

Ministry in the Church

Presbyterian & Reformed-Roman Catholic Dialogue

October 30, 1971

1. *Introduction*

The Church of Jesus Christ is charged with the responsibility of living in the unity of his Spirit "so that the world may believe" (John 17:21). Seen against this responsibility, the present divisions within the Church constitute an intolerable scandal. The world to which the Church is sent is painfully divided, and yet earnestly seeking new forms of human unity. The inescapable fact of division within the Christian family contradicts the mission of the Church and the aspirations of modern man.

The common purpose which we have increasingly shared together since 1965 has made a genuine dialogue possible between us and brought us to a meeting of minds on many matters of faith and ministry. In talking to one another we each came to recognize in the ministry of the other rich and necessary elements which both of us affirm.

Neither of our traditions feels that church office is a purely humanistic institution or that Christians have a right to abolish it if they choose. Nor, in our view, may it be restructured solely to suit the wishes of church members or officers. The leadership of service in the offices of the Church is exercised in obedience to the Risen Christ who is present and operative for the healing and salvation of his people.

Such obedience, however, need not be resistant to change. This report, then, must be seen in the context of the Church's prayerful attempt to discern the future shape of her mission and ministry. In our discussions it has become increasingly clear to us that the Church's ministry, unordained and ordained, is far broader in scope and far more susceptible to change and adaptation to pressing pastoral needs than either of our theological traditions for centuries recognized in practice.

2. *The Unique Ministry of Jesus Christ*

In all that we say about Church and ministry we start with Christ himself and his own ministry. Because the ministry is in Christ it is then in the Church which is his Body.

The first to receive and continue the ministry of Christ were the Apostles, who, in proclaiming the Gospel, proclaimed what God had done in Jesus Christ in his incarnation, in his exaltation on the cross, in his resurrection from the dead, and in the cosmic restoration of all things in him. Those who participate in the ministry of Christ as exercised by the Apostles proclaim this Gospel to the world.

But the relation of ministers of the Word to the world is not simply one of those who speak as over against those who hear. Those who exercise this ministry must also listen to

what God says to the Church through the world. There is no ministry to the world by a Church which is uninvolved in the great pain of the world of which the Church is the servant. The servant role of the Church is a sign of the servant role of Christ, a role which in Christ embraces the paradoxical poles of humble service and exalted Lordship. "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant" (Mark 10:43), The Church's proclamation of Jesus as Lord should in no way tempt her to identify herself with that Lordship, but should be an invitation to be the servant of that Lord and the world.

The commissioning of the Apostles by Jesus Christ and the outpouring of his spirit at Pentecost mark the beginning of the Church's mission in the world. This mission will also have an end at the time of God's choosing when his purpose for the world will be finally and openly achieved. In the meantime, the Church lives between the ages, a new reality in the world because it is both a community in the world, and therefore bound by the contingencies of history, and a community in the Spirit, deriving thence its power, resilience, and hope for the future.

The servant Church exists to proclaim by its life and teaching the Gospel of the crucified and risen Lord to the whole world; to proclaim the Lordship and rule of Christ over all powers; to obey him; and to witness by its faith and life to the truth that the present age is yielding to the coming rule of God. Despite its weakness the Church is a sign that the Kingdom of God is a reality in this world.

3. The Ministry of the Whole Church

From the time of the Apostles the ministry of the whole Church has been adaptable. When the Church has been faithful to God's will the forms of ministry have often changed according to the concrete situation of the Christian community and the world. For the ministry is not an end in itself, nor is the Church an end in itself. It is the Kingdom of God and his purposes in the world that determine the functions of Church and ministry. These purposes embrace the deepest needs of men as known to Christ. Therefore, the identification of these needs is a problem to which the Church must address itself as it seeks the guidance of his Spirit.

There is a general ministry or common priesthood of all who are baptized, and this common priesthood provides the context in which we treat the ordained priesthood, or the specific ministry of Word and sacraments. For within the Christian community all the faithful are called and empowered by the Holy Spirit to enter into and express the ministry of Christ. There is a whole range of gifts of service and love, rich in their diversity, not limited to the few, but possessed by men and women, young and old alike. All Christians share in the grace of God's Spirit and the basic equality of the priestly people of God. It is our conviction that this doctrine of the common priesthood of the faithful needs to be magnified and lived out more fully within both our traditions. For the Holy Spirit works through all the people of God, calling them to their ministry.

4. The Ordained Ministry

Within the general ministry of the whole Church there are ministers called and ordained to represent Christ to the community and the community before Christ. Traditionally through the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the sacraments this special ministry endeavors to unite and order the Church for the ministry of the whole people of God. This calling of some to nourish, heal, and build up the household of faith through the ministry of Word and sacraments is one particular gift of the Holy Spirit. Ordination to this ministry is a commissioning of persons by the Church and an invocation of the Spirit to empower them for their ministry.

The ordained ministry has its origin in the call of the risen Christ, who gives some as special ministers for the upbuilding of the Church in its service to the world. For the faithful performance of this ministry the Church, in its ordination of ministers, prays with confidence for the bestowal of the corresponding grace of the Holy Spirit. This ordained ministry does not constitute a self-sustaining body, for all Christians belong to the one people of God, "brothers among brothers" ¹ but there is an essential distinction of function and service.²

Thus the ordained ministry exists to form, serve, and lead the community of which it is part, and by preaching the Word and celebrating the sacraments it seeks to do what Christ intends to be done. This ministry exists to serve the world, of which the Christian community is part, in obedience to the Lord who gives ministry, Church, and world their life, meaning and purpose.

We recognize that there are many differences still to be formulated and discussed. Nevertheless we should not allow these unresolved issues to obscure from us those elements which we hold in common as central to the ministry of Word and sacrament. At this point in our discussion these elements are: that the source of our ministry is the institution of Christ; that in the ordination liturgy the Holy Spirit is called upon to bestow the gifts this ministry requires; that ordination is a designation to the service of the Church in the world; that the act of ordination is not to be repeated.³

a. *Women in the Ordained Ministry*

The ministry is deeply involved in the historical situation of the Church, and has therefore been conditioned by the relativities of history. Because of the condition of women in society, their role in the Church has been marked by constant subordination.⁴ The Church has been unclear in its theological concept of woman and the consequence has been practical and juridical depreciation of her ministry.⁵ However, more and more women today strongly wish to share fully with men in all human responsibilities. The churches must respond creatively to this insistent demand by opening areas of ministry as far as possible to women.⁶ Because of the growing consensus among Roman Catholic⁷ and Reformed theologians⁸ that there is no insurmountable Biblical or dogmatic obstacle to the ordination of women, and because of our common insights into the present and future needs of the people of God, we conclude that ordination of women must be part of the Church's life.

