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THE "SACERDOTAL" QUALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

- 1 The Anglican tradition and the Roman Catholic tradition use a sacerdotal vocabulary to designate the ministry. There is nothing surprising in this insofar as it concerns the Roman Catholic Church, whose traditional thought seems to us to be faithfully summed up in this passage from the Constitution Lumen Gentium:

The divinely established ecclesiastical ministry (ministerium) is exercised on different levels by those who from antiquity have been called bishops, presbyters (presbyteri) and deacons. Although presbyters do not possess the highest degree of priesthood (pontificatus), and although they are dependent on the bishops in the exercise of their power, they are nevertheless united with the bishops in sacerdotal dignity (sacerdotali honore). By the power of the sacrament of orders and in the image of Christ the eternal High Priest (Sacerdos) (He 5: 1-10, 7:24, 9:11-28) they are consecrated to preach the Gospel, shepherd the faithful and celebrate the divine worship as true priests (ut veri sacerdotes) of the New Testament (1).

These lines - which the translations, on the whole, have grossly distorted - distinguish carefully between the term "presbyter" which characterizes the second level of the ministry and the title "sacerdos" which encompasses the quality common to all the orders of the hierarchy. (2)

- 2 On the other hand, one might well be surprised to remark the tenacious fidelity of the Anglican Communion to the latter usage, with which it has never officially broken, since the Prayer Book continues to call "priest" the minister of the Eucharist and the Second Series itself remains firm on this point. It is true that Series 3 prefers to employ the term "president". But the author explain this: it is a matter, not of choosing between "priest" and a less sacerdotal term, but merely of underlining the role of the one who "presides over the eucharistic assembly" (3)

- 3 The use of this sacerdotal vocabulary is impressed upon the Anglican mind to such an extent that the editors of the Ordinal with a view to union with the Methodists feel the need to explain themselves at length on the use of "presbyter" in place of "priest", by showing that it is incorrect to think that

the former would not be a word belonging to the Anglican tradition, and above all incorrect to think that its adoption in place of the latter would signify "a change of doctrine" (4). The authors of Growing into Union themselves, two of whom are avowed "Evangelicals", after having noted the embarrassment of some among them in the face of the proposed change, take care to underline that they all admit the validity of the term "priest" to designate the man ordained as minister (5). Whatever may be the fashion in which the minister's link with the priesthood is conceived, it is clear from the immediate context, that they have in mind here the properly sacerdotal overtones of the word.

4 It is necessary to deduce from this that, even in its most reformed representatives, the Anglican tradition has been but slightly affected by the reaction of the Reform on this point? The text of the C. h. p. (of 1566), which conveys well the dominant tone of the reformed positions, is well known:

Ce sont choses grandements diverses et différentes que la prestrise et le ministère. Car la prestrise... est commune à tous les Chrétiens, mais non pas le ministère. Et pourtant nous n'avons pas osté le ministère de l'Eglise, quand nous avons rejeté de l'Eglise de Christ la prestrise telle qu'elle est en l'église romaine. On sait assez qu'au Nouveau Testament de Christ, il n'y a point de telle prestrise ou sacrificature (6) que celle du peuple ancien qui a eu une onction externe, des robes sacrées, et plusieurs ceremonies qui ont esté figures de Christ: lequel venant au monde, at accomplissant toutes ces choses les a aussi abolies. Mais quant à lui, il demeure seul souverain Sacrificateur éternellement: auquel afin que nous ne déroguions en rien qui soit, nous ne communiquons à nul d'entre les Ministres le nom de Sacrificateur. Car notre Seigneur n'a point ordonné en l'Eglise de la nouvelle alliance des Sacrificateurs, lesquels ayant receu le pouvoir de quelque suffragant, offrissent journellement en hostie et sacrifice, pour les vivants et pour les morts, la mesme chair et le mesme sang du Seigneur: mais il les a ordonnés afin qu'il enseignassent et administrassent les Sacrements (7).

How, within such a perspective, can a word be accepted to which earlier tradition has never ceased to attack a meaning quite as sacerdotal (in the meaning evoked in this text) as it is ministerial?

5 One could of course, as Joseph Mead did in the work published posthumously under the title Diatribae in 1642, rely upon the ambiguity of the English language, wherein a single term, "priest", translates the two Latin words "sacerdos" and "presbyter", in order to conclude from it that the maintaining of terms such as "priest" or "priesthood" does not necessarily imply advance to a sacerdotal view of the ministry (8).

Reading some pages of Thomas Cranmer's Defense of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrement (1550), it is easy to be won over to this conviction. Some pages, very close to the classical affirmations of the Reformed Confessions, are hard to explain any other way. Such, for example, is this one:

Christ made no such difference between the priest and the layman, that the priest should make oblation and sacrifice of Christ for the layman, and eat at the Lord's Supper from him all alone, and distribute and apply it as him liketh. Christ made not such difference; but the difference that is between the priest and the layman in this matter is only ministration; that the priest as a common minister of the Church, doth minister and distribute the Lord's Supper unto other, and other receive it at his hands (...)

As in a prince's house the officers and ministers prepare the table, and yet other, as well as they eat the meat and drink the drink; so do the priests and ministers prepare the Lord's Supper, read the Gospel, and rehearse Christ's words; but all the people say thereunto Amen; all remember Christ's death, all thanks to God, all repent and offer themselves an oblation to Christ, all take him for their Lord and Saviour, and spiritually feed upon him; and in token thereof, they eat the bread and drink the wine in his mystical Supper (9).

And several affirmations of Latimer (10) or of Roger Hutchinson (11) prove that this is not an isolated case at the origins of the English Reform. The current of opinion according to which the terms "priest" or "priesthood" must be interpreted without relation to the Latin "sacerdotium" has numerous witnesses.

6 The link between this whole question and Eucharistic doctrine is evident. Who ever says "sacerdotal function" immediately evokes reference to a sacrificial act. Conscious of the vulnerability on this plane of the terms "priest" and "priesthood", Richard Hooker tried, it is true, to argue pacifically for keeping them. While affirming his preference for a non-sacerdotal vocabulary, he shows that the words "priesthood" and "priest" are not in contradiction with an orthodox faith in the sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Lord, holding that it is not a matter of a new sacrifice of Christ (12):

The clergy are either presbyters or deacons. I rather term the one sort Presbyters than Priests, because in a matter of so small moment I would not willingly offend their ears to whom the name of Priesthood is odious though without cause... Seeing then that sacrifice is now no part of the Church ministry how should the name of Priesthood be thereunto rightly applied?... The Fathers of the Church of Christ... call usually the ministry of the Gospel Priesthood in regard

of that which the Gospel hath proportionable to ancient sacrifices, namely the Communion of the blessed Body and Blood of Christ, although it have properly now no sacrifice. As for the people when they hear the name it draweth no more their minds to any cogitation of sacrifice, than the name of a senator or of an alderman causeth them to think upon old age or to imagine that every one so termed must needs be ancient because years were respected in the first nomination of both (13).

