessary form of the grace which leads to salvation.

From what we have seen so far of the teaching of Vatican II, we may surmise that the doctrine of earlier Popes is confirmed, but that the emphasis is moved away from the actual carrying out of specific requirements of the natural law (as though they might so easily be known), and perhaps also away from the necessity of acknowledging the existence of a God to whom one

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(35) Ep. S. Officii ad archiep. Bostoniensem (8 August 1949) (DzS 3870 and 3872).

wishes one's will to be conformed. Rather, the common experience of possessing a moral conscience comes into central focus, and emphasis is placed upon the activity of mind by which a man sincerely seeks what is right, even if he does not always successfully locate it. The question, however, must remain unanswered as to whether actions which do not actually conform objectively to the moral law can yet be informed and filled by divine charity if they are carried out in good faith.

To sum up, Vatican II's concept of proper ecclesiastical obedience has as its counterpart a picture of non-Christian man as one who has partial, but distorted, knowledge of what is right, and some real capacity to carry it out. Actual sin consists in a refusal to follow the indications of conscience, and in neglecting the quest for moral truth as an education for conscience. However, if an individual does not refuse nor neglect his conscience, his efforts may be met by the grace of God, for God awaits man always in his interiority. Here, in an implicit dialogue, moral willingness may be transfigured by the gift of true charity, and a person's relationship to his conscience may inarticulately express a relationship of love with the creator.

2 A Closer Examination of the Doctrine of God in his Relationship to Fallen Man as it is Entailed in the Passages which we have so far Studied

On p.346 I articulated two questions concerning God's relationship to fallen man in history; they were, 'how does he relate to man the sinner?', and 'what is the divine intention regarding the general world of humanity as it exists outside the Church?' These two questions are really different sides of the same problem, that of how we are to harmonise God's universal will to save with the fact of man's freedom to sin. Because the questions belong so intimately together we shall treat them organically in this sub-section, without division.

We can speak of God's universal will to save because of the conclusion reached in Section A of this chapter - that God's full and ultimate glorification will consist in the universal communion

of men with him and with one another: This is God's purpose, and because of this purpose Christ's work for man's salvation is necessary in view of human fallenness.

The idea that God is necessarily turned towards mankind in a saving attitude - an attitude desiring the restoration of communion where it is broken - implies a universality in the work of grace; yet such a work of grace, which constantly reaches out, must nevertheless respect the liberty of man, since liberty is the essential condition of his self-giving in love.

When we try to conceive a synthesis of universal grace with respect for human freedom, we arrive at a picture of God in which he appears as one who issues an invitation to all men. The reader will immediately recall that this invitatory pattern of divine love is reflected in the attitude which Vatican II enjoined upon those who represent God in the authority-structure of the Church. However, he will remember, too, that the invitatory quality of ecclesiastical authority did not detract from a final power to exclude from the Church. Does God's invitation, too, operate within the horizon of possible exclusion - in this case, exclusion from the communion of salvation?

If such exclusion is a possibility in the thought of Vatican II, it would seem that the active refusal must come from the side of man, through his misuse of freedom, rather than from the act and decision of God. A concentration on the theme of God's universal saving will suggests that the loss of men to final communion should, in some sense, be viewed as a flaw in God's ultimate glorification, and a partial negation of his purposes. Therefore, if Vatican II's doctrine of God and the last things is consistent with the indications which we have remarked in its concept of obedience, it should be marked with this sense of loss when it comes to threat of judgement and perdition. Moreover, judgement itself should appear as a statement of man's failure to turn to God in love, that is, his failure in attaining the fullness of his own personhood; it should appear as the manifestation of human self-betrayal. In so far as sin and rejection of God are to be termed an 'offence' against him, it should be clear that we are not talking of offence in the extrinsic,

legal, sense, but rather in the sense of a real wound against his love. The question, then, which we must bear in mind when we come to examine the doctrine of God contained in those parts of the documents which we have not already studied is this: Where did the Council place emphasis in its presentation of the paradox of grace and freedom, of salvation and judgement?

3 Vatican II's Treatment of the Doctrine of Fallen Man in those Parts of the Documents Which we have not yet Studied

We have seen that the Council presented a rather favourable view of man in those parts of its ecclesiology which relate to the question of obedience, and there was an increased stress upon the value of secular moral insights, and on respect for the human person. However, the Gospel was presented as something which is necessary to correct the foreshortening of humanity's moral vision and the distortion which results from it. The Church's preaching and teaching sets those insights which are attainable to man outside the Church in the wider perspective of human personhood in its ultimate orientation towards God. Within this perspective, it becomes visible how morality relates to the attainment of full humanity, because it can be the means through which charity is expressed and developed.

Classical Roman Catholic theology, however, goes beyond the assertion that man is ignorant, and teaches that fallenness has also weakened human will and inclined it towards evil while man is in servitude to sin, to death, and to the devil. Attached to the very state into which man is born there is a culpability which attracts the wrath of God. The death to which man is in servitude is not simply physical death, but the death of the soul. (36)

Some of these themes are taken up into the anthropology of Vatican II, although in certain cases the nuance seems to be different. The fact that man is a slave to sin is mentioned in

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(36) "If anyone asserts . . . that [Adam], through his sin of disobedience, 'transmitted death' and punishment 'of the body only to the entire human race, but not sin, which is the death of the soul', anathema sit." (Conc. Trid., sess. V, de Peccato orig., 2. (Dz 789/DzS 1512)).

GS 2.2, 13.2, and AG 8; death appears as the result of sin in LG 4.1 and GS 18.2, and the first of these two texts implicitly refers not simply to corporeal death, but to the death of the soul. However, it should be noted that death is not openly called a 'penalty' for sin, but rather appears as its natural result. We have already seen that GS 15.1 spoke of the obscurity which was left in human intelligence as a result of sin (see p. 329) and yet this is mentioned in a passage which is frankly optimistic about the capabilities of the human mind in its metaphysical quest: Finally, we must note that GS 17 does not speak, in the Tridentine style, of the weakness of man's free will, but rather of the wound which sin has inflicted on human freedom.

Is it significant that the term 'free will' was avoided in this context? We may see in the change, I believe, a reference to the Council's total theology of freedom, with its several layers of meaning. Sin does not only weaken the will - the single faculty associated with free choice - but rather it wounds man's entire relationship to God. The truest, highest freedom, like the truest, highest dignity, consists in the relationship of communion which man can enjoy with his creator. (37) Every human faculty exists for this relationship, and so all exist for freedom. With the will wounded and weakened, man's capacity for self-donation in love is sapped, and thus the total freedom of the child of God is defaced. The depth of this tragedy is registered by the Council's lapidary use

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(37) No fewer than six different meanings in the use of the word 'liberty' by the Council were adduced by Bishop de Smedt in a relatio on Dignitatis Humanae. Three of these have a special interest for us: "Evangelical liberty; the liberty by which men are freed by the truth of the Gospel, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, from sin and personified evil; thus they live in holy company with God through Christ in the Spirit, until they finally achieve perfect liberty and glory. Physical liberty: free will itself, or the faculty of self-determination in acting . . . Moral liberty: (a) in its positive sense: the power of self-determination in the fulfillment of the moral law in all its amplitude; (b) in its negative sense: the power freely to violate the moral law". (Quoted by A. B. Lambino, in Freedom in Vatican II (Manila, 1974) p. 27).

of the term 'freedom' rather than 'free will'. GS 14.1 expresses the same thought: "Man himself is wounded by sin" (emphasis mine).

The Council's theology of human freedom and dignity are bound up, as we have seen, with its concept of man as a creature who is made for a divine destiny, a creature whose meaning and fulfillment consist in his orientation towards that destiny. This fundamental idea determines the major point at which Vatican II's theology of fallenness differs from that of the neo-scholastic school. The members of the latter group held that through Adam's sin mankind lost a 'primitive grace' by which it had been called supernaturally to share in the divine nature, and to contemplate God. This primitive grace was identified with the "justice" and "holiness" in which Adam was first founded, (38) but it was clearly a superaddition to the capacities of pure nature. Other consequences of sin include disruptions and losses suffered within the sphere of nature itself, but these were conceptually distinct from the loss of primitive grace, even though a concrete connection might be seen between these different penalties for sin, in that grace has constituted a privileged check upon the unruliness of man's bodily instincts. Its loss thus contributed to the wounding and disruption suffered within the sphere of the natural man, but in an extrinsic way.

Since, in Vatican II's more integrated view, the human person is seen as being intrinsically and fundamentally defined by his potential openness to God, the fact that he is concretely, from his birth, inclined to turn away from God and goodness constitutes a radical cause of inner division and disruption. This is reflected in all his outward relationships; as GS 37.1 puts it, "the world thus becomes no longer a zone of true brotherhood" (see also GS 10.1). The different goods of the world are marked by human sinfulness, as well as by God's blessing (see AG 8). The result is that the individual's tendency to sin is heightened because, from his birth, he is immersed in social conditions which turn him away from doing good and prod him into doing evil. These social conditions may be

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(38) Conc. Trid. Sess. V., de Peccato orig., 1 (Dz 788/DzS 1511).

solidified in economic and political structures, but their fundamental origin is in the selfishness and pride of men (see GS 25.3). There is, then, a cumulative effect in human sinfulness as it is mediated through the individual's integral relationship with the world.