Unfortunately, although the ordination of women has been accepted in principle by many Reformed churches, ambiguity remains, for such women as have been ordained have all too often been given positions of practical and juridical inferiority.⁹ If women, like men, are to exercise the ordained ministry of the Church to which many feel called, all positions of decision-making should be open to men and women alike.¹⁰

Since the problems and potentialities of the entry of women into the ministry of the Church, ordained as well as unordained, and indeed the full involvement of women in the whole of society, are in many ways common to all our churches, it is of the utmost importance that this issue be dealt with ecumenically as well as by each individual church.¹¹ Therefore, we recommend that an ecumenical commission composed of women and men be constituted by our churches: to study the role of women in church and society, especially the involvement of women in offices and leadership functions, both clerical and lay; to recommend corrective and innovative actions and programs in these areas; and to monitor their implementation.¹²

b. *Celibate and Married Representative Ministry*

One of the more vexed points of difference between our traditions has been whether the representative ordained minister ought to be celibate or married. It is our belief that our churches have, by a variety of historical circumstances, been faced with a false set of expectations, namely, either celibate or a married ordained ministry.

We know from New Testament evidence that in the earliest times even the *episkopoi* were married (e.g., 1 Tim. 3:2); indeed the custom of priests' marrying continued well into the Middle Ages even in Western Christianity, and to this very day in Eastern Christianity. But from the earliest times a great value was also placed on the contribution of a dedicated celibate (cf. e.g., Mt. 19:12; 1 Cor. 7), and likewise throughout the entire history of both Eastern and most Western Christianity. Thus, in Eastern Christianity up to the present, and in Western Christianity beyond the Ninth Century, the attitude of the Christian community (if not always of the official Church) toward the question of a married or celibate ordained ministry was that of "both and." The action of the Protestant Reformers broke with the tradition of celibacy and since that time marriage has been the normal and even expected state of Protestant clergy. The dichotomy between celibate priests and married ministers has, among other things, seriously damaged the effectiveness of the ordained representative ministry in both our traditions. The restriction of ministry to a single model is a problem shared by both communions.

Therefore, we recommend that an ecumenical commission be constituted by our churches to study the evangelical values both of celibacy and of a married clergy. Such study may well disclose the hidden influences of gnostic attitudes in which

sex and marriage have tended to be denigrated; and it may also disclose the values of a celibate life freely chosen for the sake of God's Kingdom, which have often been denigrated in the Reformed tradition.

5. *Structure of Ministry*

While the ordained ministry, like the ministry of the whole Christian people, derives from the ministry of Christ, the question of how Christ's ruling and governing ministry is to be carried out in the church has been variously answered. Should the Church, e.g., be governed by single bishops in dioceses, or by corporate bodies (as synods), or be radically decentralized? Here the central problem of authority and power in our several institutions is directly faced. It must be approached with an awareness of the possibilities of contemporary adaptation implied in the wide variety of ministerial structures found in the Church of the first centuries.¹³ There must also be sensitivity to the values and needs of the contemporary world.

In the 16th century the Reformed churches rejected the late medieval forms of episcopacy for a number of reasons. Since in their view pastors of congregations were "bishops" in the New Testament sense, they intended to restore this pattern in the Church. Their difficulty had to do with the abuse of authority in the diocesan structure and the political character and functions it had acquired. Some need was generally acknowledged for coordination and supervision of neighboring congregations or parishes. At times this was considered advisory only, but many Reformed churches acknowledged regional superintendency sometimes of a corporate nature, and sometimes, as in England, Scotland, Poland and Hungary, monarchical. Where the oversight was at the diocesan level it was generally achieved through a form of corporate or collegial superintendency, without admitting a higher rank or order among the pastor-bishops. The rejection of hierarchical rank among individual ministers has been since generally maintained among the Reformed churches, but most have admitted a hierarchical ordering or regional synods with varying levels of authority.¹⁴ The congregational wing, however, has at times approached complete local autonomy.

Several Reformed churches found that the old system of diocesan episcopacy was often used by civil authorities as a device for controlling the churches for civil ends. Long and bitter struggles for the freedom of the Church under Christ were in their experience usually struggles against the king's bishops. In these controversies exaggerated claims of divine right were made for congregationalism, presbyterianism and episcopalianism as forms of church government.¹⁵

In the last two or three generations, however, several Reformed churches have shown themselves willing to at least discuss individual diocesan episcopacy in proposed church mergers, as in the proposals for the Church of South India, in the negotiations in Great Britain between the Presbyterian and the Episcopal churches, in the negotiations of the American Presbyterians and Congregationalists with American Episcopalians, and currently in the discussion among participants in the Consultation on Church Union. In some churches, such as the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A. and the United Church of

Christ, there has been a conspicuous development of "executives" or "superintendents" for associations, presbyteries and synods, which has yet to be fully acknowledged in the constitutional principles of church order. There is thus, at least in some Reformed quarters, an increasing tendency to look with favor on a more permanent individual superintendency both as an effective instrument of church government and as an appropriate symbol and agent of continuity and unity, though not in detachment from synodical forms of government.

On the Roman Catholic side¹⁶ there is a scholarly recognition that in primitive Christianity several kinds of church polity with various forms of corporate responsibility flourished, and that the diocesan "monarchical episcopate" emerged only after the first century of the Christian era.¹⁷ Moreover, it is readily acknowledged by Roman Catholic scholars that even after the development and spread of the "single bishop in a diocese" form of church structure there was for many centuries the exercise of broad corporate responsibility within the dioceses and the universal church, ranging from far-reaching synodal decisions to the election, and even dismissal, of bishops by the local clergy and people.¹⁸ At the same time there were early cases of radical "populism" (e.g., I Clement). To avoid this danger, customs were developed which provided a set of stabilizing procedures to be followed, such as the submission of cases to neighboring bishops, or appeals to a patriarchal see, the see of Peter, or even to the emperor.¹⁹ Of course, since the watershed decisions of Vatican II on the need for more "collegiality" in the church there has been a growing scholarly and popular consensus among Roman Catholics that the ancient Christian corporate responsibilities should be revived and further developed.²⁰

Hence, there are grounds for both the several Reformed churches and Roman Catholic Church to think seriously of Church structures which would combine the unifying elements of the episcopal tradition and the corporate responsibility of the presbyteral/congregational traditions. Indeed, each of our respective traditions has something which responds to urgent needs in the world today, namely, for a unifying principle, and for more effective representation and participation.²¹ But the two emphases clearly need each other - both theologically (to be true to the full Christian tradition) and pragmatically (to respond fully to the insights and the needs of the contemporary world). Consequently, it is our conviction that the diversity of church structure in our traditions, which has been a stumbling block to the union of our churches, may well become a stepping stone to a more united Church, which would, more effectively, minister to the present and future world, in light of the past of both our traditions, catholic and reformed.

6. *Apostolic Succession*²²

Both our traditions regard themselves as "catholic" in the sense of maintaining continuity with the Church of Christ descended from the Apostles and with its ministry.²³ They differ in the way they have defined that succession in ministry. We admit that each of our traditions has often grasped only in part (and even at that, poorly) the positive vision or perspective in which the other viewed the succession of the apostolic faith and ministry within the Church. Both of us believe that the Christian faith, Church and ministry were

preserved by God through the polemic theologies of ministry on both sides of the Reform of the 16th century, despite their inadequacies.