7 Does this flexibility and finesse perhaps explain the fact that the Prayer Book of Scotland suffers itself to be deeply marked by the distinction between "presbyter" and "priest" (14) without, for all that, changing anything at all in the meaning of the Ordinal? It is interesting to note that from 1533 faithful in this matter to the rubrics of the two Prayer Books of Edward VI (1549 and 1552), the French translation, Livre des Prières communes, will designate the same person either by the word "prêtre" or by the word "ministre" (15). Now, in that period "ministre" already has very precise theological connotations in French. Does simple concern to respect popular language suffice to explain that, knowing of the existence of non-sacerdotal terms such as "pastor", "minister", "presbyter", they nevertheless elected to retain the term "priest"? Is it entirely fortuitous that the texts of 1549, 1552, and 1559 are careful to employ "priest" when it is a matter of the principal acts of worship? When, in 1662, the use of "priest" is widened somewhat, above all in the absolution of the Offices and in the triad "bishop, priest, and deacons" replacing "bishops, pastors, and ministers of the Church" (16), do they see it as a simple problem of vocabulary, or do they express in this way a doctrinal option?

8 It is not easy to judge. But, meditating on the major texts of the Anglican tradition, one is little by little inclined to think that the maintenance of the sacerdotal vocabulary there is not purely fortuitous and that in spite of the anti-sacrificial declarations which one is always meeting it tries to remain loyal to the main line of the great Tradition. The fidelity to the hierarchical structure "bishops, presbyters and deacons" reveals the intuition of a certain interior quality of the apostolic ministry, which the sacerdotal terms express, awkwardly no doubt but still exceedingly usefully. (17). Nothing more than that. But it is necessary to assess the value of this intuition.

9 I. The "Sacerdotal" Quality of the Ministry of the New Covenant: The Biblical Data.

It has become common place, especially in an ecumenical context, to recall the great discretion of the New Testament concerning the properly

sacerdotal quality of the Church ministry (18). It is likewise admitted by all that Christ Jesus is the sole archiereus, whose priesthood is not merely perfect but radically incommunicable, aparabatos (19). This is so true that theological reflection on whether or not we can attribute to Christian ministers a function linked in some way to the priesthood must necessarily be centered on the relation of the ministry to the work brought to completion by Christ in the ephapax of his Passover.

10 But the following fact has perhaps not been sufficiently underlined: in the presentation which the Gospel accounts make to us of His action and His person, it is not Jesus Himself who attributes to Himself during His life the quality of hiereus. This feature is all the more surprising because - whatever one say of the historicity of several passages - these accounts place on His lips affirmations attaching His ministry, in some way, either to the mission of the Messiah-King, or to that of the Son of Man, or to that of the Servant of Yahweh, or even to that of The Prophet (cf. Mc 6:4; Jn 6:14) (20). Moreover, they sometimes take care to put in the mouth of the listeners affirmations expressing their spontaneous reaction to what He says or accomplishes. But here again we find nothing about an intuition of the quality of priest which they would recognize in Jesus or which would characterize Him.

11 Of course, some texts, like the question to the Scribes concerning David (Mc 12:35), or the passages on the Temple (Mt 12:6; Mc 14:58; Jn 2:19-21) and some parts of St. John's Gospel, have sacerdotal overtones (21). Still, they are scarcely explicit. It is necessary then to admit that an attentive study of the Gospel traditions allows one to conjecture, at the very least, a great discretion on the part of Jesus concerning the explicit reference of His work to a priestly function, especially to a priestly messianism. Yet this latter was one of the lines along which Jewish hopes (22) ran under diverse forms according as it concerns circles close to the Jerusalem priesthood or those resistant to the Temple. Even if the death of Jesus is presented and interpreted in a sacrificial perspective (23), and even if Paul can, in order to express its meaning, take up the cultic vocabulary of the Temple (24), still the most ancient documents never get to the point of affirming explicitly that Jesus is a Priest. Not even in the accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper. The fact of being the free and voluntary victim of the redemptive sacrifice is one thing, to be its hiereus is another (24b). Leaving aside the Epistle to the Hebrews, no New Testament text permits itself to join together explicitly the two roles in the affirmation that Jesus is at one the priest and the victim of the Sacrifice of the New Covenant.

12 Must one see in this the result of an hostility or a contempt for the traditional priesthood, or, on the contrary the sign of a respect which the first community would have preserved for it, considering itself still as a part of the People of Israel (25)? The specialists hesitate to explain

this without qualification as anti-sacerdotalism. The Gospel according to Luke begins with a priestly act, that of Zachary, and the Acts of the Apostles is careful to note the assiduity of the first believers in the matter of Temple prayer (Ac 2:46) (26), as well as the good will with which Paul himself submits to certain requirements of the Jerusalem cult (Ac 21:26). Moreover, in the important episode of the prophecy of Caiphaz, John seems clearly enough to recognize the authentically prophetic value of the word of the High Priest, even when it involves an action showing total hostility to Jesus (27). It is, in addition, important to notice that the Epistle to the Hebrews itself will not say that Jesus inaugurates a new priesthood. It sees the priesthood of Christ much rather as the fulfillment, the teleiôsis, the goal towards which the ancient institution was tending (28). It is perhaps not superfluous to recall that, contrary to some commonly held but ill-founded ideas, the New Testament does not make Christians the new People of God. It is the Epistle of Barnabas (5:7; 7:5a) which gives them this designation and does so in a particular context, in which Israel is considered as a parenthesis in the Divine plan, the accent bearing upon the quality conferred by Baptism (29). Christians are a renewed people. The break with Judaism will be accomplished slowly under the pressure of persecutions, of conversions coming from among the Gentiles, of the destruction of the Temple (30).

13 A late work which many place after the destruction of the Temple (31), and one which interprets the work of Jesus in the light of what the Jewish priesthood had been, the Epistle to the Hebrews is the only canonical writing which makes Christ the Priest accomplishing "once for all" and in a perfect way the priestly work willed by God. He thus replaces the priests and the sacrifices of the People of God.