It is in GS 13 that the theme of sinfulness is treated in its greatest detail. This article was inserted in response to complaints that Gaudium et Spes, in particular, showed too optimistic a view of man. (39) It did not make a precise doctrinal distinction between original sin and its effects, and actual sin (although it is clear from passages such as GS 25 that the Council by no means denied the traditional idea that man is inclined to sin from the time of his birth). Instead of focusing on the doctrine of Romans 5, the Fathers of Vatican II concentrated attention on ideas drawn from Romans 1 and 7, which throw into relief man's continual and active participation in sin, and its continually enslaving effects. The result is that GS 13 strongly conveys the sense in which sin is one and indivisible, (40) and the way was left open for later investigation of the precise meaning of the Tridentine picture of original sin.

Sin, whether it is inherited or actual, represents closure against God and against the possibility of communion with him, and it results in the impairment of man's faculties for this communion. Men refuse to render glory to God, and their minds become darkened (GS 13.1, see Rom. 1. 21-25); they refuse to see in God their principle, and so break the pattern by which they are ordered to their final end, as well as the pattern of relationships between themselves, and with the rest of creation (GS 13.1). These human refusals bring in their train an inner division which has all the violence of a struggle between the powers of good and evil, and in this strife man finds himself unable to ward off the assaults of evil without aid. This is the root of his slavery (GS 13.2, see also

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(39) see Ratzinger in Vorgrimler, 5 p. 123 (especially note 5).

(40) Ph. Delhaye says: "One is not to conclude that the Council bracketed a dogma, but that it invites us to make less separation between original and actual sin. Man is in a state of sin, both through his inheritance from Adam, and also through his personal transgressions." (art. cit. p. 351).

37.2). Because of the nature of the person as one who is ordered to God and to communion with him by his very definition, the inner contradiction of sin seems to be almost too weakly described as a 'diminution' of man in GS 13.2.

Vatican II, then, leaves the question of sin's origin in the realms of mystery, but it presents a picture of its effects which goes well beyond the ascription of mere ignorance to man in his fallenness. Ignorance indeed exists (see AA 7.1, LG 16, GS 15.1), but it is grounded in something deeper, man's misuse of his liberty - that is, man's culpable decision - from whose effects he cannot by himself escape. Restrictions on human knowledge of what is right compound the inclination to evil, but they do not create it in the first place. Indeed, man may have a partial knowledge of what is good, and a desire for it, and this only goes to make the state of sin a real experience of slavery and self-division: " Being weak and a sinner, it is not rare for him to do what he does not want, and to fail to do that which he does want" (GS 10.1; see Rom. 7. 14ff.). Man is engaged in a struggle against the powers of darkness both within and without, in which he must constantly strive to adhere to what is good; but it is not without great effort, and with the help of God's grace, that he can obtain unity within himself" (GS 37.2).

Once again we have seen that the burden of this part of Vatican II's anthropology falls on Gaudium et Spes; elsewhere in the documents, references to human sinfulness are scattered and cast in a traditional mode. However, the Pastoral Constitution provides a point of synthesis from which sin, both original and actual, can be seen as closure against God, and thus as the disruption of personhood. This closure constitutes man's refusal of his vocation which, as we have seen, is grounded in God's choice of mankind in Christ. It is the revelation of Christ, then, which shows men the depth of their misery, simply because it is the same revelation which shows them the height of their vocation (see GS 13.3 and AG 8). But it is also in the revelation of Christ that there is victory over the "prince of this world" who "held" man in the slavery of sin (GS 13.2). (41)

(41) Ratzinger notes that in the final version of GS 13 "the slavery of sin is no longer characterized as present but, in relation to Christ, as already past. The commission gave purely grammatical reasons

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It is in the next section of this chapter that we shall examine more closely the Christology of Vatican II, but it is still appropriate here to note that the Council did not feel it could develop the theme of human fallenness without immediate reference to Christ.

We must now turn from questions relating to the nature of fallen man to the issue of whether men outside the Church might achieve a real, saving affinity to God through charity. All the lines of argument so far converge upon the conclusion that it must be possible for those outside the Church to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit and to have charity as the principle of their actions. We have just been reminded of the way in which the Council presented man's capacity for goodness as a real desire - a desire which qualifies his experience of fallenness as that of painful division and captivity. We have seen, too, the Council's positive treatment of the entire endeavour of human activity as being that which corresponds to the purpose of God, and can be of interest to the kingdom; it was never suggested that the only valuable activity in this sphere was that of Christians only. Finally, conciliar anthropology presents human interiority as a place of direct encounter with God in the case of all men, and the location of significant decision. Together, these indications converge to suggest that Vatican II reaffirmed that the life of grace might be lived outside the structures of the Church. It remains for us now to study the specific treatment which the Council gave to this topic in certain passages where it becomes the central point of focus.

The major text bearing on this subject is LG 16: Here we find the same ecclesiological concern as that expressed by Pius XII (see p.351); the passage does not speak in terms of an 'implicit desire' for the Church, but it does suggest that men (all men) are in various ways ordered to the Church, and that this is the basis of their possibility of salvation. In particular we may note that the Council says that "divine providence does not deny the helps necessary

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for the change . . . but at the same time it was acting on a whole intellectual attitude which in this case cannot be regarded as entirely above question." (op. cit. p. 126)

to salvation to those who, inculpably, have not yet arrived at an express recognition of God, but who strive (not without divine grace) to live a good life". This group of inculpable atheists join those who "seek God with a sincere heart and try, under the influence of grace, to fulfill his will actively as it is known to them in the dictates of their consciences" (loc. cit., see also DV 3).

The treatment given by LG 16 to those who are outside the Church and may yet attain salvation, is such as to widen the conceptuality derived from Pius IX and Pius XII. We saw, when we examined their teaching, that exactness in the fulfillment of the natural law seemed to be the condition for receiving grace according to Pius IX, while Pius XII spoke of the necessity for a disposition "whereby the man wishes his will to be conformed to the will of God". LG 16, by contrast, stresses sincerity in the act of seeking (cf. DH 3.1 and 2), rather than in the exactitude of conformity to moral truth, and it explicitly recognises the status of atheists of good faith. This is not to say that there cannot be culpable atheism (see GS 19.2 and 3), but that the measure of its culpability lies in the fact that conscience is rejected when men actively and willingly "eliminate God from the heart and strive to avoid religious questions" (GS 19.3). Once again, the emphasis is shifted from achieved states of belief and behaviour, to the responsibility which man has to use his reason rightly in a quest after religious and moral truth. Conscience appears as an active faculty.

In this context there is some ambiguity in a statement such as that of Cardinal Bea that "according to Catholic doctrine those who, without any fault on their part, do not know Christ, can be saved if they live according to a right conscience". (42) What is a 'right conscience' if conscience is something which is constantly in flux and action? The term, 'a right conscience', seems ambiguous to us in this context because it is easy, in some respects, for us to see conscience as St. Thomas did - something which is either right

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(42) "L'attitude de l'Église envers les réligions non-chrétiennes" in DC no. 1468 (3 April 1966).

or wrong ('false') in its grasp of moral truth. (43) Some of the most modern ideologies, after all, while avoiding talk of 'conscience', nevertheless try to rid us of a 'false consciousness' in favour of one which corresponds to true praxis. Vatican II, by contrast, seems to locate 'rightness' of conscience and consciousness in sincerity and questing activity. Only God can be the judge of our diligence in exercising this dynamic faculty.

It seems to remain open whether God gives grace to those whose actions do not correspond objectively to the moral law as it is known in the Church, or rather, whether those specific actions can themselves be the bearers of charity. However, there is a tendency within the thought of the Council to allow that the life of grace is not entirely cut off when men's concept of what is good differs from the Catholic view. Not only are seeds of goodness said to subsist among the nations as a secret presence of God, mixed with much else that is not so divine (see AG 9.2 and NA 2.2), but it is also acknowledged that members of other Christian communities "do not always understand the Gospel message in moral matters in the same way that Catholics do, and do not admit the same solutions to the very difficult questions of modern society", yet, nevertheless, "no less than us they wish to adhere to the word of Christ as the fountainhead of Christian goodness" (UR 23.2). The fact that other communions disagree with the Catholic Church on moral matters does not prevent them from giving access to the communion of salvation (see UR 3.3). Therefore it seems that moral disagreement with magisterial interpretation of divine and natural law does not deal death to the life of grace and charity. (44)

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(43) See Aquinas QD q. 17. a. 4, "Does a false conscience bind?"; also, a. 5, "Does conscience in indifferent matters bind more than the command of a superior?" (Vol. 2, pp. 331ff.) See also ST 1a 2ae, q. 19. a. 5.

(44) This statement may be qualified by recognition that the kind of disagreements which UR 23 instances are those of complex application of the moral law, rather than those dealing with first principles. As we have seen, Vatican II allows more liberty within the Church concerning the applications of moral principles. We cannot, then, take the indications of Unitatis Redintegratio as simple proof that the Catholic Church would allow that someone who carried out abortions with a sincere conscience, for example, might be acting from real motives of charity despite the objective moral falsity of his position.

4 Vatican II's Treatment of the Doctrine of God in his Relationship to Fallen Man in those Parts of the Documents which we have not yet Studied

God's "purpose of salvation" ('propositum salutis') is a constant theme of the documents of Vatican II, and it expresses the thought of I Timothy 2.4 that he "wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth". Indeed, this very text is used several times in the Council's argument (LG 16, SC 5.1, DH 11.2, AG 7.1, see also NA 1.2). It is also clear from other contexts that the divine saving purpose extends to all (see AG 3.1, 9.2, UR 2.2, LG 13.1, GS 45.1 and 2). We have seen that this purpose for mankind is co-extensive with God's purpose for the Church, for "all men are called to become part of the people of God" (LG 13.1), and when LG 16 says that the purpose of God "embraces those who acknowledge a creator" it says this in the context of affirming that they are "ordered to the Church". The divine purpose is, then, to include all men in the Church, and the Church in Christ, in whom man was chosen from eternity.