The conviction of the 16th century reformers was that the canonical procedures in ordination had come to be obeyed only in external form, and that the continuity of teachers of apostolic doctrine had actually broken down.²⁴ The succession of true ministers had to be secured by some other organs within the Church, since in their judgment the episcopal order had generally ceased to perform its function. The power to designate and maintain such a continuity, they believed, resided in the people of Christ as a whole and in its true ministers.²⁵ Thus, the Presbyterian-Reformed Churches, like most of the Lutheran, made no effort to sustain a continuing succession of ordaining bishops as a separate organ of the ministry. They were content to maintain a series they considered to be true ministers of Jesus Christ in the succession of the witnesses to the Lord's resurrection.²⁶

From all this the conclusion was generally drawn within Roman

Catholic theology that no real ministry of the sacraments existed in these churches, save for baptism and matrimony. The Roman Catholic members of the Consultation wish to point out that their church did not regard this estimate of the ordained ministry of the Reformed churches as a truth of faith, however tenaciously it was clung to in practice.²⁷ Moreover, with the Second Vatican Council there has been a positive recognition of the "ecclesial reality" of the churches and communities of the Reformation and that these communities are sources of grace.²⁸

There is also a growing recognition among Roman Catholic theologians and church historians that a purely "genealogical" understanding of the notion of apostolic succession is an unwarranted narrowing of this doctrine at the time of the Reformation, which therefore became divisive.²⁹ The broader understanding of apostolic succession espoused by many scholars after Vatican II³⁰ is to a large extent a recovery of the understanding that prevailed in the early Church.³¹ This recovery brings together a plurality of interpretations which stress that apostolic succession refers to a constant apostolic principle or framework of order and leadership which will engender a succession in apostolic faith, service and life, although the form of this principle varies greatly at different times and places both *de facto* and *de jure*.³² It is within this larger understanding that the bishop, in a collegially balanced context, can provide a unifying function. By thus continuing to develop the insight expressed at Vatican II, Roman Catholics rightly see that council not as a terminal point, but as a door opening toward the Church of the future. From the Roman Catholic understanding of apostolic succession, and from what appeared to many Protestants to be a widespread separation of ordination procedures from the faith and life of ministers, many Reformed churches were led to infer that Roman Catholic orders had only occasional and accidental association with apostolic doctrine and life, and that Roman Catholic sacraments, denuded of Christian understanding, were not true sacraments of Jesus Christ, but were superstitious.³³ The Reformed and Presbyterian members of this consultation wish to affirm their conviction that the presumption should rather be that the sacraments of the Roman Catholic ministry

are covenantal signs, seals of the gospel, and effective means by which the grace of God is bestowed upon the faith of Roman Catholic Christians.

However much they may still differ on the methods of maintaining them, both traditions agree on the necessity of continuity and succession in the apostolic life, doctrine, and ministry of the Church.

7. *The Papacy and The World-wide Unity of the Church*

Our traditions are agreed on the need for visibly manifesting the essential oneness of the universal church. In the ancient Church this became a distinctive function of the bishop of Rome, together with the series of ecumenical councils, supported by numerous regional and local councils and synods.

When the Reformed churches rejected papal jurisdiction in the sixteenth century they did not deny the need for manifesting the unity of the Church catholic, especially through ecumenical councils. The protest was against the scope and character of jurisdiction and authority which had come to be asserted by the papacy. But the importance of ecumenical as well as national and regional councils was explicitly affirmed.³⁴ The formation of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches a century ago and of the International Congregational Council were signs of this affirmation,³⁵ and the Reformed Churches generally contributed their share in the later shaping of the World Council of Churches. But the authority acknowledged by the Reformed Churches in such bodies is moral, not juridical. While the period since Vatican II has seen a great lessening of the antipathy of the Reformed churches toward the papacy, there has been little evidence among them as yet of a tendency to supplement the ecumenical council with a personal officer to represent and further the functions of Peter in the universal church. But as the world has grown rapidly smaller through modern communications and transportation, the increasing need to overcome provincialism and isolation and the need to stress world-wide Christian unity has become steadily more apparent; the twentieth-century world with its factionalism and global hatred desperately needs some more effective manifestation of the world-wide unifying force of Christian witness and love.

Within Roman Catholicism, particularly since Vatican II, there have been great efforts to emphasize the role of the papacy as one of unity through service, carried out in collegiality with ever more elements of the church. This can be seen for instance in the fostering of the national and regional bishops' conferences, the regular meeting of the international episcopal synod to share in the responsibilities of world-wide Roman Catholicism, and the official encouragement of diocesan and national pastoral councils, in which all the elements of the church, lay and clerical, are to be responsibly represented.

There are two main aspects of the papacy with which the Reformed churches have difficulty; its claims to primacy and universal jurisdiction in church government, and to infallibility in teaching.³⁶ The growing awareness in the Reformed Churches of the need for effective world-wide unifying forms, and in Roman Catholicism of the collegial

context and pastoral character of the papal role open the way to new possibilities in the first problem area. On the local level the contemporary church needs a creative fusing of the episcopal and presbyteral/congregational traditions. So, too, on a much wider scale the church needs in a spirit of pastoral service, to blend the unifying drive which a papacy of the future might provide, with the vitalizing growth which can come from the "collegial" or representative spirit inherent in the Reformed tradition. Hence, one of the main questions may prove to be how effectively the conciliar and representative pattern can be fused at the world level with individual personal leadership. There will also need to be careful exploration as to precisely what kinds and what degree of ecclesiastical jurisdiction are appropriate at each level: regional, national and world-wide. Consequently, although our churches are presently divided in habits of thought and practice, as is true of both Roman Catholics and Presbyterian-Reformed Christians among themselves, it is clearly to the advantage, both of the universal church-and also of the world to which it witnesses and ministers-that we learn from each other and act jointly in this regard.

8. *Infallibility*

Infallibility has been an issue for many Christian communities in recent years. Attention in the Reformed churches has been centered on the infallibility of the Scriptures. The Reformed tradition has also, however, maintained certain affirmations which can be set in relation to Roman Catholic positions on the infallibility of the Church and thus of the Pope. The Reformed confessions frequently affirm the perpetuity of saving truth in the Church, on the basis of the scriptural promises and the faithfulness of God.

