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In this issue:

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Director's Desk

Dr. Paul A. Crow, Jr. Presented a very stimulating lecture on the presence of the Catholic Church in the Faith and Order Movement at the Centro in the Spring of this year. We are very pleased to be able to offer the text of his lecture in this issue.

Together with this text our readers will find several of the lectures that were held in our Spring lecture series entitled "Liturgical Renewal: A Way to Christian Unity". These include Geoffrey Wainwright's lecture "The Ecumenical Scope of Methodist Liturgical Renewal", Canon Donald Gray's "Common Words and *Common Worship*: Praying Together and Apart" and Teresa Berger's "Liturgical Renewal, Separated Sisters, and Christian Unity". We are pleased to be able announce that other lectures given in this series will appear in a book that gather's all of the conferences to be published by The Liturgical Press.

The program continues this Autumn with talks to be given by Dr. Tom Best, "Christian Unity and Christian Diversity: Lessons from Liturgical Renewal"; Dr. Gordon Lathrop, "Conservation and Critique: Principles in Lutheran Liturgical Renewal as Proposals toward the Unity of the Churches"; Msgr. Giulio Viviani, "Le liturgie ecumeniche celebrate dal Santo Padre a Roma e nel mondo" and Prof. Ermanno Genre "Polifonia e sinfonia: liturgie protestanti in cantiere". These conferences will appear in a later issue of the *Bulletin* as well as in the collection of essays which will be translated into Italian and published as a volume of the Centro's *Corso breve in ecumenismo*.

The Fall lecture series is rounded out by the Paul Wattson-Lurana White lecture. Prof. Robert Taft, SJ will give this year's lecture on December 12, 2002. His theme will deal with the implications of the recent document concerning the validity of the ancient Eucharistic anaphora of Addaï and Mari. As is our custom, we continue our celebration on the following evening, with a concert offered by our good friend, Maestro Serguej Diatchenko and the Orchestra of the Academy "ART MUSIC".

I wish to end this issue by welcoming two members to our staff at the Centro. Fr. Brian Terry, SA has completed his license work in sacramental theology at the Pontifical Ateneo Sant'Anselmo and is beginning his doctoral research. He will join us on staff working on various research projects and some technical dimensions of the Centro's day to day running. He will likewise represent the Centro at diverse academic meetings. Dr. Teresa Francesca Rossi will join us in the capacity of research assistant and will help in the further development of programs for the Italian public that frequents the Centro. Teresa Francecsa is professor of ecumenism at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas in Urbe and vice dean of theology as well as being a member of the Joint Working Group between the World Council of Churches and the Catholic Church. I hope many of you will stop by and get to know our new staff persons who will collaborate in the ministry of the Centro.

I hope that you will enjoy the contents of this issue. Please remember that this *Bulletin* is sent to you free of charge but we always welcome a sign of your appreciation by making a donation to help us cover the expense of printing and mailing. Peace and all good!

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James F. Puglisi, sa
Director

CC Centro Conferences

The Roman Catholic Presence in the Faith and Order Movement

Paul A. Crow, Jr.
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Member of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches (1968-1998)
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(Conference held at the **Centro Pro Unione**, Tuesday, 15 May 2001)

INTRODUCTION

Among all the developments of twentieth-century Church history none has been more providential than the modern ecumenical movement. Rooted in the will of Jesus Christ and the biblical vision of Christian unity, ecumenism is a calling, a vision, a life, a theology, and a hope that re-presents the will of God and the mandate of Christ that the church is visibly one and a sign and sacrament of God's reconciling love for all humanity. The instruments of this unity are theological dialogue, prayer, eucharistic worship, common witness and mission, diaconical service, and witness to justice and peace.[1]

Within the ecumenical movement a central place belongs to the Faith and Order Movement whose fundamental purpose, as defined in its constitution, is "to proclaim the oneness of the Church of Jesus Christ and to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and in common life in Christ, in order that the world may believe."[2] My purpose in this lecture is to sketch the presence and interaction of the Roman Catholic Church vis-a-vis the Faith and Order Movement from its beginning in 1910 until today (2001). This presence for more than nine decades can be charted by three distinct positions of the Roman Catholic Church: (1) opposition, (2) charitable reluctance, and (3) full participation. This story is a theological saga of magisterial negativity matched by the heroic witness of theologians whose writings, prayers and diplomacy brought the Catholic Church into full partnership within the Faith and Order Movement.

PHASE ONE: 1910-1948

Faith and Order's original vision was to gather together in a united Church "all Christian bodies throughout the world which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour."[3] In the minds of the American founders—such as Bishop Charles H. Brent (Episcopal Church in the United States), Peter Ainslie (Disciples of Christ), and Newman Smyth (Congregational Church)—this vision included all historic Protestant churches, the Orthodox Church (Eastern and Oriental) and the Roman Catholic Church.[4] Indeed, in 1911 at the first meeting of the Committee on Plan and Scope the aim articulated was "to bring about as the next step towards unity, a Conference for the consideration of questions of Faith and Order, to be participated in by representatives of the whole Christian world, both Catholic and Protestant."[5] In no sense was the new theological movement for unity conceived as a "pan-Protestant" movement, but rather as a foreshadowing of the fullness of the whole Church of Christ.

The evidence of this comprehensive hope can be seen in Faith and Order's activities of the early years. In 1911 Robert H. Gardiner (1855-1924), a Boston lawyer, Episcopal lay person and the first executive secretary of Faith and Order, sent more than 100,000 letters of invitation throughout the world, inviting the churches to participate in the new movement. In concert with Faith and Order's wider vision this letter was intentionally sent to all Roman Catholic bishops and cardinals in the world. Gardi-

[1] See P. A. CROW, Jr., "Ecumenism," in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, (London/Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1989) 7:358-361 and ID., "The Ecumenical Movement," in C.H. LIPPEY and P.W. WILLIAMS, eds., *The Encyclopedia of the American Religious Experience,* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988) 2: 977-993.

[2] "By-laws of the Faith and Order Commission," appendix V, in T.F. BEST and G. GASSMANN, eds., *On the Way to Fuller Koinonia. Official Report of the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order,* Faith and Order Paper, 166 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1994) 309.

[3] *Joint Commission Appointed to Arrange for a World Conference on Faith and Order,* Faith and Order Paper, 1 (Boston: Merrymount, 1910) 3. In later Faith and Order texts the reference was changed to "all Christian *communions* throughout the world."

[4] See P.A. CROW, Jr., "The Faith and Order Movement," in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2001) 2:274-281.

[5] *Report of the Committee on Plan and Scope,* April 12, 1911, Faith and Order Paper, 3 (s.l., 1911) 3-4.

ner's prolific correspondence also included exchanges with early 20th century Roman Catholic ecumenists such as Abbé Paul Couturier of Lyons, Abbé Fernand Portal and Cardinal Desiré Joseph Mercier of the famed but unsuccessful conversations in Malines (Belgium) between Anglicans and Roman Catholics; and Cardinal Nicolò Marini, the Vatican's first secretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Church. All communicated a strong interest in the emerging movement.[6] Gardiner's most significant correspondence—in Latin—was with Cardinal Pietro Gasparri, the Vatican's Secretary of State under Pope Benedict XV (1914-1922) in which the Catholic Church was invited to participate in the first World Conference on Faith and Order.[7]

The most aggressive overture by Faith and Order to the Catholic Church came in the spring of 1919, when the Protestant Episcopal Church—acting on behalf of Faith and Order—sent a delegation of their bishops and priests to the Vatican. (Other delegations, including other Faith and Order churches, were sent to Anglican, Protestant and Orthodox centers in Great Britain and Europe.) Upon the delegation's arrival in Rome Archbishop Cerretti, the Secretary for Extraordinary Affairs, arranged on May 16th for the delegation to meet with Cardinal Gasparri and have a private audience with Pope Benedict XV. Fr. Thomas F. Stransky, the eminent Paulist ecumenist and member of the first staff of the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity, points to the significance of this meeting as "the first face-to-face contact between a post-Reformation pope and the bishops of another church."[8] In advance of their audience the delegation conveyed to the Holy Father a formal invitation to the World Conference and a statement about the nature and issues of Faith and Order. "Substantially all of Christendom except the Roman Catholic Church," they reported, "has indicated a readiness to take part in the World Conference." In the face of the world crisis of the post-World War I years this conference presented "a strategic missionary opportunity to the Roman Catholic Church." During the audience they were graciously received by Cardinal Gasparri and Benedict XV, who listened with utmost cordiality to their appeal. As the Faith and Order delegation was leaving the audience, the pope's official response—evidently drafted before the delegation arrived in Rome—was given verbally by Benedict and written copies handed them. The official response said:

> "The Holy Father, after having thanked them for their visit stated that as the successor of St. Peter and Vicar of Christ he had no greater desire than that there should be one fold and one shepherd. His Holiness added that the teaching and practice of the Roman Catholic Church, regarding the unity of the visible Church of Christ, was well known to everybody and it would not be possible for the Catholic Church to take part in such a Congress as the one proposed. His Holiness, by no means wishes to disapprove of the Congress in question for those who are not in union with the Chair of Peter; On the contrary He earnestly desires and prays that, if the Congress is practicable, those who take part in it may, by the grace of God, see the light and become reunited to the visible Head of the Church, by whom they will be received with open arms."[9]

This ceremonial cordiality did not mask the force of the negative answer. In its later report the delegation drew a contrast between the Pope's demeanor while in their presence and the nature of his official reply. His personal disposition was "irresistibly benevolent" while his official response was "irresistibly rigid."[10] The Catholic policy toward unity required that Christian unity could be achieved only if "the separated brethren" would leave their Christian traditions and "return" in penitence to the "true" church. Such a position would effectively end the ecumenical movement, the delegation later replied. Despite the painful disappointment of that experience, it is fair to observe that the delegation's frustration was undoubtedly heightened by the unrealistic optimism these Americans brought to the encounter. Another attempt was made to invite the Catholic Church to participate in the Faith and Order movement when in 1926--during the pontificate of Pius XI--the ailing Bishop Brent made an unsuccessful visit to Rome to extend his personal invitation to the Lausanne Conference.

In August, 1927 the first World Conference on Faith and Order met in Lausanne, Switzerland. Protestants, Anglicans, and Orthodox from all parts of the world engaged in theological dialogue and labored in optimism to transform their divided existence into a unity-in-diversity. The theological agenda focused on the themes of God's call to unity, the Gospel as the Church's message to the world, the nature of the Church, the common confession of faith, the ministry, the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the forms of unity to be sought. Fifty years later (1977) when in the same Swiss city the Lausanne conference was celebrated, Karl-Christophe Epting, an ecumenical historian, observed that in a real sense the first World Conference on Faith and Order marked the birthday of a truly ecumenical theology:

[6] See Robert Gardiner's letter (June 1, 1917) to Episcopal Bishop C.P. Anderson, Faith and Order Archives, World Council of Churches Library, Geneva, Switzerland. See also O. ROUSSEAU, "Trois lettres inédites de R. Gardiner, premier secretaire de «Faith and Order» au cardinal Marini en 1917," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 65, 2 (1970) 489-494.

[7] Gardiner and Gasparri's letters were published in an appendix to M. PRIBILLA, SJ, *Um kirchliche Einheit: Stockholm-Lausanne-Rome* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1929). The original letters are in the Faith and Order Archives in Geneva and the Robert H. Gardiner Papers at General Theological Seminary, New York, N.Y.

[8] T.F. STRANSKY, CSP, "A Basis Before the Basis; Roman Catholic/World Council of Churches Collaboration," *The Ecumenical Review* 37, 2 (1985) 214. This article brings fresh insights into the emerging relationship between the Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches.

[9] *Report of the Deputation to Europe and the Near East,* 1919, Faith and Order Pamphlet, 32 (s.l., 1919) 12.

[10] *Ibid.*, 11. See O. ROUSSEAU, "Le grand voyage œcuménique des fondateurs de Foi et Constitution," *Irénikon* 43, 3 (1970) 325-361, especially 340-341.

"Lausanne showed for the first time that it was possible for representatives of the churches to talk about agreements and disagreements in matters of faith and order without hurling anathemas at each other."[11] The churches learned that authentic ecumenism begins when the anathemas are silenced.

By the time of the convening of the Lausanne Conference all churches painfully understood that the Roman Catholic Church would not participate in any ecumenical conferences. Almost a month before (July 8, 1927) the Vatican's Holy Office (today known as the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) had issued a decree forbidding Catholics from attending any ecumenical conferences. The Faith and Order officers however sent an invitation to Monsignor François Charrière, the Bishop of Geneva, Lausanne and Fribourg, who in response sent greetings to Bishop Brent and the conference and offered his prayers for its success.[12] Providentially one Roman Catholic theologian was present with ecclesiastical permission. Josef Max Metzer (1887-1944), a German theologian who founded the ecumenical Una Sancta movement in Germany and later was hanged by the Nazis, came at the behest of his bishop. After Lausanne several Catholic journals—*Irénikon* (Amay-sur-Meuse, Belgium), *Una Sancta, Études* (Paris), and *Oecumenica*—published articles that interpreted Faith and Order's deliberations, thus beginning an interpretative tradition even when official contact was not possible.

A defining moment came on the Feast of Epiphany (January 6, 1928) when Pope Pius XI issued the Encyclical *Mortalium animos* ("On Fostering True Religious Unity").[13] This encyclical was the first official papal—and the most harsh—Catholic response to the modern ecumenical movement, mandating that no Roman Catholics could attend any ecumenical conferences, and deeming it unlawful for Catholics even to offer encouragement or support of any kind. To do so would be "giving countenance to a false Christianity quite alien to the one Church of Christ." The ecumenical movement, said the encyclical, is "pan-Christian" (a derogatory label) for several reasons: it is founded on the assumption that the Church of Christ is not identical with the Roman Catholic Church, but must be brought into existence; the ecumenical movement promotes a false view that reunion can be achieved without doctrinal unity; it envisions an untenable unity that involves the federation of independent churches without one teaching authority; it infers that the Catholic Church is only one of many communions in Christ's Church. In essence, *Mortalium animos* charged that the ecumenical movement represents relativism in doctrine, modernism in theology, and indifferentism in ecclesiology.[14] "There is but one way in which the unity of Christians may be fostered," the encyclical concluded, "and that is by promoting the return to the one true Church of Christ of those who are separated from it."

Protestant and Eastern Orthodox responses to this encyclical ranged from deep regret to anger. Obviously those who drafted *Mortalium animos* had no understanding of Faith and Order's working principles or the ranges of its theological work, especially the official reports from Lausanne. Rome engaged in caricature rather than in any valid criticism.[15] W. A. Visser t' Hooft, at the time a young Dutch Reformed theologian who later would become the first general secretary of the World Council of Churches, later reflected in his *Memoirs*:

> "These were indeed black years in the relations between the ecumenical Movement and the Roman Catholic Church . . .That the Roman Catholic Church, given its conception of the church, felt obliged not to participate in ecumenical meetings was one thing, but that it should misinterpret the motives of the ecumenical leaders in such an irresponsible manner was another thing . . . .We realized that we had to overcome the bad habit of judging each other without having really listened to each other."[16]

At the end of the day it was providential that most Orthodox, Protestant, and a goodly number of Catholic theologians refused to accept *Mortalium animos* as the final word or a permanent barrier to ecumenical relations with the Roman Catholic Church.

In 1937 the Second World Conference on Faith and Order at Edinburgh, Scotland, gathered a new generation of Christian leaders. The conference's subthemes were central to Faith and Order's original agenda: the meaning of grace, the Church of Christ, and the Word of God (including the first reference in a Faith and Order document to "Holy Scripture and Tradition"); the communion of saints, a theme introduced by the Orthodox; ministry and the sacraments; and the church's unity in life and worship.

William Temple, the Anglican Archbishop of York (later to become the Archbishop of Canterbury), was the presiding officer. The year before the conference (1936) he had written to the Most

[11] K.-C. EPTING, "Lausanne 1927 The First World Conference on Faith and Order," *The Ecumenical Review* 29, 2 (1977) 180.

[12] See O.S. TOMKINS, "The Roman Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Movement, 1910-1948," in R. ROUSE and S.C. NEILL, eds., *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954) 686.

[13] For the full text of *Mortalium animos* in English, see G. K. A. BELL, ed., *Documents on Christian Unity: A Selection from the First and Second Series, 1920-1930* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955) 188-200. For the original Latin text, see *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (AAS) 20 , 1 (1928) 5-16.

[14] G. WEIGEL, *A Catholic Primer on the Ecumenical Movement* (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1957) 44.

[15] See S.C. NEILL, *Rome and the Ecumenical Movement: Peter Ainslie Memorial Lecture* (Grahamstown, Rhodesia: Rhodes University, 1967) 7. J.-M.-R. TILLARD, OP, gives a partially positive interpretation of this phase of Roman Catholic ecumenism in his essay, "The Roman Catholic Church and Ecumenism," in T.F. BEST and T.J. NOTTINGHAM, eds., *The Vision of Christian Unity: Essays in Honor of Paul A. Crow, Jr.* (Indianapolis: Oikoumene Publications, 1997) 179-197.

[16] W. A. Visser 't HOOFT, *Memoirs* (Philadelphia/London: The Westminster Press/SCM Press, 1973) 65-67.

Reverend Andrew MacDonald, OSB, the Catholic Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, to reissue Faith and Order's invitation to the Catholic Church to send official representatives. MacDonald kindly declined, but did send a letter conveying his prayers for the conference and allowed five unofficial observers—four priests and a lay person—to attend.[17] Determined to have some mention of the Roman Catholic Church in the proceedings of the Edinburgh Conference, Temple included a paragraph in his opening sermon saying: "We deeply lament the absence of the collaboration of the great Church of Rome, the Church which more than any other has known how to speak to the nations so that the nations hear."[18] Also among the greetings read to the conference was a communique from the Prior of the Benedictine monastery at Amay-sur-Meuse, and later Chevetogne, Belgium.

In a promising omen the bookshop at the Edinburgh conference had on sale a book that represented a new departure for Roman Catholic ecumenism. The title was *Chrétien désunis: principes d'un œcuménisme catholique* (1937) by French Dominican M.-J. [Yves] Congar, who would become arguably the most influential Roman Catholic ecumenist in the twentieth century. W. A. Visser 't Hooft later spoke of him as "the father of ecumenism in the Catholic Church."[19] The poorly translated English text of Congar's book was entitled *Divided Christendom: A Catholic Study of the Problem of Union. Chrétien désunis* became, as Methodist theologian Paul Minus judges, "the Magna Charta of Catholic ecumenism in the years before Vatican II."[20] While faithful to the boundaries of Catholic teaching, including *Mortalium animos,* whose spirit he defended, Congar made clear that the Roman Catholic Church has always had a commitment to the reunion of the Church. "However, this church gives a categorical refusal to any definition of ecumenism that implies that the one Church of Christ does not exist in the world. This is the Church that lives in visible continuity that by grace and the gifts of the Spirit link her with the historic Incarnation and redeeming work of the Lord," said Congar.[21] By their baptism and faith Protestants qualify as "incomplete" members of the true Church. They "are Christians not in spite of their confession but in it and by it." Therefore, these Christians should not be called heretics but "separated brothers" or "dissidents." In this sense, continues Congar, "ecumenism begins when it is admitted that others, not only individuals but ecclesiastical bodies as well, may also be right though they differ from us; that they too have truth, holiness and gifts of God even though they do not profess our form of Christianity."[22] As Père Congar would say more articulately in a later book, the hope of reconciliation among the churches lies in a deeper understanding of unity and catholicity where diversity is embraced in communion. [23]

A few years after the publication of *Chrétien désunis* Congar was placed under heavy ecclesiastical restrictions. He was forbidden to teach; all of his writings had to be approved by readers in Rome; he could publish nothing about the ecumenical movement. The Master of the Dominican Order warned him against any "false eirenicism" which might be construed as indifference to Catholic doctrine. The Vatican's displeasure with his ecumenical vision represented in *Chrétien désunis* and other writings became his personal Cross. He suffered deeply for his vision of Christian unity. Père Congar's patient suffering was slowly lifted when Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli became Pope John XXIII and the winds of the Holy Spirit moved the Catholic Church towards the Second Vatican Council.[24]

PHASE TWO: 1948-1968

During the Second World War work toward the formation of the World Council of Churches proceeded amid the difficulties of travel and the logistics of meetings. Several years prior to the WCC's inaugural assembly the Provisional Committee received a cordial message from Msgr. Charrière, the Catholic Bishop of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg. Read publicly by his good friend Dr. Ingve Brilioth, the moderator of the Faith and Order Commission and the Swedish Lutheran Archbishop of Uppsala, it said: "While you are met together in Geneva to concern yourselves with the essential problem [of Christian unity], my prayer goes up with yours, in union with the one which Jesus prayed on the eve of His passion."[25] This simple greeting kept alive the spiritual reality that in the mystery of God's plan Protestants, Orthodox and Roman Catholics are called to a common unity.

An incredible flowering of hope came to the ecumenical movement in August, 1948 when the Faith and Order and the Life and Work movements came together to form the World Council

[17] For Archbishop MacDonald's written greeting to the Edinburgh Conference, see L. HODGSON, ed., *The Second World Conference on Faith and Order, held at Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937* (New York: The MacMillan Co , 1938) 40 See also G.K.A. BELL, *The Kingship of Christ: The Story of the World Council of Churches* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1954) 69.

[18] L. HODGSON, ed., *The Second World Conference…, op. cit.*, 20.

[19] W.A. Visser 't HOOFT, *Memoires…*, *op. cit.*, 319.

[20] P. MINUS, *The Catholic Rediscovery of Protestantism: A History of Roman Catholic Ecumenical Pioneering* (New York: Paulist Press, 1976) 99. This is a very competent study of early 20th century Catholic ecumenism.