God's purpose is matched by phenomena in the sphere of man's historical life, such as all the elements of goodness and truth which are to be found among the nations and religions of the world (see LG 16, AG 9.2, NA 2.2). These are no mere accidents, but are given by God "who enlightens every man, so that he may finally have life" (LG 16). They are realities of grace as well as of truth (AG 9.2) and they may be seen as means of preparation for the Gospel (LG 16). However, at the same time the various religions must also be seen as the embodiment of man's own religious effort (AG 3.1), and they need to be enlightened and healed for they contain the effects of contact with evil and error (see loc. cit., and LG 16 and AG 9.2). It is only in Christ that men can find "the fullness of religious life", for in him "God has reconciled all things with himself". (NA 2.2).

Just as God's universal purpose for man's salvation is matched and witnessed by the seeds of goodness, truth, and grace which appear publicly in non-Christian religious and thought-forms,

so too, in man's interiority the divine purpose is matched by the possibility of being saved through grace by obedience to conscience. What, then, is the necessity which pushes the Church outwards in mission, if men can be saved without the concrete presence of the visible Christian community? Vatican II presents this necessity not only in terms of the healing and elevation of the religious truth which is available to non-Christians, but also in terms of the need for an epiphany of the divine purpose, and of its realisation in human history when Christ is rendered present in the Eucharist (AG 9.2). God's purposes have both inner and outer form, and the outward is necessary if the purposes are to be established in history as realities. This is true of God's saving will as it is expressed both in the Church and in the very incarnation of Christ (see AG 3.1). Although the inner power of these realities can be known apart from their outward manifestation, it is only in a fragmentary and uncertain way; the epiphany makes all things clear, and makes the purposes of God effective in a wider, public sphere as well. Therefore the Church is the 'soul' of society because it expresses already that which society is destined to be, and it is also the leaven within society (see GS 40.2), the "universal sacrament of salvation" (LG 48.2, GS 45.1, see also LG 1, 9.3, SC 26.1, AG 5.1, GS 42.3).

The ecclesiological motif of epiphany or embodiment, which we have already seen come to the fore in the thought of Vatican II, is integrally connected, then, with the universality of God's purpose of salvation. Just as the central epiphany of the Church's life, found in the Eucharist, forms the focus of an openness to God in which all Christians share in a more diffuse way, so too it forms the focus of an openness which subsists in all creation, and which is brought to personal consciousness and action by men in their moral and religious capacities. As an epiphany, an embodiment, a sacrament of salvation, the Church is an invitatory sign for men; the representational side of Church life exists in order to serve this reality, a universal Church which opens out into the kingdom and the salvation of the entire human race (see GS 45.1).

There is, then, in the theology of the Second Vatican Council, a 'wider ecclesiology' which is immediately correlated both

with its Christology and with its doctrine of God's universal saving purpose. The Council, which was very much concerned with the ecclesiological theme, treated it in both this 'wider', and also in the 'narrower', sense. The unity of the wider and the narrower ecclesiologies is to be found in the concept of the Church as an epiphany, a sacrament of God's saving purpose, in which the mystery of God's love towards man is both manifested and actualised at the same time (see GS 45.2).

With the idea of the Church as a sacrament, we return to the theme of God's invitation addressed to men. The reader will remember that the idea of invitation is the mediating link making sense both of God's universal saving will, and also of human freedom. On page 353 we posed the question whether the Council saw God's invitation operating within the horizon of a possible exclusion of man from the communion of salvation. In order to answer this question we must first examine more closely the way in which the documents of the Council treated the theme of the divine invitation, and then turn to consider their treatment of the idea of judgement.

The theme of invitation links up with that of man's vocation. In a passage which we have already considered, GS 19.1, God's call to man explicitly takes the form of an invitation - an invitation to dialogue (see p.337). We may see, then, implied in the concept of vocation in passages such as GS 18.2 and 21.3, the quality of invitation.

In GS 41.1 we are given a picture of the activity of the Holy Spirit within man which constitutes part of the experience of being called: "Man, who is incessantly urged on by the Spirit of God, can never be completely indifferent to religious problems." This same, interior impulse of the Spirit is mentioned again in AA 29.3, but in terms which show more clearly the orientation of the movement as one which corresponds to the inner structure of man's personhood; this passage says that the Spirit "urges all men to love God the Father, and to love the world and men in him".

The idea of invitation takes up the themes of vocation (as it is written into man's being by the structure of his personhood)

and of the Spirit's inner and constant activity. It is an idea which takes up these themes and expresses them in such a way that the respect which God pays to human liberty becomes clear. Neither the structure of personhood, nor the incessant urging of the Spirit, overrules the real freedom of choice which belongs to man. The Christ who is lifted up from the earth to draw all men to him (Jn. 12. 32, cited in DV 17) is the same Christ who "invited and attracted his disciples in patience" (DH 11.1). In doing this, he fully manifested God, who "addresses men as friends, and converses with them in order to invite them to companionship with himself, and to sustain them in it" (DV 2).

God's invitatory relationship towards man is, therefore, expressed in the structure of their being as persons, in the interior impulse of the Holy Spirit, and in the outward revelation of Christ and the Church. In all these approaches God leaves man's freedom unimpaired, for freedom is of the essence of the communion to which man is invited: He "does not live fully according to the truth unless he <u>freely</u> recognises that love, and commits himself to his creator" (GS 19.1, emphasis mine). The penalty for refusing the divine invitation, therefore, is a life which is not 'true'; it is human self-betrayal. And yet, in DH 11.1, the Council seems to imply that there is yet another penalty for refusing the invitation of God - there is a "vengeance" which is left to the Father. The concept of invitation appears, therefore, to stand in relation both to God's universal saving will, and also to a horizon of possible ultimate judgement, in the thought of the Council. It is to the mystery of judgement which we must now turn, bearing in mind the question which we posed on page 354 : Where did the Council place <u>emphasis</u> in its presentation of grace and freedom, of salvation and judgement?

I have suggested that the possibility of final exclusion from communion with God is a necessary correlate of genuine human freedom. However, the theme of God's universal saving purpose which we have found to be amply illustrated in the theology of Vatican II, should modify the concept of judgement, and lead to the idea that it is man who actively excludes himself from the kingdom, while God's glory in some way sustains loss through the perdition of men by the misuse of their freedom.

These ideas are, of course, radical modifications to the concept of God's wrath and judgement which has traditionally been elaborated through the doctrine of hell and eternal punishment. (45) Vatican II did not set out to alter the dogmatic basis of the Church's faith, and so it would have been unlikely that such radical modifications should have been explicitly adopted by the Council. We may, however, note a distinct shift of emphasis in its treatment of the idea of judgement - a shift which goes part of the way towards making this area of theology harmonise with its stress on the universality of God's saving will.

The first sign of the shift is an omission: The Council never mentioned hell in relation to man's judgement. The only use of the word appears in SC 5.2, in speaking of Christ's descent into hell as part of the paschal mystery. In addition, we may note that the only explicit references to man's punishment appear in LG 48.4 and DH 11.1; in both cases, the references are drawn almost verbatim from the New Testament, and the idea is not developed or interpreted by the Council.

This paucity of attention paid to the idea of actual punishment is not matched by any scarcity of reference to the fact of our having to give account (see LG 48.4, DH 11.2, GS 16, 17, 45.2, 93.1). The fact of being judged, therefore, is lodged within the thought of the Council. However, on two occasions we see that judgement is not carried out with reference to an arbitrary, extrinsic law, but with reference to the indications of an individual's own conscience (GS 16, DH 11.2). Twice, too, it appears that judgement is integrally linked to man's experience of his saviour, for "we shall all be laid bare 'before the judgement seat of Christ, so that he may render to each one good or evil, according to what he has done in the body' " (LG 48.4, citing II Corinthians 5.10). "The Word of God . . . became flesh so that, as perfect Man he might save all, and recapitulate all things . . . It is he whom the Father raised from the dead, and exalted to sit at his right hand,

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(45) See, for example, Conc. Florentinum, Decretum pro Graecis (Dz 693/DzS 1306).

making him judge of the living and the dead." (GS 45.2) In both these cases it is Christ the judge, who is also Christ the saviour, before whom men are to come. It is in Christology that the tension between the themes of judgement and salvation are most acutely felt.

Before we turn to the issue of the Council's Christology in the next section of this chapter, we should notice the attention which Vatican II paid to the inner experience of human personhood as the criterion of loss when man turns away from God. Not only is there mention of the loss of dignity which results when men try to free themselves from all regulation by divine law (GS 41.3), but in LG 16 there is a moving passage which outlines the reasons for the Church's mission, focusing on the "extreme despair" of those who live and die without God in this world. Finally, we should note that although SC 109 (b) calls sin an "offence against God", this traditional-sounding formulation was an addition to the commission's original version of the text.

To sum up, the possibility of not being saved (see LG 14.1, AG 7.1) remains as a stated negation at the heart of Vatican II's affirmation of the universal saving will of God. Yet the nature of what it is that men may not be saved from remains obscure, being the subject only of hints and symbols provided by the New Testament. There is a relative reluctance on the part of the Council to use the language of penalties, although its theology does not go so far as to state that man's refusal of salvation might constitute any loss to God.

