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Subcommission II : Draft ~~II~~ 30th August, 1974 9.30.a.m.

1. The Holy Spirit converts the hearts of men and, bringing them into the community of Word and Sacrament, constitutes the koinonia. This koinonia is expressed in the sharing and interaction of his gifts within this community and is most fully actualised in the celebration of the eucharist. As a consequence of this common sharing, its members are called into a relationship of love and service.

2. The Spirit of the Risen Lord, as the author of the koinonia, guides and directs the People of God according to the will of the Father. He gives them the new life of the children of God, and the means to sustain this life. He equips them for their mission within the world. Through the apostolic tradition he safeguards their faithfulness to the truth revealed in Jesus Christ. In this way the authority of the Risen Lord, the Giver of life, is active in the Church.

3. The whole Church and each member participates in this authority, because they share the divine life given by the Spirit. By living this life authentically, each embodies and expresses the authority of Christ.

In the continuing witness of such authentic living, the Christian faith is maintained, handed on and interpreted. What is made manifest in this witness is not simply a body of doctrine but the faith as lived within the People of God in the fulfilment of its mission and service.

4. Within the People of God, the Holy Spirit gives to some a special commission (munus) in ordination to assist the whole community, and this mandate gives them a particular authority within the community. This pastoral authority is exercised in their proclamation of the Gospel, in their presidency of the Eucharist, and in their responsibility for teaching as leaders of community and as examples of Christian living. In all these ways they are instrumental in the building up of the Body (cfr. Ministry and Ordination).

This pastoral authority also entails a particular power (potestas) to intervene in order to preserve the unity and integrity of the koinonia. Because the bishop, as the obedient steward of the Lord, has the oversight of the community and is the focus of its unity, he can require compliance with whatever is necessary to ensure that faith and charity are maintained in its daily life (cfr. Hebrews 13,17; Acts 15,28; I Peter 5,3).

However, the bishop does not act in isolation; all those who exercise ministerial authority must do so in mutual responsibility and interdependence.

5. To discern the mind of Christ and to declare it with authority does not pertain exclusively to the ordained ministry. Only by the interaction of all its members, both ordained and lay, does the whole Church achieve this.

This interaction operates primarily in two ways. By living faithfully the life of Christ all are sensitive to the way the Spirit is guiding the Church. They are thereby led towards a deeper understanding of the Gospel and its implications in the diverse and changing situations of history. Those who are commissioned by ordination to discern these insights are themselves involved in the life of the community and share its search for fidelity to the Gospel. They can fulfil this task only by being receptive to the preoccupations and expectations of all. At the same time, the response of the community at all levels evaluates the discernment by the ordained ministry. This response, being taken into account, contributes towards a re-appraisal. In this interaction (conspiratio) the Holy Spirit manifests in the Church the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ in order that the faithful may live as free persons under the discipline of the Gospel.