[21] M.-J. [Yves] CONGAR, OP, *Divided Christendom: A Catholic Study of the Problem of Union* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1939) 139.

[22] *Ibid.*, 135.

[23] Y. CONGAR,OP, *Diversity and Communion* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1985).

[24] Congar's sustaining witness to ecumenism is best understood in his *Une passion: l'unité. Réflexions et souvenirs, 1929-1973*, Foi vivante, 156 (Paris: Cerf, 1974).

[25] Bishop Charrière's message—his second to Faith and Order—was quoted by Father Maurice VILLAIN in the pre-Amsterdam Assembly study volume *The Universal Church in God's Design* (New York: Harper and Row, 1947) 171.

of Churches. Some Faith and Order leaders feared that in the new council the centrality of Faith and Order would be pushed to the periphery. At that time, however, the skeptics were proven wrong. In a dramatic stoke the member churches of the WCC adopted the basis of the Faith and Order movement as the basis of the new ecumenical fellowship, affirming the World Council as "a fellowship of churches which accept the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour."

While they could not officially attend the WCC's first assembly at Amsterdam, Holland, Roman Catholic theologians did contribute to the preparatory studies for the churches. The first preparatory volume, with the title of *The Universal Church in God's Design,* contained two encouraging articles about the importance of the Roman Catholic Church being on the WCC's screen. One was written by the Danish Lutheran theologian Kristen E. Skydsgaard and the other by French Catholic ecumenist Maurice Villain, SM. As a member of the Faith and Order Commission Dr. Skydsgaard alerted the churches in the WCC to a new ecumenical spirit he perceived in the Roman Catholic Church. "The new hope in the situation today,' said Skydsgaard," is that a Catholic-Protestant discourse is now possible as a real theological and ecclesiological discourse…that which takes place quietly may someday break through and be of an importance at which we at this moment cannot guess."[26] Villain concurred with his Danish colleague's assessment: "A convergence between the Roman Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Movement is not only possible but is gradually taking place." This new climate is encouraging a "different behavior that will call forth a vital reintegration (not an absorption, not a submission pure and simple) of the Christian churches."[27]

This gradual change in official Roman Catholic attitudes and policies began to take place after the Amsterdam Assembly. The Holy Office's letter *Ecclesia Catholica* (December 20, 1949 only published on March 1, 1950) recognized that the ecumenical movement "derives from the aspiration of the Holy Spirit" and is "a source of holy joy in the Lord" to be taken seriously in prayer and charity by all Christians. While continuing to proclaim the Roman Church as "the one true Church," all Catholic should be glad that the other churches are seeking church unity.

On June 5, 1948, the same Holy Office issued a "monitum" concerning the ecumenical movement. However, the year after the Amsterdam assembly the Holy Office issued a more comprehensive and constructive *Instructio* concerning the ecumenical movement.[28] Commonly referred to as *Ecclesia Catholica* (or *De Motione Oecumenica*), this pronouncement represented a dramatic positive shift by the Vatican, in sharp contrast to Pius XI's *Mortalium animos*. For the first time hope was acknowledged in the "growing desire amongst many persons outside the Church for the reunion of all who believe in Christ." Such ecumenism "may be attributed to the Holy Ghost . . . but above all to the united prayers of the faithful." *Ecclesia Catholica* permitted Roman Catholics to participate in ecumenical meetings with other Christians in order to discuss matters of faith and morals, provided appropriate ecclesiastical permission is granted. Among bishops, priests, dioceses and all Catholics ecumenism ":should daily assume a more significant place within the Church's universal pastoral care." While the *Instructio* continued to affirm that an authentic unity will require the return of "dissidents" to the Holy See, a new day was given to those who yearned for Catholic participation in the ecumenical movement. In 1960 George Tavard, the noted Catholic ecumenist who for twenty years taught theology at the Methodist Theological School in Ohio, designated this *Instructio* as "the official charter, so far, of Catholic ecumenism whose promulgation encouraged the development of a theology of ecumenism."[29] Faith and Order leaders also took a hopeful stance.

The new freedom given by *Ecclesia Catholica* brought a flowering of individual ecumenical initiatives and led to a productive dialogue between Faith and Order and the Roman Catholic Church. One development was especially providential. In 1952 Jan G. M. Willebrands and Frans Thyssen, two Dutch priests, formed—in consultation with Augustin Bea and Charles Boyer in Rome—the Catholic Conference on Ecumenical Questions (CCEQ). Its primary purpose was "to promote harmony, collaboration and a common spirit among Catholic ecumenists and to keep them widely informed on the progress of the ecumenical movement."[30] Willebrands attracted a company of younger Dutch, French and German theologians who would eventually become prominent Catholic ecumenical theologians. Among the new circle were the names of Yves Congar, Charles Moeller (a scholar at Louvain), Jérôme Hamer (later Secretary of

[26] K.E. SKYDSGAARD, "The Roman Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Movement," in *The Universal Church in God's Design: An Ecumenical Study* Vol. I, The Amsterdam Assembly Series (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947) 155-168.

[27] M. VILLAIN, SM, "A Supplemental Note by a Roman Catholic Writer," *ibid.*, 169-176.

[28] For the text, see G.K.A. BELL, ed., *Documents on Christian Unity: Fourth Series, 1948-1957* (London/New York: Oxford University Press, 1958) 22-27. Also it may be found in the Congregation of the Holy Office's, "Instructio: De Motione oecumenica," *The Jurist* [Washington, D.C.], 10 (1950) 201-213. Actually this document was issued on December 20, 1949, but was not published until March 1, 1950. For an interesting commentary, see Father M. BÉVENOT, "The Recent Instruction on the 'Œcumenical Movement'," *Eastern Churches Quarterly* 8, 6 (1950) 357-364. See also B. LEEMING, SJ, *The Church and the Churches*, 2nd ed. (London/Westminster, MD: Darton, Longman and Todd/The Newman Press, 1963) 264-267.

[29] G. TAVARD, AA, *Two Centuries of Ecumenism* (London/Notre Dame, IN: Fides Publishers, 1960) 230-231.

[30] Y. CONGAR, OP, *Dialogue Between Christians: Catholic Contributions to Ecumenism* (London/Dublin: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966) 41.

the Secretariat for Christian Unity and prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith), Christophe-Jean Dumont (Dominican director of the Istina Centre in Paris), Karl Rahner (distinguished German Jesuit theologian), Pierre Duprey (beloved White Father and later Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity) and Emmanuel Lanne (Benedictine monk at Chevetogne and major Faith and Order voice).

One of Mgr. (later Cardinal) Willebrands' early acts was to contact W. A. Visser 't Hooft of the World Council of Churches and leaders of the Faith and Order Commission. In the CCEQ's annual meetings held between 1952-1963 their theological studies embraced a number of ecumenical events and Faith and Order themes.[31] The first study focused on the concept of *vestige ecclesiae* (marks of the Church) which was central to the 1950 Toronto Statement which defined the nature of the WCC vis-a-vis the member churches. Other papers were prepared on themes of the Evanston Assembly (1954), particularly the main theme "Christ---The Hope of the World" and Faith and Order's focus "Our Oneness in Christ and Our Disunity as Churches." Prior to the New Delhi assembly (1961) a paper was produced on "Mission and Unity." Preparatory to the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order (1963) at Montreal representatives of the CCEQ and Faith and Order jointly reviewed the preparatory studies on the conference's subthemes: Christ and the Church, Tradition and Traditions, Worship, and Institutionalism. There can be little doubt that the Catholic Conference on Ecumenical Questions served, among its other purposes, as an unofficial Faith and Order group among Catholic theologians. By the time the call for the Second Vatican Council was proclaimed a company of extraordinary Catholic theologians had experienced ecumenical formation and were ready to focus their theological expertise upon the theological mandate and issues related the Christian unity.

The Third World Conference on Faith and Order at Lund, Sweden, in late August 1952, was the first Faith and Order conference to which the Roman Catholic Church sent official accredited observers. Arising from the friendship between Bishop John Muller, the Catholic Apostolic Vicar of Sweden, and Lutheran Archbishop Yngve Brilioth, three Swedish priests and a layman were appointed to the conference. C.-J. Dumont was appointed by the Dominican Order. Oliver S. Tomkins, Anglican Chairperson of the Working (Executive) Committee of the Faith and Order Commission, later said that the presence of these official observers was "an important sign that the great Church of Rome is not indifferent to what is being done [by Faith and Order] in order to further a better understanding between Christians of different traditions, and that an amity of souls can exist in spite of ecclesiastical barriers that appear insurmountable."[32]

As had become the custom, the theological voices of Roman Catholics were involved in the preparatory volumes for the Lund conference. In the volume on *Intercommunion* Yves Congar wrote an essay stating that while intercommunion, a common sharing of the Eucharist, is often considered by Faith and Order as an issue of sacramental discipline, it is fundamentally a matter of ecclesiology. Hence, in Catholic theology the unity of the Church is envisaged as communion (koinonia).[33] On this point Congar was anticipating the concept of the Church and its unity that would be articulated by the WCC's assembly at Vancouver (1983) and the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order (1993) at Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

In a uni*q*ue development another preparatory book for Lund, under the title of *Ways of Worship*, contained essays on the role of Mary, the Mother of God, in the Christian tradition. Theologians from four traditions addressed this theme: French Reformed Frère Max Thurian of the Taizé community; Anglican Thomas M. Parker, a fellow at University College, Oxford; Vladimir Lossky, famed Orthodox professor at Paris; and Father Conrad Pepler, an English Dominican priest. This was undoubtedly a unique moment in ecumenical history, the first time in Faith and Order that a theological consideration had been given to the role of Mary in the economy of salvation.[34] As *avant garde* as these essays seemed at the time, there is little evidence that the Lund conference gave much attention to the theme.

Another sign of increased Catholic presence in the Faith and Order movement was evident at the North American Faith and Order Conference at Oberlin, Ohio, in September, 1957. The theme was "The Nature of the Unity We Seek." Two popular American Catholic priests were appointed by Bishop John Wright of the Diocese of Worcester (Massachusetts): Fr. John B. Sheerin, CSP, editor of *The Catholic World,* and Fr. Gustave Weigel. SJ, professor at Woodstock Theological Seminary in Maryland. In his reflections afterwards Weigel identified what he perceived as a theological weakness at Oberlin, namely "a strongly volunteristic unconcern for doctrine" by American Protestants. Yet he would later confess "Defacto there is a visible unity binding these churches together."[35]

The year 1960 signaled an accelerating relationship between the Catholic Church and the Faith and Order movement. In August of that year the WCC invited the Catholic Church to send

[31] See J. GROOTAERS, "Jan Cardinal Willebrands: The Reception of Ecumenism in the Roman Catholic Church," *One in Christ* 6, 1 (1970) 24-25 and T.F. STRANSKY, "Catholic Conference on Ecumenical Questions," in N. LOSSKY, *et ali*., *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1991) 134.

[32] O.S. TOMKINS, "World Conference on Faith and Order [Lund,1952]," *Church Times* [London], August 22, 1952.

[33] Y. CONGAR, "Amica Contestatio," in D. BAILLE and J. MARSH, *Intercommunion* (London: SCM Press, 1952) 141-142.

[34] See P. EDWALL, E. HAYMAN, and W.D. MAXWELL, eds., *Ways of Worship: The Report of a Theological Commission on Faith and Order* (London: SCM Press, 1951) 256-323.

[35] Weigel's evaluative comments were quoted in P.W. COLLINS, *Gustave Weigel: A Pioneer of Reform* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992) 187-192. See also G. WEIGEL, SJ, "Faith and Order at Oberlin," *America*, 98, 3 (1957) 67-71

official observers to meetings of the Faith and Order Commission and the Central Committee at St. Andrews, Scotland. René Beaupère, Jérôme Hamer and Bernard Leeming participated in the Faith and Order meeting, while Bishop Willebrands and Leeming were present at the Central Committee. Far more significant however, 1960 launched the preparations for the Second Vatican Council, first announced by Pope John XXIII on December 25, 1959.

The Pope took another highly strategic ecumenical action on Pentecost, 1960, by establishing the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU), along with the eleven preparatory commissions for the forthcoming council. Now ecumenism was at the supreme official level of the Roman See. The Secretariat's primary purpose was "to manifest in a special way our love and goodwill towards those who bear the name of Christ, yet who are separated from the Apostolic See, and to find more easily the path by which they may arrive at that unity for which Christ prayed."[36] Appointed as president was Augustin Cardinal Bea, the eminent Jesuit biblical scholar at the Pontifical Institute for Biblical Studies, confessor to Pius XII, and a friend of W. A. Visser 't Hooft, the WCC's first general secretary. Bea providentially chose Willebrands, someone already au courant with Faith and Order and other dimensions of the WCC, as the Secretary. Others who made up the SPCU's original staff were Thomas F. Stransky, gifted ecumenical strategist and omnipresent host to all ecumenical guests to the Secretariat; and Mgr. Jean-François Arrighi, a Corsican priest with many years of experience in Rome and the Curia and in the Eastern Churches. After Vatican II, the mandate of the SPCU included the publication of pastoral documents which interpreted the ecumenical tasks to the local church; the appointment of theologians to various international bilateral dialogues with world communions such as the Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, Reformed and the Disciples of Christ; the sending official observers to the assemblies of various churches and ecumenical bodies; the partnership with the Faith and Order Commission, including the preparation of the materials for the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (January 18-25) and co-sponsoring the Forum on Bilateral Dialogues. In all its work the SPCU/PCPCU and the Faith and Order Commission have been close partners. When John Paul II restructured the Roman Curia in 1989 the SPCU's status was enhanced to that of a pontifical council and renamed the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. It is impossible to over-estimate the competency of the PCPCU and its worldwide respect among all churches.

One of the providential ecumenical decisions made by John XXIII, aided by Bea and Willebrands, was the invitation to Orthodox and Protestant churches to send theological observers to Vatican II. That these observers were given such a visible and influential role was an expression of the sincerity of Catholic ecumenism. Their active presence provided "indispensable leverage for moving the Catholic episcopate—and through them the whole church—along the ecumenical way already marked out in precept and example by Pope John."[37] As Tom Stransky observes, "Without this group—which the bishops slowly learned to trust—some bishops would have been afraid to accept, for instance, many affirmations of the Decree on Ecumenism, one of the most decisive documents of the Second Vatican Council."[38]

A review of the list of the official observers at Vatican II reveals a veritable Who's Who list of Faith and Order leaders of that generation. They included Lukas Vischer (director of the Faith and Order Commission), Nikos A. Nissiotis (Greek Orthodox and future Moderator of the Faith and Order Commission), Archpriest Vitaly Borovoy (Russian Orthodox Church), Kristen E. Skydsgaard (Lutheran Church of Denmark), Edmund Schlink (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany), Albert C. Outler (United Methodist Church, USA), José Miguez-Bonino (Argentine Methodist), Douglas Horton (Congregationalist and former moderator of Faith and Order), Walter Muelder (United Methodist and co-moderator of the Faith and Order study on Institutionalism), J.K.A. Reid (Church of Scotland), Patrick C. Rodger (Anglican bishop of Oxford and Faith and Order executive director), Emerito Nacpil (Methodist professor and later bishop in the Philippines), Max Thurian (Reformed sub-prior of the Taizé Community and the coordinator and one of the drafters of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*. Among these participants Lukas Vischer became a leading strategist and interpreter of WCC-Roman Catholic relations. From the perspective of many Protestants, Anglicans and Orthodox, Vatican II was a Faith and Order gathering writ large.

The fundamental partnership between Faith and Order and the PCPCU continues to this day. The leadership of Bishop Pierre Duprey, M.Afr. (1971-1983) and Mgr. John A. Radano (1983-) as liaison officers serving on the Faith and Order Commission has kept this relationship firm and productive. Equally visible has been the eager commitment of a succession of presidents of the PCPCU: Johannes Cardinal Willebrands (1968-1989), Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy (1989-2001) and Walter Cardinal Kasper (2001). Upon his recent appointment by Pope John Paul II Cardinal Kasper became the first President of the PCPCU to have been a member of the Faith and Order Commission and a valued theologian in its studies on the Apostolic Faith.

The interaction between Faith and Order and the Catholic Church at the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order at Montreal, Canada in 1963 proved to be another notable landmark. Montreal was the first major conference where Roman Catholic representatives were present in large numbers. Five Roman Catholic official observers were appointed by the Vatican: Gregory Baum (Canada), Godfrey Diekmann, OSB (American liturgical scholar), Jan C. Groot (Netherlands), Bernard Lambert (Canada), and George H. Tavard (USA). Johannes Cardinal

[36] See T.F. STRANSKY, CSP, "The Foundation of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity," in A. STACPOLE, ed., *Vatican II by Those Who Were There* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1986) 62-87

[37] M. NASH, *The Ecumenical Movement in the 1960s* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1975) 110.

[38] T.F. STRANSKY, CSP, "A Basis Before The Basis…," *op. cit.,* 189-190.

Willebrands was an honored visitor for part of the conference. A host of other Catholics, primarily priests from Canada and the U.S., came as guests. One of the most inspirational moments was an address on "We Are One in Christ" by Paul-Emile Cardinal Leger, the saintly Archbishop of Montreal.

One of the most animated sessions focused on "The Church in the New Testament" with papers by Ernst Käsemann, Protestant New Testament scholar from Germany, and the American Sulpician New Testament scholar Raymond E. Brown. Both lectured with passion but with dramatically different perspectives. Montreal's ground-breaking work was on "Scripture, Tradition and traditions," a theme that addressed an historic polarization rooted in the controversies between Roman Catholics and Protestants rooted in the 16th century Reformation. Those theologians who led the conference to break new ground in Faith and Order history included Albert C. Outler (American Methodist theologian at Perkins School of Theology in Dallas), Erich Dinkler (United Evangelical Church in Germany), George Florovsky (Russian Orthodox émigré to Paris and eventually to St. Vladimir's Seminary outside New York City and Harvard University), and George Tavard, AA. Montreal challenged the historic polarization by claiming Scripture and Tradition were not antithetical but interdependent. The church's authority is Scripture *and* Tradition, as its classic definition stated.[39] Montreal did not fully resolve this crusty theological problem, but it gave new language with which to address the issue of authority in the Church. The prospect of Christian unity reached a productive moment, especially between the Protestant and Orthodox traditions in the Faith and Order movement and with the Roman Catholic Church. The search for a common hermeneutical principle had begun.

Another important link between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches, especially the Faith and Order Commission, came in 1965 with the formation of the Joint Working Group (JWG). Later, after considerable explorations and confidential meetings, the Catholic Church decided not to become a full member of the WCC. The Joint Working Group was formed with the purpose of furthering dialogue and collaboration, including common theological studies and common activities. Its priorities are "the unity of the Church: goal, steps and ecclesiological implications" and "ethical issues as new sources of division."[40] Both of these priorities are central to the work and witness of Faith and Order. It was noteworthy that among the first team appointed by the WCC five of the eight members were Faith and Order veterans—Lukas Vischer, Nikos Nissiotis, Vitaly Borovoy, Edmund Schlink and Oliver Tomkins. The themes of the JWG's theological reports across the years reveal the ecumenical intensity of this relationship: "Catholicity and Apostolicity" (1968), "Common Witness and Proselytism" (1970), "Common Witness" (1980), "The Notion of 'Hierarchy of Truths'" (1990), "The Church Local and Universal" (1990).

After the Canberra Assembly the JWG published reflections by Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant theologians in a Faith and Order Paper (No. 163) under the title of *Ecumenical Perspectives on the 1991 Canberra Statement on Unity*. In 1986 a report appeared on "The Ecumenical Dialogue on Moral Issues: Potential Sources of Common Witness or of Divisions." This report was in tandem with the collaborated study between Faith and Order and the WCC's program unit on Justice, Peace and Creation which explored the essential interconnection between the search for the visible unity of the Church and the calling to prophetic witness and service.[41] Since the 8th Assembly of the WCC at Harare, Zimbabwe in 1998 the JWG's studies have been focused on "The Reception of Our Common Baptism," the nature of ecumenical dialogue, and the nature and role of councils of churches.[42]

PHASE THREE: 1968-1995

The evolving relationships between Faith and Order and the Roman Catholic Church accelerated to a new level when in 1968 the Catholic Church decided to become a full member of the Faith and Order Commission. As we have seen, some thought membership in the whole WCC would be a logical step in the post-Vatican II era, while other Roman Catholic leaders were skeptical.[43] The oral tradition says the decision to join Faith and Order was made directly by Pope Paul VI in a conversation with Cardinal Willebrands. Some years before Willebrands had had a probing conversation with Cardinal Giovanni Montini, then Archbishop of Milan, about future ecumenical steps for the Catholic Church. Soon after he ascended to the Chair of Peter, Paul VI was impressed by the spirit and work of the New Delhi assembly (1961), especially the visionary work of the Faith and Order Commission. In this spirit Paul VI suggested to Cardinal Willebrands—as the tradition says—that Faith and Order would

[39] "Scripture, Tradition and traditions," (Section II) in P.C. RODGER and L. VISCHER, eds. *The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order: Montreal, 1963*, Faith and Order Paper, 42 (New York: Association Press, 1964) 50-61.

[40] See Bishop B. MEEKING, "Introductory Note," in W.G. RUSCH and J. GROS, eds., *Deepening Communion: International Ecumenical Documents with Roman Catholic Participation* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1998) 481-484. The seven reports of the Joint Working Group are important resources for Faith and Order studies.

[41] Three reports came from this study process: *Costly Unity* (1993), produced by a consultation in Rønde, Denmark, explores the relationship between koinonia and the ethical witness of the Church. *Costly Commitment* (1995, Tantur, Jerusalem) probes the relationship between the Eucharist and covenant and ethical engagement in the world. *Costly Obedience* (1997, Johannesburg, South Africa) addresses the ethical implications of Christian worship and the role of Baptism/Christian Initiation in shaping Christian character.

