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**THE CONCEPT OF DOGMA  
IN VATICAN II**

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## PRESENTATION

In this century, anxiety about dogma has increased, and a subtle suspicion of anyone proclaiming absolute truths and values is a notable mark of the times. Illustrated by the horrors of «dogmatist» social and political ideologies disguising historicist, determinist, and materialist propaganda as *veritas*-truth has suffered.

Given this situation, is it possible —or better yet— reasonable, to hold that absolute truths can exist in history, represented by human concepts and words? The Catholic Church claims precisely this when it teaches and interprets the Apostolic Tradition and Sacred Scripture, formulating expressions of divine Revelation into obligatory statements-known commonly as dogmas. Nevertheless, is dogma grounded primarily in truth, or mere doctrinal authority? If the term «dogma» is not to continue suffering incomprehension and abuse, then a proper appreciation of its precise meaning must be acquired, or at least attempted.

During Vatican II (1962-1965) —and perhaps as an implication of its pastoral orientation and dialogue with the world— the Council Fathers, it seems, barely touched the concept of dogma. The word «dogma» and its variations are cited only fifteen times in the Council Documents, and usually merely as a title, for example in *Lumen gentium*, the «Dogmatic» Constitution of the Church.

The Council documents prefer expressions related to «doctrine», such as: *doctrina catholica; doctrina Christi; doctrina Ecclesiae; doctrina Apostolorum; and evangelica doctrina*. One also finds many references to terms dealing with the concept of «truth», for example: *veritas; principales veritates; veritates revelatae; testimonium veritatis; veritates religiosae et morales; veritates Evangelii; Revelationis veritates; veritas doctrinae catholicae; and veritates Dei*. Also are found many references to the concept of «mystery», for examples: *mysteria salutis; mysterium Christi; mysterium Dei; mystera revelata; divina mysteria; fidei christianae mysterium; fidei mysteria et normae vitae christianae; and Mysteria Redemptionis*.

Given this preference for terminology related to truth, doctrine, and mystery, what accounts for a hermeneutic silence of the word «dogma» in the Council? Does such silence manifest an attitude of «discomfort» toward reflections about dogma? Or, does this stance indicate a new style of presenting revealed truths in forms that appeared more adequate for the time period in which the Council Fathers lived and worked?

Most recently, the quantity of literature addressing the nature and development of dogma has diminished somewhat; however, some thematic studies exist. Contemporary history of the question about dogmatic development has been treated by A. Nichols, in *From Newman to Congar* (1990). G. Söll's *Dogma und Dogmenentwicklung*, examines the history of the concept of dogma, however, since it was written in 1971, it lacks some recent Vatican II commentaries. M. Hines, in *The transformation of dogma* (1989), addresses K. Rahner's notions of Christian doctrine as concept and experience. L. Scheffczyk's seminal essay, *Dogma der Kirche. Heute noch verstehbar?* (1973), looks at dogma in the light of hermeneutics. J.-L. Segundo's, *The liberation of dogma* (1992) examines dogma's role with reference to liberation theology, and G. O'Collins's, *Has dogma a future?* (1975) speaks for itself. Some dictionary and encyclopedia articles about dogma have recently appeared, by authors such as W. Kasper (1989), G. Müller (1995), and W. Beinert (1995).

Although these studies offer valuable insights into specific aspects of dogma, still, few investigate, in a synthetic manner, the intimate connection between the truth and the history as it is applied to the concept of dogma, and especially, how this connection—or tension—is manifest in the Vatican II documents. This article—drawn from a larger thesis on the subject—examines aspects of this question.

The study considers the Vatican II speeches, histories, and documents that deal with dogmatic questions. It does not exhaustively present all the debates regarding, for example, the nature of revelation or Church Magisterium, which are cited, and treated in other works. Rather, the investigation is limited to writings and authors dealing with the concept of dogma prior to, and during, the Second Vatican Council.

Through these analyses, this excerpt draws from the material of the dissertation's third and fourth chapters. The topics treated in these two chapters accent the intimate connections existing between the theological and spiritual developments of this century and Vatican II's presentation of the salvific truth-founded on the fullness of revelation, Je-

sus Christ. The concept of dogma, while not directly addressed by the Council Fathers, nonetheless, is touched upon—in an indirect way—within the Council’s rhetorical and documental presentation of Christian doctrine as a living body to be applied to human life.

The realization of this study is due to the cooperation of many persons, among whom first stands out Rev. César Izquierdo, Professor of Fundamental Theology at the University of Navarre, the director of this study. Thanks also go to the other professors of Theology Faculty, many of whom offered valuable contributions for its improvement. The generous financial assistance of *Fundación Horizonte* allowed me the time and resources necessary to peacefully research the question.



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## TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Acta</i>	<i>Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani Secundi</i> (1962-1998). This excerpt cites them in the following way: <i>Acta</i> , volume, number, page. For example, <i>Acta</i> , I, 2, p. 15 =The First Period of the Council, number 2, page 15.
ASS	«Acta Sanctae Sedis» (after 1908, AAS)
Ang	«Angelicum»
BLE	«Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique»
CivCatt	«La Civiltà Cattolica»
Conc(E)(F)	«Concilium» (Spain) (France)
CS	<i>Cristianesimo nella Storia</i>
CTom	«La Ciencia Tomista»
DS	<i>Enchiridion Symbolorum</i> , H. DENZINGER
DThC	<i>Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique</i>
Dtf	<i>Diccionario de Teología Fundamental</i> , R. LATOURELLE
Et	<i>Etudes</i>
ETHL	<i>Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses</i>
GER	<i>Gran Enciclopedia Rialp</i>
Greg	«Gregorianum»
HeyJ	«Heythrop Journal»
RB	«Revue Biblique»
RET	«Revista Española de la Teología»
RSPTh	«Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques»
RHE	«Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique»
RSR	«Recherches de Science Religieuse»
RThom	«Revue Thomiste»
RA	«Revue d'Apologétique» (later RSR)
ScrTh	«Scripta Theologica»
TD	«Theological Digest»
TI	<i>Theological Investigations</i> , K. RAHNER
TS	«Theological Studies»
Wp	<i>Worship</i>



## DOGMA AND HISTORICAL CONTINGENCIES IN VATICAN II

This investigation seeks to demonstrate that the concept of dogma, while not expressly addressed in the Second Vatican Council, still was indirectly, and creatively, treated. This treatment occurs, in part, within the pastoral and ecumenical aims of the Council, and particularly within its brief but profound doctrines about divine Revelation and the Church. Paying close attention to the historic and concrete activities of God in the plan of salvation—and the Church's relation with other Christian communities and the world—dogma appropriates historic and salvific facets.

Historic-salvific aspects are projected in the Vatican II documents, particularly *Dei Verbum*, *Lumen gentium*, *Unitatis redintegratio*, and *Gaudium et spes*, all of which point to the centrality of Jesus Christ as the source of all truth. Given its Christological beginning and end, dogma can be considered an extension of the gift of self of Jesus Christ, this gift flowing as a divine propagation of the Gospel<sup>1</sup>. As such, dogma springs forth from the living Tradition of the Church as the perpetual life-giving message of salvation; formulated as propositional truths, dogma flows out of the Gospel truth itself<sup>2</sup>.

### A. JESUS CHRIST AND THE TRANSMISSION OF DIVINE REVELATION

The notion of revelation contained in *Dei Verbum* demonstrates a synthesis of magisterial and theological advances following the First Vatican Council. In order to see how this synthesis is manifested, it is first necessary to briefly examine the doctrine of revelation presented in *Dei Filius*, one of the two documents promulgated by the First Vatican Council<sup>3</sup>. In many ways, *Dei Verbum* reflects directly the teachings of *Dei Filius*, but still adds something to it: namely, a recognition of

God's personal, concrete interventions in history as manifestations of divine Revelation.

### 1. *Dei Filius*<sup>4</sup>

The dogmatic constitution *Dei Filius* is a document of great importance for fundamental theology<sup>5</sup>. Although primarily a document on the nature of faith, its contents regarding the nature of revelation merit consideration as well.

In *Dei Verbum*, the Council Fathers of Vatican II recognized the doctrinal importance of *Dei Filius*, which is cited eight times. Vatican II thus thoroughly confirmed *Dei Filius*, although expanding upon it on some points. In order to detect this expansion, it is convenient to look at some of the main elements concerning revelation in *Dei Filius*, and then compare them with *Dei Verbum*. These elements could be summarized as word, doctrine, and intellectual assent.

#### a) *Revelation as word: Deus loquens... locutus est*

*Dei Filius* does not provide a specific dogmatic definition of revelation<sup>6</sup>. Important conceptual elements of revelation, however, appear in the second chapter. This chapter affirms that God, out of his goodness, desired to manifest himself to the human race, and quotes from *Hebrews* that «At various times and in different ways, God spoke to the fathers through the prophets, but that in these last days, he has spoken to us through his Son»<sup>7</sup>.

This paragraph identifies revelation as an intellectual and verbal manifestation of truths which exceed the possibility of understanding by unaided human reason<sup>8</sup>. God transmits these truths about himself and his salvific plans for the human race, the end of this manifestation. Despite the possibility of natural knowledge of God, this paragraph emphasizes the «necessity» of supernatural divine Revelation for man's salvation<sup>9</sup>.

The citation from *Hebrews* indicates clearly that revelation is, according to the First Vatican Council Fathers, the word of God directed to all humanity. *Deus loquens... locutus est* is a manner of union between the Old and New Covenants: the instrumental word of God has been spoken, confirmed and consummated in the words and actions of the Word of God, Jesus Christ<sup>10</sup>. With the coming of his own Son,



God manifests himself in a special way; Jesus' birth, life and teaching, his death and resurrection, offer a clear and definitive salvific message to humanity.

b) *Revealed truths as doctrinal content of revelation*

The doctrines in *Dei Filius* focus on the intellectual act of faith. The human mind is capable of receiving divine truths through observation and contemplation of the natural world (*natural revelation*)<sup>11</sup>. These truths, however, fall short of a superior knowledge of many of God's essential qualities and activities (for example, of his triune nature and unconditional love for humanity). To approach these truths, man needs supernatural revelation<sup>12</sup>.

Supernatural revelation is, in fact, an intellectual manifestation of God to man, which extends beyond the possibilities of the human reason<sup>13</sup>. Thus, M. Vacant succinctly summarizes the notion of revelation in *Dei Filius* as, «the affirmation that God has made to the human race, through supernatural means, of truths that are aimed at a supernatural end»<sup>14</sup>.

c) *Faith as intellectual assent to the truth*

Despite an extensive treatment of the nature of revelation, the largest part of *Dei Filius* focuses on faith, its gratuity (i.e., that it is a grace), its object, and its necessity<sup>15</sup>. In the historical context of the First Vatican Council, attention on the possibility and necessity of faith responded to the intellectual currents of rationalism, idealism, pantheism, and deism preceding the Council<sup>16</sup>. Concerns about these intellectual movements moved the Council to accent the act of faith as a response to the supernatural truths that God reveals to man<sup>17</sup>. As Latourelle has commented, «The faith is a reasonable gift, supported by the true and infallible word of God himself. The word of God pertains to the category of testimony»<sup>18</sup>.

d) *Notion of dogma in «Dei Filius»*

The First Vatican Council's emphasis on the supernatural act of faith implied a consideration of faith's object, and thus a direct treatment, if not a definition, of the concept of dogma.