It must be said that at the present time in the Roman Catholic theological community there is serious division about the meaning of infallibility;³⁷ the positions taken range from a highly "ultramontane" one, which would attribute to the papacy the power to make infallibly true propositional statements about a very wide range of matters, to a more "liberal" one, which would decline the notion of infallibly true propositional statements in favor of the notion of the "indefectibility" of the church despite propositional errors. While it is not possible to foresee the outcome of this present vigorous discussion, it can be discerned that Roman Catholic theologians are less inclined to deny the right of the Church to accommodate its ministry, even Petrine ministry, to the needs, modes, and models of the time. There may well have been times when papal centralism best responded to the needs of a given historical moment; the right of the Church to respond to these needs cannot be denied. The doctrine of infallibility received its classical form in the last century at a time when papal authority was being vigorously reaffirmed. In other historical periods, however, there have been other ways in which the Petrine function has been exercised. Therefore, when one speaks of infallibility, or any other exercise of papal authority, papal centralism need not be considered the only style of exercising the Petrine function. The model of collegiality, for instance, is one whose implications have not yet been fully explored. Moreover, it is not claimed that the charism of infallibility protects a dogmatic statement from being inappropriate to the moment, imperfect, imbalanced, too colored by the polemical situation, too juridically

formulated, or capable of giving rise to real heresy if it were to be simply repeated at another historical moment or in another socio-cultural context.

Both Reformed and Roman Catholic Christians recognize that although it has been the desire of the Pope to be faithful to Christ and the Gospel, we disagree among ourselves as to how well or poorly the results have matched the intent. It is nevertheless our hope and conviction that these antinomies may be resolved for both Roman Catholic and Reformed Christians by a future-oriented approach. Because dogmatic formulas by their very nature are susceptible of varying interpretations, it cannot always be ascertained, if we judge from the history of dogma, precisely which interpretations are acceptable and which ones are not. It is the Church's actual living of its understanding of the Gospel which provides the context for understanding the meaning of dogmatic formulas. Hence to the degree that the collegial structure grows stronger, the papacy may well become an ever more apt instrument of Christ's unity. This will then naturally have a significant influence on the understanding of the doctrine of infallibility.

Therefore, we believe that here too the best wisdom urges us to recommend to our respective churches that they do everything possible on local, national and international levels to further the practical fusing, both within and between our churches, of the unifying drive with the collegial spirit. We look with hope to such developments, as the living context for greater unity among ourselves regarding the nature and subject of "the infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed his Church to be endowed."³⁸

9. *Moral Discipline and Church Unity*

One object of the ministry of the Church is to help each Christian to "do the truth in love." Hence none of our churches considers the way one lives as a matter of indifference for the Christian faith. At the same time, within every church there exist wide differences regarding moral standards for judging what is right and wrong, what is just and unjust, what is the charity of Christ and what is opposed to it. Certainly within the same Christian denomination or church a common confession of faith along with the true contrition and repentance required to stand at the Lord's table is generally assumed sufficient to permit members of a single church to share in one and the same Eucharist even though they are still profoundly divided on moral issues. And yet there must be no fundamental disharmony between common eucharistic sharing and a pattern of life by which we express and bear witness to Christ as Lord.

One of the conditions required for a more effective eucharistic unity between the churches of Christ in the future is agreement on a Christian way of life broad enough to leave room for the liberty of God's sons and daughters and yet not so broad as to be meaningless. Such questions as those of war and peace, sexual morality, equal opportunity for the handicapped, racial and sexual justice, right to life and property, right to privacy, stewardship over the goods of earth, obligations to the community, and others which divide one Roman Catholic from another, one Presbyterian from another, are only beginning to be faced by our churches.

Disagreements between official statements of moral policy made by our respective churches easily deepen the gulfs between us and a growing sense of cooperation and sharing of goals must not blind us to this fact. It is true that there are many moral enigmas that do not admit of only one Christian answer or solution. But some moral attitudes are clearly not compatible with Christianity. (Racial discrimination is one example generally recognized by Christendom today; sexual discrimination is only beginning to be recognized.) A more united Church of Christ in the future cannot be a sign of hope to men and women looking for it to bear witness to the coming Kingdom of God unless there is between our traditions a greater consensus on the conduct characteristic of those who try to express in life the mind of Christ. That consensus would include discernment, in the light of the gospel, of what conduct is a minimum prerequisite for sharing in a common Eucharist. Certain types of intention and conduct exclude from a common sharing in the Eucharist and common church membership, but this document does not presume to determine what they are.

We call upon the leadership of our churches to recognize this problem, set up appropriate groups to consider it and return with answers.

It is said by some that only by living together will any of these differences of opinion regarding the moral imperatives of the gospel be dissipated. In an important sense this is true. Yet, it is a fact that within our respective churches members of the same communion often are drifting farther and farther apart, not living together at all, though they are frequently worshipping together. Nevertheless, work and worship together provide a fitting context within which the ever-present crucial problems of the Christian life can best be worked out. But what is most important in this regard is that our churches jointly arrive at what are the appropriate norms for deciding as Christians what is right-and then use them.

10. The Limits and Promise of Mutual Recognition

In the past there has generally been a disposition on both sides to acknowledge as fellow Christians many devout individuals from the other tradition. We believe that a further recognition should be extended on both sides, a recognition of the reality of ministry and priesthood of Word and sacraments as having their source in the Spirit and the Risen Lord.

Each church's ministry had been real long before members of the other church or churches came to admit it, indeed notwithstanding its denial for centuries. Our respective ministries derive their efficacy from the presence of Jesus Christ, who is operative in them through his Spirit, and not from the recognition accorded by other Christian communities, but the withholding of mutual recognition hinders the fruitfulness of ministry.

The religious context in which we live and theologize has changed notably during the period of our discussions in the Consultation and this makes mutual recognition easier. For instance, significant historical studies have been conducted in recent years by Roman

Catholic scholars concerning the various criteria of an authentic Christian ministry. Among Reformed scholars there has arisen a comparable interest in the origins and contemporary meaning of the gospel of grace in relationship to the Reformation doctrine of the Eucharist. Given the new state of the question, we cannot but recognize the Risen Christ present and at work for the healing of his people in the ministry and Eucharist of each of our traditions.

Such recognition as is here proposed does not deny that there remain significant differences between the ministries in the Reformed-Presbyterian and the Roman Catholic Churches. Nor does it follow that the qualifications to minister officially in one church or tradition must or should be accepted for ministering officially in another. For this reason we do not use the terms "validity" or "mutual recognition of orders," which often have this connotation. But we ask of the members of our churches whether it should not be deemed a grace to have come to the realization that Christ is operative, however, differently, in the ministries of both churches, and further ask that this realization be publicly recognized.

11. *Shared Eucharist*

Our recognition of Christ's saving action in each other's Eucharist has led this Consultation to a positive proposal. The widespread and growing phenomenon of "de facto intercommunion" compels us to speak to the issue of shared Eucharist.³⁹

It must be faced, as we have seen, that serious divisions remain between Roman Catholic and Reformed Christians, divisions serious enough to preclude general eucharistic sharing for the present. Nevertheless, since we have moved significantly towards a greater recognition of each other's ministry and a common eucharistic faith, we believe that our churches should act not only with a consciousness of their own distinct identity, but also with a practical recognition of the common bonds already uniting them with one another. They should designate specific occasions on which invitations may be offered to celebrate together in the Eucharist the unity of faith which we have found in common and should provide effective means of striving toward the greater ecclesial union yet to be achieved. We therefore recommend to the ecclesiastical authorities to whom we are responsible the implementation of such *limited eucharistic sharing*.