14 It is clear that for the Epistle to the Hebrews Jesus is not a hieres in the line of the Jerusalem clergy whose function centered on the ritual acts of a cult in danger of becoming too purely exterior. He "fulfils", nevertheless, the longing for authentic worship, that to which the prophets indeed never ceased to call back the people (cf. Is 1:11-15, 56:7, 66:20-21; Jer 7: 21-23, 33:11; Os 6:6; Am 5:24-25; Ps 50:13, 51:21; etc.). What God expects from His People is nothing else but the offering of the man himself, raising himself above the misery of being a sinner in order to enter into the truth of the Covenant, into the Communion (cf. Ez 11:14-21; Jer 31: 31-34). The rites of the Temple liturgy are merely in the service of this cult of existence itself. One understands thus why the Death of Jesus, "the single offering which brings to perfection forever those He has sanctified" (Hb 10-14), is the sacrificial act par excellence. Not only because of its result but because of its internal organization. Because - and it is important to underline this - since He who performs this offering has become in all things like men, joining in their trials and in their weakness (2:17, 4:15), knowing the hardship of obedience (5:8), His "sacrifice" comprehends the totality of the human condition in order to lead it "once

for all into the sanctuary" (9:12). Hence, we have this affirmation, which is the heart of the Epistle:

"But now Christ has come, as the high priest of all the blessings which were to come. He has passed through the greater, the more perfect tent, which is better than the one made by men's hands because it is not of this created order; and he has entered the sanctuary once and for all, taking with him not the blood of goats and bull calves, but his own blood, having won an eternal redemption for us. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer are **sprinkled on those** who have incurred defilement and they restore the holiness of their outward lives; how much more effectively the **blood** of Christ, who offered himself as the perfect sacrifice to God through the eternal Spirit, can purify our inner self from dead actions so that we do our service to the living God. (9:11-14)".

15 But, the content of the "sacrifice" is nothing else but a slice of human life, a supreme act of human existence. We are outside ritual. The priestly act dominating the divine economy and bringing to their goal all the other priestly acts is the unique human act reconciling humanity with the Father "once for all", the death of Jesus, crowning His voluntary sharing of the human predicament. One alone is **thus** the veritable hiericus, He who has penetrated with His own life's blood into the sanctuary of God.

16 We can see from this point of view why the author of the Epistle does not associate the priesthood of Christ with the celebration of the Lord's Supper - with which he is certainly familiar - and makes no allusion to the accounts of its institution even though these are marked by a sacrificial dimension (32). The Last Supper belongs to the world of rites. Besides, even if the sacrificial implications of its content are perceived, the "body given" and the "blood poured out" for the forgiveness of sins, and its force as "announcement of the Death of the Lord", still, this is not to think of suggesting an addition to the "once for all" character of the sacrifice. Moreover, the priestly quality which can be discerned like a watermark in the celebration of the rite can **only** be assessed in the light of the essential fact that it exists in the domain of the effects of the Priesthood of Christ. It is found in the sphere of efficacy of the one and only Hiericus. Because it is a Memorial, and **thus** belongs to the world of rites and signs, the Lord's Supper carries us back to the unique priestly act in the strict sense, to the sole definitive priestly offering which takes hold of man himself in the very depths of his existence, the mystery which the Epistle to the Hebrews undertakes to set forth.

17

Of course, the efficacy of Christ's priestly act is pre-eminently by what the same Epistle does not hesitate to call "a perfect sacrifice to God" (eis to latreuein Theō zōnti) (9:14) or the offering of "sacrifices" (toiautais gar thusiais euaresteitai o Theos) (13: 12-16). But, for one thing, it does not follow from this that Christians are priests, and, for another, one cannot fail to see that the sacrifices in question go beyond the liturgical plane, evoked by "sacrifice of praise" (13:15) to signify "good works and the sharing of resources" (13:16). Thus, it is a matter of something other than ritual cult: it concerns cult which is Christian existence itself. But Christians can perform this liturgy of life, the one which is pleasing to God, only because they have been redeemed by the Sacrifice of the unique High Priest, Jesus (9: 11-14). Their "sacrifice" is the fruit of His, entirely dependent on it. The same vision was already to be found in Paul who, without attributing to believers the title of priests on that account, already determined for them as an ideal to offer themselves "as a living victim, holy and agreeable to God" for a "spiritual worship" (Rm 12: 1-2) (34), and who described his ministry as that of a liturgical officiant (leitourgos) of Christ among the pagans, in order that they too might become a holy and acceptable offering (prosphora) (Rm 15:16) (35). Here again, it is not a question of ritual acts but of the deepest meaning of the life of faith and charity (36). Thus, it is necessary to be attentive to the use of the same sacrificial vocabulary in two different settings, that of rites and that of existence. And the latter does not involve, in the texts studied, properly sacerdotal terms (37). This is an important point: it would be inexact to see in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in the texts gathered from Paul the explicit affirmation of a "priesthood of the holy life". They speak only of the "sacrifice" which is a holy life, and we have already noted that it is one thing to be offered to the Lord, to consent to become the "matter" of a sacrifice, and something else again to be the priest of this sacrifice. The sacrificial is wider than the sacerdotal. (38)

18

The First Epistle of Peter, for its part, never affirms that Christ is hiericus. It sees Him rather in his role as victim of the sacrifice (1 Pet 2:21-25; 4:1). But in a well-known passage, it applies to Christians the expression of the Book of Exodus: "I will count you a kingdom of priests, a consecrated nation" (Ex 19:6). It says to them: "you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood (basileion hierateuma), a consecrated nation, a people set apart to sing the praises of God who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people at all and now you are the People of God; once you were outside his mercy and now you have been given mercy". (1 Pet 2: 9-10) (Jerusalem Bible translation).

19

The exegetical analysis of these verses has been reworked in recent years upon new bases (39). The Lutheran exegete J. H. Elliot has proposed an interpretation of the basileion hierateuma which upsets the prevailing views and supports the insights of certain theologians (40). It has been on the whole well received (41). Elliot shows first of all that these words of

the Epistle of Peter must be understood in the light of what Exodus was saying about Israel: because of its election, a key idea of the Epistle, and because of the gift of the Spirit, the People, composed of the baptized, acquired by the Passover of Christ, finds itself **bound** to God with bonds of holiness. It thus becomes basileion, a royal dwelling-place, a temple radiating the glory of God. And its mission with respect to the pagans will be carried out by the holiness of its existence. Thus, it is the detail of their life and of their conduct which makes of the Christians "living stones entering into the construction of a spiritual building, for a holy priesthood (eis hierateuma hagion), with a view to offering spiritual sacrifices (pneumatikas thusias) acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (cf. 2:5) (42).