[42] For the history and work of the Joint Working Group, see *Joint Working Group Between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches: Seventh Report* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998)

[43] See J. GROOTAERS, "An Unfinished Agenda: The Question of Roman Catholic Membership in the World Council of Churches, 1968-1975," *The Ecumenical Review* 49, 3 (1997) 305-347.

be the appropriate place for official ecumenical participation by the Catholic Church. Those who negotiated this new definitive relationship were Bea, Willebrands and Hamer from the Roman Catholic side, and Visser 't Hooft, Vischer and Nissiotis from the WCC side. Whatever the process, this dramatic decision declared there is only one ecumenical movement and its center is spiritual and theological. This high degree of participation committed Faith and Order and the Catholic Church to a common search for koinonia and visible unity for the sake of the world.

Twenty years later Cardinal Willebrands gave an address in connection with Pope John Paul II's Day of Dialogue (September 12, 1987) with American Protestant and Orthodox leaders on the campus of the University of South Carolina. His exegesis of the rationale for the Catholic Church's decision for Faith and Order was made clear: "With its aim of 'visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship,' the work of Faith and Order is at the center of the Ecumenical Movement. [Yet] the multilateral dialogues, which it fosters are among churches and communities in the World Council of Churches, as well as churches not part of the WCC."[44]

This historic relationship between Faith and Order and the Catholic Church was again incarnated at the Uppsala assembly (1968). Twelve Catholics were appointed to the new Faith and Order Commission. This first delegation included the old and the new generations and reflected in a dramatic way the global character of the Catholic Church. Those appointed were Fr. Umberto Betti, OFM (Rome), Raymond E. Brown (St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, Maryland), Walter Burghardt, SJ (Woodstock College, Maryland), Bernard Dupuy, OP (Paris), Dom Emmanuel Lanne, OSB (Chevetogne), Professor Jorge Medina (Chile), Fr. Samuel Rayan (Kerala, South India), Professor Joseph Ratzinger (Tübingen University, Germany) and Fr. Th. Tshibangu (Kinshasha, Congo). It seems appropriate that at the first post-Uppsala meeting of the new Faith and Order Commission at Sigtuna, the Lutheran Conference Center outside Uppsala, the first Roman Catholic theologian to speak was Emmanuel Lanne.[45]

The crux of the Catholic contributions to Faith and Order in this third period lies in the three theological studies which have preoccupied the Commission and staff. This presence has deepened the quest for visible unity and given a wider sense of the churches' unity in Christ. Let us now exegete some of the fruits of this common theological work.

Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry

Fifty-five years after the Lausanne Conference of 1927 the 120 members of the Faith and Order Commission, meeting at Lima, Peru, on January 12, 1982, unanimously approved the historic text *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry.* This action affirmed that the text was "sufficiently mature enough" to be transmitted to the churches for their response and reception by "the highest appropriate level of authority."[46] In the aftermath of this momentous convergence Emmanuel Lanne, one of the gifted drafters, observed that because of BEM the churches are now in "a situation [that] is without precedent in Christian history."[47] Roman Catholic theologians who played particularly pivotal roles in BEM's development, especially from the meetings of Faith and Order from Accra in 1974 to Lima in 1982, were Jean Marie Tillard, Emmanuel Lanne, and Anton Houtepen (lay theologian from Holland). Other helpful Catholic theologians along the way were Alfredo Altimira (Buenos Aires), Raymond E. Brown, B.-D. Dupuy (Paris), Jean Gutierrez (Mexico), Walter Kasper (Tübingen), André Mampila (Kinshasha), Samuel Rayan (New Delhi), Luigi Sartori (Padova, Italy), Frans Bouwen (Jerusalem), Maria Teresa Porcile (Uruguay), René Beaupère, Fr. (now Cardinal) Avery Dulles, and Gerhard Vos. We should not miss the fact that two future Cardinals—Kasper and Dulles—were participants in this decision. It is also relevant to recall that Pope John Paul II has spoken affirmatively at least five times regarding the significance of BEM—to a meeting of the Faith and Order Commission, to the Roman Curia, and on papal visits to the United States, Poland, and the Ukraine.[48] There can be no doubt of the Holy Father's intentional affirmation of BEM.

In 1989 the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity sent the Catholic Church's official response to BEM to the Faith and Order Secretariat at Geneva in 1989.[49] Over 200 other responses from every part of the world had come. The Catholic response is not only the longest (40 pages) but also one of the most theologically engaging and affirmative, yet candidly identifying issues where further theological work is required. In a positive spirit the Catholic response calls attention to the important convergence between BEM and *The Decree on*

[44] Cardinal J. WILLEBRANDS, "The Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Movement," *Mid-Stream: An Ecumenical Journal* [Indianapolis] 27, 1 (1988) 30-31. This address was given to a gathering of leading American ecumenical leaders on the campus of the University of South Carolina, at Columbia, September 12, 1987. The day before Pope John Paul II spent a Day of Dialogue with these Christian leaders, including the present author.

[45] See *Minutes of the Faith and Order Commission and Working Committee at Uppsala and Sigtuna, Sweden, July 3-23, 1968,* Faith and Order Paper, 53 (Geneva: WCC, 1968).

[46] *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry,* Faith and Order Paper, 111 (Geneva: WCC, 1982) x.

[47] Quoted in M.A. FAHEY, ed., *Catholic Perspectives in Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986) 6

[48] J.A. RADANO, "The Catholic Church and BEM, 1980-1989," *Mid-Stream* 30, 2 (1991) 139-156. See also Monsignor J.A. RADANO, "John Paul II's Reflection on the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order," *Mid-Stream* 33, 4 (1994) 463-470.

[49] "The Roman Catholic Church," in M. THURIAN, ed., *Churches Respond to Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Vol. IV: Official Responses, Faith and Order Paper, 144 (Geneva: WCC, 1988) 1-40. The work of Frère Max Thurian of the Taizé Community in moderating BEM's drafting process and in editing the responses from the churches was incalculable and is gratefully remembered. His entrance into the Roman Catholic Church in his later years was a problematic moment for many of his Protestant and Orthodox friends.

Ecumenism (Unitatis Redintegratio). The response names four critical issues which must be faced in the ongoing work of Faith and Order: (1) the nature of sacrament and the sacramentality of the Church; (2) the nature of the apostolic Tradition, including the role of the ministry ("admittedly one of the central and most complex themes in ecumenical conversations"); the structures of the Church: local and universal; and (4) the location of pastoral and theological authority in the church. Rome concludes its response by naming ecclesiology as the central issue now to be faced in the quest for visible unity. "Full agreement on the sacraments is related to agreement on the nature of the church . . . Nor can the goal of the unity of divided Christians be reached without agreement on the nature of the church.[50] Thus Faith and Order's preoccupation with koinonia ecclesiology since the World Conference at Santiago de Compostela is both required and promising.

We can surely grasp the significance of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* for the Catholic Church and for all churches in Faith and Order by listening to the judgment of Cardinal Willebrands:

> "The Catholic response to BEM is the first time the Roman Catholic Church has officially responded to an ecumenical document. In so doing, we acknowledge again that there is only one ecumenical movement of which all Christians are part. We acknowledge also the importance of the Faith and Order movement and its goals. We acknowledge the importance of the Lima text itself as a significant development in the history of the modern ecumenical movement, a development that we must build on in order to move toward the unity Christ wills, so that the world may believe."[51]

Confessing the One Apostolic Faith

From the beginning of the Faith and Order Movement the churches have assumed that a sign of the unity given in Christ and required for the sought-after unity of all Christians is a common confession of the apostolic faith. Along with the consensus on understandings of baptism, the Lord's Supper, and ministry, a common confession of faith is one of the signs and sources of koinonia. Evidence of this understanding can be seen in the three statements about the unity of the Church adopted by the WCC assemblies at New Delhi (1961), Nairobi (1975), and Canberra (1991). In each portrait of unity the churches are called to confess a common faith, variously formulated as "holding the one apostolic faith" (New Delhi), "witnesses to the same apostolic faith" (Nairobi), and "a common confession of the apostolic faith" (Canberra). In like manner when the constitution of the WCC was revised in 1975, its first function and purpose was "to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship." (WCC Constitution, III, 1) Since the Catholic Church fully entered the Faith and Order Commission, this concern for diverse churches learning to confess the apostolic faith together has deepened.

Toward this goal Faith and Order has produced three relevant texts across the decades: "An Account of Our Hope" (Bangalore, 1978), "Towards the Common Expressions of the Apostolic Faith Today" (Lima, 1982) and "Confessing the One Faith: An Ecumenical Explication of the Apostolic Faith, as it is confessed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (381 A.D.)" (1987, 1990). As we survey the literature on this important issue, on which critical differences remain, two issues seem to be at the center of the dialogue: (1) the contemporary role and explication of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed in light of today's situation and (2) the impact of the different cultural contexts upon the confession of the faith among Christians. Any sound dealing with this issue must also confront the reality of different histories and perspectives that exist among Protestants, Orthodox and Roman Catholics. The sensitive care given to these historic differences will condition the ability of the different churches to be able to articulate the same Gospel-based faith together "in ways understandable, reconciling and liberating to their contemporaries."[52]

Whatever progress Faith and Order has made in the direction of such a common confession is the fruit of the work of numerous Protestant and Orthodox theologians in partnership with Catholic theologians such as Jean Tillard, Emmanuel Lanne, Raymond Brown, Jorge Mejia, Pierre Duprey and Walter Kasper.

The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community

As early as its meeting in Aarhus, Denmark in August, 1964, Faith and Order identified "the relation between the Church and the world" as a future study. At one of the sessions Gregory Baum, a Canadian Catholic observer at Aarhus, made an insightful statement:

> "If the Church sums up God's purpose for the human family and if its mission is to the uttermost parts of the world, it is difficult to reflect on God's merciful action in the Church separately from God's graceful dealings with those outside the Church boundaries. If the Church is the community where we find redemption in Christ, then it is inseparably related to the church where this redemption is to be lived out and made concrete."[53]

[50] For a fuller discussion of these points, see G. WAINWRIGHT, "The Roman Catholic Response of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*: The Ecclesiological Dimension," in M. DOWNEY and R. FRAGOMENI, eds., *A Promise of Presence: Studies in Honor of David N. Power, OMI* (Washington, D.C.: The Pastoral Press, 1992) 187-206.

[51] Cardinal J. WILLEBRANDS, "The Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Movement…," *op. cit.,* 31.

[52] D. GILL, ed., *Gathered for Life: Official Report of the VI Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Vancouver, Canada, 24 July-10 August 1983* (Geneva/Grand Rapids: WCC/William B. Eerdmans, 1983) 45.

[53] G. BAUM, manuscript, Faith and Order Archives, World Council of Churches, Geneva.

At the Uppsala Assembly a deeper sense of "the unity of [hu]mankind" was witnessed to, especially in its relation to the mission of the Church within God's universal history. From Uppsala came that prophetic word: "The church is bold in speaking of itself as a sign of the coming unity of [hu]mankind."[54] At Faith and Order's meeting at Louvain, Belgium in 1971—a commission meeting signified by a full-fledged Roman Catholic presence—the vision of the church's unity was explored through the lens of five subthemes: (1) the struggle for justice and society, (2) the encounter with other living faiths, (3)the struggle against racism, (4) the role of the handicapped in society, and (5) the differences of cultures. In his address Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenens, Archbishop of Malines, made a favorable connection between the church's unity and the unity of humankind. While they are not identical, he said, these two unities are interrelated. The church and the world are called by God to a "plural unity" in which the church brings hope and meaning to the world. Only the Holy Spirit, "the creator of life and the source of all diversity" can restore this genuine plurality in unity.[55]

At the blue-ribbon commission meeting at Lima in 1982—amid all the celebration of the convergence text on BEM—a new study on "The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community" was launched as a major Faith and Order study. Clearly at this time the traditional ecumenical themes and methodologies were being challenged by new Christian sensitivities, articulated by such phases as "the preferential option for the poor," "unity in tension," "unity and the paradigm of oppression," "women in the midst of male domination in the church,' and so forth. Under the guidance of a paper by John Deschner, Methodist vice-moderator (later moderator) of Faith and Order, claimed this new study as a priority. While there was consternation about the methodology that might be used, the majority of the Faith and Order Commission sensed the critical importance of this study.. The nature of the relationship between Christ and the Church could never be fully understood unless ecclesiology is considered in the context of the whole of humanity, indeed in the context of the whole of creation. Early in this study process the interrelation between the church as "mystery" (*musterion)* and as "prophetic sign" became critical.

After almost a decade of theological explorations and regional consultations in different parts of the world, a seminal Faith and Order study document entitled *Church and World: The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community* was submitted to the churches for study and response.[56] The participation of Roman Catholic theologians in the international steering group and in the regional consultations was an empowering presence. Bishop Paul-Werner Scheele of Würzburg, Germany, Professor William Henn of the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, and Professor Hervé Legrand, Dominican ecumenist in Paris, made formative contributions to this study.

Like most ecumenical studies, Unity and Renewal caused anxiety among some theologians in some churches. They wondered if it would produce a polarization within Faith and Order, an anxiety that never materialized. Geoffrey Wainwright, Methodist theologian at Duke University Divinity School and a prominent leader in Faith and Order, has made an interesting comparison between *Church and World* and the teachings of Vatican II. "Although the two poles of 'mystery' and 'prophetic sign' do not quite correspond to Vatican II's 'sign and instrument,' there is a very considerable similarity to the description in *Lumen Gentium* of the church as 'a kind of sacrament, that is, the sign and instrument of communion with God and unity among people (*Lumen Gentium* l, 9, 48, 59)"[57]

In his address to the Faith and Order Commission in 1985 at Stavanger, Norway, the inimitable Jean Tillard made a critical observation linking the Unity and Renewal study with Faith and Order's study on "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today." These represent, he said, "two programs and a single task . . .Within the ecumenical movement, long before the birth of the World Council of Churches, Faith and Order always envisaged its task in the light of the essential link which faith insists upon between the proclamation of the Gospel and God's design for the whole of humanity."[58]

Our story now fast-forwards to the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order held in the Catholic city of pilgrims Santiago de Compostela, Spain, August 3-14, 1993. This was the first world conference where Roman Catholics took part as voting delegates. As Günther Gassmann, then director of Faith and Order, reflected: The deliberate choice of Santiago as the venue for such a grand moment in Faith and Order history was "a powerful sign of a changed ecumenical situation, reflecting a growth of closer relationships between Faith and Order and the Roman Catholic Church."[59] At this world conference the presence of the Catholic Church reached its zenith. Twelve of the 120 commission members were Catholic theologians. Many others came to Santiago de Compostela in other roles: delegates, speakers,

[54] N. GOODALL, ed., *The Uppsala Report 1968* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1968) 17.

[55] See *Faith and Order Louvain 1971: Study Reports and Documents,* Faith and Order Paper, 59 (Geneva: WCC, 1971) 172-179.

[56] See *Church and World: The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community*, Faith and Order Paper, 151 (Geneva: WCC, 1990).

[57] G. WAINWRIGHT, "The Roman Catholic Response…", *op. cit.*, 190.

[58] J.-M.-R. TILLARD, "The Future of Faith and Order: Two Programs—A Single Task," in T.F. BEST, ed., *Faith and Renewal: Reports and Documents of the Commission on Faith and Order, Stavanger, Norway, August 13-25, 1985,* Faith and Order Paper, 131 (Geneva: WCC, 1986) 107-114. Also published in *One in Christ*, 21, 4 (1985) 312-319.

[59] T.F. BEST and G. GASSMANN, eds., *On the Way to Fuller Koinonia: Official Report of the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 1993,* Faith and Order Paper, 166 (Geneva: WCC, 1994).

consultants, younger theologians, guests and co-opted staff.[60] This was the first World Conference where Roman Catholics took part as voting delegates. Pope John Paul II's message to the conference was a first, expressing his papal "regard for the Commission's patient dedication" and commending Faith and Order for identifying "points of convergence and even agreement on issues over which believers have long been divided.[61]

The Fifth World Conference reflected at several dimensions the influence and gifts of the Roman Catholic Church. (1) The ecclesiological shift to the concept of *koinonia (communion*), expressed in Santiago's Message and various reports, was affirmed as "a key term for a trinitarian-rooted ecclesiology." (2) Among the marks of visible unity "structures of mutual accountability." were included in the ultimate goal. (3) For the first time in the history of Faith and Order there was an openness to speak constructively of the ecumenical implications of the universal ministry of the papal office.

Roman Catholics gave unparalleled leadership to the conference, including biblical studies by Bishop John Onaiyekan (Abouja, Nigeria); an engaging address on "The Future of the Ecumenical Movement" by Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy; numerous addresses and interventions by that pillar of Faith and Order, Jean Tillard; sermons by Archbishop Ramon Torrella Cascante (Tarragona, Spain), a past member of the staff of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and by Bishop Paul-Werner Scheele (Wurzburg, Germany), the drafting skills of Tillard, Lanne, Frans Bouwen, Sr. Donna Geernaert, Sr. Mary O'Driscoll and Monsignor Aloys Klein; and the statesmanship of Monsignors John Radano and John Mutiso-Mbinda. This leadership constituted a commanding presence, contributing to the historical nature and ecumenical fruitfulness of the conference.

Another defining moment in the ecumenical witness of the Roman Catholic Church, especially with Faith and Order, came on May 25, 1995 when John Paul II promulgated *Ut Unum Sint (That They May All Be One)*, encyclical letter "On Commitment to Ecumenism."[62] For Catholics and people other Christian traditions these long-awaited words represent a partial reversal of the anathemas and spiritual exclusivenss of many decades, even centuries. The spirit of condemnation by earlier popes has been replaced by this man of God's spirit of reconciling love. Acknowledgement is given to the "recognition" of the action of the Holy Spirit in all the communities of baptized believers. Echoing Vatican II, *Ut Unum Sint* speaks of the Catholic Church's "irrevocable commitment" to ecumenism as "an organic part of her life and work." The Catholic Church acknowledges a "real but imperfect communion (*koinonia)* with other churches and ecclesial communities."[63] In a unique overture John Paul II invites all churches to discuss together with the Roman Catholic Church the church-dividing issues in order to "find together" an authentic way toward visible reconciliation. In particular he calls for "a patient and fraternal dialogue" on the universal ministry of unity given to the Bishop of Rome. In making this overture the Pope acknowledges that the office of the papacy represents in the historic memory of many churches "a difficulty for most other Christians, whose memory is marked by certain painful recollections" (paragraph 89). Then comes this humble act of contrition: "To the extent that we are responsible for these, I join my Predecessor Paul VI in asking forgiveness."[64] In inviting such a dialogue on the question of the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, the encyclical reminds Catholics and other Christians that his is a ministry of service (*servus servorum Dei*) rather than power.

A year after the release of the encyclical (1996) Faith and Order's plenary commission met in Moshi, Tanzania, where Dr. Mary Tanner, the Anglican moderator of Faith and Order, spoke of the pope's invitation as "an important and timely ecumenical opportunity."

If our Roman Catholic sisters and brothers tell us that the communion of particular churches with the church of Rome, and of their ministers of oversight with the bishop of Rome, is in God's plan an essential requisite for full communion, then it is incumbent upon all of us to engage with that challenge, whatever our own tradition.[65]

However, any promising consideration of papal primacy, she warned, must be "set in the context of conciliarity and exercised in the service of the koinonia of the church." This important caveat reminds Roman Catholics of the vision of church unity as, in the language of the Nairobi Assembly, "a conciliar fellowship

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[60] For a report on Roman Catholic participation at the 5th World Conference on Faith and Order, see The Pontifical Council of Promoting Christian Unity, Vatican City, *Information Service* 85 (1994/I).

[61] See *On the Way to Fuller Koinonia…*, *op. cit.*, 301.

[62] Pope John Paul II, *Ut Unum Sint* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995). Also published in *Origins*. *CNS Documentary Service*, 25, 4 (1995) 49-72. For two extraordinarily insightful reflections on *Ut Unum Sint* and the work of the Commission on Faith and Order, see G. WAINWIGHT, "*Ut Unum Sint* in Light of 'Faith and Order'—or 'Faith and Order' in Light of *Ut Unum Sint*," in C.E. BRAATEN and R.W. JENSEN, eds., *Christian Unity and the Papal Office* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 2001) 76-97; and Bishop P. DUPREY, "The Encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* and Faith and Order," in C. PODMORE, *Community-Unity-Communion: Essays in Honor of Mary Tanner* (London: Church House Publishing, 1998) 216-223.

[63] *Ut Unum Sint…*, *op. cit.*, §11.

[64] *Ut Unum Sint*, pp. 98-107. In addition to Braaten and Jensen (see footnote No. 62), see the diverse essays in J.F. PUGLISI, ed., *Petrine Ministry and the Unity of the Church: "Toward a Patient and Fraternal Dialogue"*. A Symposium Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Society of the Atonement, Rome, December 4-6, 1997 (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1999).