12. *Ecumenical Involvement and Formation*

Since the true unity of the Church of Christ can develop only if the whole of the Church is involved, it is imperative that ecumenical understanding and experience not be limited to theologians and clergy. All that the members of this Consultation, and others similarly fortunate, have learned and experienced in these ecumenical encounters must somehow become the common possession of all in our churches. It is therefore urgent that ecumenical education programs be initiated, or intensified, which will not only pass on information but will also provide the laity with frequent firsthand and personal experiences of ecumenical religious encounter.

Though this grass-roots ecumenical learning and experience is taking place in many places, it remains unfortunately true that the vast majority of the members of both our traditions have not been significantly touched. Consequently, to provide wide and effective programs of information and formation, we wish to recommend that the Committee on Education of the Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs be reactivated to work closely with appropriate ecumenical education and programming committees of the Presbyterian/Reformed churches.

13. Recommendations

In closing this statement on ministry in the Church the Consultation wishes to present a number of concrete recommendations to our respective churches through the appropriate channels, on the understanding that all should be done together except that which conscience demands that we do separately. We were not called together by our various churches merely to learn from one another, but also to pass on that knowledge to all of our fellow communicants in appropriate fashions, and to make recommendations for actions that we believe should flow from these new insights. Therefore, to our respective church bodies we recommend:

- A. That this Statement on Ministry in the Church be received and acted upon appropriately.
- B. That proper steps be taken to have the appropriate organs of our respective churches at the highest level officially affirm in some appropriate way that Christ is present and at work in the ministries and Eucharist of each of our traditions.
- C. That although *general* eucharistic sharing is not to be recommended for the present, these same appropriate organs designate *specific occasions* on which invitations to a eucharistic sharing may be extended.
- D. That areas of ministry be opened, as far as possible, to qualified women, and that a major effort be undertaken to place qualified women, ordained and unordained, in offices and positions of leadership and decision-making; accordingly, that an ecumenical commission composed of women and men be constituted by our churches: to study the role of women in church and society, especially the full involvement of women in all offices and leadership functions, both clerical and lay; to recommend corrective and innovative actions and programs in these areas; and to monitor their implementation.
- E. That encouragement be given to explorations at the parish, diocesan, national, and world levels which would further the *practical* fusing, both within and between our churches, of the unifying role of individual leadership in service and of collegial, democratic responsibility; that appropriate groups be commissioned both within and between our churches to implement this recommendation.
- F. That effective church action be taken to initiate or to intensify and broaden ecumenical learning and experiences on the grassroots level, so that the lives of all of our church members may be touched and significantly changed by the movement toward Christian

understanding and unity; that committees which would provide effective programming in this area be set up or strengthened both on the national and local levels; specifically, that on the Roman Catholic side, the Committee on Education for Ecumenism of the Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs be reactivated to work closely with appropriate ecumenical education and programming committees of the Presbyterian/Reformed churches.

- G. That an ecumenical consultation be constituted among our churches and perhaps others, which would investigate basic moral issues of our time and ascertain as clearly as possible what the Christian gospel has to say to them; such a consultation to be composed of women and men with the necessary range of experience, knowledge, and concern, among them persons with expertise in such areas as ethics, Scripture, theology, history, psychology, sociology and political science.
- H. That an ecumenical commission be constituted by our churches to study the evangelical values both of celibacy and of a married clergy.

Footnotes

1. Second Vatican Council, *Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, 2:9.
2. Second Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, 2:10.
3. Although a particular theology of character has dominated Roman Catholic theology in practice since Trent, it is clear that during this period no single doctrine has been normative. The Thomistic tradition interpreted character within the framework of a metaphysical system in which elevation to the priesthood involved an essential internal change. The Thomist position, however, is but one among many, and E. Schillebeeckx thinks that even the position of St. Thomas has not been faithfully developed by his later disciples. Furthermore, many of the theologians at Trent were of the Scotist and Nominalist schools, for whom the Thomist doctrine of character was unacceptable. [See *Tijdschrift Voor Theologie* Vol. 8 (1948), pp. 424-30.]

As a matter of fact, the Council of Trent simply stresses the most basic definition of character, the impossibility of being re-ordained.

In our own day, Piet Fransen in his study of sacramental character formulates what is a growing position in Roman Catholic theology: "The character is above all the visible rite of ordination by which the ordinand is legitimately incorporated into the college of his order." ("Orders and Ordination," *Sacramentum Mundi* Vol. 4, p. 315.)

The permanent significance of ordination among the Reformed churches is attested by the fact that a minister who has once been ordained is installed into subsequent ministerial charges without re-ordination. The rationale behind this practice raises theological questions which have been the subject of considerable discussion. But it seems clear that what is generally understood to require no repetition is the examination and recognition of a candidate for ministry by a proper ecclesiastical body, these two essential elements of ordination being what is usually meant by the "call" and the "laying on of hands." At the time of the Reformation the decision whether to recognize Roman orders or to require re-ordination focused upon the call (i.e., on the question whether the priest had been properly instructed in the Word of God) and secondarily upon the consistency of life with profession. Roman orders were not accepted if evidence in either respect was lacking. It may be added that Calvin himself did not object to calling ordination a

"sacrament" provided it was recognized that its restriction to only a few Christians set it apart from the other two Gospel-sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper); but he did not base any doctrine of "permanent significance" upon this sacramental nature of ordination. See the literature cited below under Footnote 14.

