

Subcommission II : Draft II, 1st September 1974 : 11.30 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 a community of openness to other human beings and to God which results from Christ's saving action in the Spirit, enabling its members to break out of personal isolation and, in love, to recognise that they are responsible for each other and for the world in Christ's name. It is expressed in the sharing of the life of the Spirit within the community, is most fully signified in the celebration of the eucharist and actualised in the common life and interaction of its members.

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. He safeguards their faithfulness to the truth revealed in Jesus Christ. In this way the authority of the Risen Lord, the Giver of life (I John 5:11-12), is active in the Church.

3. The whole Church participates in this authority because all its members, irrespective of their office, share the divine life given by the Spirit. In so far as they live this life authentically, each embodies and expresses the authority of Christ.

The continuing witness of such authentic living is at the basis of the Christian community. In it 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} ~~Moreover~~, the People of God, the Holy Spirit gives to some a special commission 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, in their responsibility for teaching, in their direction and guidance of the community and by their example of Christian life. 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 to intervene in order to promote and preserve the unity and integrity of the koinonia. Because the bishop, as the steward of the Lord, has the oversight of the community and is the focus of its unity, he can require the compliance necessary to ensure that faith and charity are maintained in its daily life.

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 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: (1) 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 and to give authoritative expression to their content 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. (2) At the same time, the community, at all levels, responds to and assesses the discernment of the ordained ministry. In this way there takes place an on-going process of discernment and response in which doctrine is clarified and the Gospel is applied in history. In this interaction the Holy Spirit manifests in the Church the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ in order that the faithful may live freely under the discipline of the Gospel.