[65] M. TANNER, "Continuity and Newness: From Budapest to Moshi," in A. FALCONER, ed., *Faith and Order in Moshi: The 1996 Commission Meeting,* Faith and Order Paper, 177 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998) 34-35.

of local churches which are themselves truly united."[66] The wisdom of this proposal was enacted when at Santiago de Compostela a recommendation was approved, somewhat gingerly by some, that "the Faith and Order Commission begin a new study concerning the question of a universal ministry of Christian unity."[67]

It should not be surprising that one of the first official responses to *Ut Unum Sint* came in 1998 from the Faith and Order Commission. Preliminary discussions took place at their meeting in 1997 at the Abbaye de Fontgombault in France. When the commission met in 1998 in Constantinople/Istanbul, Turkey, graciously hosted by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, the response was completed and sent to the Vatican.[68] Special gratitude was expressed for "the ongoing commitment to the search for visible unity" by John Paul II and his church. Thankfulness was given for the reality that the encyclical is "in harmony with the work of Faith and Order" and is "a form of ecclesial reception which truly receives and opens up positively the themes of the Second Vatican Council, particularly *Unitatis Redintegratio (The Decree on Ecumenism)*". Care was taken by the Commission to emphasize that while the Roman Catholic Church cannot "at present" recognize the ministry and sacraments of the churches involved in the ecumenical movement, these churches "believe themselves to be true churches with the wholeness of the Church of Jesus Christ, though hoping to receive gifts from one another in progress to the visible unity of the Church." The promise is then made that as the Commission pursues its work on ecclesiology the question of primacy will be on the Faith and Order agenda.

One would assume that the issue of primacy will find a place on the agenda of the post-Santiago de Compostela study on ecclesiology. However, there is hardly more than an allusion in Faith and Order's study booklet *The Nature and Purpose of the Church: A Stage on the Way to a Common Statement.*[69] The only reference in this document to "the ministry of universal primacy" is a negative one, commenting on the decision of the 16th century Reformers to break with the Roman Catholic Church, including the ministry of primacy, while themselves continuing a ministry of *episcopé* "ordered in different ways." This muted reflection is somewhat acceptable when one understands that, like the Lima document, this text is "a convergence text." Whether this tactic is a missed opportunity will be determined by whether or not the dialogue on primacy is soon scheduled elsewhere. In the meantime Geoffrey Wainwright has helpfully identified a common agenda of ten themes contained in *Ut Unum Sint* that require such a dialogue. These themes are doctrine; prayer; Baptism; the Eucharist and the liturgy; visible unity; the relation between Scripture, Tradition and magisterium; the Virgin Mary; saints and martyrs; the nature of the Petrine office; and the interaction of unity and evangelization.[70] Surely this agenda—coupled with the rest of Faith and Order's constitutional concerns—will bring creative energy, life, and hope to the theological dialogue among the churches.

The journey between the Faith and Order movement and the Roman Catholic Church has been one of agony and ecstasy. It teaches us that ecumenical pilgrims and churches in search of visible unity will repeatedly encounter delays, perceived impasses, and opposition, even from within the churches. We will also experience moments of God's reconciling grace when this movement actually moves and the churches together become a sign of reconciliation to a broken and unredeemed world. And even amid struggle and fear God's grace continues to lead divided churches toward the unity Christ wills for his Church and his world. Already this dialogue has produced signs of ecumenical life that startle the skeptics and empower the believers. There are fruitful signs that will bring hope to a divided and disillusioned world. This is surely a legacy worth celebrating, a commitment worth treating as sacred, and a vocation worth pursuing for another ninety years.

[66] See D.M. PATON, ed., *Breaking Barriers, Nairobi, 1975* (London/Grand Rapids: SPCK/William B. Eerdmans, 1976) 60. This definition of unity was first proposed by a 1973 conference at Salamanca, Spain on "Concepts of Unity and Models of Union"; see FAITH AND ORDER COMMISSION, "The Unity of the Church – Next Steps. Report of the Salamanca Consultation Convened by the Faith and Order Commission, WCC on 'Concepts of Unity and Models of Union', September 1973," *The Ecumenical Review* 26, 2 (1974) 291-303.

[67] T.F. BEST and G. GASSMANN, eds., *On the Way to Fuller Koinonia…*, *op. cit.*, 243.

[68] See *Minutes of the Meeting of the Faith and Order Board, 9-16 January 1998, Istanbul, Turkey,* Faith and Order Paper, 180 (Geneva: WCC, 1998) 25-27 and *Minutes of the Meeting of the Faith and Order Board, 8-15 January 1997 Abbaye de Fontgombault, France*, Faith and Order Paper, 178 (Geneva: WCC, 1997) 54-57.

[69] *The Nature and Purpose of the Church: A Stage on the Way to a Common Statement*, Faith and Order Paper, 181 (Geneva: WCC, 1998).

[70] G. WAINWRIGHT, "*Ut Unum Sint*,…," *op. cit.*, 84-94.

The Ecumenical Scope of Methodist Liturgical Revision

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In 1976, in the second of its five-yearly reports, the Joint Commission for Dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Roman Catholic Church made the following observation:

> In recent years ... there has been a notable recovery of eucharistic faith and practice among Methodists, with a growing sense that the fullness of Christian worship includes both word and sacrament. Similarly among Roman Catholics there has been a renewal in the theology and practice of the ministry of the word. These developments have resulted in a remarkable convergence, so that at no other time has the worshipping life of Methodists and Roman Catholics had so much in common.

Those sentences were written at a high moment in two of the great movements that marked the history of the churches in the twentieth century: the Ecumenical Movement and the Liturgical Movement. The Ecumenical Movement had begun an exciting new phase, with the official entrance of the Roman Catholic Church on the scene at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965); since 1968 there had been twelve Catholic members in the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, which was moving along in the process that would produce the Lima text on "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" (*BEM*); and the Roman Catholic Church had started on a series of bilateral dialogues with the various world confessional families, in which the subject of the eucharist in particular would figure rather prominently. The Liturgical Movement was bearing fruit, not only in the major revisions in the Latin-rite service books that followed from the conciliar Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, but also in the composition of new books among the historic Protestant churches; in Methodism, for instance, the British church, after a decade of trial services, had in 1975 published *The Methodist Service Book*, while the "alternate rituals committee" of the United Methodist Church in the USA had in 1972 issued a text for the Lord's Supper that would be the forerunner of an entire new *United Methodist Book of Worship* (1992).

The linkage between the Ecumenical Movement and the Liturgical Movement finds a personal embodiment in my own mentor and dear friend, the late Raymond George (1912-1998): Raymond George was a member of the WCC's Faith and Order Commission, a WCC observer at the consilium that revised the Roman books (he was a first-class Latinist), a full participant in the second, third, and fourth rounds of the dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Roman Catholic Church (1972-1986), and the chief architect of the British *Methodist Service Book* of 1975.

In examining the ecumenical scope of Methodist liturgical revision over the past quarter-century, I will be looking particularly at the convergence that was noted in "the worshiping life of Methodists and Roman Catholics" in 1976, but setting this also within the broader framework of the Lima "convergence text" and especially its "Eucharist" section. By profession, I am a dogmatician, and my own involvement in these matters has been more on the ecumenical side than on the directly liturgical: as a member of the Faith and Order Commission I worked closely for several years on the *BEM* process and chaired the final redaction of the texts at Lima in 1982; since 1983 I have been a member of the dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Roman Catholic Church (and co-chairman since 1986).

My plan is as follows: In a first part I will look at the dogmatic underpinning evidenced in the Methodist-Catholic dialogue for the ritual pattern whereby the ministry of the word and the celebration of the sacrament figure as the two foci of a liturgical ellipse, such as *BEM* also favored.[1] In a second part I will look at the Methodist-Catholic dialogue and at Methodist responses to *BEM*, in order to see how Methodists interpret their own tradition of worship as a *terminus a quo* for ecumenical convergence in liturgical practice and in sacramental understanding at the present time — the *terminus ad quem*. Thirdly, I will look at some Methodist service-books in order to find some concrete evidence of the theological convergence, although it must be remembered that Methodist Conferences typically "authorize," but do not mandate, the use of service-books; here I will concentrate on the productions of the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the United Methodist Church based in the USA, since these are historically the flagship churches in the Methodist tradition. Interwoven in this last section will be some observations on actual practice among Methodists on the Lord's Day.

[1] See G. WAINWRIGHT, "Word and Sacrament in the Churches' Responses to the Lima Text," *One in Christ* 24, 4 (1988) 304-327.

I. Word and Sacrament

In the Methodist-Catholic dialogue, the dogmatic connection between word and sacrament came strongly to the fore in the Singapore Report of 1991 and the Rio de Janeiro Report of 1996. (The quinquennial reports have popularly been designated — particularly perhaps on the Methodist side — by the place and date at which they were presented to the World Methodist Council, simultaneously of course with their presentation to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.[2]) The Singapore Report of 1991 was entitled "The Apostolic Tradition"; and the Rio de Janeiro Report of 1996, "The Word of Life: A Statement on Revelation and Faith."

In a fully trinitarian, though pneumatologically oriented, paragraph (28), the Singapore Report declared:

> The Holy Spirit prepares the way for the preaching of the Word to those who do not believe, enabling them to respond in faith and to know the saving grace of God. The Spirit thus creates and maintains the oneness of the Church, bringing the many into unity and joining to their Head the members of the Body of Christ. Believers recognize one another as members of the Body, share in one ministry of worship and sacrament, and partake of the eucharistic meal, where, through and with Christ, in the Spirit, they offer a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to the Father.

Another paragraph in the same report (55), without omitting the Father and the Spirit, put the matter more in terms of Christ the Word and emphasized the connection between word and deed, not only in Christ's historic activity but also in the liturgical action of his Church:

> In the Book of Acts, the apostles are described as "servants of the Word" (Acts 6:4; *cf.* Luke 1:2). This phrase holds a rich meaning, conveying all that is said in Scripture about God's action through his Word in creation and in his saving purpose in history. What he says, he does. What he does, makes him known to us. There is a solidarity between word and deed. This complete interdependence of word and deed in God's action for us culminates in the coming of the Person who, in his entire being, is the Word of God. "Service of the Word" implies the service of a living Person, whose words are always fruitful and whose deeds make him known. Supremely in Christ, words and actions are one. Through the Spirit these deeds and words culminate in the living presence of Jesus in us. It is in this context that the sermon and the sacrament must be understood. In preaching, the Word of God himself addresses us through the preacher: "Whoever hears you hears me" (Luke 10:16). In the Eucharist, our Lord's words, "This is My Body," "This is My Blood," convey both his meaning and the actual giving of himself.

Later in the same report (paragraph 67), the Church is described, in an even more directly liturgical manner, as "the community of worship":

> The Christian community continues to flourish by virtue of the common baptism and faith of its members. But it is also sustained and nurtured by the celebration of the memorial of the Lord, the service of thanksgiving in which it experiences, as the Spirit is invoked, the presence of the risen Christ. There the Word of God is heard in the Scriptures and the proclamation of the Gospel. Through the holy meal of the community, the faithful share "a foretaste of the heavenly banquet prepared for all mankind" (British *Methodist Service Book* 1975). As they receive the sacrament of his body and blood offered for them, they become the body through which the risen Lord is present on earth in the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 10:16-17). As they share his body and blood that have brought to the sinful world salvation and reconciliation, they proclaim today the past events of the Lord's death and resurrection, and as they do so they present to the world their confidence and hope that Christ who "has died and is risen" will also "come again."

In grounding its "Statement on Revelation and Faith" in "The Word of Life," the Rio Report of 1996 included "word and sacrament as the intelligible and tangible means of grace" among what could be drawn from its highly — and appropriately — incarnational interpretation of 1 John 1:1-3, the passage that the Commission had taken as its scriptural headline:

> This sacred text starts from the particularity of the God of Israel's self-revelation in Christ: the divine Word, who was in the beginning with God and has led the history of the chosen people, has been made flesh in Jesus. That sheer self-gift of God is a word of life to humankind: God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. In Christ, in his words, his deeds, his entire existence, God has been revealed in audible, visible, palpable form; God has been received by human ears, eyes, and hands. What the first believers have taken in, they then bear witness to and transmit, for the message spreads the offer of a life shared with God. The modes of the announcement will appropriately reflect, echo and hand on what was seen, heard and touched in the embodied manifestation of God in Jesus Christ. Accepted in faith, the words, signs and actions of the Gospel will become the means of communion with the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The divine life into which the Spirit introduces believers will be a common life, as each transmits and

[2] The dialogue reports are officially published in the *Information Service* of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and in the *Proceedings* of the respective meetings of the World Methodist Council. They have been made available in such other places as the periodical *One in Christ* and in the two volumes of *Growth in Agreement* published by the World Council of Churches (1984 and 2000).

receives what is always the gift of God.

Again, the more directly liturgical description comes later (paragraphs 117-118):

> Communion with God and with one another is lived and experienced by word and sacrament in the worship of the Christian community. In praise and prayer we share the wonderful deeds of God as well as all human joy and the needs which arise among us. Listening to the Word of God brings us together as a community of those who look to God's creative and redemptive Word for all their needs.
>
> The sacramental life of the Church expresses this communion with God and with one another in a profound way. The sacraments are at one and the same time effective signs of God's fellowship with his people and of the fellowship of the people of God with one another. Baptism and eucharist, the sacraments which are common to almost all Christian churches, show this most clearly. Those who are baptized receive a share in the death of the one Lord Jesus Christ and in the power of his resurrection; at the same time they are baptized into the one body, the body of Christ with its many members who suffer and rejoice together. At the table of the Lord's Supper the "cup of blessing" is "a participation in the blood of Christ" and "the bread which we break" is "a participation in the body of Christ," therefore "we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Cor. 1);16-17). "Discerning the body" (1 Cor. 11-29) means both to recognize the reality of our communion with Christ and to be responsible for the fellowship with brothers and sisters in the Lord.

It would hardly seem possible or necessary to find a more solid dogmatic basis than these passages from the Methodist-Catholic dialogue for the simple statements of *BEM* — whether normative or descriptive — concerning the eucharist, that "its celebration continues as the central act of the Church's worship" (*Eucharist*, 1), and that it "always includes both word and sacrament" (*ibid*., 3). Leaving to Roman Catholics the matter of a "renewal in the theology and practice of the ministry of the word" among them, we may still ask: From where are Methodists coming, if, for their part, the sense that "the fullness of Christian worship includes both word and sacrament" as an interlocking pair would represent a theological and practical recovery?

From the Wesleys and Back?

It will appear that, in the context of ecumenical dialogue, Methodists view their own liturgical history as maintaining a proper emphasis on preaching while having suffered a decline in "eucharistic faith and practice." In the English Church of the eighteenth century, early Methodism represented not only an evangelistic and an ethical but also a eucharistic revival. At a time when the typical parish observed the Lord's Supper three or four times a year, John Wesley himself celebrated or received the Holy Communion some seventy or ninety times annually, encouraging Methodists to press the Anglican clergy for more frequent celebrations in their local churches, and using the Prayer Book permission for communion of the sick to gather family and neighbors for domestic participation. Moreover, the collection of *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* published by the Wesley brothers provided a resource for instruction, meditation, and even singing (during the lengthy distribution of the elements at large Methodist gatherings).[3] Eucharistic practice among Methodists fell away in England after John Wesley's death and the gradual separation of Methodism from the Church of England — a tendency that may later have been aggravated by a reaction against the perceived "sacramentalist," and hence Romeward, direction of Anglicanism after the Oxford Movement. It may be doubted whether the eucharistic side of Wesleyanism ever really caught on in the ecclesiastical and cultural conditions of colonial North America and the independent United States.

Here, then, is how Methodists tell their story to the Roman Catholic partners in dialogue. Already in the Denver Report of 1971 it was "agreed" that "while traditional Methodist reverence for the preaching of the Gospel finds an echo in recent Roman Catholic theological and liturgical thinking, there are signs that Methodists on their part are re-capturing through the liturgical movement an appreciation of the sacraments such as is enshrined for example in Charles Wesley's eucharistic hymns" (19). Further, in the narrative style of the early reports (9):

> If a Methodist ideal was expressed in the phrase "a theology that can be sung," it was appreciated on the Roman Catholic side that the hymns of Charles Wesley, a rich source of Methodist spirituality, find echoes and recognition in the Catholic soul. This is not less true of the eucharistic hymns, which we saw as giving a basis and hope for discussion of doctrinal differences about the nature of the Real Presence and the sense of the "sacrificial" character of the Eucharist. Methodists on their side were candid in considering Roman Catholic questions on how far the Wesleys remain a decisive influence in contemporary Methodism.

The Denver Report recalled "the emphasis on frequent Communion of the Wesleys, which led to a eucharistic revival in the first part of the Methodist story, and of which the eucharistic hymns of Charles Wesley are a permanent legacy" (79). The conversations "included an appraisal of those hymns from a Catholic view" (*ibid*.). Yet in "friendly honesty and candor," it "was not disguised ... that the eucharistic devotion of the Wesleys

[3] First published in Bristol in 1745 under the joint names of John and Charles WESLEY, The *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* can be found in *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*, edited by G. OSBORN, volume 3 (London: Wesleyan-Methodist Conference Office, 1869) 181-342; in the study by J.E. RATTENBURY, *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley* (London: Epworth Press, 1948); and in a facsimile edition by the Charles Wesley Society, with an introduction by me (Madison, NJ, 1995).

and the hymns of Charles Wesley are no index at all to the place of Holy Communion in the life, thought and devotion of modern Methodists" (80). The frankness continued in the Dublin Report of 1976, where it was admitted that "Methodist practice and theology often fall short of those of the Wesleys"; yet "the hymns and sermons of the Wesleys" — which supply "the nearest equivalent" to "a comprehensive doctrinal statement on the eucharist" — retain "their unique importance for Methodists" (51). There we find stated both the intervening historical lapse, from which recovery is needed, and one internal source, at least, for that "recovery of eucharistic faith and practice among Methodists" (*ibid.*) that the Dublin Report noted to have begun: "Methodists do not celebrate the eucharist as frequently as Roman Catholics, although in many places the service is now regaining a central place" (71).

Coming from that past history, what is the point that Methodists have now reached in consensus with ecumenical partners with regard to the theological understanding of word and sacrament in worship? Official Methodist responses to *BEM* — especially from the British church and from the United Methodist Church — display a considerable measure of agreement with the broad lines of eucharistic theology represented in the Lima text, while continuing to stress that the exaltation of the sacrament must not occur at the expense of the word read and preached, both as means of grace and as locus and vehicle of Christ's presence.[4] Alluding to the fact that Methodist societies or congregations have always far outnumbered the ordained pastors available, the British response considers that "the history and structure of Methodism make weekly celebration [of the eucharist] all but impossible" and asks it to be recognized that "because the Methodist tradition has always meant frequent services without communion, Methodists have learnt to nourish themselves on that kind of worship and many would not now wish to see the balance altered in favor of more frequent communion. They would argue that it is not now a matter of administrative necessity, but rather that the infrequency of celebration actually heightens the sense of the eucharist's importance": "A eucharist less frequently celebrated is not necessarily a eucharist less highly valued."

Several Methodist responses question the phrasing of *Eucharist*, 13: "Christ's mode of presence in the eucharist is unique." Thus the East Germans: "We see no qualitative difference between celebration of the Lord's Supper and the proclaimed word"; and the West Germans: "The Lord is not any more 'present' in the feast of the eucharist than in prayer or the proclamation of his word." Again, the German responses show themselves uncomfortable with *BEM*'s having made "eucharist," not "the Lord's Supper," the predominant designation of the sacrament: the emphasis is thereby "shifted from God's action in Christ to the celebrating congregation and its 'activity' (praising God)." Nevertheless, the West German response acknowledges that "thanksgiving and praise are neglected in our eucharistic celebration."

Issued in the name of the Council of Bishops, the response of the United Methodist Church to *BEM* was one of the most detailed and affirmative responses made by any church to the Lima text. It showed a notable willingness to receive the ecumenical challenge to current practice, judging that Methodism would thereby be brought back to its own better beginnings: "As we United Methodists regard the Church's practice through the ages, we can recognize now how our own usage has fallen short of the fullness of the holy communion. Like other Protestants, we have allowed the pulpit to obscure the altar. Now, without minimizing at all the preaching of God's word, we more clearly recognize the equivalent place of the sacrament." For United Methodists, a "vigorous renewal of liturgical theology and practice in the ecumenical movement" has been conjoined with "a remarkable recovery" of the beginnings of their own tradition in the high eucharistic devotion, theology and practice of the Wesleys; and, say the bishops, "we intend to urge our congregations to a more frequent, regular observance of the sacrament."

In welcoming the "convergence" in *BEM*'s witness to Christ's presence, the United Methodist response acknowledges the work of "concentrated liturgical scholarship and ecumenical dialogue." It pinpoints the recovery of the significance of "two traditional Greek words: *anamnesis* and *epiklesis*":

> In terms of the congregation's appropriation of the reality of Christ's presence, the *anamnesis* (memorial, remembrance, representation) means that past, present, and future coincide in the sacramental event. All that Jesus Christ means in his person and his redemptive work is brought forth from history to our present experience, which is also a foretaste of the future fulfillment of God's unobstructed reign. And this presence is made to be a reality for us by the working of God's Spirit, whom we "call down" (*epiklesis*) by invocation, both upon the gifts and on the people.

"All this," the United Methodist response continues, "we find explicitly taught by John and Charles Wesley, who knew and respected the apostolic, patristic, and reformed faith of the Church." The United Methodist bishops make their own densely incarnational confession concerning the full service of word and sacrament: "God's effectual word is there revealed, proclaimed, heard, seen, and tasted."