4. Leonard Swidler, "Jesus was a Feminist," *Catholic World* (January, 1971), pp. 177-183; Eugene Maly, "Women in the Bible," *St. Anthony Messenger* (March, 1971), pp. 6-7; Letty Russell, "Women's Liberation in a Biblical Perspective," *Concern* (May-June, 1971, entire issue); Johannes Leipoldt, *Die Frau in der Antiken Welt und im Urchristentum* (Leipzig, 1954).
5. Ct. Mary Daly, *The Church and the Second Sex* (New York, 1968); Anne Marie Pelzer, "God Needs Women Too," *Dimension* (St. Charles Seminary, Philadelphia, Pa., Winter, 1970), pp. 158-171; Margaret Ermarth, *Adam's Fractured Rib* (Philadelphia, 1970); Sally Cunneen, *Sex Female, Religion Catholic* (New York, 1968).
6. In 1971 a committee of the Catholic Theological Society of America, appointed at the request of the Bishops' Committee on the Permanent Diaconate of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, strongly affirmed not only that there were no valid reasons why women should not be ordained deacons, but that there were urgent reasons of justice and pastoral need in favor of ordaining women deacons.
7. Haye van der Meer, S.J., "Priestertum der Frau?" (Lima, 1963, mimeographed), Jose Idigoras, S.J., "La femme dans l'ordre sacré," *Catholiques Internationales* (November 15, 1963), pp. 32-34; Arlene Swidler, "The Male Church," *Commonweal* (June 24, 1966), pp. 387-389; George Tavard, "Women in the Church: a Theological Problem," *The Ecumenist* (November-December, 1965), pp. 7-10; Ida Raming, *Zum Ausschluss der Frau vom Amt der Kirche, Eine kristische Untersuchung van Kanan 968, par. 1 des Codex Iuris Canonici*. (Milnster, 1970. Unpublished doctoral dissertation in the Catholic Theology Faculty.) For an extensive bibliography see van der Meer, *op. cit.* (prepared by René J. A. van Eyden), pp. 197-213. The National Pastoral Council of the Roman Catholic Church in Holland recommended in 1970 that women be ordained to the priesthood. In 1971 the Catholic Bishops of Canada expressed strong support for the ordination of women to the priesthood. See *The Catholic Citizen* (Journal of St. Joan's International Alliance, July-August, 1971), pp. 121-123. Rev. Carl Armbruster, S.J. was commissioned by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops to do a theological study of the priesthood. At the Spring meeting of the NCCB he gave a preliminary report of his study in which he stated: "One can safely say that there are no scriptural or dogmatic arguments against the ordination of women, but in fact some theological and pastoral reasons for doing so." *Ibid.*, p. 126.
8. For information about when the various churches of the Reformed family in our Consultation admitted women to full ordination see the Appendix to the 1972 statement on "Women and the Church" by the Mission and Worship Section of this Consultation. See also Andrew Harsanyi, "Women's Rights and the Hungarian Reformed Church in America," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* (Fall, 1971), pp. 969-971. It should also be noted that partly as a result of the research done by the Division of Theological Studies of the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., digested in Raymond Tiemeyer (ed.), *The Ordination of Women* (Minneapolis, 1970), the Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church both decided in their national conventions of 1970 to ordain women to the ministry; in the same year the Episcopal Church in the United States decided in its general convention to ordain women to the diaconate; in late 1971 two women were ordained to the priesthood of the Episcopal Church in Hong Kong.
9. In 1969 the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. established a Task Force on Women, which was to report annually to the next three General Assemblies. In its second report (1971) the Task Force recommended, among other things, that at least one half of all the elected lay members of all church decision-making bodies be women. It should also be noted that in attempting to deal with a similar issue Rev. Elizabeth J. Miller, Director of the Division of Christian Social Concern, American Baptist Convention, published the results of a study, *Retreat to Tokenism, A Study of the Status of Women on the Executive Staff of the American Baptist Convention* (Valley Forge, 1970, mimeographed).

10. In all churches of the Reformed family and in the Roman Catholic Church women constitute well over half the active membership.
11. Arlene Swidler, "An Ecumenical Question: The Status of Women," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* (Winter, 1967), pp. 113-115. In the fall of 1971 a committee of Roman Catholic bishops was appointed by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops to investigate the rights of women in church and society; a similar but internationally composed committee was also recommended by the Synod of Bishops in Rome in 1971.
12. See *Genesis III*, bimonthly newsletter of the Philadelphia (ecumenical) Task Force on Women in Religion (P. O. Box 295, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa. 19122) for ecumenically conceived projects either already undertaken or recommended.
13. Raymond E. Brown, "The Unity and Diversity in New Testament Ecclesiology," *Novum Testamentum*, vol. 5 (1962), pp. 298-308; Myles M. Bourke, "Reflections on Church Order in the New Testament," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, vol. 30 (1968), pp. 493-511; Ernst Kasemann, "Unity and Diversity in New Testament Ecclesiology," *Novum Testamentum*, vol. 5 (1962) pp. 290-297; Eduard Schweizer, *Church Order in the New Testament*, (Studies in Biblical Theology, no. 32, London, 1961); Hans von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries*, (Stanford, 1969). David M. Stanley, S.J., "Authority in the Church; a New Testament Reality," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, XXIX, 4, October, 1967, pp. 555-573.
14. See Jacques Pannier, *Calvin et L'episcopat. L'Episcopat élément organique de l' église dans Le calvinisme integral. (Cahiers de la Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses publiés par la Faculté de Théologie protestante de l'Université de Strasbourg. Strasbourg and Paris, 1927)*; James L. Ainslie, *The Doctrines of Ministerial Order in the Reformed Churches of the 16th and 17th Centuries*, (Edinburgh, 1940); John T. McNeill, "The Doctrine of the Ministry in Reformed Theology," *Church History*, vol. XII, no. 2 (1943), pp. 77-97; Alexandre Ganoczy, *Calvin. Théologien de l'église et du ministere. (Unam Sanctam, 48, Paris, 1964)*; *ibid.*, *Ecclesia Ministrans. Dienende Kirche und kirchlicher Dienst bei Calvin. (Oekumenische Forschungen, Abt. I, Bd. III, Freiburg, 1968, revised German edition of the foregoing study by Ganoczy)*; Jean-Jacques von Allmen, *Le Saint Ministère selon la conviction et la volonté des Réformés du XVIe siècle. (Bibliothèque Théologique, Neuchatel, 1968)*.
15. It is clear that Episcopal claims were of comparatively late growth. John Jewell's early *Apologia* had been based on Scripture and early church tradition (*Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, 1562), and the claim to a Divine Right within episcopacy itself seems to have grown out of the much more existential appeal to the Divine Right of Kings. This is the context out of which the explicit *jure divino* claims of Puritan Congregationalists and Presbyterians arose. Their appeal to the Scripture, together with the temptation to literalism during the 17th century struggle, should be seen as an appeal to a higher law than that of the crown.

This scriptural base became the vital arena of debate between the rival Congregationalists and Presbyterians in the Westminster Assembly, who each claimed Divine Right for their systems by appealing to the New Testament church.

On the other hand, it should be pointed out that there have always been those who have protested against this claim within the Reformed churches. (A fuller discussion of the issues will appear in Robert S. Paul, *The Church in Search of Its Self* (Grand Rapids; Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1972, chapters IV and V.)
16. See *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue, IV, Eucharist and Ministry*, (published jointly by representatives of the U.S.A. National Committee on the Lutheran World Federation, New York and the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, Washington, D.C. 1970).
17. Jean Colson, *L'Evêque dans les Communautés Primitives*, (Paris, 1951); Colson, *Les Fonctions Ecclémiales aux deus premiers Siècles*, (Paris, 1956); Wolfgang Beinert, "Bishop, II. Church History," *Sacramentum Mundi*, Karl Rahner, ed., *et.al.*; (New York, 1968); Patrick Burke, "The Monarchical Episcopate at the End

of the First Century," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, vol. 7 (1970), pp. 499-518.