20

These "sacrifices", thus, are not ritual acts. And to see in the "royal priesthood" the power which every Christian possesses, by the very fact of his baptism, to take an active part in the ritual cult and especially in the Eucharist as a fully accredited member, is to falsify the thought of the text (43). As we have already seen, we are in the other setting, that of holiness of life (44). And a holiness which derives from Christ. Rather than being a matter of participation in the priesthood of Christ, it is much more a matter of the effect of that priesthood, of its repercussion in and through the life of Christians (45). Our Epistle does not seek to discover how this "holy priesthood" of believers could be a sort of passage of the priesthood of Christ into the Church. Such a question does not enter into its frame of reference.

21

Moreover, the vision of the First Epistle of Peter is clearly collective. Whether one accepts J. H. Elliot's position or not, this point finds greater and greater acceptance among the better specialists (46). The basileion hierateuma - "royal dwelling-place" or "royal priesthood" - designates essentially the "holy nation" as such, the "community" in its collective being (47), the "priestly body" and not the "priesthood" as engaged in, wholly or partly, by each individual (48). As in the case of Israel (Ex 19:6), "priesthood" here aims to express the function of the People "in toto", in its life of obedience "coram Deo and pro hominibus", its mission as witness to God in the face of the world (49).

22

Consequently, it is impossible to seek to understand the nature and the functions of this "priesthood" in relation with the Levitical institution. It is equally impossible to mix the two types of "priesthood". The Levitical type and the existential type at Ex 19:6 are not of the same order. This moreover explains why the Old Testament sees no difficulty in the fact that a Levitical, ritual "priesthood" plays a primary role in the life of the "priestly People". The Epistle of Peter, for its part, is not interested in what would be an adaptation of the ritual line within the Christian community, nor does it strive to find in the "royal priesthood" of the baptized a spiritualization of the "ritual priesthood". No more does

it mount a polemic against this latter. Rather, it is firmly planted, within the other frame of reference we have spoken of.

- 23 The texts of the Apocalypse which describe, not the celestial cult or the eschatological Kingdom, but the concrete and actual result of the salvific work of Christ, employ the same language: "He has made of us a Kingdom and priests (basileian kai hierais) for His God and Father" (1:6), "a Kingdom and priests (basileian kai hierais) ruling upon earth" (5:10) (50). It is more difficult to determine with precision the meaning taken on by the term "hierais" in the heavenly vision of chapter twenty (20:60), centered on the situation which will be that of the martyrs during the reign of a thousand years.
- 24 At the conclusion of this presentation of the New Testament texts speaking explicitly of the Christian priesthood we must submit to the evidence. None treats explicitly of the Christian ministry. It even seems to us necessary to add that none establishes, in a clear and explicit way, any relation between the Priesthood of Christ and that of the Church as such other than the following: because of the Priesthood of Christ, the faithful can offer sacrifices acceptable to God (Epistle to the Hebrews); because of the Sacrifice of Christ, the baptized are the People who bear the holy priesthood which is exercised in spiritual sacrifices (Epistle of Peter). Nowhere it is said that the priesthood of the Church (a royal priesthood, a priesthood of holiness of life) would constitute a participation in the priesthood of Christ (51). Nowhere is there any question of the relationship between this priesthood of the Church and that which is exercised in the ritual worship. Thus, we are disappointed to find the authors of Growing into Union justifying the retaining of the term "priest" to designate the presbyteral ministry by the fact that an "ordained man does not cease to be a member of the royal priesthood of the Church" (52). It seems to us that in so doing they confuse the two frames of reference we have separated.
- 25 If, now, we study the numerous allusions in the New Testament to the diverse forms which the ministry takes in the Christian community - presbyteroi, episkopoi, diakonoi, apostoloi, prophetai, evangelistai, didaskaloi, proistamenoi, hegoumenoi - we note that any explicit reference to a sort of take-over of the properly ritual dimension of the Levitical priesthood is absent from it. When the First Epistle of Peter comes to describe the gifts (charismata) internal to the community and to speak of the function of the presbyteroi which are its shepherds (4: 7-11; 5: 1-5), neither for the former nor for the latter does it envisage properly priestly activities. It sees in them only special dynamisms, relative to the charity and to the fervour of the Church (53). Of course, those who provide these services are members of the basileion hierateuma and everything is directed to the latter's advantage, and thus contributes to its fidelity in the accom-

plishment of its vocation. But, for one thing, these functions are not formally priestly expressions of the community considered under its specific quality as priestly body, and, for another, the language used is lacking any properly ritual overtones. It is a matter of services for and within the priestly people, and "the sum of all ministering individuals is no more a body of priests than is the sum of all working carpenters a house" (54).

26

There is, of course, the phrase of Paul calling himself "a priest" (leitourgos) of Christ Jesus among the pagans, performing a priestly function (hierourgounta) of the Gospel of God, so that the pagans might become an acceptable offering (prosphora), sanctified in the Holy Spirit" (Rm 15:16). While the general meaning of the verse is clear, the precise meaning of leitourgos and of hierourgein is less so (55). Leitourgein often has a profane content, even with Paul and within the Epistle to the Romans (13:6) (56). Hierourgein, unknown in classical Greek and, moreover, not found in Scripture elsewhere than in this Pauline phrase, has indeed for content a reference to the Levitical cult. But how is one to know if Paul is likening himself here to the priest celebrating the sacrifice, to the layman coming to the Temple to offer his victim, or to the faithful Jew performing the cult which is God's due. In contemporaneous Jewish texts, the word covers all these cases and signifies in a very broad way "to offer sacrifice" (57). And who can say that for Paul the priest presenting the sacrifice to God is not Christ (58)? Furthermore, the religious act here at issue is the proclamation of the Gospel, conceived in the way which is usual with Paul (Rm 1:9; 1 Cor 9:13-14) (59). Even allowing for the teaching function performed by the Levitical priesthood (Dt 33:8-10) (60), this reduces the relationship of this activity to the Jewish cult, in the strict sense of the word. Even though it originates in a cult context, the verb hierourgein thus does not seem to liken Paul to the priests of the Old Covenant. (61).

27

When we draw up the list of the diverse functions performed by Paul, the Twelve, the "apostles and prophets" (Ep 2:20; 3:5), the presbyters, the bishops, the "bishops and deacons" (Ph 1:1), the deacons and all the other persons carrying out a ministry in the primitive Christian communities, the complete absence of reference to what since Ignatius (cf. Smyrn. 8:1) we have called the presidency of the Eucharist cannot help but strike us. And yet, if the Lord's Supper was then celebrated, it must have had a president. The New Testament says nothing about him. Paul, the Acts of the Apostles, the synoptic texts in the accounts of the Institution, the pastorals, the Epistle of James, the First Epistle of Peter never connect the ministries they mention either with a right or with a duty to preside at the Eucharist. The "do this in memory of Me" of the Last Supper certainly does not amount to a designation of the ministers of the Memorial, but rather designates the new meaning to be attached to the rites (62). Though a passage of Acts (20:11) recounts what seems indeed to be a celebration of the Lord's Supper and makes mention, at that point, only of Paul, one ought not to conclude too quickly from this that it means to indicate that he was its president: he alone is mentioned because he is at the centre of the whole episode (63).