From the Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue, the Dublin Report of 1976 lists in paragraph 52 the following five

[4] See *Churches Respond to BEM*, 6 volumes edited by M. THURIAN (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1986-1988). Most Methodist responses are found in volume 2 (1986), in particular that of the United Methodist Church on pp. 177-199, and that of the British Methodist Church on pp. 210-229; the responses of the German central conferences of the UMC are found in volume 4 (1987), pp. 167-172, 173-182. I analyzed the whole range of responses from Methodist churches and united churches with an originally Methodist component in "Methodism through the lens of Lima," in K.B. WESTERFIELD TUCKER, ed., *The Sunday Service of the Methodists: Twentieth-Century Worship in Worldwide Methodism — Studies in Honor of James F. White* (Nashville: Abingdon / Kingswood Books, 1996) 305-322.

affirmations as expressing "our common mind" about the eucharist. Their trinitarian and salvation-historical character bring them very close to the central section in *BEM* on "The Meaning of the Eucharist":

> (a) The eucharist as a sacrament of the gospel is the fullest presentation of God's love in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit; through it God meets us here and now in his forgiving and self-giving love.
> (b) It is the commemoration of the sacrificial death and resurrection of Christ, which is the climax of the whole action of God in creation and salvation.
> (c) It expresses our response — both personal and corporate — to God's initiative in a sacrifice not only of praise and thanksgiving, but also of the glad surrender of our lives to God and to his service. Thus we are united with Christ in his joyful and obedient self-offering to the Father and his victory over death.
> (d) It is our response of faith and love whereby we receive [Christ's] gift of himself and are renewed as members of his body, that we may be the focus of his presence and the agents of his mission to the world.
> (e) It is the pointing to and the anticipation of his final triumph and it is our vision of that hope and our sharing in that victory.

Concerning the historically controversial question of the mode of Christ's eucharistic presence, the Dublin Report of 1976 in paragraph 52 summarizes the points already agreed in the Denver Report:

> Christ, in the fullness of his being, human and divine, is present in the eucharist; this presence does not depend on the experience of the communicant, but it is only by faith that we become aware of it. This is a distinctive mode of the presence of Christ; it is mediated through the sacred elements of bread and wine, which within the eucharist are efficacious signs of the body and blood of Christ.

The "chief point of difference" appears to lie between the Roman Catholic doctrine of "transubstantiation" and the Methodist view that "the bread and wine acquire an additional significance as effectual signs of the body and blood of Christ" but do not thereby "cease to be bread and wine" (59).[5]

Concerning sacrifice, Dublin in paragraph 63 backs away somewhat from Denver's unguarded use (83) of "re-enactment." After a four-point agreement on the senses of sacrifice (65), Dublin details a remaining difference (66):

> When Methodists use sacrificial language it refers first to the sacrifice of Christ once-for-all, second to our pleading of that sacrifice here and now, third to our offering of the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and fourth to our sacrifice of ourselves in union with Christ who offered himself to the Father.
> Roman Catholics can happily accept all these senses of the term, but they are also accustomed to speak of the sacrifice of the Mass as something which the church offers in all ages of her history. They see the eucharist not as another sacrifice adding something to Christ's once-for-all sacrifice, nor as a repetition of it, but as making present in a sacramental way the same sacrifice. For some Methodists such language would imply that Christ is still being sacrificed. Methodists prefer to say that Christ has offered one sacrifice for sins and now lives to make intercession for us, so that we in union with him can offer ourselves to the Father, making his sacrificial death our only plea.

That last phrase may in fact point towards a consensus. Elsewhere I have suggested that the unprecedentedly stark expression of the Roman Eucharistic Prayer IV — "offerimus tibi eius corpus et sanguinem" — might be benignly interpreted in terms of a hymn familiar to evangelical Protestants, A. M. Toplady's "Rock of Ages, cleft for me":

> Nothing in my hand I bring,
> Simply to Thy Cross I cling.[6]

After the Dublin Report of 1976, the Methodist-Catholic dialogue has not returned to the contentious issues connected with eucharistic presence and sacrifice. It may be a measure of the consensus already achieved — of all that it is both possible and necessary to say — that subsequent reports have spoken rather freely in agreed terms about the eucharist as both word and sacrament. The clue may reside in the way in which, beginning with the Nairobi Report of 1986, the category of Mystery has been used to join the Incarnate Word himself, his Church as his Body, and the various means of grace which sustain the Church as it celebrates them.

The Nairobi Report states concisely, if still rather tentatively (10), that

> [t]he Mystery of the Word made flesh and the sacramental mystery of the eucharist point towards a view of the Church based upon the sacramental idea, i.e. the Church takes its shape from the Incarnation from which it originated and the

[5] A proposal for the reconciling of two such views, made from the Catholic side, is found in T. NICHOLS, "Transubstantiation and Eucharistic Presence," *Pro Ecclesia* 11, 1 (2002) 57-75. Sensitive to the ecumenical implications of his argument, the author invokes my presentation of the eucharist as "an eschatological sign" in my book *Eucharist and Eschatology* (London: Epworth Press, 1971; 3rd ed. Akron, OH: OSL Publications, 2002).

[6] See G. WAINWRIGHT, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life* (London/NY: Epworth Press/Oxford University Press, 1980) 271-274. The final phrase in the quotation from paragraph 66 of the Dublin Report — "making his sacrificial death our only plea" — echoes a line from another hymn familiar to Methodists: the hymn "Thou didst leave thy throne / And thy kingly crown," by Emily Elizabeth Steele Elliott (1836-1897), contains the line, "Thy Cross is my only plea."

> eucharistic action by which its life is constantly being renewed;

and then in paragraph 14:

> The grace which comes through the sacraments is the grace of Christ, the visible image of the unseen God, in whom divine and human natures are united in one Person; the Church proclaims the action of the same Christ at work within us; and the individual sacraments likewise convey the reality of his action into our lives.

The Singapore Report of 1991 called Christ "the primary sacrament" (89). The Rio Report of 1996 — structured to take into account the stated aim of the dialogue as "full communion in faith, mission, and sacramental life" — made that designation of Christ, with appeal to 1 Timothy 3:16, the starting-point of its two-part exposition of the sacramental life, "the mystery of God in Christ and the Church," and "the sacraments and other means of grace":

> 95. ... Having taken our humanity into his own person, the Son is both the sign of our salvation and the instrument by which it is achieved.
> 96. As the company of those who have been incorporated into Christ and nourished by the life-giving Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13), the Church may analogously be thought of in a sacramental way....
> 97. In such an approach, the sacraments of the Church may be considered as particular instances of the divine Mystery being revealed and made operative in the lives of the faithful. Instituted by Christ and made effective by the Spirit, sacraments bring the Mystery home to those in whom God pleases to dwell.
> 98. The particular sacraments flow from the sacramental nature of God's self-communication to us in Christ. They are specific ways in which, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Risen Jesus makes his saving presence and action effective in our midst....

The Rio Report goes on to give, in paragraphs 102-103, a remarkably agreed, and ecumenical, account of the major sacraments, in which (finally!) a direct quotation from the Wesleys' *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* is made:

> 102. With the whole Christian tradition Methodists and Catholics find in the New Testament the evidence that baptism is the basic sacrament of the Gospel. They also agree that Jesus Christ instituted the eucharist as a holy meal, the memorial of his sacrifice. As the baptized partake of it, they share the sacrament of his body given for them and his blood shed for them; they present and plead his sacrifice before God the Father, and they receive the fruits of it in faith. Proclaiming, in his risen presence, the death of the Lord until he comes, the eucharistic assembly anticipates the final advent of Christ and enjoys a foretaste of the heavenly banquet prepared for all peoples. In the words of the Wesleys' Hymns on the Lord's Supper:
>
> He bids us eat and drink
> Imperishable food.
> He gives His flesh to be our meat,
> And bids us drink His blood.
> Whate'er the Almighty can
> To pardoned sinners give,
> The fulness of our God made man
> We here with Christ receive. [Hymn 81]
>
> 103. Meanwhile, as believers we seek to enact throughout our lives that which we celebrate in the sacraments. Thus the prayers of the Roman Missal ask that the sacraments received at Easter may "live forever in our minds and hearts," and that "we who have celebrated the Easter ceremonies may hold fast to them in life and conduct."

This entire perspective is substantially — and, in part, even verbally — endorsed in the Brighton Report of 2001, paragraphs 52-55, with an agreed and increased emphasis on "the need for graced, free and active participation in God's saving work" on the part of believers as "God's co-workers" (52).

Before leaving the Methodist-Catholic dialogue, we may notice one more constellation of themes which, like the others so far displayed, presages or reflects the liturgical compositions to which we shall at last come. The cluster brings together ecclesiology, missiology, and eschatology: church, mission, and kingdom. Already the Denver Report of 1971 mentioned "the whole eschatological and forward-looking element in the eucharist, with its implications in the life of the believer, of the whole Body of Christ, and of the Body of Christ in relation to the world" (81): "By partaking of the Body and Blood we become one with Christ, our Savior, and one with one another in a common dedication to the redemption of the world" (83). In similar vein, the Dublin Report of 1976 concluded (73):

> In the eucharist we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. We bring closer the day when God will be "all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28). The eucharist makes God's kingdom to come in the world, in our churches, in ourselves. It builds up the church as the community of reconciliation dedicated to the service and salvation of mankind.

In describing "the community of worship," the Singapore Report of 1991 followed the already quoted paragraph 67 with these:

> 68. This experience of the presence of the Lord in the setting of worship attunes the hearts and minds of the faithful to all other aspects of his presence. They return to him the love they have received from him, when they serve the poor and when they struggle for social justice. In the sick and suffering they see the sufferings of Christ. In their

own pains and sorrows endured for the sake of the gospel they share in the passion of Christ. In all this the faithful experience the wonderful exchange by which, in Christ and the Holy Spirit, all is common to all. And they present to God all that they have and all that they are as their own sacrifice of praise.

69. In the worshipping fellowship the community confesses Jesus Christ as Lord, shares the peace which Christ gives, and so anticipates the heavenly kingdom where the risen Christ fills all things to the glory of God the Father. The community of the faithful is thus the proclaiming, celebrating and serving community which gives glory to God in the name of all creatures. By its gatherings on the Lord's Day the community shapes the life of its members, helping them to make their weekly and daily tasks expressions of the royal priesthood of the believers gathered together under the high priesthood of the risen Lord. Thus the community provides for its members a pattern of life consecrated to God and directed towards fulfillment in the final manifestation of Christ.

Methodist Liturgical Compositions

The book that John Wesley sent across the Atlantic in 1784 was entitled *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America, with Other Occasional Services*. It was described by Wesley himself as "a liturgy little differing from that of the Church of England," i.e. the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*. Karen Westerfield Tucker, in her recent superb analytical history of *American Methodist Worship*,[7] outlines the provisions for Sunday worship thus (pp. 6-7):

> Wesley provided orders of service for morning and evening prayer on the Lord's Day, and for the administration of the Lord's Supper that, following Prayer Book tradition, included the sermon as part of Ante-Communion.... A table of proper lessons to be read at Sunday morning and evening prayer, and a listing of proper collects, epistles and gospels to be read on Sundays and other particular days throughout the year were also included.... Ideally, morning prayer each Sunday was to be concluded with the service of the Lord's Supper as long as it was presided over by a properly ordained elder (presbyter), but the reality in the new church was that the number of available elders was significantly smaller than the communities in need of one, and, in point of fact, American Methodists were as unaccustomed as Anglicans of the time to weekly Eucharist.

In point of fact, Methodists on both sides of the Atlantic quickly adopted for their regular Sunday worship a much freer form of preaching service, with hymns, Scripture, sermon, and prayers. That Wesley had intended the use of hymns is clear from his sending of *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for the Lord's Day* along with the *Sunday Service* and from the *Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists* that had been published already in 1780 and was to constitute the backbone of official Methodist hymn-books, particularly in Britain, throughout the nineteenth century. In both Britain and America, the Lord's Supper itself became practically an "occasional service," with a monthly or even quarterly observance of the sacrament. Whereas the "preaching service" abandoned Wesley's pattern for Sundays, the liturgy for the sacrament, when celebrated, remained recognizably close to Wesley's sacramental order in the principal Methodist bodies.

In their liturgical revisions of the final third of the twentieth century, both the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the United Methodist Church returned in broadest structural terms to Wesley's combination of word and sacrament, while almost abandoning the linguistic inheritance of the Cranmerian-Wesleyan Prayer Book.

In its "general directions" to "The Sunday Service," the British *Methodist Service Book* of 1975 declared that "[t]he worship of the Church is the offering of praise and prayer in which God's Word is read and preached, and in its fullness it includes the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion." After "The Preparation" (hymn; confession of sins and declaration of forgiveness; collect of the day; hymn, or "Glory to God in the Highest") comes "The Ministry of the Word": the Old Testament Lesson, or the Epistle, or both; hymn; the Gospel; the Sermon; the Intercessions; the Lord's Prayer; the first dismissal and blessing ("those who leave do so now") Then comes "The Lord's Supper": the Peace; the Nicene Creed; the Setting of the Table; the Thanksgiving (invariable); the Breaking of the Bread; the Sharing of the Bread and Wine; the Final Prayers (post-communion; hymn; blessing; dismissal). The next pages of the book outline an order for "The Sunday Service without the Lord's Supper," with the explanation that "[i]n many churches of the Reformation tradition it has been the custom, once a Sunday, for the shape of the service to reflect that of the Lord's Supper." With hymns to be inserted *ad libitum*, the suggested order goes: "The Preparation" (adoration; confession of sin, and assurance of God's forgiveness); "The Ministry of the Word" (Scriptures, sermon, a historic creed); "The Response" (thanksgiving, intercession, self-dedication, the Lord's Prayer, "blessing and commissioning for the service of God in the world"). This last, non-sacramental outline represents what Raymond George, with a twist on the "missa sicca," used to call a "dry eucharist."

On the grounds of "many requests for the provision of a wider range of services and other worship material," the British Methodist Conference in 1999 authorized the publication of a new *Methodist Worship Book*, in which the services "are the fruit of a long process of drafting and revision" and "take account of recent liturgical and ecumenical developments throughout the world as well as distinctively Methodist traditions of worship" (p. vii). There is now no explicit attempt to give a eucharistic shape to the principal Sunday service, although it is declared that "Holy Communion, or the Lord's Supper" — without specification of its timing — "is the central act of Christian worship, in which the

[7] K. WESTERFIELD TUCKER, *American Methodist Worship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Church responds to our Lord's command, 'Do this in remembrance of me.'" The 1999 book sets out full eucharistic orders and complete texts — structurally similar, though thematically varied — for Advent, for Christmas and Epiphany, for Ash Wednesday or the First Sunday in Lent, for Lent and Passiontide, for the Easter Season (including Ascensiontide), for the Day of Pentecost (and times of renewal in the life of the church), and for "Ordinary Seasons" (three services).

The 1999 *Methodist Worship Book* offers of the Eucharist, first (p. 114), a doctrinal account (with many echoes of *BEM*), and then (pp. 114-115), a ritual account (indebted to the classic work of Dom Gregory Dix):

> Many of the themes of John and Charles Wesley's *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (1745) are reflected in present-day ecumenical understanding of this sacrament. In communion with the people of God in heaven and on earth, we give thanks for God's mighty acts in creation and redemption, represented supremely in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this means of grace, the Church joyfully celebrates the presence of Christ in its midst, calls to mind his sacrifice and, in the power of the Holy Spirit, is united with him as the Body of Christ. At the Lord's table, Christ's disciples share bread and wine, the tokens of his dying love and the food for their earthly pilgrimage, which are also a foretaste of the heavenly banquet, prepared for all people. Those who gather around the table of the Lord are empowered for mission: apostles, sent out in the power of the Spirit, to live and work to God's praise and glory....
>
> The services of *Holy Communion* in this book are set out, after the initial "The Gathering of the People of God," under the two historic headings, "The Ministry of the Word" and "The Lord's Supper." The hinge point between the two is normally the sharing of the Peace. The shape of the Lord's Supper follows the record in scripture of Jesus' characteristic sharing with his disciples, especially after [*sic*] the final meal on the night before the crucifixion. His seven actions with the bread and wine (four with the bread, three with the wine) were taken up in the Church's tradition as a fourfold shape: Taking, Giving Thanks, Breaking and Sharing. In the Great Thanksgiving, the service of praise offered by God's people on earth is joined with the praises of the heavenly host, praising God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This Eucharistic Prayer (the word "Eucharist," derived from a Greek word which means "Thanksgiving," is increasingly accepted by Christians of all traditions as one of the names for this sacrament) is Trinitarian both in its structure and in its focus.

In the United Methodist Church, the international and ecumenical Liturgical Movement first showed its influence in the "alternate text" of 1972 for *The Lord's Supper* — which eventually sold two and a half million copies in pamphlet form.[8] The order ran as follows: greeting; hymn of praise; confession and pardon; act of praise (e.g. the Gloria in Excelsis); an epicletic prayer for illumination (a feature borrowed from the Reformed tradition); scripture lessons, interspersed with psalms, canticles, anthems or hymns; sermon; affirmation of faith; prayer for others; invitation and peace; the offering; the great prayer of thanksgiving; the breaking of the bread and the taking of the cup; the giving; prayer after receiving; hymn or doxological stanza; dismissal and benediction. The eucharistic prayer was marked by several interesting features: first, the Preface focused on the events and themes recorded in the Old Testament (creation, fall, election, exodus, covenant, prophecy), a pattern that continued into later United Methodist anaphoras and seems indebted to the liturgy of *Apostolic Constitutions VIII*. Second, the post-Sanctus commemoration of the earthly ministry of Christ included his practice of table-fellowship with sinners, a feature much emphasized by gospel scholars of the mid twentieth century, and subsequently expanded to "he healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners." Third, the words of institution were linked to the ensuing anamnesis-oblation by this sentence: "When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we experience anew the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ and look forward to his coming in final victory." The sentence was later dropped, perhaps because it did not fit into the rhetorical form of a prayer addressed to God, but it made a brave attempt to set, in a characteristically Methodist style, the present experience of believers in relation to the mighty acts of God in Christ and the sacramental gift of their benefits through the liturgical celebration. Subsequently omitted, too, was the neat allusion to the Emmaus story: "Help us know in the breaking of this bread...." The "alternate text" went, in fact, through several revisions, while other "supplemental worship resources" included some two dozen and more seasonal and occasional eucharistic prayers, in various literary and historic styles, published in *At the Lord's Table* (1981) and *Holy Communion* (1987). The overall rationale for the recommended "basic pattern of Sunday worship" was stated in the significantly entitled *Word and Table* (1976).

The complete *United Methodist Book of Worship*, authorized by the General Conference in 1992, provides a standard "Service of Word and Table I," while allowing both for a more flexibly arranged service of the word (which may take a quasi-eucharistic shape, even without the holy communion) and for "words of the pastor's own composition or selection" at points in the Great Thanksgiving of the Lord's Supper. Fully formulated Great Thanksgivings are supplied for use in Advent, at Christmas, at "New Year, Epiphany, Baptism of the Lord, or Covenant Reaffirmation," "Early in Lent," "Later in Lent," on Holy

[8] See K. WESTERFIELD TUCKER, *American Methodist Worship*, *op. cit.*, 139-142. For accounts by the principal author of the 1972 text, see J.F. WHITE, "Making Changes in United Methodist Euchology," *Worship* 57, 4 (1983) 333-344; and *idem*, "United Methodist Eucharistic Prayers: 1965-1985" in F.C. SENN, ed., *New Eucharistic Prayers: An Ecumenical Study of Their Development and Structure* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987) 80-95.

Thursday Evening, at Easter, at Pentecost, "The Season after Pentecost (Ordinary Time, or Kingdomtide)," on "World Communion Sunday," at "All Saints and Memorial Occasions," on "Thanksgiving Day, or for the Gift of Food," and "For General Use." The 1992 book also contains — allegedly at the insistence of African-American members of the United Methodist Church — a "Service of Word and Table IV," which retains large portions of the Cranmerian-Wesleyan text, with the units now rearranged to match better the "liturgical-movement" order of Word and Table. (The British *Methodist Service Book* of 1975 had retained, in second place, the latest previous version of the Cranmerian-Wesleyan service from the 1936 *Book of Offices*, but this disappeared from the 1999 *Methodist Worship Book*.)

Concerning current texts and practices at Word and Table in the United Methodist Church and the Methodist Church of Great Britain, further ecumenically important matters have to do with lectionaries, hymnology, the structure of eucharistic prayers, the words of distribution, the nature of the elements, the disposal of remains, presidency at the sacrament, and the conditions of admission to it.

Lectionaries. The *United Methodist Book of Worship* (UMBW) prints a lectionary "based on the *Revised Common Lectionary* [1992], with selections made on the basis of United Methodist needs and traditions." The British *Methodist Worship Book* (MWB) states that "the lectionary for the Principal Service is derived from the ecumenical *Revised Common Lectionary*, which has won widespread acceptance in most English-speaking countries." For the British Church, this represented a shift from the *Methodist Service Book* of 1975, which had employed a two-year lectionary that itself had been ecumenically generated in the British Isles by the Joint Liturgical Group. The three-year *Revised Common Lectionary* is an adaptation of the *Ordo Lectionum* for Sundays in the post-Vatican II Roman Missal, displaying particularly a broader understanding of typology in the readings from the Old Testament. It would be an ecumenical move on the part of the Roman authorities to adopt the *Revised Common Lectionary*; and it would not be the first time in liturgical history that the Roman church had taken back to itself a ritual feature that had undergone improvement in the provinces. Meanwhile, the considerable agreement that already exists in this area allows pastors to work together at the preparation of sermons in their local ecumenical associations. Among Methodists, the use of lectionaries by the preachers has certainly increased over the past couple of generations.