18. Giuseppe d'Ercole, "The Presbyteral Colleges of the Early Church," *Historical Investigations, Concilium*, vol. 17 (New York, 1966), pp. 20-33. Eugenio Corecco, "The Bishop as Head of the Local Church and its Discipline," *The Sacraments in Theology and Canon Law, Concilium*, vol. 38 (New York, 1968).
19. L. Hertling, "*Communio und Primat: Kirche und Papsttum in der christlichen Antike*," *Una Sancta*, vol. 17 (1962), pp. 91-125; Francis Dvornik, *Byzantium and the Roman Primacy*, 1966 (New York, 1966).
20. The material in this area is too great to list. Of some influence has been Leon Joseph Suenens, *Corresponsibility in the Church* (New York, 1968); Jose De Broucker, ed., *The Suenens Dossier: The Case for Collegiality*, (Notre Dame, 1970); James Corriden, ed., *Who Decides for the Church? Studies in Corresponsibility* (Canon Law Society of America, Hartford, 1971); and James Corriden, ed., *The Once and Future Church* (New York, 1971)

Two principles have guided the development of new forms of church polity attempting to implement the notion of collegiality: subsidiarity and shared responsibility. Subsidiarity requires that no decisions be made at a higher level which can be made at a lower level. An important example of subsidiarity in the Roman Catholic Church is the exercise by national conferences of bishops of authority once exercised by the Roman curia. Shared responsibility calls for wide participation in the process of decision-making. Two important contemporary examples of shared responsibility are priests' senates (on the presbyteral model) and pastoral councils (on the congregational model).

21. Heinrich Schneider, "Democracy: The Idea and the Reality," *Democratization of the Church (The New Concilium)*, Herder and Herder (New York, 1971) pp. 12-47. In the same volume cf. Rudolf Pesch, "The New Testament Foundations of a Democratic Form of Life in the Church," pp. 48-59; Karl Lehmann, "On the Dogmatic Justification for a Process of Democratization in the Church," pp. 60-86.
22. Kilian McDonnell, "Ways of Validating Ministry," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Vol. 7 (1970), pp. 209-65.
23. The Reformers believed strongly in the unbroken continuity of the Church. Calvin is typical: "We deny not that there has been an uninterrupted succession of the church from the beginning of the gospel to our day," "On the True Method of Giving Peace to Christendom and Reforming the Church," *Tracts and Treatises*. The retention and use of the ancient creeds by the Reformed churches was one expression of this belief in continuity.
24. On the proclamation of the apostolic gospel as the true apostolic succession some of the Reformers spoke at times of doctrinal succession - the *Tetrapolitan Confession*, 1530, says characteristically: "What constitutes fit and properly consecrated ministers of the church, bishops, teachers, and pastors, is that they have been divinely sent ('for how will they preach unless they have been sent?') - i.e., that they have received the power and mind to preach the gospel and to feed the flock of Christ" (ch. XIII). This doctrinal succession is the series of those who in the ministry of the Church declare the Word of God which comes from Christ and the Apostles. See Beza, *An Exhortation to the Reformation of the Church*, 1565. In addition to the idea of doctrinal succession Reformed churchmen spoke also of the continuity and succession of those who had been commissioned by the true Church for its ministry. The continuous apostolic Church produces the continuous apostolic ministry. It follows therefore, for the Reformers, that some may wrongly claim to be ministers of the Church. Two criteria for a true ministry were 1) that the ministry must be rightfully authorized (and this implied some form of solemn "calling" and setting apart or ordination) and 2) that the ministry be "efficacious". For the Reformers this efficaciousness of the ministry was its essential constituent and was determined by whether or not the gospel of Christ is proclaimed. Knox says: "I say, none can be a lawful minister of Christ's sacrament who first is not a minister of his blessed Word."
25. For the relation of true doctrine to apostolic ministry, cf. Yves M.J. Congar, "Apostolicité de ministère et apostolicité de doctrine. Reaction protestante et tradition catholique," *Vold Gottes, zum Kirchenverständnis*

der katholischen, evangelischen und anglikanischen Theologie [Festgabe for J. Höfer, ed. R. Bäumer and H. Dolch (Freiburg, 1967) pp. 84-111].

26. See the works of Ainslie, Ganoczy, and von Allmen, cited above; also Leopold, *Le Ministère pastoral dans l'Institution Chrétienne de Calvin à la lumière du troisième sacrement*. (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz, Bd. 39. Wiesbaden, 1965.)
27. Harry J. McSorley, "Protestant Eucharist Reality and Lack of Orders," *The Ecumenist*, Vol. 5 (1967) pp. 68-75; McSorley, "The Roman Catholic Doctrine of the Competent Minister of the Eucharist in Ecumenical Perspective," *One in Christ*, Vol. 5 (1969) pp. 405-422, also in *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue*, IV, pp. 120-137.
28. *Decree on Ecumenism*, 4:22; *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, 2:15. See the discussion by Aloys Grillmeier in Herbert Vorgrimler, ed., *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, Vol. I, pp. 177-182 and Vol. II, pp. 81-93, and the works cited. Kilian McDonnell, "The Concept of Church in the Documents of Vatican II as Applied to Protestant Denominations," *Worship*, Vol. 44 (1970) pp. 332-349.
29. Maurice Villain, "Can There be Apostolic Succession outside the Chain of Imposition of Hands?" *Apostolic Succession, Concilium*, Vol. 34 (New York, 1968), pp. 87-104; in the same volume, Johannes Remmers, "Apostolic Succession; An Attribute of the Whole Church," pp. 36-51; James F. McCue, "Apostles and Apostolic Succession in the Patristic Era," *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue*, IV, pp. 138-172.
30. See, e.g., Wilhelm Brenning, "Apostolic Succession," in *Sacramentum Mundi*, Vol. I, pp. 86-90 and Hans Küng, ed., *Apostolic Succession, Rethinking a Barrier to Unity Concilium*, Vol. 34, (New York and Glen Rock, N.J., 1968).
31. For both Irenaeus and Tertullian the succession of presbyters and bishops provided an important check upon the reliability of beliefs purportedly transmitted from the Apostles. They continued to use the term "tradition" in its original sense of authentic apostolic testimony, whether written or not, to the original revelation in Jesus Christ (Tert., *De Praescript*, 21; Iren., III.i). But the Gnostics questioned either the authenticity or the interpretation of the writings cited in the Church (Iren., II.ii.1), and claimed possession of certain unwritten traditions. The reply of the Antignos Fathers was that the tradition belonged to the Church and could not be torn from its context in the Church's lively proclamation (*ibid.*, I. X.2, III. ii-v *passim*). In this sense only is an appeal to "oral tradition" appropriate. The presbyters and bishops were in a special degree the custodians of this transmitted proclamation (*ibid.*, IV. xxvi.5). Hence it became important to claim that the presbyters and bishops of the present really did stand in succession with the Apostles (cf. xxvi.2): that is, that the tradition had been handed on securely and special weight attached to the bishops of such prominent "apostolic" churches as Corinth, Philippi, Ephesus, Rome (Tert., *op. cit.*, 36); according to Irenaeus, especially Rome (*op. cit.*, III.iii.2, a passage which in detail is very hard to interpret). It became a matter of great importance to be able to trace the lineage of the incumbents of the major sees (Tert., *op. cit.*, 32; Iren., *op. cit.* III.iii.1-2). There can, however, be no doubt that for both Irenaeus and Tertullian the function of this succession was solely to preserve intact the tradition of the Scriptures, not (like the Gnostics) to add to or subtract from it.
32. Hans Küng, *The Church*, (New York, 1968) pp. 354-359.
33. Calvin expresses himself rather vigorously on this question in his *Antidote to the Prefatory Discourse of the Council of Trent*. He speaks of the worship of God (among Roman Catholics) as "vitiating by foul and disgraceful superstitions." Behind the intemperate language there lies a genuine pastoral concern to return to the 'custom of the ancient church.'
34. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. J. T. McNeill (Philadelphia; 1960) IV, ix, "Councils and their Authority." J. T. McNeill *Unitive Protestantism* (Richmond, 1964;), pp. 109ff, "The Conciliarism of Calvin." The Synod of Dort (1643-49) and to a lesser extent, 'The Westminster Assembly, (1618-1619) were international councils. *The Form of Government* of the Westminster Assembly states "Synodical

assemblies may lawfully be of several sorts, as provincial, national, and ecumenical."