In fact, nowhere does Scripture tell us in a precise way who presides at the Eucharist, and nowhere does it show us one of the Twelve or one of the ministers of which it speaks carrying out this task. Nothing permits us to affirm that presiding at the Holy Banquet would have been closely connected with one or other of the ministerial functions attested to in the apostolic writings.

28 Other details, of less importance, can nevertheless help us to guess the reason for these silences. Acts mentions what indeed seems to be a conversion of Jewish priests to the faith (Ac 6:7). But the texts are subsequently silent on what is to be the status of these converts belonging to the priestly tribe, at a time when the community has not yet broken with the Temple. If they had played a properly priestly role in the young Church, this silence would be hard to explain, especially since this fact would have been an important element in the relations between nascent Christianity and official Judaism. No connection seems to have been made between belonging to the priestly tribe and exercising properly Christian functions.

29 The title most frequently used to designate the ministers of the Judeo-Christian communities is "presbyteroi", a term absent from the authentically Pauline letters but found in the Acts of the Apostles, the catholic epistles, and in the pastoral epistles whose direct attribution to Paul is today widely questioned (64). The point seems to be established that this nomenclature represents a borrowing from the organization of the traditional Jewish communities having at their head a college of Elders, the "zeqenim" a word translated into Greek as "presbyteroi" (65). But this term is often used to designate the prominent laity, distinct from the members of the priestly families, in particular in the constitution of the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem (66). Matthew speaks of archiereis and of presbyteroi tou laou (21:23; 26:3; 27:1). The same distinction, doubtless, would prevail for the constitution of local councils of the Jewish community (67). And we know that the chief of the synagogue, who presided at the local liturgy, was probably chosen from among these elders (68). His function and that of the hazzan are clearly distinct from those of the priests who, when present, pronounced the blessing (69). By virtue of its origins, then, the term "presbyteroi", now Christianized, has no direct connection with any priestly activity in the strict sense.

30 At this point in our inquiry, we are already in a position to ask the reason for this uncompromising reserve in the New Testament documents concerning the priestly dimension of the Christian ministry. Several explanations have been proposed. Often, unfortunately, there has been a failure to distinguish two aspects of the question. The first is the connection between the priesthood and the celebration of the Memorial of the Death of the Lord; the second is the attribution to the chief of the community of the power to preside at this Memorial, so solidly attested towards the year 100 by Ignatius of Antioch. Only the first aspect concerns us in the present inquiry.

31 In its essential and formal function, the priesthood is connected to the offering of sacrifice. To the extent that the first Christians remain faithful to the climate religion of the Fathers, such as it was lived at the time of Christ, it seems to us natural that for them, as for the great mass of Jewish believers, the central act of this sacrifice is neither the immolation of the victim nor its being eaten, but the handling of its blood which has been in contact with the altar and the presentation of those of its parts which are being returned to God (70). Such, then, is the heart of the priestly function. Now even where there is clear perception of its relations to the sacrificial act of Jesus - and this seems clear in the two traditions of the account of the Institution - the Lord's Supper can be included only with difficulty within the field of properly priestly activities. This is true as regards both its origins and its texture.

32 If, in fact the Last Supper of Jesus coincided with the celebration of the Passover meal, it inherited in the eyes of the participants something of the liturgical quality proper to that meal. But we know that until the destruction of the Temple in 70, the Passover at Jerusalem combined the immolation of victims at the Temple with a meal in the home. The properly sacrificial act, necessitating the participation of priests, was that of pouring out, at the foot of the altar, the blood of the beast which the believer himself had slain (71). The meal was a participation, in thanksgiving and hope, in the redemptive value of the commemorated feast, by virtue of the eating of the lamb, the bitter herbs, and the unleavened bread (72). The one who presided at this meal was the father of the family or the chief of the little fraternity (haburah) assembled to celebrate the feast in this way (73). This second panel of the Passover diptych thus required no properly priestly quality in the person presiding. The priestly act was antecedent to it. One can, accordingly, understand that in the celebration of the Memorial of the Lord, when the first Christians proclaimed that His Death had been the perfect and unique Sacrifice, they were not spontaneously inclined to give to the one who presided the title or the quality of priest. The priestly quality of the mystery "commemorated" belonged, for them, as the Epistle to the Hebrews will later make explicit, to the historical event of the death of Jesus and to His entry into the sanctuary of God with His own blood. And what we have just shown holds a fortiori if the Eucharist is to be linked, not to the Passover meal as such, but to an ordinary "fraternity" banquet (74).

33 The young Christian community which by means of the Lord's Supper shares in the fruits of the Sacrifice of Jesus is thus scarcely led to see in this liturgical act a ritual sacrifice, in the line of the Levitical tradition. In the strict sense, the Church has only one sacrifice, the Act lived in the very flesh of Jesus. Besides, as long as the Temple lasts, it is difficult, if one wishes to be understood, to compare the sacrifices there offered (and the ministry formally connected with this service) with the ritual

of the Eucharistic meal (along with the one who presides at it). It is a matter of two different worlds. How could the term "hiereus", under these circumstances, designate anything else but a member of one of the priestly families, someone set apart for the faithful performance of the task traditionally entrusted to those of his lineage? (75). It is indeed this spontaneous understanding that the Epistle to the Hebrews seeks to go beyond.

34 II. The Rise of the "Sacerdotal" Vocabulary for Designating the Ministry.

It is difficult to fix with certainty the date of the Didachè. It is generally agreed to place it towards the end of the first century - perhaps about 70 AD - in an Antiochean milieu (76). Now, speaking of the prophets who, along with the apostles sent into the community, seem to be itinerant ministers (77), the text prescribes : "let the prophets 'eucharistize' (eucharistein) at will" (10:7). The term "eucharistein" relates certainly to the blessing pronounced by the one presiding and addressing to God the community's praise (78). Nevertheless, it is difficult to know if the rite described corresponds to the celebration of the Lord's Supper (79). If it is a question here of a true Eucharist - and that appears to us the most likely position (80) - one can then envisage presiding at the Eucharist those prophets and doctors, with whom episkopoi kai diakonoi will be associated in the community (81). It is important to note that these latter only appear at chapter 15, and in connection with "the breaking of bread and the Eucharist" on the Lord's Day (82). Here then a little light is shed for us on the tie between certain "ministries" and the Eucharistic assembly.