The word «dogma» had been studied repeatedly since the Council of Trent, and especially since about the year 1800<sup>19</sup>. The Fathers of Vatican I thought it necessary to express, in its treatment of the act of faith, the connection of faith with revelation and Church authority, and to ensure the highest intellectual assent to Catholic dogma<sup>20</sup>. Thus, the notion of dogma became identified as an object of the act of faith:

Porro fide divina et catholica ea omnia credenda sunt, quae in verbo Dei scripto vel tradito continentur et ab Ecclesia sive solemnii iudicio sive ordinario et universali magisterio tamquam divinitus revelata credenda proponuntur<sup>21</sup>.

Early sources for this notion include the theologians Melchor Cano (1509-1560) and Francisco Véron (1578-1649), but its most immediate source seems to be Philip Neri Chrisman (1751-1810). Chrisman, although trying to keep the Church's infallibility to a minimum, defined a dogma as a divinely revealed truth, that the Church declares must be believed, and to deny it is heresy<sup>22</sup>. These elements —revelation and Church authority requiring an act of belief— then, served as basic elements for the notion of dogma in Vatican I<sup>23</sup>.

Still, given its focus on intellectual assent and struggle against the forces of rationalism, Vatican I did not declare a precise definition of dogma. Rather, it made more explicit the limits of what must be believed with divine and ecclesiastical faith; the result being, according to G. Söll, that subsequent discussions about the concept of dogma have focused on juridical themes rather than on dogma's truth-value<sup>24</sup>.

## 2. *Dei Verbum* and salvific truth

Accepting fully *Dei Filii's* teachings, *Dei Verbum* stresses further the centrality of the Person of Jesus Christ as the source, object, and fullness of all revelation. Vatican II's treatment of divine Revelation and Tradition in a Christological perspective, taken together with the historical aspects of salvation economy, focuses on the concrete and universal messages, actions, and Person of Christ. Because he is the sum of all revelation<sup>25</sup>, Jesus Christ, as Truth, encourages the Church to present its doctrine as essentially salvific-mediated and represented by expressions dealing with the teachings, actions, death and resurrection of the Word Incarnate.

This expression of truth is presented throughout *Dei Verbum*, for example in number 7, which compresses notions of revealed truths into the notion of Christ as consummation of all revelation. Specifically, it uses the term *revelatio* in the place of *veritati revelatae*, in the phrase, «Ideo Christus Dominus, in quo summi Dei tota revelatio consummatur...»<sup>26</sup>. Jesus Christ as *tota revelatio*, emphasizes the harmony that exists between the Old and New Testaments, and explains the teaching role of the Apostles to present the truth about him. That is, the Christological concentration manifests the fullness of the promised Gospel. Jesus directly charges the Apostles with the duty of extending the totality of revelation (Old and New Testaments) to the whole world<sup>27</sup>.

Reflecting on the specific mandate of Christ to the Apostles to preach the Gospel, as a memory of Himself, as a totality God's love towards man, *Dei Verbum* treats Tradition as a living organism, an active remembrance that maintains its vitality in the recalling of the words and actions of the Lord, like a «historical motivation which never ceases to grow»<sup>28</sup>.

### 3. The Church and Magisterium

The living transmission of God's autorevelation flows forth from the intensity of his communication. God takes the free initiative, making Himself known to man, becoming Himself a man; thus the manner of perpetuating this communication will be through a perpetual living memory of Christ's deeds and words.

The Church, through the Apostolic succession, is given the personal and specific mandate from Christ to spread the Gospel—the salvific truth about himself—and it dedicates itself to two particular but closely united tasks: the conservation and transmission of evangelical testimony.

*a) Conservation.* Tradition (in a wide or cultural sense) has an authoritative-conservative force of its own<sup>29</sup>. In fact, traditions, whether sacred or profane, offer us orientations regarding personal and communitarian behavior and thought; they provide the necessary normative bases of authority for personal and collective action<sup>30</sup>. This force is perhaps even more notable in the case of the Apostolic Tradition, manifested in the Church's Magisterium, or teaching office.

The Apostles, after receiving the authoritative mandate from Christ to go out to the whole world, then elected successors to maintain the

*memoria Iesu* and his precepts and moral teachings of the Church, so that, following the will of God, the Gospel could be conserved living and intact<sup>31</sup>.

*b) Transmission.* The Magisterium's role of conserving truth is closely united to its duty to transmit it to all people; the transmission of truth is equally important as its conservation. Thus, Tradition should not only be considered a conservative «force»<sup>32</sup>. It almost goes without saying that the constant communication of salvific truth to the faithful is a fundamental mission of all Christians, but in a special way, of the successors to the Apostles who share in a specific divine office, guided by the Holy Spirit, to teach and interpret the Gospel truth.

*c) Dogma within Sacred Tradition.* Thus, the salvific truth about Jesus Christ is conserved and transmitted in the Church, and in a special way, though not exclusively, through the Church's Magisterium. Magisterium's role is interpretative —although at the same time, fully authoritative— a continual hermeneutic exercise of distinguishing truths that revolve around the fullness of truth, Jesus Christ, and His salvific message. These truths, then, must be presented to the faithful in a way readily grasped and to which total assent can be given. The presentation of the Gospel thus implies a Church as well as a thoughtful public reception<sup>33</sup>.

The question about dogma concerns close attention to the Apostolic Tradition; for dogma is an aspect, or expression, of the Tradition, and finds its proper place and meaning *in it*<sup>34</sup>. Tradition, in its turn, is a unique expression of the Gospel, and for this reason, has a unique content<sup>35</sup>. The uniqueness of Tradition and its verbal expression precisely opens the possibility and necessity of dogma for the conservation and transmission of the faith.

#### 4. The possibility and necessity of dogma

If, at first glance, it appears that the Second Vatican Council explicitly has little to say about dogma<sup>36</sup>, still, its comprehensive treatment of Tradition and its Christological concentration in the first two chapters of *Dei Verbum* provide access to a treatment of dogma in an indirect manner. If truth exists in the Apostolic Tradition, then a proper and authoritative formulation of the truth in specific historical conditions is needed; thus, dogma is possible and necessary because it provides an authoritative expression of revealed truth in history<sup>37</sup>.

Dogma is historical because it is a precise formulation of truths referring to divine words and actions, and, particularly, the words and actions of Jesus Christ. Because it is a specific expression of those words and actions, dogma is bound to the Tradition from which it flows. In this way, *Dei Verbum* recognizes the historical dimension of dogma<sup>38</sup>, a significant contribution.

##### 5. Doctrinal progression and the «fullness of truth»

As seen, *Dei Verbum* presents Apostolic Tradition as a living organism<sup>39</sup>. As a source of life, its doctrinal content will also reflect a life-giving, salvific character. As L. Alonso Schökel astutely points out, the Church transmits «life, its own life, in a living act; if this life includes doctrine, the transmission of life also passes on doctrine»<sup>40</sup>. In other words, the Church's doctrine, while always maintaining its objective and unchanging qualities, should undergo a progression —much like any other living body— of its material expression and explication of its contents. This progression is then adapted and personally comprehended by the faithful. The dynamic character of Tradition thus responds to external and internal elements of integration and explication, namely the Holy Spirit, personal study and contemplation, and especially personal faith.

These elements are found in *Dei Verbum*, 8, which directly addresses the issue of dogmatic development, proclaiming that the Apostolic Tradition progresses under the assistance of the Holy Spirit, regarding the things and the words that are transmitted. This development occurs through the study and contemplation of the faithful, as well as through their experience of spiritual realities<sup>41</sup>. This progression, however, depends on the guidance of the bishops, who enjoy the charisma of teaching the truth. Once again, the Council affirms the salvific facets of revealed truth, and its eventual plenitude—the return of the long-awaited Savior<sup>42</sup>.

The historic aspect of the truth as expressed in revelation, and transmitted actively through the Church's Sacred Tradition, finds its proper expression in the formulation of dogmas. Dogmas participate in history —and though transcendent to it— are thus subject to progression and development, as a particular and definitive expression of that same Sacred Tradition.

The notion that dogma flows directly from the Gospel, as an element of the Sacred Tradition (as well as the Sacred Scriptures), im-

plies as an absolutely necessary condition the existence of an authoritative body, able to articulate and interpret revealed truths to the faithful.

Thus, the notion of dogma is inseparable from the reality of a teaching office capable of this task. In the Catholic Church, this teaching body is, of course, called *Magisterium*, which, in Latin, refers to the role of someone who is a master in some field of knowledge<sup>43</sup>. As master in the interpretation of revelation, the Church's Magisterium allows the Church as a whole to be considered the subject of dogma<sup>44</sup>.

However, an appreciation of the Magisterium as the subject of dogma, the primary authoritative teaching element in the Church, implied, for the Council Fathers, an attempt at further comprehension of the Church itself. This is exactly the «self examination» that occurred during the whole Second Vatican Council, eventually articulated in the dogmatic constitution, *Lumen gentium*.

#### B. POPULUS DEI AND MAGISTERIUM IN *LUMEN GENTIUM*

Jesus Christ as the fullness of truth and revelation affects the Council's doctrinal image of the Church as the People of God<sup>45</sup>. How all the members of the Church participate, in their own proper ways and functions, in the *munus propheticum Christi*—though by no means in the Church's Magisterium—and what this participation implies for the notion of dogma, particularly its ecumenical implications, are here considered.

The Church's self-reflection resulted in the dogmatic constitution, *Lumen gentium*, on the nature of the Church, commonly considered the core of the Council documents. *Lumen gentium* reflects on the Church's «transcendent and unique societal character»<sup>46</sup>; a reflection which implied a deeper probing into the structural relations between the Church's popular and hierarchical elements. In other words, *Lumen gentium* examines the Church in two united aspects, the Church as *Populus Dei* (Chapter II) and as the hierarchical *Corpus Christi* (Chapter III).

Regarding the first aspect, one of the celebrated advances in the ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council is the image of the Church as the People of God<sup>47</sup>. What is the relation of this image to the notion of Church as the Body of Christ? How do the relations between these two images affect in any way our thinking about dogma?

## 1. Notion of the People of God

The Vatican II Fathers adopted this image of the Church shortly after the close of the First period of the Council, when the Theological Commission was working on a new version of *De Ecclesia*.