35. *Report of Proceedings of the Second General Council of the Presbyterian Alliance*, ed. J. B. Dales and R. M. Patterson (Philadelphia, 1880), pp. 65ff.
36. *Scots Confession*, article XVI; *Belgic Confession*, articles XXVII, XXIX; *Heidelberg Catechism*, answer 54; *Second Helvetic Confession*, XVII, XVIII; *Westminster Confession*, XXV, iii, iv.v. It was Calvin's conviction that the Church, insofar as she hears the Word of God, does not err, but this inerrant Church cannot simply be identified with the visible institution. See, e.g., *Articles agreed upon by the Faculty of Sacred Theology of Paris ... with the Antidote [Tracts and Treatises]* [Grand Rapids, Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1958], pp 101 ff.]. Hence, although this conviction furnishes grounds for confidence that the Church will in the long run rectify error, it cannot guarantee that any particular ecclesiastical pronouncement will be irreformable. In case of dispute, the Church can only follow the "legitimate method of establishing concord which has always been observed": namely, to have recourse to an assembly of pastors who will seek to define the truth from the Word of God (*ibid.*, p. 104). The appeal to the guidance of the Spirit - *a fortiori* the appeal to the antiquity of tradition - cannot be elevated above this demand to stand always as hearers under the Word. Cf. Calvin's response to Cardinal Sadoletto: *ibid.*, pp. 36 ff. A similar notion of the Church as "infallible under the Word of God" appears in the thought of Martin Luther, whom Calvin may be following here. See especially Karl Gerhard Steck, *Lehre und Kirche bei Luther (Forschungen zur Geschichte und Lehre des Protestantismus, Reihe X, Bd. XXVII, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1963.*
37. See Hans Küng, *Infallible? An Inquiry* (English trans., Garden City, N.Y., 1971). This book of Küng has come as a catalyst and focusing point for a good deal of Roman Catholic reflection and re-evaluation in this area. In this debate it is made more and more evident that very careful distinctions must be made between papal primacy and infallibility and also between papal infallibility and papal absolutism. Another area of ambiguity is the statement of the First Vatican Council that definitions are irreformable "*ex sese et non ex consensu ecclesiae.*" In general the definition of infallibility at the First Vatican Council was incomplete since though the role of the bishops and of the whole Church was on the agenda, time ran out before it could be dealt with. *Papal Ministry in the Church, Concilium*, Vol. 64 (ed. H. Kung, N.Y., 1971); Garrett Sweeney, "The Forgotten Council," *Clergy Review* (October, 1971), pp. 738-754; *The Infallibility Debate* (New York, 1971); H. Fries. "Ex sese non ex consensu ecclesiae" in *Volk Gottes: Zum Kirchenverständnis der katholischen, evangelischen und anglikanischen Theologie* (Festgabe for J. Höfer, ed. R. Bäumer and H. Dolch, Friburg, 1967); H. Küng, *Structures of the Church* (Eng. trans. New York, 1964), pp. 366-368; K. Rahner, "What is a Dogmatic Statement," in *Theological Investigations*, Vol. V, (Baltimore, 1966), cf. George Lindbeck's very favorable evaluation of this essay in his *The Future of Roman Catholic Theology* (Philadelphia, 1970) pp. 110-111, 117. The Fall, 1971 number of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* (Vol. VIII, no. 4) is devoted to the problem of infallibility.
38. Vatican I, *Denz.*, 1839.
39. See Scott Francis Brenner, "De Facto Intercommunion throughout the World," in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* (Vol. 7, Fall, 1970), pp. 903-906; "Students go with Intercommunion," in *National Catholic Reporter*, Vol. 5, no. 6, (September 3, 1969); C. Armbruster, "Trends to Intercommunion," in *America* (Vol. 121, November 15, 1969), pp. 455-456. Reformed or Protestant positions are presented by M. Thurian, *The One Bread*, (New York, 1969); Jean-Jacques von Alimen, "The Conditions for an Acceptable Intercommunion." in *The Future of Ecumenism, Concilium* vol. 44, (New York and Paramus, New Jersey, 1969) pp. 7-15, (cf. reply by Herman Fiolet, "Intercommunion: A Catholic Reply," in the same volume, pp. 16-25); C. E. Braaten, "Intercommunion," *Dialog*, Vol. 8 (Spring 1969) pp. 87-88; M. E. Osterhaven, "Are Catholic and Protestant Clergy Moving Toward Intercommunion?" in *Christianity Today*, Vol. 11 (September 29, 1967) pp. 8-10. An older work expresses main lines in Protestant thought in a valuable way:

Intercommunion. Report of the Theological Committee Appointed by the Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order, ed.

Donald Baillie and John Marsh, (New York 1952). The Roman Catholic position is variously expressed in the following: Pope Paul VI, "Address to a General Audience concerning Christian Unity and Intercommunion"; excerpts in English translation in *Ecumenist*, 8:35-36, (January-February 1970) pp. 35-36; Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, "Declaration on the Catholic Church's Position concerning Intercommunion," French text in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 62:184-188, (March 31" 1970); J. Willebrands and J. Hamer, "Concerning a Common Eucharist" in *Catholic Mind*, 68:50-53, (April 1970); F. Buckley, "Principles of Intercommunion," in *Catholic Theological Society of America Proceedings*. Vol. 24 (June 1969), pp. 211-238; Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, "The Question of Intercommunion," in *The Pope Speaks*, Vol. 15 (no. 1, 1970) pp. 59-63; N. Quirin, "Intercommunion: Current Trends in Catholic Theology," in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Vol. 7, (Summer 1970), pp. 531-536.

For joint Roman Catholic-Protestant statements see H. Fries, W. Pannenberg, "Abendmahl und Abendmahls-gemeinschaft," Report of a seminar at the University of Munich in the Winter Semester of 1970-71, in *Una Sancta* (Niederaltaich) 26. Jahrgang (112, 1971) pp. 68-88. John C. Haughey, "Christian Unity-the U.S. Scene," *America*, Vol. 123, no. 10 (October 10, 1970) pp. 261-3: highlights of the conclusions of the seven bilateral conversations in which Catholics are involved.