35 However, we have here no explicit priestly designation. There is talk, it is true, in this context, of the Eucharist as a sacrifice (thusia), and we are referred to the declaration of Malachi (1:11,14) concerning the pure sacrifice offered in every place and at every time among the nations (14:1,2,3). But we have already remarked that it is rash to move from the affirmation of the sacrificial quality of the Lord's Supper to the conclusion that its minister must therefore possess a priestly quality. Moreover, what does the word "thusia" cover here ? The call for reconciliation "lest your sacrifice suffer blemish" (14:2) following upon the prescribing of confession of sins "so that your sacrifice may be pure" (14:1) indicates that the accent is being placed on the disposition of the heart, though this disposition is essentially related to an objective act. Malachi opposes to the bloody sacrifice offered by the priests of a deceitful People a sacrifice

offered elsewhere and one which pleases him. And this sacrifice is not of the same type as the first (83). The Eucharist of the Lord's Day thus takes its place within the movement of this "pure sacrifice", different from that criticized so sharply by the prophet, criticized less because of its nature than because of the cheating of those who sacrificed. It seems to us that it is difficult to say more. And to call upon the affirmations of Justin here in order to make up for the silence of our text would be to risk serious misunderstanding; Justin's testimony is far later and comes from an entirely different milieu. It is impossible to deduce from our text, then, that the ministers of the Eucharist (prophets, episkopoi kai diakonoi) were already being seen in a priestly light. Besides, Justin says nothing at all concerning any priestly quality of the president of the Eucharists he describes (84).

36 It is true that, a few lines above, speaking of authentic prophets desirous of becoming established in the community, our text had insisted on the duty of providing for their material needs, going so far as to specify : "accordingly, you will take from the wine-press and from the threshing-floor, from among the cattle and the sheep, the first-fruits of all the produce, to give them to the prophets : they are your High Priests (hoi archiereis humôn) (13:3). It is difficult to eliminate from the comparison all reference to the liturgical function of the prophets, especially since the interruption concerning the celebration of the Lord's Day follows immediately. But having said this, it must be recognized that the assimilation to the High Priests bears formally on the question of first-fruits. One will do for the prophets what one did for the High Priests: their important role gives them the right to special treatment.

37 Thus, there is nothing really explicit, and we must avoid pushing the texts too far. Nevertheless it is important to underline the fact that the Didachè, without any polemical intention, makes the Old Testament its point of reference at the very moment that it means to issue directions about what is special in the life of the nascent Church. Even though on these precise points Christians have moved away from the Judaic institutions, they remain within the sphere of influence of the

traditional religion. The blessing of the Eucharistic meal still speaks of the "holy vine of David", of the "house of David", of the Kingdom (9:1-10:6); the celebration of the Lord's Day is related to the prophecy of Malachi; the situation of the prophets is compared to that of the High Priests. But there is a certain note of fulfillment that can be read between the lines. They are doubtless on the road that will lead them, among other things, to see in the ministries of the new community the fulfillment of those of the Old Covenant. But the step has not been taken.

38

It has still not been taken, it seems to us, in the celebrated passage of Clement of Rome's Letter to the Corinthians (40:1-44:6). The author - writing probably between 95 and 98 (85) - returns to the vision of the Epistle to the Hebrews in the affirmation that Jesus Christ is High Priest (archiereus) (36:1; 61:3; 64:1), protector and help for our weakness (ibid.) by a priesthood connected with our offering (tôn prosphorôn hemôn) (36:1) (86). But for him there is no opposition between Christ and the Law : "the last stage in the history of salvation is in harmonious continuity with that which preceded it" (87). Also, he does not hesitate to look towards Levitical models in order to explain the ecclesiastical order. (88) One must act in an orderly way. The Levitical ordinances concerning the times and places of offering, as well as the hierarchy of functions, show that God on this point makes demands which must be respected : "because to the High Priest have been allotted functions which are proper to him, Priests have been given their special place, and particular services are assigned to the Levites : the layman is bound by the precepts proper to laymen" (40:5). A simple comparison, which is not an assimilation. Though for him the analogy seems close (89), Clement does not go so far as to confer upon the ministers of the Christian community the priestly quality of the ministers of the Levitical order. The comparison bears not upon this priestly quality but upon the taxis, the ordering of functions.

39

But Clement immediately pursues the analogy, when he describes the activity of the presbyters who assure in the community the episkopè (90) by accomplishing their office (leitourgia) well. They have, he says, "presented the gifts (dôra)

in a devout and irreproachable way" (44:4). That is only one part of their pastoral function (cf. 57:1). It is nevertheless clear that Clement considers it among the most important. The terms used designate in the septuagint the sacrificial offering (Lev 1:2; 7:38). In the context of the Letter to the Corinthians, all the evidence suggests they are being used about the liturgical offering, and everything leads one to believe that it is here the Eucharist which is under discussion (91). The distinction made above between laymen and ministers appears to indicate with sufficient clarity that this presentation of the dôra is reserved for the dignitaries mentioned in the text. Here again the parallelism is so close that one expects to see Clement use some term from the sacerdotal vocabulary to characterize these ecclesiastical functions. He does not do so.

40 Ignatius of Antioch is no more explicit. If for him Jesus is the High Priest surpassing the priest of Israel (92), if he presents in high relief the role of the bishop surrounded by his presbytery and his deacons during the Eucharist (93), and if he does not then hesitate to have recourse to the sacrificial language of the Old Testament (Ep 5:2; Philad 4:9; Tral 7:2; Magn 7:2), never does he explicitly call the bishop an hiereus (94). No more than do Polycarp and the author of the Martyrdom of Polycarp. We have already noted that, in describing the Eucharist with the people assembled around the president (Apol. I, 65-67), or in comparing the Eucharistic offering to the offering of the wheat and seeing it as the fulfillment of the prophecy of Malachi (Dial. 41:1-3; 117:14), Justin does not apply to the ministers of the Eucharistic synaxis the title "priest". He reserves it for Jesus (Dial. 116:1-3).

41 Rather loose in his employment of the term "sacerdos", which he uses for the whole work of Jesus, (95), Irenaeus calls His disciples "sacerdotes". But he includes among these disciples, "discipuli omnes Domini", priests and levites of the Temple of God, all the "adepts" of Christ (96). It seems to us that it is impossible to discern a reference to a priesthood of ministers in the symbol of the bull of the Apocalypse which shows "the dignity of the one who sacrifices and of the priest" (Adv. Haer. III, 11:8) : the text is focussed on the activity of the Son of God himself (97). One must then accept the fact of

Irenaeus' silence (98).