The Theological Commission (under the intellectual guidance of Belgian theologian G. Philips) had prepared a shorter scheme of four chapters, in which the theme of the People of God was treated in the third chapter<sup>48</sup>. This order was changed, so that eventually the chapter on the People of God became the second chapter, following an initial chapter which addresses the mystical nature of the Church. The switch of chapters two and three is attributed largely to a moving speech given by Council Father Garrone during the Second Period, who argued for the notion of the Church as the «Kingdom of God»<sup>49</sup>. This notion seemed to curb a «triumphalism of the hierarchy»<sup>50</sup>.

The definitive placement of *De populo Dei* as Chapter II of *Lumen gentium* reinforces the historical-social character of the Church, with its basis in the early Christian community. This image likewise neatly coincides with the concrete salvific character of its doctrinal contents and mission. As one scholar has put it, «The origin, the nature, and the mission of the Church are only understandable... as a historical and salvific projection of the mystery of the Trinity of God»<sup>51</sup>. *Lumen gentium* affirms this social character of salvation, opening the frontiers of salvific truth to all humanity<sup>52</sup>. An appreciation of this Trinitarian projection, in turn, depends on determining in more detail the relationship between the faithful and the Magisterium.

## 2. Magisterium as service to revealed truth

The election of God's People as a social body based in sacramental communion with Christ (Baptism) and the spreading of the Gospel, in no way undermines the need for authority. In fact, from the People of God springs a divine initiative that further unites it through an authoritative articulation of the *memoria* of Christ's life and teaching. This initiative results in a special body, which, in the name of God, carries out a special service of an authoritative character. This service is based in the ministerial function of Holy Orders, from which flows the Hierarchical Magisterium of the Body of Christ, a body which propagates the truth in the name of the Church's divine Founder<sup>53</sup>.

### 3. Dogma and Magisterium in *Lumen gentium* 25

After *Lumen gentium* treats the nature of the Church as the People of God—to which all persons are called<sup>54</sup>, and to which all belong, in some way, after the sacrament of Baptism<sup>55</sup>—it turns to a specific consideration of the role of the Church's Magisterium (Chapter III). It affirms the notion of service to the truth, as well as the communal nature of belief.

Affirmations made in *Lumen gentium* 25 reflect, on its surface, traditional Catholic accounts of the notion of dogma. Dogma is an authoritative proposition made by the Magisterium about a particular revealed truth—a truth that must be recognized by the People of God as necessary for belief, and thus communion in the Catholic Faith—and is irreformable.

The irreformability of its doctrine necessarily reflects its infallible nature. That is, that the Church's Magisterium cannot err in the formulation of its dogma, nor the People of God err in its belief of divine truths. It is worthwhile to look at the initial sentences of *Lumen gentium*, 25 to see how this relationship is manifested:

Among the principal duties of bishops, the preaching of the Gospel occupies an eminent place. Bishops, teaching in the communion with the Roman Pontiff, are to be respected by all as witnesses to divine and Catholic truth. In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ, and the faithful are to assent to it with a religious assent of soul. ...Although individual bishops do not enjoy the prerogative of infallibility, they can nonetheless proclaim Christ's doctrine infallibly. This is so even when they are spread out around the world, provided that, while maintaining the bond of unity among themselves and with Peter's successor, and while teaching authentically on a matter of faith or morals, they concur in a single point of view as the one which must be held conclusively<sup>56</sup>.

Thus, the Council Fathers affirm that dogmas can be formulated by the Pope, when he speaks *ex cathedra* or by the Catholic Bishops, in communion with the Pope, whenever they meet in an ecumenical council. Their definitions must then be adhered to with submission of the faith. But dogma, as a proposition of faith, meant to express a divinely revealed truth, must be expressly defined as such, as the last part of *Lumen gentium*, 25 affirms:

But when either the Roman Pontiff or the body of bishops together with him defines a judgment, they pronounce it in accord with revelation



itself. All are obliged to maintain and be ruled by this revelation, which, as written or preserved by tradition, is transmitted in its entirety through the legitimate succession of bishops and particularly through the care of the Roman Pontiff himself. Under the guiding light of the Spirit of truth, revelation is thus religiously preserved and fruitfully expounded in the Church<sup>57</sup>.

Therefore, the presentation of the formulation of Catholic dogma through the teaching office of the Bishops, as leaders of and among the People of God treats the notion of dogma in a coherent, clear and systematic —though not explicit— manner: dogma is a revealed truth of faith to be believed as such by the faithful. Despite the complete absence of the word «dogma» in this text, its presence is felt, indicated by the use of other terms like *sententia de fidei*, *catholicae veritates*, and *doctrina Christi*.

#### 4. Sensus fidei in *Lumen gentium*

Along with a consideration of the infallible role of Church Magisterium, *Lumen gentium* also considers the infallibility of all the People of God (*in credendo*). This phenomenon is commonly referred to as *Sensus fidelium* or *Sensus fidei*, whereby all the faithful take part in the comprehension and transmission of revealed truth. This notion is simply developed in *Lumen gentium* 12:

The holy People of God shares also in Christ's prophetic office. It spreads abroad a living witness to him, particularly by means of a life of faith and charity, and by offering God a sacrifice of praise... The body of the faithful as a whole, anointed as they are by the Holy One, cannot err in matters of belief. Thanks to a supernatural sense of the faith which characterizes the People as a whole, it manifests this unerring quality when... it shows universal agreement in faith and morals. For, by this sense of faith which is aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth, God's People accepts not the word of men, but the very Word of God. It clings without fail to the faith once delivered by the saints, penetrates it more deeply by accurate insights, and applies it more thoroughly to life. All this it does under the lead of a sacred teaching authority to which it loyally adheres<sup>58</sup>.

Rather than an authoritative body which has direct responsibility from Christ for transmitting and interpreting the divine mysteries, *Sensus fidei* applies to the way in which the Christian faithful «instinc-

tively or intuitively» perceive the truth and adhere to it, and the infallibility that this adherence gains by assent to these truths<sup>59</sup>.

The universality of the graspability of truth is a treasure of the Catholic faith, it holds no one exempt from the possibility of knowing the truths of salvation, and allows for an active participation of the faithful in the confirmation of these truths. The act of faith of all believers is thus made stronger and more vital in the personal and social confessions of the faith. That is, that the faithful participate in the prophetic office of the Church —though not as a part of, or substitutes for, the Church's Magisterium— as already seen in number 12<sup>60</sup>.

This universality applies to the condition of infallibility *in credendo* on the part of the People of God, as a common body. This aspect developed from extensive studies of the role of the laity in the Church, which had grown in the middle part of this century<sup>61</sup>. Indeed, the recovery of the role of *sensus fidei* could be counted among the theological novelties or advances regarding revelation and dogma in *Lumen gentium*<sup>62</sup>. As such, it is worthwhile to see how *sensus fidei* might be connected to the concept of dogma.

##### 5. *Sensus fidei* as a preparation for dogmatic formulation

But, given the infallible nature of the popular sense of the faith, what is this phenomenon's relation to dogma? Since dogma is an infallible and authoritative expression of revealed truth necessary for salvation, *sensus fidei* must be implied somehow in dogmatic formulation and development.

Following the indications given in *Lumen gentium*, 12, it seems that *sensus fidei* might be considered an expression of a common reception of divinely revealed truths. This reception can be realized either prior to or after an explicit formulation of dogma. Because of its infallible character *in credendo*, the popular sense of the faith can be considered a «practical version of dogmas, previous to their formulation»<sup>63</sup>.

As a vital or practical reality, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the supernatural *sensus fidei* can, it seems in some cases, serve as a kind of preparation for dogmatic formulation. An intuitive preparation, to be sure —a kind of charismatic grounding which accepts the seminal truths of the faith—, a grounding made possible because of the intrinsic connection between *sensus fidei* and the original Gospel message<sup>64</sup>. Thus, the intellection of the faith is closely connected to the life of the Gospel, and searches for its meaning and personal application in con-

crete historical circumstances<sup>65</sup>. In this way, dogma guides our life, but also springs forth from our lives as we live out our personal faith and vocation.

This is implied in *Lumen gentium*, 12, which states that «...the People of God, under the direction of the Magisterium... infallibly adheres to the faith transmitted... goes deeper into it with correct judgment, and applies it each day more fully to life»<sup>66</sup>.

As mentioned before, the participation of all the People of God in the development of dogma is affirmed in *Dei Verbum*<sup>67</sup>. With the help of the Holy Spirit, all the faithful take part in a deepening of the intelligence and comprehension of God's mysteries. This collective comprehension is sometimes affirmed explicitly by the Magisterium, when it formulates dogmas, as recently made clear in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 89:

There is an organic connection between our spiritual life and dogmas. Dogmas are lights along the paths of faith; they illuminate it and make it secure. Conversely, if our life is upright, our intellect and heart will open to the light shed by the dogmas of the faith<sup>68</sup>.

The manifestation of the infallibility of the faithful, a real participation in the *munus propheticum Christi*, does not in any way initiate conflict of the laity with the Hierarchy, but rather leads to a deeper harmonization between the two bodies, in service to the truth<sup>69</sup>. *Sensus fidei* often encourages the vitality and purity of the true doctrine of the Church, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, sometimes acts on its own account to invoke truth against falsehood<sup>70</sup>.

Harmony flowing from the cooperation of all the faithful in the comprehension of and service to divine truth, facilitates, in some way, the formulation of dogma on the part of the Church's Magisterium. Thus, it could be argued that Vatican II's approach to focus on the notion of the Church as the People of God foments the possibility that dogma serves a kind uniting function; the faithful, in particular the Catholic faithful, seeking truth, will live according to what binds them rather than that which emphasizes separation.

Rather than present hindrances to Christian unity, a proper appreciation of how dogmas are ordered according to their divine and Apostolic origins might serve to foment it. Agreement as to the sources of Christian dogma should then be expected to open further dialogue among these communities. Thus understood, dogmas might serve an effective ecumenical function.

In order to approach the theme of ecumenism —understood as the quest for Christian unity— and the relationship between the Catholic dogma and all Christian believers —Catholic or not— an analysis of the relations between the notions of the People of God and doctrine «broadly considered» needs to be looked at. These relations are addressed in *Unitatis redintegratio* and *Gaudium et spes*.

### C. DOGMA AND HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTINGENCIES

As seen above, the Church as *Populus Dei* constitutes a People made up of an authoritative apostolic hierarchy and faithful—more precisely, a *conditio fidelis*, based in Baptism, and its *ministerium*, based in Holy Orders<sup>71</sup>. It is, however, opportune to inquire: «Who belongs to this People?». While the Second Vatican Council affirms that only Christians belong to it, still it can be asked, «To what extent is each Christian community affected by the bonds of *Catholic* dogma?». If it is the case that all Christians —through personal baptism— belong at least in a sacramental way to God's People, is it possible that dogma be affected, albeit in purely accidental ways? That is, can —or should— propositional expressions of revealed truths be formulated in a way that all Christians can easily grasp, and assent to?<sup>72</sup> Such questions derive from an expanding notion of the People of God, one maintaining that this term applies not only to members of the Catholic Church, but in a way, to all Christians<sup>73</sup>.