Conclusion

In our examination of Vatican II's anthropology and doctrine of God, as it relates to the 'moment' of human fallenness, we have found in some areas that the Council was willing to expand its picture beyond the sketch which is entailed as the groundwork of its idea of obedience, while in other areas it was rather reticent. Elaboration is most evident in the Council's picture of man, the sinner, and of the God who wishes all men to be saved, whilst reticence is noticeable in relation to the degree in which non-Christian moral action can be the vehicle of true charity, and even more obviously in relation to the Council's treatment of God's

judgement and punishment of recalcitrant men. We find, then, that the balance of elaboration and reticence falls in such a way that there is equal emphasis on both sides of the paradox of grace and freedom; God's love and call balance man's true freedom in the foreground of the Council's vision. In general, this balance is maintained in such a way that there is congruence between this paradox and the conditions of obedience which arise from the Church's role as an invitatory sign and as a structure of representational authority.

C) Vatican II's Christology: The Relationship of God and Man in the Structure of Grace

Over the preceding two sections of this chapter it has become clear that the anthropology of Vatican II is intimately linked with its doctrine of Christ, and that this, in turn, is connected to a 'wider ecclesiology' (see p.363) which deals with the complete scope of the divine grace shown towards man in history. Now that we have considered the doctrines of God and man in the 'moments' of creation and fallenness, and before we turn to an examination of the divine-human relationship in its eschatological context, it is appropriate to pause and analyse more closely the Council's Christology, for it is the pivot around which the doctrines of God and man turn. When we considered the divine-human relationship in the 'moments' of creation and fallenness we were looking 'backwards', as it were, from our starting point in Vatican II's picture of the Church; when we come to consider eschatological dimensions of the relationship we shall be looking 'forwards' from the same point. In examining Christology, however, we are dealing with that integrated picture of the divine-human relationship which is most immediately correlated with any concept of the way in which the Church mediates grace to man in history.

Although Christology now appears as the area of theology to be most immediately correlated with the concept of grace in the Church, the conclusions of Chapter II-V of the thesis were not formulated in strictly Christological terms. Only in Chapter III, when we considered the significance of the obedience of the Son as a model for the obedience of Christians, did we see a reflection of the crucial role which Christology plays in the overall scheme of Vatican II's doctrine of God and anthropology. This crucial role was to emerge more clearly in the first two sections of the present chapter, when we came to examine parts of the Council's documents not immediately concerned with teaching about obedience. Because Christology did not appear largely in the conclusions of Chapters II-V, we shall not divide this section, as we did the preceding ones, into a review of conclusions drawn from the first part of the thesis

followed by an examination of new material. Rather, we shall analyse the Council's Christological statements as they stand, in relation to the overall scheme of anthropology and of teaching about the nature of God. First, we must briefly remind ourselves of the Christological indications of the first two sections of the present chapter.

We have seen on p.321 that LG 3 takes up the theology of the first chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, and gives a Christological basis to human existence from the outset. It is God's choice of man in Christ which is the grounds of the vocation through which man is called to communion with his creator. This is the major Christological reference arising out of Section A of this chapter. In Section B we first noted a Christological perspective when we remarked upon the fact that Vatican II set man's fallenness immediately in relation to Christ's victory over sin (see p. 359); later in the same section we noted the connections between salvation, God's purpose, and a 'wider ecclesiology', finding them all rooted in a Christological matrix see pp. 362-64). It is Christ's drawing of all men to himself that constitutes the inner meaning of the Church, and this inner meaning cannot ultimately be separated from an epiphany, or embodiment, in the public sphere. Thus the Council could claim that all men are 'ordered to the Church' in one way or another, for God has chosen them all 'in Christ'.

We find then, that the thought of the Council directs us again and again to the Christology of the early chapters of Colossians and Ephesians. Within this pattern of ideas, there is an intrinsic link between the 'moments' of creation and redemption; it is because of the Father's choice of man in Christ that the human race is both created and redeemed. This inner unity in God's approach to man must not be forgotten; nevertheless, it will prove convenient to treat the Christological basis to the doctrines of creation and redemption separately in the present section, and so to provide the necessary groundwork for the final section of the chapter when we shall consider Vatican II's presentation of the eschatological 'moment' of the divine-human relationship.

1 Christology and Creation

Each chapter of the first part of Gaudium et Spes ends with an article setting the doctrine of the preceding pages within a Christological perspective. It was regretted by some members of the Council that this device meant that the Christological basis to human dignity was not made fully explicit throughout the course of Chapter I. (46) It was only in GS 22 that the connection was shown between man's status as one made "after the image of God", and the fact that Christ, the Son and Word, is the "Image of the invisible God . . . who has restored to the sons of Adam the divine likeness" (GS 22.2). However we should note that the preamble to Part I of the constitution made it clear that the intention was to "illuminate the mystery of man . . . in the light of Christ, the Image of the invisible God and the firstborn of all creation" (GS 10.2). Therefore, throughout every chapter of the first part of the Pastoral Constitution the cosmic, unitive Christology of Colossians 1 is presupposed. (47)

Colossians 1.15ff. is not the only New Testament passage referred to by the Council to show the Christological basis of creation. Texts such as John 1.3 and 10, Hebrews 1.2, I Corinthians 8.6, and, of course, Ephesians 1.4-5 and 10, are also adduced. In none of these passages did the biblical writers treat of the Son's role in creation as an individual, self-subsistent object of

(46) See Ratzinger's commentary in Vorgrimler, 5, p. 120.

(47) The reason for keeping the Christology underlying Chapter 1 of Gaudium et Spes implicit for a greater part of the chapter's course was the Council's intention of entering into dialogue with men of other faiths and none, starting from bases which might be mutually comprehensible and acceptable. However, ultimately a personalism which pays attention to the human person's capacity for communion with God must come to specify explicitly the nature of the God it has in view, the character of man's communion with him, and the grounds of its possibility. This leads naturally into the realm of Christology, and so GS 22 is the appropriate culmination of what went before it. The very method employed by the Council in the construction of Chapter 1 of Gaudium et Spes illustrates the way in which Christian thought is both in harmony, and yet also discontinuous, with the ideas of other humanistic philosophies; it is finally the preached Gospel which both completes and reorientates personalistic thinking about man.

speculation and belief. Rather, the concept appears as part of the elucidation of that fullness of salvation which was achieved through the Son's incarnation, death, and resurrection. This synthetic approach is reflected in the use which Vatican II makes of the New Testament texts, for the Council, too, treated the idea of creation in and through Christ in close conjunction with soteriological, ecclesiological, and eschatological themes.

In DV 3 the idea that God created through his Word is introduced by an allusion to John 1.3; the idea grounds the entire article's message, which concerns God's continual communicativeness, on a Christological basis (see p.344). It also serves to introduce the Christological theme at the beginning of a catalogue of God's acts on behalf of human salvation, and thus (as has been already suggested) there is the indication of an inner unity between creation and man's supernatural destiny - an inner unity grounded in Christ.

In AG 3.1 there is a direct reference to Hebrews 1.2, and allusions are made to John 1.3 and 10, and I Corinthians 8.6. These scriptural references to the fact that God created the world through his Son are inserted into a text which would otherwise seem to indicate that the reconciliation of the world was essentially a separate and secondary decision of God. However, the insertion of the Christological-creation motif provides grounds for seeing creation and salvation as being all of a piece within the movement of the Godhead towards mankind, and the paragraph ends with a glimpse of the Christ-centred consummation of this unified orientation of God to creation: "He has made him heir to all things, so that he might renew everything in him".

It is from Colossians 1.15-20, above all, however, that Vatican II's concept of Christ "in whom all things were created" is derived. This passage synthesises the "Image" theme, the creation theme, the idea of the Church, and the message of the reconciliation of all things through the cross. The greater part of the passage is quoted in LG 7.4, in order to locate the Council's ecclesiology in its widest possible setting, but it is in Gaudium et Spes that the theology of the passage is particularly developed, and the focus of interest is the fact that Christ is "the Image of the invisible

God", as we have already seen in two citations taken from the Pastoral Constitution.

This idea of the "Image" is the most concentrated point of union between the doctrines of creation and redemption; it provides a theme which runs in counterpoint throughout the history of man. He was chosen in the Son to be "in the image and likeness of God"; when that "image" was defaced and robbed of its substance (the "likeness"), leaving only a bare and weakened structure of potentiality for God, it was the Son who restored it through sharing our humanity, so that we might again share the divine Image in its fullness; this divine Image is the very divinity of the Son. The final, heavenly redemption will, therefore, appear when humanity is completely 'recapitulated' in him (see GS 22.2, 45.2). (48) This makes it clear that the universality of God's purpose of redemption is intrinsically bound up with the theology of the "Image"; it is because texts such as Ephesians 1.4-5 are read in the light of the conceptuality of Colossians that they are used by the Council to provide a systematic basis for universalism in its doctrine of God's purpose. All men were created after the image of God; the redemption of the image, by him who is supremely the Image of the Father, is consequently a universal redemption.

We find, then, that our consideration of the place of Christology in the doctrine of creation put forward by Vatican II leads directly to an examination of the Council's Christology of redemption; beyond that, we are pointed along the line of this theme to the doctrine of the final consummation.

2 Christology and Redemption

"By his incarnation the Son of God united himself in some way to every man" (GS 22.2); this sentence stands at the point of transition between the universalist theology and soteriology of the "Image" theme, and a picture of Christ which focuses on the events

(48) We shall not consider here the recapitulation of "all things" in Christ, because this is beyond the scope of our inquiry into the Council's view of the relationship between God and man. However, the reader will remember that the destiny of the natural order is seen as being bound up with the vocation of man, who is its centre, its crown, and the point where it finds consciousness to praise its maker.

of his concrete, earthly life. The culmination of these events is seen in the paschal mystery, the fact that "he delivered himself over to death for all" (GS 32.2), and rose again. It has been said that Gaudium et Spes "views the Incarnation as oriented to the paschal mystery. The life of Jesus, his earthly activity culminating in the passion and resurrection - all this is uniquely and irreplaceably important". (49) I should like to argue, however, that there is not a smooth subordination of the notion of the incarnation to the concrete account of the paschal events in any part of the thought of Vatican II, but rather a tension between the two foci of Christological attention, each of which indicates different soteriological consequences. Several times in the documents the two foci appear in the same passage, but their conjunction does not resolve the tension between them.