Hymnology. Throughout Methodist history, the successive hymnals used have increased in ecumenical range, though at a proportionate loss of texts from the Wesleys' pens. The British Methodist *Hymns and Psalms* (1983) contains some 170 Wesleyan hymns in a total of 823, and the *United Methodist Hymnal* (1989) around 60 Wesleyan texts in a total of 678 (some being printed as "poems" rather than set to music). Of the 166 texts in the Wesleyan *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (many of them admittedly unsuitable for direct liturgical use), the current British book contains sixteen, but the American book a mere two ("O the depth of love divine," and "O thou who this mysterious bread"), to which the supplementary *The Faith We Sing* (2000) added "Victim divine, thy grace we claim." There is clearly a problem when the doctrinally and ecumenically important hymns of the Wesleys have to contend with contemporary literary and cultural tendencies that disfavor rhyme, meter, and complex scriptural allusion.[9]

The structure of eucharistic prayers. Liturgical composition among both the British and the United Methodists has broadly favored the Antiochene or West Syrian type of anaphora that has dominated eucharistic revision in the historic churches of the West in the second half of the twentieth century. The pattern was outlined thus in a classic article by W. J. Grisbrooke: (1) introductory dialogue; (2) preface or (first part of the) thanksgiving; (3) Sanctus; a transition which may either (4) continue the thanksgiving, or (5) take the form of a preliminary epiclesis, if not both; (6) narrative of the institution; (7) anamnesis-oblation; (8) epiclesis; (9) intercessions; (10) concluding doxology and Amen.[10]

Some features of the United Methodist prayers have already been noted; but otherwise the fixed British "Thanksgiving" of 1975, composed in the concise and chaste style of Raymond George, may be taken as rather typical. After the opening dialogue it runs:

> Father, all-powerful and ever-living God,
> it is indeed right, it is our joy and our salvation,
> always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise
> through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
> You created all things and made us in your own image
> When we had fallen into sin, you gave your only Son to be our Saviour.
> He shared our human nature, and died on the cross.
> You raised him from the dead, and exalted him to your right hand in glory,
> where he lives for ever to pray for us.
> Through him you have sent your holy and life-giving Spirit
> and made us your people, a royal priesthood, to stand before you
> to proclaim your glory and celebrate your mighty acts.
> And so with all the company of heaven
> we join in the unending hymn of praise:
> **Holy, holy, holy Lord,**
> **God of power and might,**
> **heaven and earth are full of your glory.**
> **Hosanna in the highest.**
> **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**
> **Hosanna in the highest.**
> We praise you, Lord God, King of the universe,

[9] See J.R. WATSON, *The English Hymn: A Critical and Historical Study* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[10] W.J. GRISBROOKE, "Anaphora," in J. G. Davies, ed., *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship* (London/NY: SCM Press/Macmillan, 1972) 10-17.

through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who, on the night in which he was betrayed,
took bread, gave thanks, broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying,
"Take this and eat it. This is my body given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."
In the same way, after supper,
he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying,
"Drink from it all of you.
This is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.
Therefore, Father, as he has commanded us,
we do this in remembrance of him,
and we ask you to accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.
Grant that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we who receive your gifts of bread and wine
may share in the body and blood of Christ.
Make us one body with him.
Accept us as we offer ourselves to be a living sacrifice,
and bring us with the whole creation to your heavenly kingdom.
We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Through him, with him, in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be given to you, almighty Father,
from all who dwell on earth and in heaven
throughout all ages. Amen.

Unlike the Roman Eucharistic Prayers II, III, and IV, Methodist eucharistic prayers do not contain a preliminary consecratory epiclesis before the narrative of the institution. Nor do they contain more than a hint of intercession, since that has been taken care of by the prayers of the people towards the end of the ministry of the word. The American prayers, in the manner of the Wesleyan eucharistic hymns, make a closer link than the British between the self-offering of Christ and the self-oblation of the believers; and, in a new development, they include among the fruits of communion an active participation in Christ's redemptive mission and ministry in the world. Thus, from the Thanksgiving in "A Service of Word and Table I," directly after the recounting of the institution:

... And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.
Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.
By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at his heavenly banquet....

For the principal celebration of the eucharist at the meeting of the World Methodist Council and Conference at Brighton, England, in 2001, Karen Westerfield Tucker and I composed a classically structured eucharistic prayer from phrases and echoes of Wesleyan hymns, both from the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* and from other collections, allowing for congregational sections of the prayer to be sung.[11]

The words of distribution. The British book of 1975 retained as general "words of invitation" a form close to the old words of distribution: "Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, and his blood, which was shed for you; and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving"; and for the individual communicant, either the Prayer Book words of distribution or simply "The body of Christ given for you," "The blood of Christ shed for you." The book of 1999 proposes "words such as the following ... during distribution": "The body of Christ given for you / The blood of Christ shed for you," or "The body/blood of Christ keep you in eternal life." The *United Methodist Book of Worship* has "these or other words being exchanged": "The body / blood of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**"

The nature of the elements. The British MWB stipulates "the juice of the grape," while the UMBW declares: "Although the historic and ecumenical Christian practice has been to use wine, the use of unfermented grape juice by The United Methodist Church and its predecessors since the late nineteenth century expresses pastoral concern for recovering alcoholics, enables the participation of children and youth, and supports the church's witness of abstinence" (p. 28). The UMBW states that "[t]he bread may be either leavened or unleavened" and contemplates either "a large uncut loaf of bread" or "wafers" or "bread cubes"; and either a "chalice" or "individual cups." In the United Methodist Church in the United States, communion by intinction has become a widespread practice in the past two decades.

Conditions of admission. The British MWB declares: "One of the keynotes of the Methodist revival was John Wesley's emphasis on 'The Duty of Constant Communion' and it is still a duty and privilege of members of the Methodist Church to share in this sacrament. The Methodist Conference has encouraged local churches to admit baptized children to communion. Those who are communicants and belong to other Churches whose

[11] See G. WAINWRIGHT and K. WESTERFIELD TUCKER, "A Wesleyan Anaphora," in M. KLÖCKENER and A. JOIN-LAMBERT, eds., *Liturgia et Unitas: In honorem Bruno Bürki* (Freiburg, Switzerland/Geneva: Universitätsverlag/Labor et Fides, 2001) 145-159.

discipline so permits are also welcome as communicants in the Methodist Church" (p. 114). With some foreshortening of historical perspective, the UMBW declares that "we have no tradition of refusing any who present themselves desiring to receive" (p. 29).

Presidency at the Lord's table. In both the British and the United Methodist Church, presidency at the Lord's table is normally assured by ordained presbyters; but, in cases of sacramental deprivation, the Conferences may authorize lay preachers to preside, by name, for a specified period of time, and for specific places.

The disposal of bread and wine remaining from the sacrament. The British MWB instructs that "[w]hat remains of the elements should be reverently consumed, or otherwise reverently disposed of, at the end of the service" (p. 116). The UMBW waxes more pastoral and indeed poetic:

> What is done with the remaining bread and wine should express our stewardship of God's gifts and our respect for the holy purpose they have served.
> 1) They may set aside for distribution to the sick and others wishing to commune or unable to attend....
> 2) They may be reverently consumed by the pastor and others....
> 3) They may be returned to the earth; that is, the bread may be buried or scattered on the ground, and the wine may be reverently poured out upon the ground — a biblical gesture of worship (2 Samuel 23:16) and an ecological symbol today.

Conclusion

While there clearly remain important differences between Methodist and Catholic practice, which may signify differences in understanding and even doctrine, it may fairly be concluded that, at the levels of theological dialogue and officially recommended rites, Methodism has been considerably affected by the Ecumenical and Liturgical Movements of the twentieth century, with indeed something of a recovery of the intertwined evaluation of word and sacrament that marked its own early history under Wesleyan auspices. Preaching and the singing of hymns — the components in distinctively Methodist services — are fitted into a ritual structure, and there are signs of a richer eucharistic faith that — in the forms of convergent doctrinal statements and some homegrown anaphoras —matches the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, even where those classic texts from the eighteenth-century revival remain under-used. In their response to *BEM*, however, the United Methodist bishops issued a salutary warning that might also be heeded by others in the Methodist family: "We United Methodists need to recover the belief that the holy communion is central in our worship and life together before some other Churches will honor our statements of theological accord." In the year 2000, the General Conference of the United Methodist Church commissioned an official study of the Holy Communion that would report on current theology and practice and make recommendations to the General Conference in 2004.

Common Words and *Common Worship* Praying Together and Apart

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(Conference held at the **Centro Pro Unione**, Thursday, 21 March 2002)

My title, as you see, is *Common Words and Common Worship*. Common prayer has for a few years now been a fashionable issue in the Church of England because there are, on the one hand, many folk who are concerned with the preservation of ancient and familiar texts, that have been prayed in common in the past; while, at the same time, there are others who have embraced a new vision of commonality, that vision which is the result of ecumenical sharing. We have begun to acknowledge our common liturgical roots and although ecumenically agreed texts "do not necessarily lend to convergence and agreement, yet it is a fact that there is a now more 'in common' across the denominational boundaries than there ever has been since the divisions of the sixteenth century."[1]

In order to trace the torturous path by which many in England have come to our present (and new) understanding of commonality, I need to give you a rapid overview of the process of liturgical revision in the Church of England over the past 100 years. I make no apology for this, because I believe that the latest authorised form of worship (which is indeed called *Common Worship*) can only be properly understood by such an examination. Indeed the title of the new service book *"Common Worship"* only makes full sense against this background.[2]

However, let me emphasize again that it is the *Church of England* I'm dealing with. Professor Holeton has already contributed to this series of lectures by speaking on *Anglican* liturgical renewal of which, obviously, my subject is part. But notoriously, even the most senior Vatican officials confuse these two categories and sometimes speak as though they are synonymous. There are, of course, far more Anglicans outside England than there are in the provinces of Canterbury and York which comprises the Church of England. Part of the confusion, liturgically, lies in the fact that, until the 1950's, the majority of Anglican provinces outside the British Isles used the unexpurgated 1662 Prayer Book, that same form of liturgy as was then currently authorised in the Church of England. There was one major and increasingly significant deviation from this generalization. The, admittedly tiny, Episcopal Church of Scotland — never under any circumstances to be mistaken with the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland — had preserved a Eucharistic rite which varied in some major particulars from that contained in the 1662 book. It harked back, behind the 1662 book, to the first English prayer book (the work of Cranmer in 1549) which generations of high churchmen in England recalled with considerable nostalgia believing, in particular, that its Prayer of Consecration was much superior to that in the later books.[3] Now the remarkable thing is that the Scottish Prayer Book was a crucial influence in the liturgical work of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. It can be clearly seen in the first American Book of Common Prayer authorised "from and after" October 1, 1790.[4]

However to return to England. The facts of the matter are that serious liturgical revision was not accomplished in the Church of England until late in the 20th century. That does not mean that the need for revision had not been appreciated earlier. Although there was always easy talk about "our incomparable liturgy," its inadequacies were widely recognized. Ronald Jasper, who might well be celebrated as one of the founding fathers of ecumenical liturgical co-operation, wrote his BD thesis (I don't know what the equivalent is in Roman degrees; it is at post-graduate level) on the various moves to revise the 1662 liturgy, particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[5] All of them came to nothing.

However, in the 1840s the Oxford Movement, a High Church Movement, of which John Henry Newman was so much a part at its conception, created a situation in which changes became inevitable. It has to be admitted that the earliest Tractarians (so called because their propaganda was contained in a series of

[1] D. GRAY, "Ecumenical Approach to Common Prayer" in M. PERHAM, ed., *The Renewal of Common Prayer: Uniformity and Diversity in Church of England Worship*, GS Misc, 412 (London: SPCK, 1993) 52-53.

[2] *Common Worship, Services and Prayers for the Church of England* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[3] A. Campbell DON, *The Scottish Book of Common Prayer 1929: Notes on Its Origin and Growth* (London: SPCK, 1949) 52.

[4] M.J. HATCHETT, *The Making of the First American Prayer Book, 1776-1789* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1982).

[5] R.C.D. JASPER *Prayer Book Revision in England 1800-1900* (London: SPCK, 1954).

booklets called *Tracts for the Times*) were what could, not unfairly, be described as "Prayer Book Fundamentalists". They feared state intervention into the church's affairs, which they had seen demonstrated by the plans to disestablish the (Anglican) Church of Ireland. One of their defenses against such aggression, they believed, was the 1662 Prayer Book. They were also conservative in ritual and ceremonial matters. In his Church of England days, Newman never wore Eucharistic vestment for instance. But what has been characterized as the "reserve" of the early adherents of the Oxford Movement became considerably less distinctive by the middle of the century. By 1900 what had previously been a trickle of more ritualistic ceremonial and deviations from the Prayer Book and the introduction of not only words and actions but also vestments, ornaments and fittings from outside the Church of England, had become a flood. It is not unfair to say that liturgical anarchy reigned over vast areas of the Church of England, particularly in the new and crowded areas which had grown up in the industrial towns and cities, and other large centers of population. The Diocese of London was particularly notorious for many high church, Anglo Catholic parishes.

Episcopal authority was widely flouted. There were Ritual Riots: mobs who has no interest in the niceties of either liturgy or ecclesiastical politics were "rabble-roused" into causing disturbances at church services. For a recent and readable account of these days see John Shelton Reed's, *Glorious Battle.*[6] There was also a series of high profile cases in the Church Courts and tempers were inflamed when attempts were make to enforce Church law by use of secular courts, in particular the powers of the Privy Council. It was all very degrading and quite unnecessary. Amidst it all, five Anglican priests were actually imprisoned for contempt of court, having refused to accept the jurisdiction of civil courts to enforce ecclesiastical discipline.

It was a situation which could not continue and eventually the government of the day decided that it was its solemn duty to set up, in 1904, a high-powered Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline whose task it was:

> To inquire into the alleged prevalence of breaches or neglect of the Law relating to the conduct of Divine Service in the Church of England and to the ornaments and fittings of churches; and to consider the existing powers and procedures applicable to such irregularities and to make such recommendations as may be deemed requisite for dealing with the aforesaid matters.[7]

It could only happen in England! Evidence was brought before the Commission by agents of the Church Association which had been formed in 1865 by several leading Evangelical churchmen to maintain the Protestant ideals of faith and worship in the Church of England. They, together with the Church of England League and National Protestant Union, produced 164 witnesses. The contents of the volume of evidence would be hilarious — if it were not so sad. Examples of "lawlessness" varied from the use of the lavabo and mixing the chalice at one end of the scale to the use of the Roman Canon and services of Benediction at the other. The League and Union produced examples from 1500 Churches in England and Wales (the disestablishment and disendowment of the Welsh dioceses and the formation of the Church in Wales as a separate Anglican province had not yet occurred).

Even the Archbishop of Canterbury appeared before the Commission. In what was a masterly, diplomatic and eirenic statement, he explained how, in the nineteenth century, the pattern of worship in the Church of England, in some large part under the influence of the Oxford Movement, had altered. Archbishop Randall Davison had previously been Bishop of Winchester and he gave the Commission examples from that diocese. In 1829, he said, in the 319 parishes in the Diocese divine service took place twice a Sunday in 158 and only in 11 three times. Whereas 70 years later the Holy Communion was celebrated monthly (or more often) in 557, fortnightly (or more often) in 512, weekly (or more often) in 404.[8]

I will not detail the various items that were reckoned as being "significant of teaching contrary or repugnant to the articles or formularies of the Church of England," but many would surprise you. I have included a catalogue in my book on the history of the way in which the Eucharist returned to the center of worship patterns in the Church of England.[9]

The Commission listened to all of this for the best part of 2 years; having to endure the clear bigotry and intolerances of the "protestant spies." But they themselves were fair and balanced men (no women on a Royal Commission in those days!); they realized that the complaints had only come from a small proportion of churches in the country and that in the large majority of parishes the work of the Church was being, as they said "quietly and diligently performed." Nevertheless the report does provide what Geoffrey Cuming described in his *History of Anglican Worship* as "an authoritative picture of worship at the turn of the century."[10]

The Commission came to the conclusion that "the law of public worship in the Church of England is too narrow for the religious life of the present generation." They said "It needlessly condemns much which a great section of her most devoted members value."[11]

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[6] J. SHELTON REED, *Glorious Battle: The Cultural Politics of Victorian Anglo-Catholicism* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1996).

[7] *Report of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline,* Cd 3040 (London, 1906) v.

[8] *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission of Ecclesiastical Discipline at Church House Westminster,* Cd 3069 (London, 1906) vol 1, 11, paras 13265-13257.

[9] D. GRAY, *Earth and Altar: The Evolution of the Parish Communion in the Church of England to 1945,* Alcuin Club Collections, 68 (London/Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1986).

[10] G.J. CUMING, *A History of Anglican Liturgy*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1982) 163.

[11] *Report on the Royal Commission..., op. cit*., para. 399.

In order that there should be an agreed standard of liturgical practice (some commonality) they made this historic recommendation: that the Convocations of York and Canterbury should be issued with Letters of Business to provide new rubrics regulating ornaments and vesture and to frame, with a view to enactment by Parliament, modifications relating to the conduct of divine worship.[12]

Now note the phrase "with a view to enactment by Parliament." In those days there was no other way, nor was there for many years until the passing (by Parliament) of *The Worship and Doctrine Measure* in 1975. That gave the synodical processes of the Church full power over the contents of its services (excluding the power to abolish use of the 1662 Prayer Book, which continues as a legitimate and available form of worship).[13] The 1906 reminder to the Church of England that Parliamentary approval would be necessary to secure and liturgical changes was to come back and haunt the church as you will hear.

The immediate outcome of the issuing of the Letters of Business was that the Convocations began to work to produce a *Revised Prayer Book*. Remember that was only the Bishops and representative Priests — known as Proctors — who were members of these two bodies, one for each province. At first they had the assistance of a Committee of Experts, whose composition reads like a roll call of some of the great liturgical scholars of the day: W.H. Frere, F.E. Brightman, Percy Dearmer. Sadly we know the inherent suspicion of the capability of Committees to write liturgy and it was allowed to lapse after a few years. You see we are talking about a process which lasted over 21 years. It was not until 1927 that the book was produced. True a World War intervened but, in fact, that did not curtail the meetings, while millions died in War the Convocations of the Church of England resolutely continued in their liturgical work of producing a book for presentation to Parliament.[14]

However the Parliamentary hurdle was not to be surmounted! In 1927 the House of Lords gave approval to a Prayer Book which came to them with the overwhelming support of both the clergy and a newly formed House of Laity, but failed to gain the support of the House of Commons. Once again it was the combination of the forces of conservatism and evangelicalism which united to defeat its adoption. Hasty attempts were made to accommodate some of these low church fears and the book resubmitted to Parliament in 1928, but it suffered the same fate.[15]

In the wake of this crisis, the Bishops issued a unusual statement in which they stated that, in future, they would measure the seriousness of any deviations from the strict letter of the Book of Common Prayer against the provisions of the rejected 1928 book.[16] But although some of the variations, particularly the pastoral offices, were widely used, there was an obvious absurdity in using a book which had been intended to legalize variations, in a way which was itself technically illegal. This was then the situation until after the Second World War. The official book of the Church of England was still that issued in 1662 — 300 years earlier.

If the Archbishop of Canterbury could explain to the Royal Commission in 1904 the ways in which worship patterns had greatly changed, how that was even more true another 50 years later! Consequently the church gathered up its courage and was emboldened to set up, with the approval of its Convocations and the Church Assembly (an official body comprising both clergy and laity) a Liturgical Commission with a view to revising its services.[17] In preparation for this the Canon Law of the Church had been altered to allow the experimental use of new services. It was believed that in this way, by presenting Parliament with a service which had been widely "road tested" throughout the parishes of the land, that allegations of parochial unacceptability could be challenged and proved inaccurate.[18]

Thus the process of producing such experimental services started. The first set were, to all intents and purposes, the rejected pastoral offices of 1927/28 which, I have said, had been widely used for the past 40 years. This set of services was called *Series One* and was quickly followed by more original work in a *Series Two*. Prominent in that book was a revision of the Eucharist intended to furnish the needs of the large proportion of English parishes which had been influenced by the Liturgical Movement.[19]

The Liturgical, or Parish Communion, Movement in the Church of England is often called the Parish and People Movement because of the influence of an organization set up to foster its principles — but its roots pre-date that organization. It has its origins in the 19th century Christian Socialists who saw the Eucharist as expressing theologically and liturgically what they were advocating politically. The People of God at the Lord's own Service on the Lord's own day, empowered at the Eucharist to go out into the world fed by the Corpus Christi to be the Corpus Christi, that is the hands, feet, and eyes of the Lord in his world.[20] It was, they maintained, the working out in social and political terms of the incarnational principle; indeed being, "an extension of the incarnation." It was a phrase they discovered the 17th century Anglican theologian Jeremy Taylor had coined.[21] It is

[12] *Ibid., Recommendations,* 77, 2.

[13] R.C.D. JASPER, *The Development of the Anglican Liturgy 1662-1980* (London: SPCK, 1989) 281-282.

[14] D. GRAY, *Earth and Altar..., op. cit.,* 35.

[15] R.C.D. JASPER, *The Development..., op. cit.,* 122-125.

[16] *Ibid.,* 147-148

[17] *Ibid.,* 211ff.

[18] *Ibid.,* 244-245.

[19] D. GRAY, *Earth and Altar...*, *op. cit*., 3.

[20] *Ibid.,* 226.

[21] *The Whole Works of the Rt. Revd. Jeremy Taylor DD, With a Life of the Author,* revised C.P. EDEN, vol. 18, "The Worthy Communicant," 1,2. 4, Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology (London: J. Moyes, 1854) originally published 1660.

true that the writings of the continental liturgical reformers came to have currency, and indeed influence, on the Parish Communion movement, but its origins do not lie in the exciting developments in Germany, Belgium and France; it was a bonus to discover that in these places, as in England, there was this seed growing secretly.[22]

One of the agitations in the continental, Roman Catholic, Liturgical Movement was for the use of the vernacular in the liturgy and we can recall such attempts to satisfy that need by the introduction of Dialogue Masses and the like.[23] In the Church of England there was not the same problem about language, or at least it was a different problem. One of the fruits of the 16th/17th century reforms in England had been the introduction of the "vulgar tongue" into its liturgy, the use of the vocabulary of the 16th century. This is one of the essential ingredients of "Common Prayer."