If it were the case that dogmas could be simplified so that more Christians would accept them, then «dogmatic simplification» would seem a solution to some ecumenical questions. It may also be the case that Catholic dogma would become less of an abstract concept, linked ever more tightly to living historical realities and needs of specific communities of believers<sup>74</sup>. Nevertheless, might the purity of revealed truth be affected?

As an expression of revealed truth, dogma should serve as a material bond (contents of the faith) of deeper and closer union among all Christians. Similarly, as an element of Tradition, dogma liberates and unites Christians at the foundation of their life and activities, serving as posts guiding the way of salvation<sup>75</sup>.

Temporal and cultural adjustments of dogma to specific historic conditions need not imply a stripping away of the contents of dogma, but may affect a certain order or priority that each truth maintains within the totality of Christian doctrine. This ordering of truths is

perhaps even more fundamental to the faith in relation to the sources of those truths, the Gospel, and more specifically, Christ himself.

Would an «ordering» or «priority» of truths serve as a foundation for agreement among believers? This question is addressed in *Unitatis redintegratio* within its treatment of the novel image of a «hierarchy of truths».

## 1. Hierarchy of truths

The Council Fathers announced the concept of a «hierarchy of truths» in the context of the ecumenical arguments about *Unitatis redintegratio*, 11. As this familiar text of Vatican II reads:

...Catholic theologians engaged in ecumenical dialogue, while standing fast by the teaching of the Church and searching together with separated brothers into the divine mysteries, should act with love for truth, with charity, and with humility. When comparing doctrines, they should remember that in Catholic teaching there exists an order or «hierarchy» of truths, since they vary in their relationship to the foundation of the Christian faith<sup>76</sup>.

This text directly deals with the question of dogma. It argues that there exists a real ordering among the truths of the faith, if not in importance (all must be believed with Catholic and divine faith), at least in relation to the source of all dogma, Jesus Christ himself. The history of the formation of this concept should be briefly considered.

### a) *History of the concept*

Renewed interest in the existence of a *hierarchia veritatum* is notable in some French theological works in the early part of this century, beginning in the 1930's. Shortly after the Second World War, various thinkers, such as Y. Congar<sup>77</sup>, C.J. Dumont, R. Draguet, J. Bonnefoy, E. Charlier, and R. Gagnebet focused on the notion of a hierarchy of truths according to Thomas Aquinas' ordering of the articles of the faith<sup>78</sup>. According to W. Henn, the closest approach to the phrase «hierarchy of truths» during this time, and hence one may say its first use, seems to be found in E. Charlier's *Essai sur le problème théologique*<sup>79</sup>.

Thus, although there had been a notion of an ordering of the articles of the faith in scholastic theology, and the concept of the *nexus*

*mysteriorum* had appeared in the First Vatican Council<sup>80</sup>, still the notion of a «hierarchy of truths» as a specific hermeneutic tool to address ecumenical questions dealing with Catholic dogmas marks a notable theological advance prior to Vatican II, an advance subsequently developed in the Council<sup>81</sup>.

#### b) *Hierarchy of truths in the Vatican II debates*

Reference to a hierarchy of truths in the Second Vatican Council debates on ecumenism first appeared in a speech by the Council Father Pangrazio during the Second Period. Bishop Pangrazio held that it would be necessary for the Council to distinguish between the truths of the faith that participate in an eternal reality, and have as their *end* the salvation of man (the Trinity, the Incarnation), and those truths that serve as *instruments* or means of salvation (for example, those dealing with the Church)<sup>82</sup>. Therefore, Msgr. Pangrazio held that although all revealed truths must be believed, still —considered within the whole of divine Revelation— some truths hold a preference in order over others<sup>83</sup>.

Although —as can be seen in *Unitatis redintegratio*, 11— Vatican II did not wholly accept Bishop Pangrazio's distinction between truths *ad ordinem finis* and truths *ad ordinem mediorum salutis*, still, the text neatly affirms the ecumenical necessity to integrate and approach the totality of all dogmas from the source of their connections (*nexus mysteriorum*), the Person of Jesus Christ<sup>84</sup>.

## 2. Truth as project of moral union

The phrase, «hierarchy of truths», while perhaps not the most important theological advance of the Second Vatican Council<sup>85</sup>, nonetheless invites the possibility for inter-community dialogue among different Christian confessions. Rather than focusing on the differences among the various Christian communities and their relation with the Catholic Church, the Church itself was officially encouraging the necessity to focus on positive likenesses and common doctrines among Christians, and especially their common foundations of the faith, the belief in Jesus Christ as God's Word and Savior of the world.

From an ecumenical standpoint, however, the doctrine contained in *Unitatis redintegratio*, 11, can be looked as a project of moral unity

rather than, strictly speaking, immediate dogmatic unity. The Council recognizes that doctrinal differences among various Christian confessions hinder the possibility for an immediate reunion of all Christians back into one common fold. Nonetheless, the Council also recognizes the moral value of its dogmas to serve as practical and fruitful ignition points of convergence and communication among the faithful. By focusing on what unites rather than separates, ecumenism can make considerable advances, at least in dialogue, if not in doctrinal agreement.

The moral project of communication among believers who hold common doctrines depends on love of the truth, and particularly the love of the divinely revealed truths most central to Christianity—the Trinity, the Incarnation, and personal redemption—. An ever increasing love of truth, then, should lead to a deeper appreciation of Catholic dogma on the part of all Christians. Precisely because of dogma's permanent quality (irreformability), lovers of the truth—whatever faith they profess—should be attracted by the real possibility of approaching the fullness of all revealed truth, Jesus Christ. This possible encounter may then lead all into communion with him and his followers. The Church is foremost in encouraging this encounter, particularly when it reflects ever more deeply on Christ and the dogmas which express aspects of his person, life, death, resurrection, and moral teachings<sup>86</sup>.

J. Ratzinger, commentating on *Fides et ratio*, looks at the possibility of truth to unite all men when he states that, «the fundamental category of Christian Revelation is the truth, together with charity. The universality of Christianity comes from its pretension to be true ...and [thus] from the conviction that the faith is the truth ...therefore Christianity applies to all precisely because it is true»<sup>87</sup>.

### 3. Dogma and culture in *Gaudium et spes*

Having briefly looked at some of the Vatican II documents on revelation and the nature of the Church and interfaith relations, there still remains to be considered the Church's teaching on the notion of doctrine as it applies to—and is comprehended by—all men and women of the world. Thus, the Church's pastoral constitution, *Gaudium et spes*, needs to be looked at. What does the Council's «pastoral» constitution have to offer to the understanding of the notion of dogma?

Any consideration of the Second Vatican Council's doctrine should include an examination of this central text. Precisely in this constitu-

tion, the Church's salvific doctrine is applied to concrete historical problems and circumstances. The Council Fathers, through the arguments and principles outlined in *Gaudium et spes*, sought to show how the truths of salvation, reached in their fullness through the person, words, and actions of Jesus Christ, can bring about profound changes in human attitudes and institutions, in how we think about ourselves, and particularly how the faith can approach actual societal problems. Such concrete themes addressed include, the nature and dignity of the human person (Part I, chapter 1), marriage and the family (Part II, chapter 1), economic and social justice (Part II, chapter 3), the human community and politics (Part II, chapter 4), and world peace (Part II, chapter 5).

From the standpoint of the concept of dogma, some of the most pertinent arguments appear in the second part of Chapter II, «On cultural progress». Particularly relevant is the Council's considerations on the relationship between faith and culture, particularly the harmony that should exist between Christian doctrine and the presentation of the faith in varying historical and cultural contexts.

It is necessary to examine briefly how Church doctrine, or dogma, can be affected—though never substantially changed—by these same historical and cultural conditions. In other words, the salutary character of Catholic dogma does not exclude it from historical and cultural conditioning.

Although, as in the case of all Vatican II documents, the concept of dogma is not directly addressed, nonetheless, it is precisely in the second part of *Gaudium et spes* where—not excluding the theological advance of the notion of the hierarchy of truths—perhaps dogma is most directly touched upon. Particularly in number 62, the Council takes up the question of how doctrine is affected by history, that is, to what extent the formulation of revealed truth affects—and is affected by—cultural changes and pressures.

a) *Dogma and history in «Gaudium et spes» 62*

From the beginning of this century, contemporary thinkers actively continued to address the historical and subjective aspects of man's approach to absolute truth, as it is confessed, comprehended, and lived in the context of human life. A new generation of theologians, biblicists, and philosophers reflected on the great advances made in the scientific community, and sought to apply and develop these methods



to the sacred sciences as well. Particularly interesting to these thinkers were the possibilities of discovering more precise relations between cultural-historical conditions and the faith. Some of these historical and subjective approaches to faith retained their importance through the twentieth century, and appeared at Vatican II.

Because the Council sought a deeper comprehension of its doctrine in order to more effectively present it to the world, it affirmed that the Church needs to recognize the validity of contemporary methodological tools, including methods and findings used in the profane sciences. The major statement made in this regard is found in *Gaudium et spes*, 62, which reads:

Although the Church has contributed much to the development of culture, experience shows that, because of circumstances, it is sometimes difficult to harmonize culture with Christian teaching. These difficulties do not necessarily harm the life of faith. Indeed, they can stimulate the mind to a more accurate and penetrating grasp of the faith. For recent studies and findings of science, history, and philosophy raise new questions which influence life and demand new theological investigations.

Furthermore, while adhering to the methods and requirements proper to theology, theologians are invited to seek continually for more suitable ways of communicating doctrine to the men of their times. For the deposit of the faith or revealed truths are one thing; the manner in which they are formulated without harm to their meaning and significance is another<sup>88</sup>.

The first paragraph of this quotation seemed an allusion to the «Galileo case», and although many Fathers may have been slighted because Galileo was not mentioned by name, and «rehabilitated» here expressly, it is not the nucleus of the phrase<sup>89</sup>. Rather, the central teaching is that the Church must admit an open attitude to the findings and methods of contemporary science, life, and culture.

The openness to contemporary culture found in *Gaudium et spes*, 62, however, in no way implies that revealed truth is relative-subject itself, in substance, to cultural and historical changes. It simply reaches out to the world's technical advances that help man to understand truth, revealed and natural, to approach and solve questions and problems that he encounters.