The first focus is the cluster of ideas which we have just been examining - namely, the interconnected notions of God's purpose in creating, the "Image" as a key to understanding both creation and redemption, the 'wider ecclesiology' in which the Church appears as the "universal sacrament of salvation", and finally, the idea of the redemption of all men in conjunction with the recapitulation of all things. In tension with this cluster of ideas stands the second, concrete Christological focus; this has at its centre the events of the paschal mystery, and correlates these events with the reality of human servitude to sin, over which Christ has won the victory (see SC 5.2, GS 2.2, 13.2). The idea of sin is, however, intrinsically united to the concept of human freedom - and this freedom subsists as a reality even beyond the victory, to the extent that man can reject salvation.

We find in several places that a concentration on the paschal mystery leads to a recognition of the concrete precariousness in which the message of salvation is preached to men, to be accepted or rejected in freedom: There is a gap between "that which was accomplished once for the salvation of all" by Christ, and the "effect" which should be brought about in all, in the course of

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(49) Lambino, op. cit., p. 64.

time (see AG 3.3). This is a gap which is formally constituted by the structure of possibility, "for since Christ died for all, and since the human vocation is really one and divine, we must hold that the Holy Spirit offers to all men the possibility of associating themselves with this paschal mystery, in a way known to God alone" (GS 22.5, emphasis mine). Externally, this gap is filled by the manifestation of that possibility, in the preaching of the Church (see AG 3.3). Therefore, the concrete existence of the Church as a preaching body belongs with the paschal mystery in the second cluster of ideas, as does the concept that there are real, historical non-Christian individuals who live by grace. But finally, we must also assign to this second cluster of ideas the dark side of the possibility which inheres in human freedom - that is, the possibility of judgement and loss through rejection of salvation.

The reader will see that these two clusters of ideas represent, respectively, a set of concepts which is extra-historical, and a set which is concretely embodied in the events of human and Christian history. The paradox of grace and freedom begins to appear as a tension between God's intention and purpose, on the one hand, and 'what actually happens' on the other. This tension is left by the Council as an unresolved mystery; even when its two poles appear in the same passage there is no attempt at an explanatory solution. For example, we may take two passages, UR 2.1 and GS 45.2:

> "Herein has appeared the love which God has for us, for the only-begotten Son of God was sent into the world by the Father to be made man and give new birth to the entire human race through redemption, and to gather it into one. Before he offered himself on the altar of the cross as an unspotted victim, he prayed to the Father for those who believed in him." (UR 2.1)

> "The Word of God, through whom all things were made, himself became flesh so that, as perfect Man, he might save all and recapitulate all things. The Lord is the end of human history, the point upon which the desires of both history and civilization converge, the centre of the human race, the joy of all hearts, and the fullfillment of their aspirations. It is he whom the Father raised from the dead, and exalted to sit at his right hand, making him judge of the living and the dead." (GS 45.2)

In both these cases there is a transition from ideas associated with the first focus or cluster (associated with the salvation of all) to ideas which belong in the second, more concrete cluster. In UR 2.1 we move from the loving purpose of God for universal redemption to the fact of the paschal death of Christ, before which he prayed for a restricted group - those who believe. In GS 45.2 we move from the concept of the Word through whom the universe was made, and in whom it finds its meaning, to the fact of the resurrection, which is associated here with the idea of judgement.

In carrying out its Christological doctrine of salvation through both these clusters of ideas, Vatican II reflected a tension which is found in the New Testament itself, and which is not resolved there. The Council, then, maintained a fundamental paradox, as we have already noted in the conclusion to Section B (p.367f).

Conclusion

We have seen all the problems concerning the relationship of man and God concentrated upon the central issue of Christology; the doctrine of Christ has, in some ways, been a key to these problems, providing the point at which the Council could show that the Father's choice of man in Christ before the foundation of the world is, indeed, a choice of grace. Human salvation, then, remains a matter of sheer gratuitousness, even though it corresponds to a structure of desire and openness which is written-in to the human person from the very beginning. This structure, this openness and finality, do not determine that God gives man the final gift of salvation; rather, "it is the free will of the giver which awakens the desire . . . But . . . it remains true none the less that once such a desire exists in the creature it becomes the sign, not merely of a possible gift from God, but of a certain gift. It is the evidence of a promise, inscribed and recognized in the being's very self." (50) the doctrine of Christ, then, gives a biblical grounding to the Council's almost complete rejection of the division between

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(50) H. de Lubac, The Mystery of the Supernatural (London 1967) pp. 272f.

pure nature and the supernatural. Man was chosen in the Son for an integral destiny, and this choice, made before the foundation of the world, constitutes God's promise and man's vocation.

Likewise, the doctrine of Christ's coming and victory explains why man's situation in face of sin can be viewed with a basic optimism, and grace can be seen as obtainable by all who strive to follow the indications of their consciences. The natural order, and even the fact that sin has been allowed, appear as the presuppositions of the universal redemption which God willed in Christ. Although the Council only indicates it indirectly, not only are nature and the supernatural united in a Christological perspective, but the orders of creation and redemption can also be seen as intrinsically one in the single choice of God:

> "This world, in the concrete, which God has willed, and has willed as one thing (without our needing to imagine, anthropomorphically, a series of divine decrees all, from God's side, depending on each other) this world is a world in which God has allowed sin and evil to exist and hence one in which the incarnation of the Word of God necessarily took place because of sin and for our salvation. But it is also a world in which this incarnation is the highest of the acts of God, to which all other entities essentially refer, and for whose sake everything else, including nature, the secular sphere and sheer matter, is willed by God." (51)

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(51) K. Rahner, "The Order of Redemption within the Order of Creation" in Mission and Grace, 1 (London, 1963) pp. 75f.

I have said that the radical unity of creation and redemption is only indicated in the documents; in fact, as we have seen, various of their statements seem to show God's decrees concerning man as forming a series (creation, elevation, redemption, consummation in communion); it is in the Council's treatment of the recapitulation of all things in Christ, upon which we have only touched briefly, that its theology comes nearest to affirming explicitly the radical unity of which Rahner writes. However, I argue that even when a series of decrees is presented (as in LG 2, DV 3, or AG 3.1) the Christological thread which unites them indicates that there is, indeed, a radical inner unity between them.

However, while Christology provides a key which unifies teaching about nature and supernature, creation and redemption, it also proves to be a point at which the paradox of grace and freedom, salvation and judgement, God's universal purpose and the concrete particularities of history, is focused as an insoluble problem. The reality of human freedom must be maintained, both because of the historical experience of the Church, in which those who accept the message of salvation are a restricted group over against the rest of the world, and also because of the very nature of salvation as supernatural communion, the fulfillment of man's freedom in self-donation to the one who has first given himself for man:

> "If divinisation, if the perfect likeness is given us as something new, as something 'added' to the ordinary image, it is because it comes to us on the condition of our free acceptance . . . the subject of new life is man in as much as he is liberty embodied . . . the supernatural [gift] can only be defined as the fulfillment of liberty." (52)

Christology, then, focuses the tension between Vatican II's stress on the paschal mystery and the choice with which it faces man on the one hand, and, on the other, its stress on the universal purpose of God who chose man in Christ, and who restores his image to man through the incarnation of the divine Image for the purpose of universal redemption.

D) Vatican II's Doctrines of God and Man in the Eschatological 'Moment' of their Relationship

In this section we do not only have to test the eschatological teaching of the Second Vatican Council against the conclusions drawn from our study of the Council's ideal of obedience; we must also gather up the threads of what we have unearthed in the previous sections of the present chapter, and follow them through into their eschatological development, in order to see whether Vatican II's picture of the final consummation was consistent with all other features of its anthropology and doctrine

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(52) Henri Bouillard, "L'Idée du surnaturel et le mystère chrétien" in L'Homme devant Dieu (Mélanges offerts à H. de Lubac) Coll "Théologie", no. 58, (Paris, 1964) pp. 159f.

of God. Because of the crucial place of Christology in the Council's concept of the divine-human relationship, we shall devote particular attention to the question of the relationship between Christ and the kingdom. This will form the subject of the first sub-section. It will be followed by a sub-section in which we remind ourselves of the conclusions which we drew from the Council's ideal of obedience, in so far as they related to the eschatological dimension; finally, we shall analyse what the documents had to say about the life of heaven, in order to test this teaching for consistency both with its doctrine of Christ and the kingdom, and also with the eschatological implications of the ideal of obedience.

1 Christ and the Kingdom of God

Within Christology we discovered a focus for the tension between God's intention, on the one hand, and the reality of human freedom worked out in history, on the other. There is a similar tension within the doctrine of the kingdom of God, and it is related to the tension within Christology in a tangential way. The tension within the doctrine of the kingdom is this: The kingdom is inaugurated and active on earth 'already', but it has 'not yet' been brought in, in its fullness. This is a tension determined by <u>time</u>; there is hope for its resolution in the eschatological future - that which is among us 'already' in history will find its fulfillment, and the tension of the 'not yet' will be done away as time is superseded by eternity. The tension between God's universal, saving intention and the history of human freedom, on the other hand, seems to admit of no such fulfilling resolution, for if there were one it would not simply be time and its ambiguities which were abolished, but human liberty itself. Therefore, although the problem of the kingdom cuts across the same ground as the paradox of grace and freedom, the issues are not identical. Although we have found that Vatican II does not destroy the more acute paradox nor bring it to any solution, we may yet fruitfully trace the Christological question into the eschatological sphere by focusing on the doctrine of the kingdom - the doctrine in which there is a tension which <u>does</u> admit of solution.