Linguistically the *Series One* services reflected the fact that in the 1920s the only real language concerns were the removal of outdated and antiquated words; and, remarkably the *Series Two* services published as late as 1965 were still in mock Tudor language.[24] But the common prayer of England was about to change more radically than it had done for four hundred years and a major, decisive factor in this was the result of ecumenical liturgical co-operation.

When on 4 December 1963 the Secretary General of the Vatican Council announced, "Holy Father, the Constitution on the Liturgy is acceptable to two thousand, one hundred and forty seven Fathers, with four against," it was, as said, "an emotional moment, a historical moment."[25] "The findings and experiences of the last sixty years form the underlying basis of the document and a window is opened on to a future the end of which no man can see," said Monsignor James Crichton.[26] Nevertheless there was one consideration which lay in the immediate future and required urgent attention: the provision of vernacular liturgical texts not least material in the English language. There were those who innocently believed that the task need be no more than a discreet adoption of the already available texts of the Book of Common Prayer, but they were swiftly disabused! What were required were liturgical texts in *modern* English.[27]

It was here in Rome in mid-October 1963 that a meeting was called of what was known at first as the "English Liturgical Committee." It consisted of the appointed bishops and the two English-speaking *periti* of the Conciliar Commission on the Liturgy (Fr Fred McManus and Fr Godfrey Diekmann).[28] "A group born in casual conversation about the need to co-ordinate translation efforts for inevitable vernacular concessions," says Kathleen Hughes.[29] That was the beginning of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL).

In my biography of Ronald Jasper[30] I have, I trust, justified my earlier description of him as "one of the founding fathers of ecumenical liturgical co-operation." In the same month as the "English Liturgical Committee" met in Rome, at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury (Michael Ramsey, whom Jasper had previously convinced of the possibility of there being ecumenical liturgical co-operation), there was held in London the first meeting of the Joint Liturgical Group. Its members were drawn from the Church of Scotland, Methodists, Baptists, URC as well as the Church of England.[31] This was the first such body in the world. The North American Consultation on Common Texts (CCT) was not formed until 1964. Jasper had written in a letter to the Archbishop of York, "Time, labor and energy might well be saved if only we would all stop doing our work in splendid isolation. To put it at its very crudest, if we worried a little more about what Scotland is actually doing and a little less about what we think Hippolytus did, we might get somewhere. If needs be, we can study Hippolytus together."[32] There were no Roman Catholic representatives at that first meeting in 1963, but this was quickly remedied as the pace of producing new texts increased.

By the winter of 1964 Jasper had succeeded Archbishop Coggan of York as Chairman of the Church of England Liturgical Commission. Arising out of the ecumenical connections he was now building up, Jasper invited two lay Roman Catholics, who were members of the Liturgical Translation Committee for the RC Church in England, to attend meetings of the Commission as observers. He, in turn, was invited by Bishop Gordon Wheeler to attend meetings of the Translation Committee. This Committee produced texts which were used in the British Isles until the first work of ICEL was available. The Committee was very proud of the fact that these earliest texts were ecumenical due to Jasper's contributions.[33]

[22] D. GRAY, *Earth and Altar...*, *op. cit.,* 226.

[23] J.R.K. FENWICK and B.D. SPINKS, *Worship in Transition: The Twentieth Century Liturgical Movement* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995) 28.

[24] THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LITURGICAL COMMISSION, *Alternative Services: Second Series* (London: SPCK, 1965).

[25] A. BUGNINI, *The Reform of the Liturgy 1948-1975* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press,1990) 37.

[26] J.D. CRICHTON, *The Church's Worship: Considerations on the Liturgical Constitution of the Second Vatican Council* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1965) 3.

[27] P. BYRNE, "Pastoral Benefits of English in our Liturgy" in P.C. FINN and J.M. SCHELLMAN, eds., *Shaping English Liturgy* (Washington: The Pastoral Press, 1990) 283-284.

[28] F.R. McMANUS, "ICEL: The First Years" in P.C. FINN and JM SCHULMAN, *Shaping English...*, *op. cit.,* 435.

[29] K. HUGHES, "Godfrey Diekmann 'Man Fully Alive'" in R.L. TUZIK, ed., *How Firm a Foundation: Leaders of the Liturgical Movement* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1990).

[30] D. GRAY, *Ronald Jasper: His Life, His Work and the ASB* (London: SPCK, 1997).

[31] *Ibid.,* 77-78.

[32] *Ibid.,* 77.

[33] *Ibid.,* 80-81.

In 1966, as a result of Michael Ramsey's historic visit to Rome, an invitation was issued for two observers from the Anglican Communion to attend the Consilium which had been charged with the task of working out the practical consequences for the implication of the Constitution on the Liturgy. The appointed observers were Dr Jasper and Dr Massey Shepherd from the ECUSA; also invited were Max Thurian from Taizé, Pastor Kunnuth of the LWF, and Raymond George (an English Methodist) representing WCC. Bugnini said of them "They were the first to arrive at the meetings, the last to leave the hall. They were always affable, polite, sparing of words, and ready to engage in a friendly way in any conversation that might be requested" said Archbishop Annibale Bugnini, the Secretary of the Consilium.[34]

While in Rome for the Consilium the English-speaking, non-Roman Catholic observers had been attending the meetings of ICEL. The work was of the greatest interest to all of them, not least Jasper whose Church of England Commission had just surmounted what he chose to call the "thee/thou hump." That is, a decision had been made to abandon the attempt to write liturgy for the 20th century in a Tudor pastiche.[35] But in this the Church of England realized it should not go it alone. They were already committed to the work of JLG, were aware of the CCT (in the United States) and now there was this fascinating work being undertaken by ICEL. It was a RC priest, Fr Gerald Sigler (the Secretary of ICEL) who was the main instigator of squaring this particular liturgical circle. He suggested that there should be a meeting of representatives of JLG, CCT, ICEL and Concilium observers. Out of that came the International Consultation on English Texts (ICET).[36]

This body moved quickly and decisively and produced three editions of a booklet entitled *Prayers we have in Common*.[37] Its contents were immediately and widely adopted; the texts being incorporated into the revised prayer books of all English-speaking churches. The common texts were appropriated and included in the work of ICEL, used throughout the Anglican Communion, and in the Methodist, Presbyterian and Reformed traditions world-wide. It was, and is, a major success story, one of the most practical and tangible fruits of the modern ecumenical movement.[38]

The production of common texts is a task which is commended in the 1993 Ecumenical Directory where it is stated that, "Churches and ecclesiastical Communities whose members live within a culturally homogeneous area should draw up together, where possible, a text of the most important Christian Prayers." It goes on to list the Lord's Prayer, Apostles' and the Nicean Creeds as well as a Trinitarian Doxology and the Glory to God in the Highest. These would be both for regular use by all the Churches or at least on ecumenical occasions[39] More recently the Holy Father in his encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* has said:

> Love is the great undercurrent which gives life and adds vigor to the movement towards unity. This love *finds its most complete expression in common prayer* (italics in original)[40]
>
> Along the ecumenical path to unity, pride and place certainly belong to common prayer, the prayerful union of those who gather together around Christ himself.[41]

In 1980 that process of liturgical revision in the Church of England, which I have described at length, came to an end. Seventy-four years after those Letters of Business had been issued to the Convocations *The Alternative Service Book* was authorised for use.[42] Some of us might believe that this long gestation period was providential. That the 1927/28 disasters, traumatic as they were at the time, proved to be a merciful deliverance. It certainly meant that the 1980 book now contained all those ecumenically agreed ICET texts. I would dare to call that infinitely providential.

Yet it was never intended that *The Alternative Service Book* was to remain unchanged for 400 years, like the Book of Common Prayer, and so liturgical work has continued in the Church of England over the past twenty years. Equally unwilling to remain at a standstill were the ecumenical liturgical partners who had formed ICET. That body was reincarnated in 1983 as ELLC (the English Language Liturgical Consultation — avoiding the confusion between ICEL and ICET). This body was tasked with monitoring and assessing the acceptance of the ICET common texts, and furthermore to look at the effect of the second great liturgical and linguistic challenge after the "thee/thou hump" — inclusive language. The result of our work was published as *Praying Together* in 1988.[43] Once again, this work has had wide acceptance. In the Church of England the texts, with only minor amendments, are part and parcel of our new *Common Worship* authorised in 2000. Other parts of the Anglican Communion have followed suit, as have recent Presbyterian and Reformed revisions. And, of course, the drafts of the Revised Sacramentary

[34] A. BUGNINI, *The Reform...*, *op. cit.,* 200.

[35] R.C.D. JASPER, *The Development...*, *op. cit.,* 293.

[36] D. GRAY, *Ronald Jasper..*, *op. cit.,* 85-88.

[37] INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION ON ENGLISH TEXTS, *Prayers We Have in Common, Agreed Liturgical Texts* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970) revised enlarged ed. 1971, 2nd revised ed. 1975.

[38] D. GRAY, *Ronald Jasper...*, *op cit.,* 87.

[39] PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM AD CHRISTIANORUM UNITATEM FOVENDAM, *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 1993) 187.

[40] JOHN PAUL II, *Ut Unum Sint. Encyclical Letter of the Holy Father on Commitment to Ecumenism* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995) 21.

[41] *Ibid.,* 22.

[42] R.C.D. JASPER, *The Development...*, *op. cit.,* 360.

[43] ENGLISH LANGUAGE LITURGICAL CONSULTATION, *Praying Together. A Revision of 'Prayers We Have in Common' (ICET 1975)* (Norwich: The Canterbury Press, 1988).

have included the ecumenical texts, as affirmed and described by Mark Francis and Keith Pecklers.[44] Your ecumenical friends and liturgical colleagues hold their breath with you regarding the outcome of that particular saga.

It is also true that we shed tears together over our continuing divisions and long for a swift ending of them. In the meanwhile as we trudge, sometimes wearily, along the road which *must* lead to full communion and eucharistic fellowship — because it is our Lord's will and nothing can finally thwart that — the existence of texts which "we have in common," which we can "pray together," is of the greatest possible encouragement. Think of two of those texts: we have a common form of the Creed, which means we can profess our faith in common words, we can affirm our common belief in identical phrases. Secondly, at the very heart of the Eucharist, when we join with the angels and archangels and all the company of heaven; when we blend our voices with the holy doctors, martyrs and confessors of our churches, the saints known to us and unknown, our loved ones departed; at that timeless moment we sing in *common* words of adoration, humility, awesome praise and wonder. That has got to be a matter of the greatest possible joy — and a sign of God's blessing upon us in this particular work. For, remember, the earliest apostles broke bread together — and — had *all* things in common.[45]

[44] G.W. LATHROP, "The Revised Sacramentary in Ecumenical Affirmation and Admonition" in M.R. FRANCIS and K.F. PECKLERS, eds., *Liturgy for the New Millennium: A Commentary on the Revised Sacramentary* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2000).

[45] *Acts* 2:44-47.

CC Centro Conferences

Liturgical Renewal, Separated Sisters, and Christian Unity

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Introduction

Of the trinity of terms that is my title, the middle one, "Separated Sisters," holds what I assume distinguishes my lecture from all others within this series. "Separated sisters" probably also is the term in my title most in need of an explanation. Let me begin, then, with the "separated sisters," and subsequently look to what is at the right hand, and at the left hand of these separated sisters (at least title-wise). At the end, I will come back to my initial trinity of terms and see whether a *perichoresis*, a mutual indwelling of these three is at all workable.

"Separated Sisters" — this oxymoron was coined during the Second Vatican Council when the absence of **women** auditors at the Council first came to be recognized as a problem.[1] The expression obviously is modeled on the term created by Pope John XXIII and adopted by the Council for its new ecumenical vision: non-Roman Catholic Christians now were designated as "separated brethren" (a definite improvement over the previous terminology which defined them as either schismatics or heretics). The two conciliar terms, "separated sisters" and "separated brethren," witnessed to painful ecclesial fragmentations. "Separated brethren" pointed to Christians outside the confines of the Roman Catholic Church. "Separated sisters," on the other hand, did not designate non-Roman Catholic Christian women, but Roman Catholic women as "outsiders" within their own church. The dis-unity embodied by the "separated brethren" and the "separated sisters" respectively thus follows different lines. One centers on denominational divisions, while the other highlights asymmetrical gender divisions as a source of dis-unity and fragmentation.

I take the notion of "separated sisters" as a starting point for my analysis of the conflictual interplay between ecumenical, liturgical, and women-identified visions. As a Roman Catholic woman theologian and liturgical scholar committed to an ecumenical vision, I interpret women-identified concerns as one form of faithfull struggle for the wholeness of the church. That is to say, I claim women-identified concerns as an essential part of the ecumenical vision in the twenty-first century. At the same time, women-identified voices obviously challenge the more traditional ecumenical vision of "unity." A look at the historical development of women-identified voices and the ecumenical vision helps to trace these challenges.

"Separated Sisters" and Christian Unity

To put the historical narrative in a nutshell: women are no latecomers or strangers to ecumenism, even if many narratives of the Ecumenical Movement suggest so. In fact, the history of the Ecumenical Movement in the twentieth century can be told in such a way that women become visible as integral "movers" right from the start.[2] The beginnings of women's crucial contributions to the Ecumenical Movement can, in fact, nicely be pinpointed to a **liturgical** initiative, the Women's World Day of Prayer. This first ecumenical liturgical initiative of modern times was initiated well before the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The inception of the Women's World Day of Prayer goes back to Mary Allen James, an American Presbyterian, who was president of a women's home mission board. In 1887, James called on other women to join in a day of prayer for "home missions." This day of prayer became an annual event. Three years later, two Baptist women, Helen Barrett Montgomery and Lucy Peabody, called for a similar day of prayer for "foreign missions." The idea of women uniting in prayer around the world and across denominational lines spread rapidly. In 1927 this day of prayer officially became the Women's World Day of Prayer. It is still celebrated to this day, on the first Friday in March, all over the world.

The origins of this World Day of Prayer lie in a field which women had successfully struggled to enter in the nineteenth century, namely the mission field. This, of course, is also the field that birthed the Ecumenical Movement proper. Not surprisingly, women were present from the earliest inception of the movement – even if their presence was not without constraints. At the first World Conference on Faith and Order in Lausanne in 1927, for

[1] See the book by G. HEINZELMANN, *Die getrennten Schwestern: Frauen nach dem Konzil* (Zürich: Interfeminas-Verlag, 1967). For more on the women who did, in the end, attend the Council as auditors, see C.E. McENROY, *Guests in Their Own House: The Women of Vatican II* (New York: Crossroads, 1996).

[2] This story has been told in a variety of ways, e.g., S. HERZEL, *A Voice for Women: The Women's Department of the World Council of Churches* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981); M.A. MAY, *Bonds of Unity: Women, Theology, and the Worldwide Church* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989) 15-58; P. WEBB, *She Flies Beyond: Memories and Hopes of Women in the Ecumenical Movement*, Risk Book, 56 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1993).

example, one of the women delegates, Lucy Gardner, presented a memorandum stating that "it has been laid upon the hearts of the women delegates to ask the Conference to realize the significance of the fact that out of nearly 400 delegates only seven are women"[3] — a very unthreatening way of describing the underrepresentation of women in the Ecumenical Movement!

When the World Council of Churches began to take shape in the 1930s, women initiated a worldwide questionnaire. This questionnaire, first formulated by the American Presbyterian Twila McCrea Cavert, inquired into the status and participation of women in the different churches. Based on the answers to this questionnaire, Sarah Chakko (1905-1954), a Syrian Orthodox Christian from India, presented a report to the founding assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam. Chakko was not the only woman who shaped the Amsterdam assembly. Kathleen Bliss from Great Britain drafted a preliminary assembly message including the famous sentence "We intend to stay together." That a woman wrote a first draft of the assembly message led to "prolonged laughter" in Rome, where a Roman Catholic visitor to the assembly had related that fact.[4] It is not surprising that it took twenty years for Roman Catholic women themselves to enter into sustained relations with the World Council of Churches. A Women's Ecumenical Liaison Group was created in 1968, but it was short-lived. There were, of course, Roman Catholic women committed to the vision of Christian unity well before then. Two examples of such women are Mother Lurana White S.A. (+ 1935), co-foundress of the Society of the Atonement at Graymoor which is dedicated to unity, and the Trappist Maria Gabriella Sagheddu (1914-1939) who chose to offer her life for the unity of the Church. Pope John Paul II beatified Sagheddu in 1983; she is also mentioned in the 1995 papal encyclical dedicated to ecumenism, *Ut Unum Sint* as an exemplary model of the importance of prayer for unity.

To continue the historical development of women-identified voices and the ecumenical vision: the 1960s were a watershed decade, not only in the Roman Catholic Church and in the Ecumenical Movement, but also in women's lives which underwent profound changes due to major cultural shifts. In the churches, women begin to develop a consciously women-identified ("feminist") theological vision, suspicious of facile band-aid approaches to the ecclesial marginalization of women. With the seventies, a feminist ecumenical vision increasingly takes shape. This feminist ecumenical vision soon becomes a conflictual presence in the Ecumenical Movement,[5] ever-strengthening in theological conviction and imaginative expertise but also calling forth sustained negative reactions and resistance. With the 1980s it is clear, however, that women's voices are there to stay in the Ecumenical Movement. The most visible recognition of this fact is the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988-1998) — even if much of the decade was one of women in solidarity with the churches rather than the other way around.

Let me draw this sketch to a close. Obviously I have only scratched the surface of the historical development of women-identified voices and the ecumenical vision. The point of this historical narrative nevertheless should be clear: women have always moved the Ecumenical Movement, even if not without constraints. In the last four decades, women's visions have developed in distinct ways, challenging the traditional ecumenical paradigm at crucial points. Women force certain subjects on the ecumenical agenda, such as women's ministries in the churches, including ministries of oversight. Women question the established discourse of unity, suspicious that the envisioned unity masks an ecclesial reality that is not fully supportive of women's flourishing. What good is a unity that is also a unity of the marginalization of women? Women engender a new ecumenical vocabulary ("round-table," "living letters," "mending of creation") and new practices of discourse. Women privilege new conversation partners, especially poor women, and women from different faith traditions.[6] One of the responses to these challenges has been to brand-mark women and "women's issues" as ecumenical trouble-makers par excellence. Women are accused of rocking the ecumenical boat and of threatening emerging ecumenical convergences. One "water way" that has proved particularly rocky for women in the ecumenical boat (and in the ecclesial boat more generally) is the waters of liturgy. Let me, then, add the third part of the trinity of terms that is my title, "Liturgical Renewal."

Separated Sisters and Liturgical Renewal

If the twentieth century was the century of the Ecumenical Movement, it certainly also was the century of the Liturgical Movement. The Second Vatican Council, in fact, acknowledged both these movements as movements of the Holy Spirit through the church (SC 43; UR 1,4). One of the defining features of this century was the irruption of women into liturgical practice and discourse. The classical Liturgical Movement had gained official ground in the church particularly since the 1940s (as I have shown elsewhere, women were peculiarly active in this movement from

[3] Quoted in H.N. BATE, ed., *Faith and Order: Proceedings of the World Conference, Lausanne, August 3-21, 1927* (London/NY: Student Christian Movement/G.H. Doran, 1927) 372.

[4] The story is told by Willem Visser't Hooft, in HERZEL, *A Voice for Women*, 10.

[5] See, for example, C.F. PARVEY, "The Continuing Significance of the Community of Women and Men in the Church Study: Its Mixed Meanings for the Church," in T.F. BEST, ed., *Beyond Unity-in-Tension: Unity, Renewal and the Community of Women and Men*, Faith and Order Paper, 138 (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1988) 34-43.

[6] See M. GREY, "Ist der Dialog eine notwendige epistemologische Voraussetzung für die Findung der Wahrheit? Eine Feministische Perspektive," *Ökumenische Rundschau* 42, 2 (1993) 196-208.

its inception onward[7]). With the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, the Liturgical Movement bore its most highly visible immediate fruit. This Constitution and the liturgical reforms which followed engendered much ecumenical hope,[8] so much so that an ecumenical theologian could claim enthusiastically: "La grande speranza dell'ecumenismo è la liturgia."[9]

The self-description of women as "separated sisters," however, suggests a more complex vision both of ecumenical and of liturgical developments. As women began to develop a self-consciously women-identified ecumenical vision in the 1960s, so they also began to interpret the call to *actuosa participatio* in the liturgy in women-identified ways. They confronted a painful experience: the renewed liturgy did not seem that much more hospitable to women's lives — especially given the now quickly changing nature of those lives — than the Tridentine liturgy had been. Interestingly, this experience of liturgical ambiguity came to be felt by women across denominational lines. A grassroots ecumenical experience of women's shared concerns with the liturgical lives of their churches emerges. Denominational divisions recede into the background as women encounter liturgical marginalization across their various ecclesial communities. Initially, women's questionings were concentrated on individual elements. Women started with the basic acknowledgment that they were all but invisible as authoritative liturgical subjects. Although they would often be the majority of those present at worship, they were not re-presented as women. Examples of this liturgical invisibility of women were the fact that leadership was almost exclusively in the hands of men, and that the language used in and for the liturgical assembly was usually in the masculine. In the Roman Catholic Church, androcentric language became especially noticeable with the early translations of liturgical books from Latin (generally not understood by women) into the vernacular — a vernacular that was changing in gender-attentive ways precisely at the point at which these translations took place but of which they showed little evidence. And scrutiny of the liturgy grew as feminist tools of analysis grew sharper. The early problems noted (e.g., the absence of women from liturgical leadership, and exclusive language) soon were joined by more subtle ones. The limited and stereotypical selection of biblical stories about women in the lectionary was one of these problems. Added to the absences soon were problematic presences. Women began to resist certain Scripture passages read and then proclaimed unquestioningly from the pulpit. They also found little help in women saints stereotypically honored for their virginity, humility, and self-effacement. On the other side of the spectrum of problematic liturgical presences, many women found various confessions of sins with their focus on pride, self-determination, and will-power distinctly male-oriented and detrimental to their own beginning discovery of self. These women lost interest in confessing sins that their own subject formation and cultural context did not really allow them to commit in the first place.