42

Tertullian, at the end of the second century, crosses the threshold, and without any embarrassment. Speaking of the minister of baptism, in a treatise in which a high value is placed upon typology and relationship with Old Testament figures, he writes : "the power to confer baptism rests in the first place with the highest priest (summus sacerdos), i.e. with the bishop if he is present; after him, with the presbyter and with the deacon, but never without the bishop's authorization... The laity also have the power (laicis jus est)" (De baptismo 17:1-2). No possible doubt. The mention of laymen indicates, furthermore, than an explicit distinction is being made between hierarchical ministers and others Christians. The former are included under the label "priesthood", which names what is in some way their general quality : though associated with the power of this "priesthood", the presbyters are not called "priests" (99). A mere nuance, but one not without consequences. Elsewhere, in the De prescriptione (41:6), treating of heretics, Tertullian, at the same time as he underlines very strongly the firm distinction which must exist between "ordained" ministers and laymen (41:8), employs the term "ordinatio" in what is already a technical sense (100). Let us note finally that in the De pudicitia, after having compared the disciplinary function of the Christian sacerdotes with that of the Jewish priests (20:6-13), and having given to Christ the title "Summus Sacerdos Patris" (20:10), Tertullian, now a Montanist, writes these lines, which indicate that in the official Church the function of pardon is tied to the priesthood : "The Church indeed remits sins, but it is the Church Spirit through the intermediary of a man animated by the Spirit, and not the Church which is a collection of bishops; because it is the sovereign right of the Lord, not that of His servant; it is the right of God Himself, not that of the priest (sacerdotis)" (21:16) (101). If Tertullian is the one who, among known authors, for the first time applies explicitly to Christian ministers the term "sacerdos" (102), it must be admitted that he does so without stint. But this does not prevent him from affirming in a wonderful way the transcendence and the uniqueness of the Priesthood of Jesus. "Dei Patris Summus Sacerdos" (103). Cyprian bears witness to the

same use of a formally sacerdotal vocabulary to characterize the ministers of the Church (104).

43

The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus is the most ancient set of ecclesiastical regulations which we possess, representing Roman Discipline at the beginning of the third century. And in its prayer for the ordination of the bishop, after having called to mind the Levitical institution and having affirmed that the Church is the sanctuary of God, the text proceeds :

"Grant, Father... to Your servant whom You have chosen for the episcopate that he may pasture Your holy flock and that he may exercise towards You the sovereign priesthood (archierateuin; primatum sacerdotii), serving You night and day; may he always find favour in Your sight and may he offer the gifts (dôra, dona sancta) of Your holy Church; may he have, in virtue of the spirit of the sovereign priesthood (tô archieratikô), the power to remit sins according to Your commandment; may he distribute burdens according to Your order, and may he loose from every bond in virtue of the power which You have given to the apostles; may he please You by his meekness and his pure heart, in offering You an agreeable perfume, through Your Child... (105)"

On the subject of deacons, it specifies that the bishop alone imposes his hands because the deacon is not ordained "in sacerdotium" whereas in the case of the presbyteri all presbyters present impose their hands because there is participation in a common spirit (no. 8). But the prayer for diaconal ordination is deeply marked with references to the Old Testament sanctuary where serves a high priest whom the deacon must assist (no 8). The liturgical tradition will never cease, right to the present day, to convey this "sacerdotal" vision of the Church ministries.

44

Thus far we have met only with authors who are Latin or from the Roman milieu, as witnesses of the explicit transition to a priestly view of ministries : Tertullian, Cyprian, the Apostolic Tradition. But towards 250 Origen, in the Second Homily on Joshua, which unfortunately we possess only in the Latin of Rufinus, is also found to push very far the analogy between the liturgy of the Temple and the life of the Church. He writes:

"when you see...the altars no longer soaked with the blood of animals but consecrated by the precious blood of Christ, when you see the priests and the levites (sacerdotes et Levitas) no longer administering the blood of bulls and goats but the word of God by the grace of the Holy Spirit, then say that Jesus has taken the place of Moses" (Hom. in Jos. II,1, SC 71, 116). But what is here mere analogy becomes later on pure and simple application of the title "priest" to the ecclesiastical ministry : "let no one hide his way of living, especially not from the priests and from the ministers. (maxime sacerdotibus et ministris)" (VII, 6, 210). And this "priesthood" is clearly distinct from the lay state : so that the sacerdotes may be able to give themselves completely to their study of the Word of God, the laity must be faithful in assuring a measure of material service for the priests (obsequia sacerdotum), in line with what the Israelites did for the Levites and the priests (XVII, 3, 379-381). It seems to us to be the same distinctions that we find in another place, in a text which this time we possess in Greek (106). It should be added that Origen shows himself to be demanding the inner quality of this priesthood :

"all those... who live the religion in a holy and priestly manner, not only those whom one sees sitting in the assemblies of priests (in consessu sacerdotali), but rather those who conduct themselves in a priestly spirit (sacerdotaliter), those for whom the Lord is the unique portion and who possess nothing else on earth, those persons are truly the priests and Levites of the Lord (sacerdotes et Levitae Domini), who carry on their shoulders the law of God because they bring to reality and fulfil in their works what is written in the Law (IX, 5, 254)."

This passage is important. It shows that, if it suffices to be ordained to the ministry in order to perform the acts related to it (107), it is necessary nevertheless that one's interior holiness correspond to the level which one occupies in the external hierarchy (108). A certain inner priesthood of life thus become something like the soul of the priestly function. A celebrated passage from the treatise on prayer says this in speaking on the difficult problem of the remission of sins, and this time again we possess it in its original state:

"the apostles and the successors of the apostles, priests

(hiereis) according to the high priest, having received the science of divine healing, know, instructed by the Spirit, for what sins one must offer sacrifices (thusias), when and how...I do not know how it is that some, claiming for themselves a more than priestly power (huper tèn hieratikèn), although they are perhaps lacking in priestly (hieratikèn) learning, assume the power to remit sins of idolatry, adultery, and fornication, as if the prayer pronounced over the guilty sufficed to remit even the sin which leads to death (109)".

Bishops are, alas, often far from this ideal (110)!