The kingdom relates to Christ in various ways; he it was whose earthly ministry inaugurated it (LG 3, DV 17, see also SG 9.2); this came about not only through proclamation, but also through Christ's embodiment of the kingdom in his work, word, and presence (LG 5.1). It is the Church which spreads the kingdom (LG 5.2, AA 2.1, AG 1.3, see also UR 4.6) and is, itself, the kingdom's "seed" (LG 5.2), its "secret presence" (LG 3); it forms the people in which the kingdom is introduced among the nations, and through which it gains its citizens (see LG 13.2). Yet this people has its destiny in a future reality which it does not yet fully know - the kingdom of God which will be consummated when Christ appears (LG 9.2). Until that time, the kingdom in its fullness is a heavenly reality which is "sought" by the faithful (see LG 13.2, 31.2, GS 72.2) or whose powers are "proclaimed" by them through the presence of these powers in their lives; they yet wait in hope for the life of blessedness which is to come (see LG 35.3, 44.3, PO 16.2, PC 12.1). This is the tension between the 'already' and the 'not yet' of the kingdom which Christ both inaugurated and proclaimed.

When the kingdom is viewed in this perspective - as that which is already present and secretly at work, but not yet fulfilled - the Council uses the terms "kingdom of God", "kingdom of Christ", and "kingdom of heaven" indiscriminately. It is the present reign of God over the hearts and minds of men which comes about through the proclamation of Christ, and through the activity of the Spirit in the Church. Yet, when the Council speaks of its final consummation, it markedly prefers to call it the "kingdom of God" (GS 39.2, 45.1, AG 9.1) - it is that which Christ will "deliver" to the Father at the end, when he subjects himself and all creation to God (GS 39.3, PO 2.5, see also LG 36.1). This will be the kingdom's fruition, the appearing of Christ through whom it was established, and through whose love it has grown on earth (see DH 11.1), and the return, with him, of all things to the Father.

We see here that the motif of the kingdom was used by the Council as another way of talking about the fact that God's intention and purpose for the world is an intention and purpose "in Christ"; the kingdom's reality and possibility is grounded in the Father's

creation of all things in and through the Word, and his choice of mankind in the Son. Language about the kingdom is language about the outworking of this purpose, intention, and choice. The consummation of the kingdom represents the recapitulation, or summing-up, of all things in Christ, which will be the fulfillment of God's purpose, and thus the subordination of all things to his will. The parallelism between the ideas can be seen very clearly by comparing the first sentences of the first two paragraphs of GS 45:

> "The Church . . . tends towards this single goal - that the kingdom of God may come and the whole human race be saved." (GS 45.1)
>
> "The Word of God . . . himself became flesh so that, as perfect Man, he might save all and recapitulate all things." (GS 45.2)

By examining the theology of the kingdom we see, therefore, that there is a strict correspondence between the relationship of the Father, the Son, and the world, in the 'moments' of creation and eschatological consummation. The Father chose us in the Son before the beginning of the world, and with the world's fulfillment in the kingdom, the Son will return us to the Father. The history of the world, and particularly of the obedience of faith within the world, appears as the trajectory of that movement of return in love. It is now time, then, to pause and consider that obedience of faith again - the faith of the individual - for it is of such obedient individuals that the kingdom of heaven is formed.

2 A Review of the Anthropology and Doctrine of God Entailed in Vatican II's Ideal of Christian Obedience, in Relation to the Eschatological Relationship of Man and God

I argued in Chapter VI that, because Vatican II acknowledged the extent to which man's intellectual, objective knowledge is necessarily mediated through historical transcendentals of understanding, we may draw the conclusion that such objectified knowledge will be abolished when history and its conditions of understanding finally pass away (see p. 301). In connection with this, I also suggested that the Council brought more centrally into

view the possibility for man, even in this world, of being in immediate contact with the divine mystery through the unobjectified experience of affinity in charity. In the person who lives in the power of grace, the immediacy of the Spirit's presence to the heart and conscience is such as to become the root of a substantial affinity in action. Human acts become transfused and transfigured with the charity of the Spirit, which is their principle and their fulfillment. From this basis I drew the conclusion that the form of man's final relationship with God will entirely be defined through the knowledge of love: Human knowledge in the kingdom will not be rational knowledge - by which the saved might, theoretically, describe to one another objectively the essence of the divinity upon which they gaze - but it will be the inexpressible knowledge of love. The incomprehensibility of God will consist in his essential mysteriousness, and not simply in his inexhaustibility.

The more rationalist line of thought in Catholicism's approach to the question of the final union of man with God has attached itself to St. Thomas's concept of the beatific vision, in which the highest activity of the mind is involved; it is a direct, intuitive, intellectual vision of God, accompanied by the perfection of charity. The alternative line of thought, propounded by the Franciscan school of the middle ages, posits a union with God which is not merely accompanied by love, but rather is founded and formed by love (dilectio). (53) The pattern of my argument suggests that it is this latter line of thought which should be more strongly supported by the teaching of Vatican II, if it is self-consistent. Do the passages which treat explicitly of the life of heaven bear this out in any way? And how do they present the corporate aspect of the kingdom, the union with other men which is integrally bound up with loving communion with God?

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(53) One should note that St. Thomas's category of intellectual activity was wider than his category of rational activity. It was an impoverishment of his thought, then, which was expressed by those of his disciples who understood the beatific vision in primarily rationalist terms.

3 Vatican II's Treatment of the Eschatological Relationship between Man and God in those Parts of the Documents which we have not yet Studied

As we come to examine those passages of the Council documents which we have not yet studied in relation to eschatology, we must bear in mind two things: Firstly, the Council did not set out a systematic treatise on this subject more than on any other - in fact, rather less. The major passages on the life of heaven all occur within a pattern of argument whose major focus is elsewhere. Secondly, although these passages have not been under our consideration in the first part of the thesis because they do not deal with ecclesiastical obedience, they are, nevertheless primarily ecclesiological passages. They take up the emphasis on the social nature of salvation which was central to the thinking of many Fathers of the Church, and which has been lost for much of the modern era. (54)

On examining the passages which relate to the nature of the heavenly life, two things strike the reader: First, the heavenly consummation is presented in terms of worship; and second, several passages stress the corporate state of communion of the blessed, through charity. These two facts are partly the result of the contexts in which the Council treated the subject; for example, the idea of the heavenly liturgy is introduced in SC 8, in order to show the full dimensions of earthly worship:

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(54) It was Henri de Lubac, above all, who, in 1937, focused upon the centrality of the idea of communion in the patristic concept of heaven, in his book, Catholicisme, les Aspects Sociaux du Dogme (Paris):

"The Christian . . . sets out on his journey towards his last end. So does not a certain amount of individualism come back here into its own? How can we go on talking of the social character of a doctrine which teaches the survival of the individual soul, its immediate reward, and once the necessary purification has been undergone, its attaining the vision of the divine essence?

Nevertheless we are compelled to do so. Everything here below. including the Church itself, is for the elect, but the elect are not isolated beings, much less so, indeed, than Christians on earth." (Translation from the English edition (Catholicism (London, 1950) p. 51.)

> "In the earthly liturgy we share in that of heaven as a foretaste: It is being celebrated in the holy city, Jerusalem, to which we travel as pilgrims, where Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father as minister of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle. With the whole company of the heavenly army we sing a hymn of glory to the Lord; as we venerate the memory of the saints we hope to have a part and share with them; we are awaiting our Lord Jesus Christ until he comes as our life and we shall appear with him in glory."

Similar passages appear in LG 49, 50.4, and 51.2, and in each case the Council was concerned to situate the liturgy of earth in relation to those who are already glorified. Indeed, the theme uniting LG 48-51 as a chapter is "the eschatological character of the pilgrim Church, and her union with the Church of heaven" (emphasis mine). The idea of the celestial liturgy therefore appears naturally, in order to demonstrate the point at which the Church on earth is most nearly in tune with the Church triumphant. Nevertheless, the consistency with which the concept of heavenly worship and praise is put forward indicates that it is a particularly apt way of describing the experience of life of heaven. To the passages already cited above we may add one which we have already studied in relation to the final glorification of God:

> "So at last the plan of the creator . . . will really be brought to completion, when all who share human nature, having been reborn in Christ through the Holy Spirit, will gaze together on God's glory and be able to say, 'Our Father'." (AG 7.3)

Once again, the life of heaven (and here it is heaven in its fullest consummation, at the end of time when all are saved) is presented as a life directed towards the Father; we may take it that the words which are put into the mouth of the entire human race, "Our Father", appear in this context as an expression of praise and worship - the ultimate glorification of God when he is recognised for what he truly is to the human race, a Father.