Thus, alongside the ecumenical question, through its search for the unity of all Christians into one fold, the Council addressed the historical and cultural influences that indirectly inform, and even help to form dogmatic expressions. In *Gaudium et spes*, 62, the Church admits

that difficulties have sometimes arisen between the faith and cultural nuances, that is, difficulties that spring from «contingent factors» (*ex causis contingentibus*). Rather than harming the faith, these cultural contingencies can, and do, serve to stimulate a more precise and deeper understanding of that faith. It likewise exhorts theologians to inquire into better ways of presenting revealed truths<sup>90</sup>. For «the deposit of faith and its truths are one thing, the manner of expressing them is quite another» (*quia aliud est ipsum depositum Fidei seu veritates, aliud modus secundum quem enuntiantur, eodem tamen sensu eademque sententia*)<sup>91</sup>.

This last phrase was, of course, a direct application of Pope John XXIII's opening discourse on 11 October 1962. In this address, Pope John XXIII had made the fundamental distinction between the deposit of faith and its mode of expression. In this section of its pastoral constitution the Council officially recovered this idea within the context of the Church's dialogue with the world.

In 1973, the Magisterial document, *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, affirmed this teaching of Vatican II; the doctrine of the Church should be presented to man in a living manner, and according to the needs of the time<sup>92</sup>. It affirms the idea that historical and cultural conditions can affect dogmatic expressions, and procure a deeper penetration into them, while at the same time avoiding historical relativism<sup>93</sup>.

#### b) *History, dogmatic expression, and unity*

What, then, does a historically and culturally conditioned approach to the concept of dogma offer the faithful? Does this section of *Gaudium et spes* admit, albeit in a limited way, a subjective frailty of dogma? How can dogma remain absolute in the midst of a sea of historical and cultural change? Can an admission of the historical character of Church teaching contribute to further unity among believers and non-believers?

From a dogmatic perspective, it is clear that the Second Vatican Council did not try to impose any substantial change to the treasure of the Church's *depositum fidei*. It did, however, seek to develop some points of its teaching with regard to the nature of the Church and its relation to the world. To accomplish this development, the Council Fathers placed all of its doctrine within a broad, salvific framework<sup>94</sup>. In other words, the Church, while maintaining the absolute transcendent character of its doctrine, was perhaps more interested in an adequate, life-giving application of its doctrine rather than merely its defi-

nitio<sup>95</sup>. The Council looked toward the subjective and collective application of its doctrine aimed to bring about the universal salvation of all persons. This is, in effect, to promote actively the unity of the whole human race, though, of course it focused its primary unifying goals at the communion of Christians.

The consequences of the recognition of the validity of history and cultural progression as significant methodological tools in *Gaudium et spes* confirmed earlier intellectual currents arguing that it is precisely *in history* where God carries out his salvific plans. This recognition, in turn, evokes a complete Christological emphasis. Upon entering human history, Christ becomes the *locus* of encounter between absolute, transcendent truth and the historical currents that flow around him and the Gospel. Human history becomes, in a certain sense, divine.

#### D. SUMMARY: DOGMA'S CHRISTOLOGICAL AXIS

In its presentation of Catholic truth to the contemporary world, the Second Vatican Council maintained a realistic and practical approach to the question of how truth simultaneously maintains its perennial and conditional qualities; that is, how absolute truth can be presented and *represented* by the human word in historical circumstances. Vatican II's teaching on the nature of the Church, its Magisterium, ecumenism, and the Church's relationship to the world, brought the concept of dogma within a thoroughly ecclesial *and* cultural context.

Regarding the Magisterium, or teaching office of the Church, there were no new novelties presented, though it affirmed the infallible nature of revealed truth. The notions of a hierarchy of truths in *Unitatis redintegratio* and the recognition in *Gaudium et spes* that historical conditions make necessary an ever deeper penetration and actualization of dogma's expression are, however, considerable novelties to the Church's conception of doctrine—at least considered in a broad sense—. Again, these elements indicate a clear and profound ecclesial and ecumenical realism held by the Council Fathers.

Through the careful reading of these documents, it is evident that all baptized persons, even though they be non-Catholic, belong in some way to the People of God. God blesses His People and guides them through the Church's doctrine and Magisterium, which is at the service of divinely revealed truth.

Since, as we have seen, the fullness of all truth is found in the Person of Christ, acceptance of the major dogmas dealing with the Tri-

nity and the Incarnation serve as an excellent starting point for an effective dialogue among all Christians, *qui ad populum Dei iam aliquo modo pertinent*<sup>96</sup>.

In turn, subjective comprehension of truth, the living grasp of revealed truth by personal assent to dogma, clearly shows that time and history intimately link divine realities with limited human comprehension of them. The Catholic faith does not remain content with teaching an abstract God-as a unity of perfections, such as «the Good» or «the Almighty» or even «the Transcendent One». These qualities are certainly applicable to God and His activity, but divine Revelation, and especially the historical richness of the Gospel, reaches far beyond the possibilities of human abstraction and concepts.

Dogma is an expression or explanation of revealed truth based in a living Tradition that contemporary man desperately needs today. We would like to comprehend the mysteries of God; dogma, as an expression of divine Revelation allows human beings access to a clearer, albeit limited, comprehension of not only the divine mysteries, but also the world as well. It helps us to make sense of events, persons, the good, and evil that we encounter every day.

Thus, dogma is a necessary, constant, life-giving reference; it brings the Reign of God within our reach as it lights and guides our pilgrimage on earth toward Heaven. Dogma as an expression of the divine Word (in its particular expressions), rests confidently on the fullness of revelation, the person of Jesus Christ, thus, on the fullness of dogma.

In the theology of St. John, Jesus is the «self-explanation» of God<sup>97</sup>, and dogma must always refer to him, in person and action, in order to be correctly interpreted. By a proper appreciation of the Gospel and its relation to history, all things can receive their proper sense within the order of creation<sup>98</sup>. All mankind, as much as it is united to the Word, and the truths that emanate from it, can make significant steps towards ecclesial —and perhaps, even civic unity—.

H. de Lubac held that the concept of dogma is in immediate relation to the notion of authority<sup>99</sup>. As long as the authority of truth is recognized as having its foundation in Jesus Christ's Incarnation and salvific actions, then that authority will be easier to accept, and love, in the form of dogmatic formulas handed over by the Magisterium to the whole People of God.

## NOTES

1. Cfr., *Mt* 28, 19-20.
2. Cfr., G. MÜLLER, *Katholische Dogmatik*, Freiburg 1995, p. 80. «Die Wahrheit des Dogmas ist ebenso wenig wie eine Glaubensformel oder ein Glaubensbekenntnis das Wort Gottes selbst».
3. *Dei Filius*, promulgated on 24 April 1870, Sessio III. Cfr., DS 3000-3045.
4. Some worthwhile commentaries on *Dei Filius* would include: J. VACANT, *Etudes théologiques sur les constitutions du Concile du Vatican*, Paris 1895; I.D. MANSI, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, Lipsia 1923-1927; R. AUBERT, *Le problème de l'acte de foi*, Louvain 1945; IDEM, *Vaticanium I*, Mainz 1965; Y. CONGAR, *L'ecclésiologie de la Révolution française au Concile du Vatican sous le signe de l'autorité*, in *Unam Sanctam*, 34, Paris 1960, pp. 77-114; JIMÉNEZ ORTIZ, *Teología Fundamental: La revelación y la fe en Heinrich Fries*, Salamanca 1988, pp. 302-317; H.J. POTTMEYER, *Der Glaube vor dem Anspruch der Wissenschaft*, Freiburg 1968; IDEM, *La costituzione «Dei Filius»*, and A. GONZÁLEZ MONTES, *Dei Verbum sullo sfondo di «Dei Filius»*, in *La teologia fondamentale*, R. FISICHELLA (dir.), Casale Monferrato (Italy) 1997; J.M. GÓMEZ-HERAS, *La constitución «Dei Filius» y la teología del Cardinal J.B. Franzelin*, in *RET* 23 (1963) 137-190, and 451-487; R. LATOURELLE, *Théologie de la révélation*, Paris 1966; and M. CAUDRON, *Magistère ordinaire et infailibilité pontificale d'après la constitution «Dei Filius»*, Leuven 1961.
5. As Pope JOHN PAUL II has recently remarked: «Con *Dei Filius* viene riconosciuto alla ragione umana di poter raggiungere la verità in modo autonomo e, partendo dal creato, di arrivare a conoscere Dio stesso...». *Discorso*, in *La teologia fondamentale*, R. FISICHELLA (dir.), Casale Monferrato (Italy) 1997, pp. 281-284. Cfr. also, JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical letter, *Fides et ratio*, 17-X-1998, numbers 8 and 9.
6. The dogmatic definition most important in *Dei Filius* is the affirmation that God can be known through the use of reason and the contemplation of nature.
7. DS 3004: «...attamen placuisse eius sapientiae et bonitati, alia eaque supernaturali via se ipsum ac aeterna voluntatis suae decreta humano generi revelare, dicente Apostolo: "Multifariam multisque modis olim Deus loquens patribus in Prophetis: novissime diebus istis locutus est nobis in Filio"» (*Heb* 1,1).
8. Cfr., C. IZQUIERDO, *Teología fundamental*, Pamplona 1998, pp. 72-73.
9. R. LATOURELLE, *Théologie de la révélation*, Paris 1966, p. 285.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 284.
11. DS 3004: «...naturali humanae rationis luminae e rebus creatis certo cognosci posse...».
12. *Ibid.*, «attamen placuisse eius sapientiae et bonitati alia eaque supernaturali via se ipsum ac aeterna voluntatis suae decreta humano generi revelari...».