Even the argument that worship at heart never was nor is primarily about saints, sermons, or sins, but about the Living God did not help for long. At the heart of worship, women began to confront a God who was imaged and addressed almost exclusively in the masculine. These same women, however, had discovered that the Christian tradition knew feminine images for the Living God, from the early Christian image of the eucharist as God's breast-milk.[10] to medieval images of Jesus as mother and as a woman in labor who births new life on the cross.[11] Unfortunately, the liturgy seemed to know nothing about these images nor be hospitable to their rediscovery.

In short, a growing feminist consciousness had brought recognition of wide-ranging concerns for women at worship. That there was "a problem" for women at worship slowly began to be acknowledged, but depending on how acute and pervasive it was seen to be, the responses differed widely. At the level of liturgical reforms, there has been some openness to acknowledge women-identified concerns, and actual proposals for reform have begun to be affected by women's concerns, be it in relation to liturgical ministries, lectionaries, liturgical language, or the shape and content of rituals as a whole. In what follows, I want to highlight four areas that I see as either indispensable or as fruitful ground for the intersection of ecumenical, liturgical, and women-identified concerns.

Lectionary Lacunae

Much promising ecumenical work has been done on lectionary readings in and between the churches. Much less work has been done on the occlusion of women-identified readings present in all cycles of readings in the Christian tradition. The Scriptures themselves, after all, have a decidedly androcentric bias. That is to say, the textual representation of women in our scriptural canon is limited. This androcentric bias of the biblical witness is **heightened** by the choice of passages for reading in the liturgy. I take my own tradition, the Roman Catholic Church, as an example. The lectionary that governs the choice of readings in my church — and that means: in more than half of Christianity(!) — simply has not attended carefully enough to biblical stories

[7] See T. BERGER, *Women's Ways of Worship: Gender Analysis and Liturgical History* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999) 69-108.

[8] For more, see T. BERGER, "Ecumenism and the Liturgy," in P.E. FINK, ed., *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1990) 385-390.

[9] P. TAMBURRINO, "Lex orandi – Lex credendi. Per un discorso liturgico nell'ecumenismo," *Rivista Liturgica* 68, 3 (1981) 313-321, here 321.

[10] *Cf.* J. BETZ, „Die Eucharistie als Gottes Milch in frühchristlicher Sicht," *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 106 (1984) 1-26, 167-185.

[11] Balthasar FISCHER is unusual among liturgical scholars in having paid attention to this research, see his "Jesus, unsere Mutter," in A. GERHARDS and A. HEINZ, eds., *Frömmigkeit der Kirche. Gesammelte Studien zur christlichen Spiritualität*, Hereditas, 17 (Bonn: Borengässer, 2000) 91-102.

about women and their faith.[12] An example is the following omissions of biblical women's stories from the lectionary readings (I take as my material the lectionary for the Roman Catholic Dioceses in the United States[13]).

The story of the two Hebrew midwives Shiphrah and Puah, who set the scene for the Exodus by defying Pharaoh, is simply cut out from the liturgical reading of Exodus 1:8-22. The lectionary reading of this passage jumps from verse 14 to verse 22, thus "disappearing" Shiphrah and Puah from sight. As a result, the liturgical assembly will not hear the stories and names of these women, although in a wonderful irony of history the biblical witness **does** remember their names while it has forgotten the name of "the pharaoh." There are other lectionary omissions of women's stories in the midst of longer narratives. Such omissions have rendered invisible, among others, the Hebrew prophet Hulda (2 Kings 22:14-20). Hulda's story is that of a temple prophet who is asked to validate a scroll found in the temple during repairs. Feminist scholars have argued that through this validation, Hulda, in fact, authorizes what will become the core of our Scriptures: "Her validation of a text … stands as the first recognizable act in the long process of canon formation".[14] Our lectionary thinks nothing of Hulda's authoritative act. Unfortunately, Hulda, Shiphrah, and Puah are not alone.

There are other women whom the lectionary renders invisible in its choice of texts, such as Phoebe, the co-worker of the apostle Paul and "deacon" or "minister" of the church at Cenchreae (Rom 16:1). The prophet Deborah, a judge and military leader of Israel, also is not allowed to speak to a liturgical assembly, although Deborah is a decisive figure in Israel's settling in Canaan. In the Book of Judges, Deborah's deeds fill two whole chapters (Judg 4-5). The lectionary, however, knows nothing of this woman. Similarly, short excerpts from the Book of Ruth appear only twice in the lectionary, and then only in weekday liturgies. This is especially unfortunate since Ruth (re-)appears in the New Testament as a foremother of Jesus (Mt 1:5), making her one of only four women named in the genealogy of the Messiah. Weekdays are also the only times that we hear from Esther, the Jewish exile who becomes queen of the Persian empire and with her resourcefulness and courage saves her people. Like Esther, Judith too is an undocumented alien in the lectionary. In the lectionary choice of readings, we simply find no trace of this woman who saved her people (except within the common of saints).

The lectionary furthermore assigns women's stories the status of "optional" in a number of readings, that is to say, these women's stories form part of a longer biblical passage which may be shortened by the presider if he[!] considers the passage too long. The presence of the prophet Anna at the presentation of Jesus in the temple (Lk 2:36-38) thus is rendered "optional," as is the woman with a hemorrhage who is healed by Jesus (Mark 5:25-34). The same applies to the beautiful parable in which Jesus likens the coming of God's reign to a woman baking (Mt 13:33). This passage, too, is optional on the only Sunday when it might be read, although it is one of the few biblical texts which show Jesus drawing on women's everyday lives to image God's reign. There are yet other ways in which women's presence in the Scriptures and the lectionary readings come to be veiled. Take the reading of Proverbs 31 as just one example. The lectionary omits precisely those verses that show the woman of Proverbs 31 as a powerful and productive household manager, and focuses instead on her service to her husband.

Let me draw this analysis to a close. It should be clear by now that there are women-identified problems in our lectionary readings, certainly in those of the Roman Catholic Church. Any ecumenical liturgical work that does not attend to these problems cannot be said to confront the brokenness of the church's life in all necessary depth. Wherever ecumenical liturgical work **does** attend to these problems,[15] all churches do well listen and learn.

Holy Women and Women Today

The veneration of saints is a second liturgical area in which issues of gender representation not only are a given, but which also has proved fruitful as common ground among women from widely differing ecclesial traditions. The last decades have witnessed a growing interest in holy women, our foremothers in the faith, across denominational lines and beyond.[16] Even in ecclesial traditions without a sustained liturgical practice of the veneration of the saints, women have found the rediscovery of their foremothers in the faith an important element in their women-identified spirituality. As an ecumenical experience, this remembering of holy women among women is not necessarily something that functions on the level of official liturgical reforms

[12] For detailed analyses, see R.A. BOISCLAIR, "Amnesia in the Catholic Sunday Lectionary: Women — Silenced from the Memories of Salvation History," in M.A. HINSDALE and P.H. KAMINSKI, eds., *Women and Theology*, College Theology Society, 40 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995) 109-135; M. PROCTER-SMITH, "Images of Women in the Lectionary," in E.SCHÜSSLER FIORENZA, ed., *The Power of Naming: A Concilium Reader in Feminist Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996) 175-186; R. FOX, "Women in the Bible and the Lectionary," in *Remembering the Women: Women's Stories from the Scripture for Sundays and Festivals*, compiled and annotated J.F. HENDERSON (Chicago: LTP, 1999) 359-367.

[13] I am using the table of readings of the *Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, Second Typical Edition. Vol. 1: Sundays, Solemnities, Feasts of the Lord and the Saints. Study Edition* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998).

[14] C.V. CAMP, "Hulda," in C. MEYERS *et al.*, eds., *Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, and the New Testament* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000) 96.

[15] Not surprisingly, the *Revised Common Lectionary* of 1992 does provide a richer fare of women's stories than the Roman Catholic *Lectionary for Mass*. For more, see F. WEST, *Scripture and Memory: The Ecumenical Hermeneutic of the Three-Year Lectionaries* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1997) 143, 146-149, 171.

[16] An example is the interest in Hildegard of Bingen in ecological circles.

(in most calendars, images of holy women in the liturgical calendar continue to follow very traditional constructions of female sanctity anyway[17]). The "current resurgence of women's practices of memory"[18] is more readily visible at the grassroots and in women's lived lives. Let me give just one example. In the past few years, women in many places and from a variety of different churches and ecclesial communities have begun to gather on the feast day of Saint Mary of Magdala (in the Roman Catholic calendar: July 22). This biblical woman until quite recently was known more through the eyes of a tradition that had framed her as a prostitute than through the biblical story itself that remembers her as the first witness to the resurrection. Today, women gather on July 22 to celebrate Mary of Magdala as the woman who stands at the beginning of resurrection faith and rightly bears the title "apostle to the apostles."

One of the promises the liturgical calendar holds for women from all traditions is such invitations to celebrate women of faith who have gone before. As with most of the church's liturgical life in relation to women, however, the sanctoral cycle and its women saints, too, are not without problems. To begin with, the process of canonization throughout history clearly has been male-dominated, one of the reasons for the underrepresentation of women in the sanctoral cycle. Furthermore, many of the women who were included in the calendar conform to a certain stereotypical depiction of female sanctity: their piety centers, on the one hand, on obedience and submission to the church and, on the other hand, on stark practices of self-effacement, especially sexual and food renunciations (no wonder, then, that no woman was counted among those saints recognized by the church for their **teaching** authority until Saint Teresa of Avila was named such a "teacher of the church" by Pope Paul VI in 1970). The recovery of holy women and the celebration of their memory as an ecumenical liturgical practice of women today thus have to proceed with careful and critical analysis of how the memory of these women has been "traditioned" in the past.

Liturgical Language, Gender, and Ambiguity

A third issue readily comes to mind at the intersection of ecumenical, liturgical, and women-identified concerns, namely that of liturgical language. This issue has garnered a lot of attention ever since the 1970s, with all the contestation that such attention involves. It is worth noting that *Liturgiam Authenticam* devotes a whole section to "gender" in relation to liturgical language, thus proving the importance of the issue, if nothing else. Language, of course, is not an abstract universal (even if *Liturgiam Authenticam* seems to treat it as such), but time-sensitive, region-specific, and always spoken by human beings who live particular and gendered lives.

A point at which questions of gender and liturgical language have surfaced in ecumenical conversations is the naming of the Holy Trinity at baptism. Feminist theologies had for many years raised questions over exclusively male God-language.[19] In a couple of North American ecclesial communities these questions led to alternative trinitarian formulas in baptism, such as baptism simply into the "name of the Holy Trinity," or "the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer." Ecumenically, this change is sensitive, since many Christian communities link the validity of baptism to the traditional formula (which is not that traditional, however: until the seventh century, there was a three-fold interrogation, affirmation, and dipping or effusion rather than the one formula we now consider to be "tradition"[20]). In its statements on baptism, the Ecumenical Movement has, at most, simply noted such alternative baptismal formulas as a concern.[21]

But what if one wanted to go beyond the purely descriptive statements? As a feminist theologian and liturgical scholar, I begin with the acknowledgment that "the trinitarian tradition, like the Bible, is *both* the source of revelatory truth about the mystery of God *and* a powerful resource for patriarchal culture".[22] This very ambiguity suggests that the trinitarian formula at baptism does **not** need to be read as inherently patriarchal, that is as assigning maleness to God.[23] The richness of our tradition tells a different story. What remains unclear is whether the baptismal liturgies of the churches adequately mirror that richness. An insistence on the traditional wording of the trinitarian name in baptism at minimum would need to be accompanied by an insistence that the baptismal liturgies of the churches signal at other points that male-dominated language falls under the same judgement as any other gender-specific or ungendered language about God: it is limited. Any and every affirmative statement human language can make about God also has to be open to being negated. For the traditional trinitarian formula, that would most easily be accomplished if our baptismal liturgies at other points

[17] *Cf.* I. PAHL, "'Eine starke Frau, wer wird sie finden?' Aspekte des Frauenbildes in den Meßformularen der Heiligenfeste," in T. BERGER & A. GERHARDS, eds., *Liturgie und Frauenfrage. Ein Beitrag zur Frauenforschung aus liturgiewissenschaftlicher Sicht*, Pietas Liturgica, 7 (St. Ottilien: EOS-Verlag, 1990) 433-452; M.D. WHALEN, "In the Company of Women? The Politics of Memory in the Liturgical Commemorations of Saints – Male and Female," *Worship* 73, 6 (1999) 482-504.

[18] E.A. JOHNSON, *Friends of God and Prophets: A Feminist Theological Reading of the Communion of Saints* (NY/London: Continuum/SCM, 1998) 26.

[19] See R.C. DUCK, *Gender and the Name of God: The Trinitarian Baptismal Formula* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1991). For recent comments on this topic, see G. RAMSHAW, "In the Name: Towards Alternative Baptismal Idioms," J.A. ZIMMERMAN, ed., *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy Annual Meeting 2002*, 143-154.

[20] *Cf.* D. HOLETON, "Changing the Baptismal Formula: Feminist Proposals and Liturgical Implications," *Ecumenical Trends* 17, 5 (1988) 69-72.

[21] See, for example, a draft of a working group of the Commission on Faith and Order of the WCC, "One Baptism: Toward Mutual Recognition of Christian Initiation" (Faverges 2001) 68.

[22] C.M. La CUGNA, "The Baptismal Formula, Feminist Objections, and Trinitarian Theology," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 26, 2 (1989) 235-290, here 238.

[23] *Cf.* C.M. La CUGNA, *ibid.*, 243.

included more faithfully the fullness and richness of our tradition, including, for example, the feminine images for God and for Jesus Christ known to earlier centuries. The weight of ambiguity born by the traditional baptismal formula ("*both* the source of revelatory truth about the mystery of God *and* a powerful resource for patriarchal culture") could thus be lessened.

Women's Lived Lives and Liturgy

A fourth area of possible ecumenical liturgical ground is the representation (or lack thereof) of women's lived lives in newer liturgies. Some confessional families have begun to include women-identified imagery in their liturgical texts, often drawing on a rich tradition of such imagery particularly in relationship to baptism. One example is the Thanksgiving over the Water in the *United Methodist Hymnal*'s "Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant." This Thanksgiving over the Water, which celebrates salvation history by retelling it as a water-way, contains the following sentence: "In the fullness of time you sent Jesus, nurtured in the water of a womb".[24] The waters of a pregnant woman's body are here inscribed as a part of God's salvation history. Particularly in the baptism of children, who come to the waters of new birth in temporal proximity to the breaking of waters in their mother's wombs, this is a powerful recognition. The same United Methodist service book also uses birthing imagery in a eucharistic prayer. In the anamnesis, God is imaged as birthing the church in the paschal mystery: "By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you [God] gave birth to your church".[25] To mention just one other example of a maternal image for God's redemptive work, this time from a different confessional family: in the Reformed *Book of Common Worship*, the epiclesis in the Thanksgiving over the Water asks God: "Pour out your holy Spirit upon us and upon this water, that this font may be your womb of new birth."[26] Again, a maternal image is used: God has a womb and gives birth. Granted, in many ways these are very traditional liturgical images. It is precisely the maternal, and correspondingly natality, that become the key feminine symbols for God and for our entry into new life. No doubt the danger of a stereotypical reduction of women's lived lives lurks just around the corner. And yet, as not only feminist philosophers of religion but also the Pope have recently stressed: natality, being born of a woman, is at the heart of all human existence. Grace Jantzen puts this forcefully: "every person who has ever lived has been born, and born of a woman. Natality is a fundamental human condition. It is even more basic to our existence than the fact that we will die, since death presupposes birth".[27] It would be very odd indeed to celebrate liturgy without metaphors of natality, even if women's lives need to be images and represented liturgically with richer metaphors than those of maternity and natality alone.

So much for my four examples at the intersection of ecumenical, liturgical, and women-identified concerns. It will by now be clear that I do not offer an easy vision of how to gather my trinity of terms, liturgical renewal, separated sisters, and Christian unity. There is no elegant *perichoresis* or mutual indwelling and coinherence of all three that is readily available. Rather, their conflictual relationships need to be confronted, if only to create space where all three can flourish in the future. But given that I have to draw to a conclusion in the here and now, I want close with a non-beatific, clearly chastened vision of my trinity:

Ecumenism, Liturgy, and Women: No Easy Embrace

Obviously all three, the ecumenical vision of unity, women's activism in the churches, and liturgical renewal share at least one common theological concern. Broadly speaking, they center on ecclesiology, more specifically on ecclesial fragmentations and the corresponding search for the flourishing and the wholeness of the church. For the ecumenical paradigm, fragmentations among confessional bodies are the crucial rupture. The corresponding "good" is couched in the image of "unity." For women-identified concerns, the asymmetry of divisions between gendered bodies are the crucial fragmentations. The corresponding vision is one of well-being and flourishing for every "body," particularly women's bodies. For liturgical renewal, worship that is not clearly God-sustained and communal is a site of brokenness. The corresponding "good" is couched in the image of a liturgy in which "[t]he Spirit and the Church cooperate to manifest Christ and his work of salvation."[28]

All three forms of theological work can also be seen as a similar form of theology: they are self-consciously partisan, and they are prophetic denunciations of an ecclesial status quo. Beyond these shared ecclesiological concerns, however, there is no easy embrace in my trinity of terms, liturgy, ecumenism, and separated sisters. In order to understand the depth of difference between the three, let me glance back at the initial vision embraced by the Ecumenical Movement. For the early Ecumenical Movement, the unity of the church was at the heart of its message. Denominational divisions between the churches were recognized as sinful, as something that the Ecumenical Movement — in accordance with God's desire for the church —

[24] *The United Methodist Hymnal: Book of United Methodist Worship* (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989) 52.

[25] *The United Methodist Hymnal*, 9.

[26] THEOLOGY AND WORSHIP MINISTRY UNIT FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA) & THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, *Book of Common Worship* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993) 412.

[27] G.M. JANTZEN, *Becoming Divine: Towards a Feminist Philosophy of Religion* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 144. Pope John II emphasizes such a symbolic of natality in *Mulieris Dignitatem* 19: "The history of every human being passes through the threshold of a woman's motherhood; crossing it conditions 'the revelation of the children of God'" JOHN PAUL II, *Mulieris Dignitatem: On the Dignity and Vocation of Women*, in *Origins* 18:17 (1988), here 275.

[28] *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997, 2nd ed.) 1099, *cf.* 1108.

was seeking to overcome. The way to overcome these sinful divisions was the struggle for (theological) consensus among the churches. The central motif, unity, simply was accepted as a biblical mandate (*ut unum sint*, "that they may all be one," John 17:21). With the late 1960s, however, the ecumenical enthusiasm for unity began to undergo changes. Traditional ways of being church and conceptions of ecclesiology were questioned as Black Theology, Feminist Theology, and other Liberation Theologies "irrupted" into theological, and especially ecumenical discourse. These theologies began to conceive of the core ecumenical vision along new lines.

For women-identified theologies, for example, with their recognition of a deeply gendered asymmetry in the life of the church, confessional differences are not the central threat to the life of the church. There are other, inner threats: the ecclesial marginalization of women, the double oppression of poor and the triple oppression of racialized and poor women, the silencing of women's theological voices, to name just a few. Likewise, the vision of restored well-being for the church no longer centers exclusively on unity between denominationally divided bodies, but on wholeness, on healing, on life in abundance, and on the ecclesial flourishing of all, particularly of women. Finally, rather than relegating women's status to the margins, as one of the "non-theological" factors of the fragmentation of the church, women-identified theologians claim the opposite: an asymmetrical fragmentation of the church into women and men is a crucial **theological** problem of the **whole** church and has to be confronted as such.

Where do all these developments leave the original ecumenical vision? Or, to turn to the future, what kind of vision will sustain the ecumenical journey into the twenty-first century? Denominational divisions have lost their defining edge in the lives of many churches, while at the same time deep-seated other fragmentations **within** the churches have become visible. The classical ecumenical vision alone cannot sustain the church's journey into the twenty-first century. As every other theological vision, the classical ecumenical vision, too, has carried with it its own limitations, its culture-specific constraints, its complicity with wider socio-political shifts, its privileging of some and rendering invisible of others.

One could nevertheless claim that the basic problem the Ecumenical Movement tried to address since its inception has remained: there are fragmentations among and in the churches that mar and often seem to invalidate their message of the Gospel of Life. The beginnings of the twentieth century gifted the church with a heightened awareness of confessional divisions that mar the Body of Christ. Towards the end of the twentieth century, we were gifted with and challenged by a heightened awareness of manifold other ecclesial fragmentations. If, then, the ecumenical vision is to continue alive among the churches in the twenty-first century, it has to attend to **all** fragmentations that threaten the oikoumene. Such attendance demands the renarrating of the ecumenical vision in consciously contextual terms, a renarrating that validates the very different, always contextually defined fragmentations threatening specific churches or communities within. One of these fragmentations, which any ecumenism worth its name in the twenty-first century must acknowledge, is the ecclesial asymmetry between women and men. The identities of literally all churches have been shaped by a history of the marginalization of women — a historical ecumenism of women's invisibility, so to speak. Any ecumenical vision that does not address this fact perpetuates women's marginalization and can ultimately not claim truly to struggle for the unity of the church.

If liturgy, indeed, is the "fount and summit" of the churches' life, then here as in no other place, ecclesial disunity and fragmentation have to be healed. That healing has only just begun.