We may say, then, that heaven is firstly characterised by worship; but secondly, as I have noted, it is also characterised by its corporate nature, as the blessed commune together in charity. Again, if we derive this idea from LG 49 ("we all . . . commune together in the same love of God and neighbour") we find that it is dictated by the point which the entire chapter of Lumen Gentium is

making - namely, that the Church on earth is united to that which is in heaven already. But the theme of corporate communion in love is constant, even outside this chapter; the reader will remember that GS 39 stresses the fact that it is charity and all its works which are to remain into the final kingdom, and the human values of society which are to be transfigured. Even more strikingly the passage from AG 7.3 which has just been quoted lays great emphasis upon the corporate nature of the heavenly worship, both by the use and position which it gives to the word "unanimiter" (55) and also by the note which it attaches to the words, "our Father", in which St. Augustine is quoted:

> "Let us love that which can be led by us to those kingdoms where no one says 'My Father', but where all say to the only God, 'Our Father'." (56)

It is particularly notable that this stress on the corporateness of the heavenly communion of love is attached to that passage which most nearly refers to the doctrine of the beatific vision, for it is that doctrine which, in earlier years, had been associated with an individualism concerning the nature of salvation, concentrating as it did upon the perfection of the intellectual faculty, and on the act of gazing upon the divine essence.

We find, then, that the themes of worship and mutual love characterise Vatican II's picture of the heavenly life, showing it to be the life in which the Church itself, in its widest dimensions, is consummated, rather than a reward given individually to the saints. Indeed, it is the Church as a body which has a vocation to the worship of heaven - a vocation to which it can respond partially on earth "in mutual charity and a single praise of the most Holy Trinity" (LG 50.2). Within this picture of worship, it is the note of love and praise which predominates, suggesting the union of men

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(55) "Sic tandem consilium Creatoris . . . revera adimpletur, cum omnes qui humanam participant naturam, in Christo per Spiritum Sanctum regenerati, unanimiter gloriam Dei speculantes, dicere poterunt: 'Pater noster'."

(56) De Serm. Domini in Monte, I, 41 (Migne, PL 34, 1250).

with the divine mystery through the knowledge of love; where the idea of the beatific vision is hinted at, it is set in the context of corporate worship, and we are not told that the entire body of worshippers gazes upon the divine essence, but upon God's glory. Their recognition of God's nature is not expressed in the language of intellectual understanding, but in the language of loving communion - "Our Father".

Conclusion

We have found a remarkable consistency in Vatican II's treatment of the question of man's eschatological relationship to God. There is both an inner consistency, in the firm stress on the characteristics of worship and love which are the prime notes of the heavenly life, and there is also a consistency between this picture and the theology of other parts of the documents' teaching on man and God. The life of heaven appears as a life "in Christ", the life of a kingdom which is stored up in heaven now, yet which is also already present on earth as a foretaste, a seed, of the reality which is to come. It will appear in its fullness when Christ comes at the end, and then the kingdom, its worship and values, will be consummated corresponding to the Father's pre-temporal purpose. There will be the abolition of history and its transcendentals, but the fulfillment and fruition of all the works of love which have their roots in history. Love will abide, and it will be the form of the divine-human relationship, because love alone - the love with which the Father purposed and chose the world - is the reality which transcends the conditions of time. The human race which was chosen by the Father "in the Son" will fulfill the Father's integral purpose for it; reborn in the Son it will be able to return in worship and loving communion to its creator, completing his glorification as it says, "Our Father".

POSTSCRIPT

I promised, in the Preface, to review the methods and results of this thesis briefly, in a Postscript. By this means we may draw together the different threads of thought which have made up the argument, and assess their significance.

The methods of the thesis were devised in view of its aims: The reader will remember that we set out with two major aims on the theological level, and a secondary interest in the interrelationship between theology and social factors. Our first major theological aim was to analyse Vatican II's presentation of the ideal pattern of Christian obedience which should be rendered in the Church. It was mainly in association with this analysis that our concern with the social plausibility of the Council's theology was worked out. Our second major aim - that of analysing how well the thought of the Council co-ordinated the idea of ecclesiastical obedience with the wider doctrines of God and man in their total relationship - was pursued in more purely theological categories. However, as I shall suggest, the degree of co-ordination which was achieved by the Council, as well as the areas in which consistency was not complete, give us grounds for posing an important question about the way in which social factors influence the development of theology in a body such as the Roman Catholic Church. Before we come to formulate these questions, however, we must first review the method which has been employed in the various parts of the thesis, and the conclusions which have been reached.

In order to achieve our first major aim we studied the documents of Vatican II by reference to a ground-map, which was constituted by the first part of the typology of Chapter I. This typological map gave us guidance, as we elucidated the way in which Vatican II's concept of the nature of authority in the Church represented a shift of emphasis away from the exclusive concentration on one motif which had characterised the ecclesiology of the preceding century. By reference to our map, too, we could see that

those who hold authority were set by the Council in a renewed relationship to other forms of God's presence and activity in the Church. We also discovered that the way in which authority is to be exercised was described in fresh patterns, which suggested that the shift in theological emphasis should naturally bear fruit in a shift in practical attitudes and approaches. All this made up the set of conclusions reached in Chapter II; from this complex web of results, we derived a new category by which pictures of authority might be characterised - the idea of an 'invitatory sign'. This idea integrates in a concrete way the motif-patterns which Vatican II emphasised in its concept of authority, and incorporates the Council's moral delineation of authority's proper exercise.

Using the idea of authority's function as an 'invitatory sign', we then went on to examine the Council's description of the obedience which is due in the Church, asking whether the documents show a shift of emphasis in their ideal of obedience corresponding to the shift of emphasis which they display in their treatment of the nature of authority. (Although at this point we considered the Council's theory of authority mainly in the category provided by the idea of an 'invitatory sign', we also went back to the underlying motifs belonging to our original typology, so as to have a variety of tools with which to open up the significance of Vatican II's teaching on the obedience which the Catholic should render in the Church.) In all our analysis of shifts of emphasis, we used examples drawn from magisterial teaching of the preceding hundred years to provide the backcloth against which the distinctive patterns of Vatican II's thought might be thrown into relief. The reader will remember that it was not our aim to give a full historical picture either of the development of official Catholic thinking over that period, or of its immediate influence on the theology of Vatican II; texts from the past were simply used to provide the ground against which shifts of emphasis might be picked out.

Official texts of the preceding century were used in a broadly similar way in the final part of the thesis, in which the second major aim of our study was pursued. As we examined the consistency between Vatican II's concepts of man and God in the

whole scope of their relationship throughout the course of salvation history, and its concept of the type of relationship between them which is mediated through proper obedience in the Church, we once more looked for shifts of emphasis, although this time, in the Council's anthropology and doctrine of God. In this latter part of the thesis we utilised the second and third parts of the typology of Chapter I, to map out the doctrines of God and man which should have been entailed in Vatican II's ideal of ecclesiastical obedience (Chapter VI); we then tested them against their actual presentation and treatment in other parts of the Council documents than those we had previously studied. (This was the concern of Chapter VII, and was aided by the method of discovering shifts of emphasis, as already indicated.) Although our method of study largely operated upon the assumption that the Council documents may all be treated as a body, we did, in the final chapter, devote some pages to a particular study of one aspect of the anthropology of Gaudium et Spes; by doing this, we were able to exercise a control on the unified analysis of the rest of the chapter, and to demonstrate the soundness of our presupposition that the thought of the Council may indeed be seen appropriately as a single whole.

What method was employed as the result of our concern with the social plausibility of Vatican II's concept of obedience? It must be admitted that the thesis did not approach this through the medium of rigorous sociological analysis. The answer to our questions was sought in an area of intermesh between shifts of teaching which were exemplified by Vatican II, and the underlying currents of post-Enlightenment, anti-authoritarian thought which, it may be generally assumed, have formed the social and philosophical context in which a great and significant section of the Roman Catholic Church exists during the second part of the twentieth century.

I have argued that it is too simplistic to say that Vatican II made a crisis in the Church inevitable because it did not modify its concept of authority, in line with its modification of other theological ideas, through the use of a modern idea of 'the sign'. This idea is simplistic, because it overlooks the nuanced

shifts in the idea of authority and obedience which the Council did present. These shifts had their own intrinsic significance, both theological and practical. Bur more than that, they also had significance because they contributed to the creation of an atmosphere in which yet more fundamental changes might be expected. The pattern of events which brought crisis to the Church after the Council followed the same course of events that is often noted in changes and crises in civil society: Outward pressures alone did not precipitate crisis immediately, but changes and problems came to a head after there had been inward relaxations, both in the theory and the practice of authority and obedience.

Whilst the present study, being mainly theological, has concerned itself mostly with the inward shifts in concept and practice which Vatican II set forward, our interest in the social plausibility and effectiveness of these shifts has pointed to an area where further study of a more rigorously sociological kind would be fruitful. Such a sociological analysis of the effects of the expectations and atmosphere fostered by the treatment of obedience at the Council would, however, on its part have to take account of a theological study of the kind which forms the greater part of this thesis. Theology (particularly the theology of the Church's official teachers) must be taken seriously as a social determinant, but its influence on social behaviour and expectations is not always that which its proponents might envisage or hope for.

We must now turn from this secondary concern of the thesis to consider once more our major aims: What have been the results of our analysis of the inner consistency of Vatican II's theology, with respect to the relationship between its picture of ideal ecclesiastical obedience and its treatment of the whole sweep of the divine-human encounter, throughout salvation history? We may generally conclude that marked shifts of emphasis in the one field were reflected in the other, while tensions in the ecclesiological area had their counterparts in wider co-ordinate doctrines. There is, however, one notable exception to this statement, which we shall see shortly. But first, the areas of correspondence and

consistency may briefly be catalogued.