13. Cfr., J. POLO CARRASCO, *Verdad divina y lenguaje*, in *ScrTh* 11 (1979) 61-104, and C. IZQUIERDO, *Teología fundamental*, Pamplona 1998, p. 73.
14. A. VACANT, *Constitutions de Concile du Vatican*, vol. 1, p. 312. «L'affirmation que Dieu a faite au genre humain, par un moyen surnaturel, de vérités qui tendent à la fin surnaturelle».
15. Cfr., DS 3008-3014. Chapter Four also deals with faith in the context of its relationship with reason. Such emphasis on the act of faith has led G. O'COLLINS to remark that *Dei Filius* is fundamentally a constitution about faith. Cfr., *Retrieving fundamental theology*, New York 1993, p. 57.
16. Cfr., R. LATOURELLE, *Théologie de la révélation*, pp. 278-279, and C. IZQUIERDO, *Teología fundamental*, Pamplona 1998, p. 72.
17. Cfr., DS 3008.
18. R. LATOURELLE, *Théologie de la révélation*, p. 282.
19. Cfr., W. KASPER, *Dogma y palabra de Dios*, Madrid 1969, pp. 38-39, and A. LANG, *Teología fundamental*, II, Madrid 1971, pp. 310-311.
20. Cfr., G. SÖLL, *Dogma und Dogmenentwicklung*, in *Handbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, V, A. GRILLMEIER (dir.), Freiburg 1971, p. 18.
21. DS 3011
22. *Regula fidei catholica*, Kempten, 1792, part 5. «Quod dogma fidei nil aliud sit, quam doctrina et veritas divinitus revelata quae publico Ecclesiae iudicio fide divina credenda ita proponitur, ut contraria ab Ecclesia tanquam haeretica doctrina damnetur». Quoted in J.R. GEISELMANN, *Dogma*, in *Conceptos fundamentales de la teología*, Madrid 1966, pp. 447-448. Geiselmann holds that this concept coincides with that of *Dei Filius*.
23. Cfr., P. SCHRODT, *The problem of the beginning of dogma in recent theology*, Frankfurt 1978, p. 164.
24. G. SÖLL, *Dogma und Dogmenentwicklung*, p. 18. «Daraus ergibt sich, daß die in der neuesten Zeit wieder aufgelebten Diskussionen über Sinn und Berechtigung einer fides ecclesiastica für die Geschichte des Dogmenbegriffs eigentlich nicht mehr von Belang sind». Another German author, J. Nolte, argues that the notion of dogma given in DS 3011 is in the imperative mood, which indicates that it was never intended to be a definition. Cfr., P. SCHRODT, *The Continuing discussion of dogma in Germany*, in *HeyJ* 14 (1973) 66.
25. *Dei Verbum*, 7, «Ideo Christus Dominus, in quo summi Dei tota revelatio consummatur...». Following this notion, W. KASPER succinctly summarizes the essence of Apostolic Tradition as *memoria Iesu Christi*: «Tradition is *memoria Iesu Christi*, that occurs in the Holy Spirit; it is the word of God that lives in the hearts of believers through the Holy Spirit». Cfr., *Teología e Iglesia*, Barcelona 1989, pp. 122-123.
26. Cfr., F. GIL HELLIN (dir.), *Constitutio dogmatica de divina Revelatione «Dei Verbum»*. *Synopsis Historica*, Rome 1993, p. 52.
27. Cfr., R. LATOURELLE, *Théologie de la révélation*, p. 374. Cfr. also *Lumen gentium*, 19.
28. P. RICOEUR, *Historia y verdad*, Madrid 1990, p. 76. This idea is reminiscent of Maurice Blondel's notion that Tradition «sait garder du passé non pas tant l'aspect intellectuel que la réalité vitale»; and that, «la Tradition anticipe l'avenir et se dispose à l'éclairer par l'effort même qu'elle fait pour demeurer fidèle au passé». Cfr., M. BLONDEL, *Histoire et dogme*, in *Les premiers écrits de Maurice Blondel*, Paris 1956, pp. 204-205.
29. For example, W. KASPER writes that: «...la autoridad de la tradición se impone exclusivamente en la razón y a través de la razón del hombre; y viceversa, el recuerdo del

- pasado es también expresión y condición de racionalidad y de humanidad». *Teología e Iglesia*, Barcelona 1989, p. 109. Cfr. also, Y. CONGAR, *La Tradition et les traditions*, I, Paris 1960, p. 44, where he states that: «L'idée essentielle est celle de transmission d'un contenu de vérités et de principes de vie, à la fois normatifs et efficaces pour la salut»; A. MICHEL, *Tradition*, in DThC 15, Paris 1946, cols., 1252-1350; and A. DULLES, *Tradition and creativity in theology*, in «First Things» 27 (1992) 20-27.
30. Cfr., H.J. POTTMEYER, *Tradición*, in Dtf, R. LATOURELLE-R. FISICHELLA (dirs.), Madrid 1992, pp. 1560-1562.
  31. V. PROAÑO GIL, *Tradición*, in GER XXII, Madrid 1991, pp. 661-670. Vid. also, *Lumen gentium*, 19-25, and *Dei Verbum*, 9: «Sacra autem Traditio verbum Dei, a Christo Domino et a Spiritu Sancto Apostolis concreditum, successoribus eorum integre transmittit, ut illud, praeuolente Spiritu veritatis, praeconio suo fideliter seruent, exponant atque diffundant».
  32. L. ALONSO SCHÖKEL, *El dinamismo de la Tradición*, in L. ALONSO SHÖKEL (dir.), *Comentarios a la constitución «Dei Verbum» sobre la divina Revelación*, Madrid 1969, pp. 266-309. He states: «Vista la Tradición como realidad viva, en el sujeto transmisor, es imposible entender la Tradición puramente como una fuerza conservadora. La conservación es sólo un polo, el otro polo el progreso...».
  33. Cfr., F. ARDUSSO, *Magisterio eclesial*, Madrid 1998, pp. 16-17.
  34. Cfr., C. IZQUIERDO, *Uso della Tradizione nella Teologia fondamentale*, in *La teologia fondamentale*, R. FISICHELLA (dir.), Casale-Monferatto (Italy) 1997, p. 180.
  35. H. DE LUBAC, *Opera omnia*, XIV, Milan 1985, p. 177.
  36. As W. Kasper has remarked, «Vaticano II... intencionadamente quería hablar un lenguaje pastoral y no dogmático (en el sentido estricto de la palabra). Evidentemente el concilio no sólo confirmó la tradición dogmática, sino que también hizo él mismo afirmaciones con peso dógmatico (en sentido amplio). Pero significativamente el concepto dogma no desempeñó en él ningún papel decisivo». Cfr., W. KASPER, *Dogma-evolución de los dogmas*, in P. EICHER (dir.), *Diccionario de conceptos teológicos*, Barcelona 1989, p. 267.
  37. Vid., *Acta III*, 3, p. 881. As one Council Father —C.E. SABOIA— remarked in the Third Period, commenting on *Dei Verbum*, Chapter II «Exinde nullum dogma seu doctrina christiana existere potest, quod non continatur in traditione et ex traditione veniat».
  38. COMMISSIO THEOLOGICA INTERNATIONALIS, *De interpretatione dogmatum*, in Greg 72 (1991) 16.
  39. L. ALONSO SCHÖKEL notes the following passages from chapter II of *Dei Verbum* as significantly referring to the living aspect of the Apostolic Tradition: «Ut autem Evangelium integrum et vivum iugiter in Ecclesia servaretur...» (7); «Sanctorum Patrum dicta huius Traditionis vivificam testificantur praesentiam» (8); and «...per quem viva vox Evangelii in Ecclesia, et per ipsam in mundo resonat...» (8). Cfr., *El dinamismo de la Tradición*, in L. ALONSO SCHÖKEL (dir.), *Comentarios a la constitución «Dei Verbum» sobre la divina Revelación*, Madrid 1969, p. 276.
  40. *Ibid.*, p. 277.
  41. *Dei Verbum*, 8 reads: «Haec quae est ab Apostolis Traditio sub assistentia Spiritus Sancti in Ecclesia proficit: crescit enim tam rerum quam verborum traditorum perceptio, tum ex contemplatione et studio credentium, qui ea conferunt in corde suo (Lc 2, 19 and 51), tum ex intima spiritualium rerum quam experiuntur intelligentia, tum ex praeconio eorum qui cum episcopatus successione charisma veritatis certum acceperunt. Ecclesia scilicet, volventibus saeculis, ad plenitudinem divinae veritatis iugiter tendit, donec in ipsa consummentur verba Dei».

42. A. NICHOLS argues that the celebrated text of *Dei Verbum* 8 thus appeared to solve the problem of doctrinal development which had provoked some of the most intense theological debate of the twentieth century. Cfr., *From Newman to Congar*, Edinburgh 1990, pp. 263-266.
43. F.A. SULLIVAN, *Magisterio*, in Dtf, R. IATOURELLE-R. FISICHELLA (dirs.), Madrid 1992, p. 841. The author adds that the term *magisterium*, now almost exclusively refers to the authority of the Church's hierarchy.
44. G. MÜLLER, *Dogmatik*, p. 80. «Das Subjekt der dogmatischen Aussage ist die Kirche als ganze».
45. The notion of the People of God is clearly suggested by the title of *Lumen gentium*, Chapter II, «*De Populo Dei*».
46. H. DE LUBAC, *Diálogo sobre el Vaticano II*, Madrid 1980, p. 73.
47. *Lumen gentium*, 13 states: «Ad novum Populum Dei cuncti vocantur homines. Quapropter hic populus, unus et unicus manens, ad universum mundum et per omnia saecula est dilatandus, ut propositum adimpleatur voluntatis Dei, qui naturam humanam in initio condidit unam, filiosque suos, qui erant dispersi, in unum tandem congregare statuit...».
48. For a brief history of the draft, *De Ecclesia*, vid., G. ALBERIGO (dir.), *Constitutionis dogmaticae «Lumen gentium» synopsis historica*, Bologna 1975, Appendix A, pp. xxiii-xxv.
49. Cfr., G. PHILIPS, *La Iglesia y su misterio en el Concilio Vaticano II*, Barcelona 1968, pp. 66-67. Later, Bishop Garrone noted in his *Animadversiones scriptae*, the notion of the «People of God» possibly included non-Catholics, because Christ is the head of the entire human race: «Dictum est eloquenter de populo Dei ut aliquomodo usque ad nonchristianos se extendente. Cui consideratione fundamentum theologicum afferri posse videtur ex introductione notionis essentialis gratiae capitis in Christo. ...Legitime igitur considerantur, en schemate de Ecclesia etiam non catholici, upote iam realiter suo modo gratiae capitis Christi subiectes». Cfr., *Acta*, II, 3, pp. 465-466.
50. A. MELLONI, *L'inizio del secondo periodo e il grande dibattito ecclesiologicalo*, in *Storia del Vaticano II*, III, G. ALBERIGO (dir.), Bologna 1998.
51. Cfr., P. RODRÍGUEZ (dir.), *Eclesiología 30 años después de «Lumen gentium»*, Madrid 1994, p. 182. He further notes that «... la Iglesia sólo puede ser entendida desde la totalidad del proceso salvífico que la hace nacer y ellos —los Apóstoles— estaban entonces inmersos en el proceso mismo», p. 192.
52. *Lumen gentium*, 9: «In omni quidem tempore et in omni gente Deo acceptus est quicumque timet Eum et operatur iustitiam... Placuit tamen Deo homines non singularim, quavis mutua connexione seclusa sanctificare et salvare, sed eos in populum constituere, qui in veritate Ipsum agnosceret Ipsique sancte serviret».
53. Cfr., P. RODRÍGUEZ, *El concepto de estructura fundamental de la Iglesia*, in *Veritati Catholicae*, A. ZIEGENAUS (dir.), Eichstätt 1985, p. 245. As the author states: «El Bautismo crea la cualidad de miembro del Pueblo sacerdotal de Dios, de *christifidelium*, y hace aparecer la Iglesia en su más primaria y desnuda condición: *congregatio fidelium*, como decían los antiguos con intuición certera. Antes de cualquier otra división de funciones y responsabilidades, de distinción en estados y condiciones, se da la igualdad radical de todos los fieles que surge de la llamada de Dios en el Bautismo... Pero, en el seno del pueblo sacerdotal, algunos de sus miembros son llamados por Cristo para ser los ministros del Señor, es decir, para representarle ante sus hermanos como Cabeza de su Cuerpo y jefe de su Pueblo: el Orden, en este sentido, les capacita para actuar *in persona Christi*. A través del sacramento del Orden, Cristo configura la dimensión jerárquica de la estructura fundamental de la Iglesia».