Everything which I have integrated within the idea of an 'invitatory sign', as a way of designating the Council's concept of the primary function of authority in the Church, may be seen as forming a pattern which is a microcosm of Vatican II's concept of the primary purpose of the entire Church. The entire Church is a sacrament of salvation for the world - and so authority within the Church is correspondingly rooted in sacramental status and function; the whole Church is bound up in the mission of the Son and the Spirit - and so its officers succeed the Apostles in a task which is primarily that of mission. Beyond these correlations there stands the fact of God's universal purpose for the salvation of mankind, a purpose which must be worked out in respect for human freedom, and thus through the invitatory means of sacrament and preaching; the Church, and holders of authority within it, exist as an epiphany of God's intention, attitude and action on behalf of men.

Turning from the invitatory attitude of the hierarchy which Vatican II proposed, and the areas of doctrine which co-ordinate with it, we find that the Council's stress on the responsible and active obedience of members of the Church, whether lay or ordained, is to be correlated with the idea that men in general exist with an openness to God which is best manifested in their orientation towards the activity of charity. From his creation, and even in spite of sin, man aspires after the conditions of communion which can be attained through action which is inspired by the Holy Spirit. This grace of the Spirit can come out to meet the man who strives to obey his conscience, even when he does not have explicit faith; in addition, it even seems that this grace, which leads to eternal life, may meet men when their consciences are objectively wrongly informed, since human openness to God is displayed in the very fact of diligent moral search. Obedience in the Church, and fundamental obedience to God, therefore share the characteristics of initiative, responsibility and activity, rather than of conformity and passivity.

This leads us to a third area of correspondence: Vatican II stressed the responsibility which all Christians share for the

development of the Church's faith and (implicitly) for the delimitation of its moral boundaries. This capacity of even the laity is grounded in their inner experience of encounter with God. When we examined the Council's doctrine of man's relationship to God in more general terms, we found a similar emphasis on interiority, particularly in the doctrine of conscience.

We move now from correspondence between similar shifts of emphasis to correspondence between similar areas of tension in the Council's theology. Firstly, we may instance the fact that behind the invitatory authority of the hierarchy there continues to exist the juridical and legal function, which gives the Pope and bishops power to exclude people from the Church. This capacity is quite clearly included in the Council's ecclesiology, and yet it is only with difficulty compounded with the picture of pastoral authority as being based on the ministerial activity of Christ and his saving self-giving for his flock. Yet the mention of Christ immediately introduces us to the area of parallel tension in Vatican II's wider doctrine of the relations between God and man - some men, it seems, are to be excluded from the kingdom, and all men are to come before Christ's judgement seat. These are the consequences of human freedom, despite the universal saving will of God and Christ's redemption of humanity. We may note, however, that the Council fought more shy of expanding on the exclusive character of the kingdom, and God's aspect as a judge, than it did of treating the boundaries of conscious Church membership, and the juridical functions of the hierarchy. However, because of its doctrine of conscience, and its 'wider ecclesiology', the exclusive features of Catholic church order are made to seem of less ultimate importance than previously for the individual who stands without.

A second area of tension attached to the concept of ecclesiastical obedience is concerned with the status of the moral teaching of the Church. Vatican II did not make it entirely clear how far this should be seen as didactic instruction requiring conformity, and how far it should be seen as prophetic preaching of evangelical principles, by which men are invited to construct the future in responsibility. This tension was matched in the Council's delineation of the nature of the person, which is drawn up from

elements derived from the conceptualities of the Bible, the Fathers of the Church, the natural law theology of the scholastics, and the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment eras. As a result, it is not entirely clear whether the criteria by which men are to judge their moral actions, are located in the 'given' structures of human nature, or in the future of communion which men strive to achieve.

Finally, we reach an area of tension in Vatican II's theory of due ecclesiastical obedience which is not reflected in its picture of the divine-human relationship in its wider scope: We have seen that the Council's concept of the authority of the doctrinal magisterium of the Pope and bishops includes the notion of infallible and irreformable teaching. The kind of assent which is said to be due to this teaching is described in terms which suggest that dogmatic language can be universally and trans-historically clear, or at least that problems of interpretation are safely adjudicated by the Magisterium, which preserves ever the same sense and meaning in the Church's understanding of doctrine. However, we have also seen that the problem of the same sense and meaning is not easily settled, when once the variability of human cultures and philosophies is admitted, and when the critical effects of theology's dialogue with other disciplines, and its own absorption of critical principles, are allowed. Dogma appears to be a source of constant debate, rather than a source of constant objective certainty shared by all the Church.

I say that this tension is not reflected in the wider, co-ordinate areas of doctrine, dealing with the whole scope of the divine-human relationship, because in Vatican II's treatment of this theme the fully historical nature of human representational knowledge seems implicitly to be accepted. I have even been able to argue that the Council's picture of man's relationship to God in heaven reflects an epistemology in which discursive representational knowledge passes away, because it depends upon the analogues provided by man's historical condition, rather than being formed by the direct impress of the essence of divine truth upon the human spirit. Within such an epistemology, the constant variability in man's historical expression, and means of apprehending the truth of

God, appears to be natural, and the guarantee that the Church holds to the same sense and meaning in her doctrine is to be located not in the external discipline of the Magisterium, but in the consistent witness of the faithful that the various expressions of doctrine cohere with their inner experience of encounter with God - an experience and a knowledge which are not fully expressible in any objective terms.

Although our excursus into the kind of epistemology implied in Vatican II's doctrine of the entire scope of the divine-human relationship (and particularly its eschatological dimension) has had to be tentative, one important fact emerges with clarity. Areas of doctrine outside the range of ecclesiology were not less influenced by ideas emanating from the epochal change of the Enlightenment, but were, perhaps, affected with even more consistency. Does this then suggest that one of the presuppositions with which we began was ill-founded; namely, that ecclesiology, and the doctrine of obedience in particular, is an area of theology which is most immediately likely to show shifts brought about through the pressure of ideas which originate outside Scripture and Tradition? It seems that philosophical ideas of the modern era have been adopted more thoroughly into Vatican II's anthropology and doctrine of God's relationship to us, than into its picture of the obedience which should ideally be rendered in the Church. Is this because of the particularly conservative nature of Roman Catholic ecclesiology - which is all the more conservative just because a particular doctrine of authority has become one of the major distinctive features of the Roman communion? Or is it because, in every system of theology, ecclesiology is an area resistant to change, because change in this field is so obvious when it comes about, whilst subtle shifts in the concept of man's relationship to God in wider spheres are less easily noticed, having less immediate concrete results?

We find then, as I suggested on p. 387 , that the conclusions of this thesis concerning the consistency of Vatican II's picture of ecclesiastical obedience with its doctrines of God and man

in the broader scope of their relationship, give rise to an important question about the way in which external, socially mediated factors, influence the development of different fields of theology. We may count the fact that this question has been brought into focus, among the major fruits of our study. Indeed, the view may be canvassed that in a discipline such as theology, the elucidation of a question which is of general interest, is of more importance than conclusions which are reached in a restricted area of study. Whether this view is correct in relation to the foregoing arguments and analyses, I must leave for the reader to decide.

ABBREVIATIONS

I Abbreviations Used to Designate Individual Documents of Vatican II, together with Dates of Promulgation

AA ... Apostolicam Actuositatem (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity) 18 November 1965

AG ... Ad Gentes (Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church) 7 December 1965

CD ... Christus Dominus (Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church) 28 October 1965

DH ... Dignitatis Humanae (Declaration on Religious Liberty) 7 December 1965

DV ... Dei Verbum (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation) 18 November 1965

GE ... Gravisssimum Educationis (Declaration on Christian Education) 28 October 1965

GS ... Gaudium et Spes (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World) 7 December 1965

IM ... Inter Mirifica (Decree on the Media of Social Communication) 4 December 1963

LG ... Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church) 21 November 1964

NA ... Nostra Aetate (Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to non-Christian Religions) 28 October 1965

OE ... Orientalium Ecclesiarum (Decree on Oriental Catholic Churches) 21 November 1964

OT ... Optatam Totius (Decree on the Training of Priests) 28 October 1965

PC ... Perfectae Caritatis (Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life) 28 October 1965

PO ... Presbyterorum Ordinis (Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests) 7 December 1965

SC ... Sacrosanctum Concilium (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy) 4 December 1963

UR ... Unitatis Redintegratio (Decree on Ecumenism) 21 November 1964

Note: Unless otherwise noted, quotations from Vatican II documents, and others, are given according to my own translation.

II Abbreviations Used to Designate Standard Works of Reference and Periodicals (For fuller details, see bibliography on following pages)

AAS ... Acta Apostolicae Sedis

ASS ... Acta Sanctae Sedis

Aquinas QD ... Quaestiones Disputatae by St. Thomas Aquinas

Aquinas ST ... Summa Theologiae by St. Thomas Aquinas

CIC ... Codex Iuris Canonici (1917)

Coll. Lac ... Collectio Lacensis

DC ... Documentation Catholique

Dz ... Denzinger's Enchiridion, numeration of first 31 editions

DzS ... Denzinger's Enchiridion, numeration from edition 32 onwards

LTK ... Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche

Migne PL ... Patrologia Latina

Mansi ... Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio edited by Mansi, Petit, and Martin

NRT ... Nouvelle Révue Théologique

Vorgrimler ... Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II edited by H. Vorgrimler

III Abbreviated Forms of Words

alloc. ... allocution

Conc. ... Council
eg. Conc. Trid. ... Council of Trent
Conc. Lat. ... Lateran Council

Const. ... Constitution
eg. Const. Dogm.... Dogmatic Constitution

decr. ... decree

encycl. ... encyclical

Note: When the term "Catholic Church" is used in the thesis to designate the Church in communion with the See of Peter, or when the unadorned adjective "Catholic" is used, this is done through courtesy and for brevity.

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