54. *Lumen gentium*, 13: «Ad novum Populum Dei cuncti vocantur homines».
55. *Lumen gentium*, 9: «Credentes enim in Christum, renati non ex semine corruptibili, sed incorruptibili per verbum Dei vivi (cf. *I Pt.* 1, 23), non ex carne sed ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto (cf. *Jo.* 3, 5-6), constituuntur tandem, genus electum, regale sacerdotium, gens sancta, populus acquisitionis... qui aliquando non populus, nunc autem populus Dei» (cf., *I Pt.* 2, 9-10).
56. «Inter praecipua Episcoporum munera eminent praedicatio Evangelii. ...Episcopi in communione cum Romano Pontifice docentes ab omnibus tamquam divinae et catholicae veritatis testes venerandi sunt; fideles autem in sui Episcopi sententiam de fide et moribus nomine Christi prolatam concurrere, eique religioso animi obsequio adhaerere debent. ...Licet singuli praesules infallibilitatis praerogativa non poleant, quando tamen, etiam per orbem dispersi, sed communionis nexum inter se et cum Successore Petri servantes, authentice res fidei et morum docentes in unam sententiam tamquam definitive tenendam conveniunt, doctrinam Christi infallibiliter enuntiant».
57. «Cum autem sive Romanus Pontifex sive Corpus Episcoporum cum eo sententiam definiunt, eam proferunt secundum ipsam Revelationem, cui omnes stare et conformari tenentur et quae scripta vel tradita per legitimam Episcoporum successionem et imprimis ipsius Romani Pontificis cura integre transmittitur, atque praelucente Spiritu veritatis in Ecclesia sancte servatur et fideliter exponitur».
58. «Populus Dei sanctus de munere quoque prophetico Christi participat, vivum Eius testimonium maxime per vitam fidei ac caritatis diffundendo, et Deo hostiam laudis offerendo, fructum labiorum confitentium nomini Eius (cf. *Heb* 13, 15). Universitas fidelium, qui unctionem habent a Sancto (cf. *I Jo* 2, 20 et 27), in credendo falli nequit, atque hanc suam peculiarem proprietatem mediante supernaturali sensu fidei totius populi manifestat, cum «ab Episcopis usque ad extremos laicos fideles» universalem suum consensum de rebus fidei et morum exhibet. Illo enim sensu fidei, qui a Spiritu veritatis excitatur et sustentatur, Populus Dei sub ductu sacri magisterii, cui fideliter obsequens, iam non verbum hominum, sed vere accipit verbum Dei (cf. *I Thes* 2, 13), «semel traditae sanctis fidei» (*Jud* 3), indefectibiliter adhaeret, recto iudicio in eam profundius penetrat eamque in vita plenius applicat».
59. Cfr. C. IZQUIERDO, *Teología fundamental*, Pamplona 1998, p. 125. The author remarks that the terms *sensus fidei* and *sensus fidelium* are often used indiscriminantly to describe the same phenomenon. See also J. SANCHO BIELSA, *Infalibilidad del Pueblo de Dios*, Pamplona 1979, pp. 286-287. Also cfr., J. BURKHARD, *Sensus fidei: Theological reflection since Vatican II*, in *HeyJ* 34 (1993) 41-55 and 123-126, J.H. NEWMAN, *On consulting the faithful in matters of doctrine*, New York 1962, and D. FINUCANE, *Sensus fidelium*, San Francisco 1996, pp. 248-249. Regarding the history of recent developments in the appreciation of *sensus fidei*, Cfr., S. PIÉ-NINOT, *Sentido de la fe*, in *Dtf*, R. LATOURELLE-R. FISCHIELLA (dirs.), Madrid 1992, pp. 1348-1351.
60. «Illo enim sensu fidei, qui a Spiritu veritatis excitatur et sustentatur, Populus Dei sub ductu sacri magisterii, cui fideliter obsequens, iam non verbum hominum, sed vere accipit verbum Dei...». For the development of this text, vid., B. VAN LEEUWEN, *La participación en el ministerio profético de Cristo*, in *La Iglesia del Vaticano II*, I, Barcelona 1966, pp. 497-504. The affirmation of the participation of laypeople in the prophetic *munus* of the Church is also found in LG 31. For more on this, vid., E. MOLANO, *Los laicos en el magisterio del Vaticano II*, in *ScrTh* 17 (1985) 807.
61. Cfr., S. PIÉ-NINOT, *Sentido de la fe*, p. 1350. Among the ecclesiologists studying this question was Y. Congar, whose classic work, *Jalons pour une théologie du laïc*, stres-

- sed the possibility of the infallibility of all believers (*L'Église croyante et aimante*) in the possession of the faith. This infallibility, however, is characterized by a moral or vital act of the person, and as such can *never* replace the role of the hierarchy, which always remains in charge of guarding the Tradition in its reality and formulas. It is an expression of truth, though not properly speaking, infallible by its own merits.
62. Cfr., S. PIÉ-NINOT, *Sentido de la fe*, pp. 1348-1351. In this article, however, the author makes the careful distinction between the *sensus fidei* (a believer's subjective capacity to grasp the truths of the faith and reject what is contrary to them), and the *sensus fidelium* (the objective contents of the faith in as much as they are believed and professed by *all* the faithful).
  63. J. MORALES, *Nota histórico-doctrinal sobre las relaciones entre magisterio eclesiástico, oficio teológico, y sentido popular de la fe*, in *ScrTh* 2 (1970) 494.
  64. *Ibid.* He continues that the *sensus fidei* «se funda en la capacidad innata de todo hombre para aprehender lo religioso y desarrollarlo: es versión básica y primaria de la fe, subyacente a cualquier otro modo, más reflexivo, de acceder a ella».
  65. Cfr., L. SCHEFFCZYK, *Los dogmas de la Iglesia, ¿son también hoy comprensibles?*, Madrid 1980, pp. 77-78. He states that: «...en la intelección de la fe se trata de un acontecimiento palpitante de vida que se plenifica en el hombre real y que se entreteje con las fibras de su existencia concreta de ser-en-el-mundo en una situación determinada históricamente y en un lenguaje también determinada».
  66. «Populus Dei sub ductu sacri magisterii, cui fideliter obsequens, iam non verbum hominum, sed vere accipit verbum Dei (cf. *I Thes* 2, 13)... indefectibiliter adhaeret, recto iudicio in eam profundius penetrat eamque in vita plenius applicat».
  67. Cfr., *Dei Verbum*, 8. In this section, the Council states that: «Haec quae est ab Apostolis Traditio sub assistentia Spiritus Sancti in Ecclesia proficit: crescit enim tam rerum quam verborum traditorum perceptio, tum ex contemplatione et studio credentium, qui ea conferunt in corde suo (cf. *Lc* 2, 19 et 51), tum ex intima spiritualium rerum quam experiuntur intelligentia, tum ex praeconio eorum qui cum episcopatus successione charisma veritatis certum acceperunt. Ecclesia scilicet, volventibus saeculis, ad plenitudinem divinae veritatis iugiter tendit, donec in ipsa consummentur verba Dei».
  68. «Inter nostram vitam spiritalem et dogmata vinculum habetur organicum. Dogmata lumina sunt nostra fidei viam illustrantia eamque securam efficientia. E converso, si vita nostra recta est, nostra intelligentia nostrumque cor ad lumen dogmatum fidei accipiendum erunt aperta».
  69. As one author has put it, «...no hay entre el *sensus fidei* y el poder de magisterio una dialéctica de funciones, sino interdependencia de servicios a la verdad». Cfr., J.A. FUENTES ALONSO, *La función de enseñar*, in *Manual de Derecho Canonico*, Pamplona 1991, p. 432. This idea was also expressed in *Lumen gentium*, 31: «Nomine laicorum hic intelleguntur omnes christifideles praeter membra ordinis sacri et status religiosi in Ecclesia sanciti, christifideles scilicet qui, utpote baptisate Christo incorporati, in Populum Dei constituti, et de munere Christi sacerdotali, prophetico et regali suo modo participes facti, pro parte sua missionem totius populi christiani in Ecclesia et in mundo exercent».
  70. J. MORALES, *Nota histórico-doctrinal...*, p. 497: «...en ocasiones sólo el sentido popular de la fe ha expresado rectamente el sentir de la Iglesia».
  71. Cfr., P. RODRÍGUEZ, *El concepto de estructura fundamental de la Iglesia*, in *Veritatae Catholicae*, A. ZIEGENAUS (dir.), Eichstätt 1985, p. 246.
  72. This possibility was addressed by K. Rahner in his later years. His constant defense of a true «World Church» necessitated the simplification and even alteration of

- dogmatic statements for ecumenical and universal motives. On this, Cfr., M. HINES, *The transformation of dogma: Karl Rahner on Christian doctrine*, New York 1990, J. RATZINGER, *Teología e historia*, Salamanca 1972, pp. 122-123, and K. LEHMANN, *Kurzformel des christlichen Glaubens*, Maguncia 1974, pp. 175-199.
73. The simultaneous pronouncements of *Lumen gentium*, *Unitatis redintegratio*, and *Orientalium ecclesiarum* on 21 November 1964 would be such an indication of this expansion. Consider the telling passage of *Unitatis redintegratio*, 3: «Uni nempe Collegio apostolico cui Petrus praeest credimus Dominum commisisse omnia bona Foederis Novi, ad constituendum unum Christi corpus in terris, cui plene incorporentur oportet omnes, *qui ad populum Dei iam aliquo modo pertinent* (italics added). Qui populus, durante sua terrestri peregrinatione, quamvis in membris suis peccato obnoxius remaneat, in Christo crescit et a Deo, secundum Eius arcana consilia, suaviter ducitur, usquedum ad totam aeternae gloriae plenitudinem in caelesti Ierusalem laetus perveniat». On this topic vid., also, I. RIUDOR, *La pertenencia a la Iglesia en los dos primeros capítulos de la constitución «Lumen gentium» del Concilio Vaticano II*, in «Estudios Eclesiásticos» 40 (1965) 301-318.
74. Cfr. J. RATZINGER, *Teología e historia*, pp. 119-120.
75. Cfr., A. DULLES, *Tradition and creativity*, in «First Things» 27 (1992) 25, Cfr., also CCC, n. 89. The notion that Catholic truths serve as a basis for unity of life and unity within the Christian Community was expressed nearly 150 years ago by J.A. Möhler, who wrote that the «believer's rejection of heresy is not a refutation by mere authority, but by living faith», and that, «Christianity does not consist in expressions, formulae, or figures of speech; it is an inner life, a holy power, and all doctrinal concepts and dogmas have value only insofar as they express the inner life that is present with them». Cfr., J.A. MÖHLER, *Unity in the Church, or the principle of Catholicism*, Washington, DC 1996, pp. 110-111.
76. «Insuper in dialogo oecumenico theologi catholici, doctrinae Ecclesiae inhaerentes, una cum fratribus seiunctis investigationem peragentes de divinis mysteriis, cum veritatis amore, caritate et humilitate progredi debent. In comparandis doctrinis meminertur existere ordinem seu «hierarchiam» veritatum doctrinae catholicae, cum diversus sit earum nexus cum fundamento fidei christianaе».
77. *Théologie*, in DThC 15 (1946) Paris, pp. 454-458. As Congar remarks: «Pour lui [St. Thomas] toute la Révélation, toute la foi, et donc toute la théologie se réfèrent à ce double objet: Dieu béatifiant, l'économie divine des moyens de la béatitude, c'est-à-dire encore au double mystère de Dieu: le mystère nécessaire de sa vie trinitaire et le mystère libre de notre salut par l'incarnation rédemptrice. Tous les autres articles de foi ne sont, pour saint Thomas, que des applications ou des explications de ces deux articles essentiels... C'est ainsi qu'il y a, dans la Révélation et donc dans la théologie, une hiérarchie, un ordre où se manifeste l'unité du sujet dont on y traite». For more on Congar's concept of a hierarchy of truths», vid., W. HENN, *The hierarchy of truths according to Yves Congar*, Rome 1987.
78. These later four authors were also reviewed by Y. CONGAR, in *Comptes rendus*, in «Bulletin thomiste» 5 (1937-1939) 490-505. The German theologian, A. Rademacher, also considered the notion of a hierarchy of truths, but by examining it mainly from the point of view of its application to dogmatic development. Cfr., A. RADEMACHER, *Die wiedervereinigung der christlichen Kirchen*, Bonn 1937.
79. E. CHARLIER, *Essai sur le problème théologique*, Thuilles 1938, p. 126: «Il y don comme une hiérarchie dans le vérités de la foi».
80. DS 3016.

81. Cfr., W. HENN, *Jerarquía de las verdades*, in Dtf, R. LATOURELLE-R. FISCHIELLA (dirs.), Madrid 1992, p. 742. For a review of post-Vatican II writings on this topic, vid., IDEM, *The hierarchy of truths twenty years later*, in TS 48 (1987) 439-471. Cfr. also, U. VALESKE, *Hierarchia veritatem*, Munich 1968; H. MÜHLEN, *Die lehre des Vaticanum II. über de hierarchia veritatem und ihre Bedeutung für den ökumenischen Dialog*, en ThGL 57 (1966) 305-335. W. HENN, *The hierarchy of truths according to Yves Congar*, Rome 1987 (an appendix of this work contains a rather exhaustive bibliography of the subject); H. SCHÜTSEICHEL, *Das hierarchie der Wahrheiten*, in «Cath (M)» 25 (1971) 90-111; Y. CONGAR, *Diversités et communion*, Paris 1982; A. KREINER, *Hierarchia veritatem*, in «Catholica (M)» 46 (1992) 1-30; E. SCHLINK, *Die hierarchie der Wahrheiten und der Einigung der Kirchen*, in *The Ecumenical Institute for Advanced Theological Studies Yearbook 1972-1973*, Jerusalem 1973, pp. 27-42; and W. BEINERT, *Hierarchia Veritatem*, in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, II, 1952, Freiburg 1995. For a Protestant view, see, O. CULLMANN, *Einheit in der Vielfalt in lichte der «Hierarchie der Wahrheiten»*, in *Glaube im Prozess*, E. KLINGER-K. WITTSTADT (dirs.), Freiburg 1984.
82. *Acta II*, 4, p. 34. It is worthwhile looking at a substantial part of Pangrazio's speech here: «Ut unitas inter christianos iam existens et simul diversitas adhuc permanens iuste diiudicetur, magni momenti mihi videtur, ut bene observetur ordo, ut ita dicam, hierarchicus veritatum revelatarum, quibus mysterium Christi exprimitur, et elementorum ecclesiasticorum, quibus Ecclesia constituitur. ...Etiam omnes veritates revelatae eadem fide divina credendae et omnia elementa constitutiva Ecclesiae eadem fidelitate retinenda sint, tamen non omnia eundem locum obtinent et occupant. ...Sunt quaedam veritates, quae pertinent ad ordinem finis, v.g. mysterium Ss. mae Trinitatis, Incarnationis Verbi et Redemptionis, caritatis et gratiae divinae erga humanitatem peccatricem, vitae aeternae, ect. ...Aliae autem veritates sunt, quae pertinent ad ordinem mediorum salutis, ut v.g. veritates de numero septenarium sacramentorum, de ipsa structura hierarchica Ecclesiae, de successione apostolica, etc. Hae veritates media respiciunt, quae Ecclesiae a Christo collatae sunt pro via terrestri peregrinationis suae; post hanc autem cessant. ...Iamvero diversitates doctrinales inter christianos minus respiciunt veritates illas primarias pertinentes ad ordinem finis, sed potius illas, quae pertinent ad ordinem mediorum et primariis sine dubio subordinatae sunt...».
83. W. HENN, *Jerarquía de las verdades*, in Dtf, R. LATOURELLE-R. FISCHIELLA (dirs.), Madrid 1992, p. 741.
84. Cfr., J. MORALES, *Introducción a la teología*, Pamplona 1998, p. 70.
85. Cfr., K. RAHNER, *Hierarchie der Wahrheiten*, in «Diakonia» 13 (1982) 376-377.
86. Cfr., JOHN PAUL II, *Fides et ratio*, 3: «It is her duty to serve humanity in different ways, but one way in particular imposes a responsibility of a quite special kind: the diakonia of the truth. This mission on the one hand makes the believing community a partner in humanity's shared struggle to arrive at truth; and on the other hand it obliges the believing community to proclaim the certitudes arrived at, albeit with a sense that every truth attained is but a step towards that fullness of truth which will appear with the final Revelation of God: "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully" (1 Cor 13,12). John Paul II also states that, "...it is necessary to keep in mind the unity of truth, even if its formulations are shaped by history and produced by human reason wounded and weakened by sin. This is why no historical form of philosophy can legitimately claim to embrace the totality of truth, nor to be the complete explanation of the human being, of the world and of the human being's relationship with God».

87. Cfr., J. RATZINGER, *Fides et ratio*, in «Communio» 160-161 (1998) 90.
88. «Quamvis Ecclesia ad culturae progressum multum contulerit, experientia tamen constat compositionem culturae cum christiana institutione ex causis contingentibus non semper sine difficultatibus procedere ... Istaedifficultates non necessario vitae fidei damnum afferunt, immo ad accuratorem et altio-rem intelligentiam fidei mentem excitare possunt. Etenim scientiarum, necnon historiae ac philosophiae recentiora studia et inventa novas suscitant quaestiones, quae sequelas pro vita quoque secumferunt et etiam a theologiae novas investigationes postulant. Praeterea theologi, servatis propriis scientiae theologicae methodis et exigentiis, invitantur ut aptiorem modum doctrinam cum hominibus sui temporis communicandi semper inquirant...».
89. Cfr., A. DONDEYNE, *El desarrollo de la cultura*, in *La Iglesia en el mundo de hoy*, II, Y. CONGAR (dir.), Madrid 1970, pp. 592-593. He adds though, that it would be difficult to find a rectification more eloquent on the part of the Church than its admission of a general openness to culture and scientific research in this paragraph. For more on the «Galileo case», Cfr., W. BRANDMÜLLER, *Galileo y la Iglesia*, Madrid 1992.
90. It is worthwhile to examine more closely the suggestions offered by some Council Fathers in the last three redactions of the *Schema constitutionis pastoralis de Ecclesia in mundo huius temporis*. The first (a) was presented in the Council Hall in September of 1965, and was heavily debated. The second version (b) was presented in the Council Hall on 15 November 1965, which, after minor amendments became the final version (c), *Gaudium et spes*, promulgated on 7 December 1965.
- With regard to the relation between culture and the faith, a minor but significant change between (b) and (c) involved the replacement of the term *sed* for *immo* in what would become *Gaudium et spes*, 62:
- (b) «Iste difficultates non necessario vitae fidei damnum afferunt, *sed* ad accuratorem et altio-rem intelligentiam fidei...».
- The term, *sed*, was later amended in *Gaudium et spes* as:
- (c) «Iste difficultates non necessario vitae fidei damnum afferunt, *immo* ad accuratorem et altio-rem intelligentiam fidei...».
- Here the word *immo* implies not only «however», but rather «by all means» —a change which evokes a whole-hearted acceptance that modern science can indeed apply its methods to the faith, theology, and Christian life itself—.
91. *Gaudium et spes*, 62.
92. AAS 95 (1973) 402-404. On this, cfr. also, COMMISSIO THEOLOGICA INTERNATIONALIS, *De interpretatione dogmatum*, in Greg 72 (1991) 16-17. This document reiterates the teaching of *Mysterium Ecclesiae*: «...Ecclesiae doctrinam ...hominibus modo vivo et eorum temporis necessitatibus correspondenti esse transmittendam».
93. AAS 95 (1973) 404.
94. Cfr., W. KASPER, *Dogma*, in *Diccionario de conceptos teológicos*, P. EICHER (dir.), Barcelona 1989, p. 267. «Evidentemente, el Concilio no sólo confirmó la tradición dogmática, sino que también hizo él mismo afirmaciones con peso dogmático (en sentido amplio). Pero significativamente el concepto dogma no desempeñó en él ningún papel decisivo».
95. As Y. CONGAR remarked in one of his later interviews, «It has been noted that what John XXIII called “pastoral” was doctrinal in character, but doctrine expressing itself in history, in time, and in the present-day world. Of course, there are those who have misused the term by saying, “Since it is pastoral, it is not doctrinal”. That is quite wrong; the term includes the doctrinal element, but this is doctrinal-pastoral,

i.e., doctrinal in terms of a doctrine which requires it to be applied historically...». Later on, Congar remarks that, «In passing, let me say that I believe that the novelty of Vatican II consisted largely in its acceptance of the historicity of the Church, of scripture, and so on». Cfr., B. LAURET, *Fifty years of Catholic theology: conversations with Yves Congar*, London 1988, p. 6.

96. *Unitatis redintegratio*, 3
97. Cfr., *Jn* 1, 18: In this phrase of the prologue to the Gospel narrative, John says that: «No one has seen God; the only-begotten Son of God, in the innerlife of the Father has *explained himself*».
98. Cfr., *Gaudium et spes*, 62.
99. H. DE LUBAC, *La fe cristiana. Ensayo sobre la estructura del simbolo de los Apostoles*, I, Salamanca 1970, p. 250.

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