45 III. Conclusion concerning this Rise of the Sacerdotal Vocabulary to describe the Ministers.

We have verified two points which seem to us to be sure. First of all, the absence in the New Testament of a properly priestly designation of the Christian ministries, for which we have sought the reasons : continued attachment of the nascent community to Judaism, wherein the official cult is still in existence (111); lively awareness of the transcendence and of the uniqueness of the sacrificial Act of Jesus; two biblical veins expressing what is latent in the term "priesthood" (the Levitical vein centered on the ritual, and the Exodus vein centered on the holiness of existence of the consacrated People); that Lord's Supper belongs to a ritual category other than that at which the priest presides. On the other hand, we have discovered that the rise of the priestly vocabulary came about in the earliest Christian tradition under the aegis of an enlightened and extremely nuanced comparison with the institutions of the Old Testament. In these was seen the expression of an act of God's will tied to a single economy which has found its authentic fulfillment only in the work of Jesus. Neither in the Didachè, nor in Clement, nor even in Origen have we found anything but an analogy between the priesthood of the Old Covenant and the function entrusted to the ministries of the Christian community.

46 How can one explain this transition, this slow evolution ? We can hazard an explanation. The priesthood is intrinsically tied to sacrifice, even with Origen who is nevertheless so much

attached to the ministry of the Word (112). The Church has the unshakeable conviction that she possesses only one sacrifice, **that** which took place in the historical Death of Jesus. But she knows also that the Lord's Supper is the Memorial of this unique and unrenowable Sacrifice. It is reasonable to think that the disappearance of the temple and its bloody rites, by demonstrating their fleeting nature, will enable her to perceive with more assurance the sacrificial quality attached to the rites of the Lord's Supper, at once "sacrifice of thanksgiving" and means of access to the fruits of the Sacrifice of the unique Priest. But, within the ritual celebration of the ephapax of this Sacrifice, in the Memorial - i.e. in an ensemble of signs and of symbols directed towards it - there is room for an "evocation", a "presence as in a sign" of the properly priestly quality of the Event thus commemorated. If historically Jesus has been the Priest of the Sacrifice, in the Memorial, wherein His gestures and their profound significance are rehearsed, it will be possible to introduce a reference to His priesthood. His words and His gestures, taken up once more by the one presiding, will be perceived as priestly words and gestures. Will not one then be inclined to speak of a priestly quality of the minister ?

47

But one thus sees what meaning is to be given to this priestly quality. If the priesthood in question is not of the same type as that of the basileion hierateuma, since it belongs to the domain of ritual, nevertheless neither can it be assimilated without qualification to the Levitical priesthood. The witnesses we have questioned never do this, and they do not limit themselves to a mere transfer of the Levitical vocabulary to the Ecclesiastical ministries. We have rather to do with a priesthood sui generis, wholly relative to the unique priestly Act of Jesus, intended to permit the contact of the community with that Act in the hic et nunc. This priesthood indeed only yields up its meaning when read in the light of the Memorial (in the technical sense of the term) which is, as it were, the sacramental mirror of reflecting hic et nunc to the Church the Event of the Passover of Christ (113). Thanks to this priesthood, the community can sit at the Table where the sacrificial Death of the unique Priest is celebrated.

From this point of view, the recourse to analogy with the Levitical ordinance can be understood. For one thing, God indeed wants accomplished what the function of high priest implies in its very essence, and it is established that that can only be realized in its complete truth in Christ. Because one is conscious of the unity of the Divine plan (114), one deduces from it that the priesthood of the Law prepares prophetically what will come to pass in Jesus. He it is who "fulfils the Scriptures", and thus surpasses without contradicting the institution which was moving towards Him (115). There is then still room for admitting the priestly value of the Levitical ministry while taking account of the total final purpose of Him who gives it its meaning. But for another thing, if the Christian ministries have, with regard to the ephapax of the priestly Act of Jesus, the role we have described, being themselves also essentially relative to it, ordered no longer to preparing the way for it but to radiating it, their nature no longer appears entirely foreign to that of the earlier institutions. They are, for the New Covenant in its relation to Christ, analogically, what the earlier institutions were for the Old Covenant in its relation to the same Christ. Taking account of the essential difference which exists between the two covenants - covenant of "preparation" and a covenant of "deployment" - but also of the profound link which Jesus establishes between the two, the two ministries appear in a certain unity. An integrated reading of Scripture allows one even to see in the Levitical priesthood, looked at in the light of its fulfillment in Christ, the point of anchorage in history of that which the Ecclesiastical ministry accomplishes since the Cross.



When the Anglican tradition and the Roman Catholic tradition manifest their attachment to the "sacerdotal" vocabulary for the designation of the threefold ministry, they certainly dissociate themselves from the resolution of the Reformed to say nothing that is not in Scripture. We have seen that Scripture remained silent on this difficult question. Moreover, what we have fathomed of the record left by the first witnesses

shows that the use of the terms "hiereus" and "sacerdos" comes in to mitigate a certain feeling of disarray left by an attentive reading of the Scriptural data. They seek only to make explicit the content and the meaning of functions about which the revealed texts say truly very little. Nevertheless they do it in the light of a truly Scriptural principle, that of fulfilment and so of the unity of the Divine economy. And it is to be noted that under these priestly titles they have striven to unify the diverse tasks which the New Testament assigns to the ministers of the Gospel. But in this whole question, touching as it does upon a central point of the mystery of the Church, we are confronted with the problem of the articulation between Scripture and Tradition. The sacerdotalization of the ministries appears to us to be, indeed, a typical instance of the creativity of the community going beyond the mere letter of Scripture without for all that consenting to betray the spirit of Christ. Would not the Anglican tradition's love for this vocabulary stem from the intuition that something more important than a battle of words is here at stake ?

50 However that may be, it is clear that the word 'sacerdotal' - whose legitimacy can be recognised with the precautions suggested by the present study - raises some grave questions. The history of the Catholic and Reformed traditions bears witness to this. On the one hand, this word has done much to induce in the Catholic tradition a hardening which Vatican II tried to correct without however casting as much light on the matter as it might have done. 'Minister' is found identified with 'priest' and attention is centred on his role in the offering of sacrifice. On the other hand the Churches of the Reform have been tempted to confuse the two levels of 'priesthood and to look for an explanation of what was called 'ministerial priesthood' in the 'priesthood of a holy life'. We have seen how scripture discourages this approach.

51 But by the same token our research leads to a serener view of our divergencies in this area. Not only does the gospel "ministry" appear as broader than the "sacerdotal" function but what the scripture says does not explicitly concern the latter. Our two Churches can therefore very well come together on the dimensions of ministry as attested by the revealed data and not diverge except on a certain interpretation of the sacerdotal

function rendered more explicit by Tradition. At the end of my paper "Catholiques romains et Anglicans : l'eucharistie", I suggested what were the points of intersection. They seem to be essential, and to exceed the divergences.

52 The comparative study of new Roman Catholic ordination rites and of the traditional Anglican ordinal, which it hardly seems useful to repeat, shows that our views on the 'sacerdotal' function itself are not contrary, though neither are they identical.

Our programme should therefore be as follows :

53 to discover those aspects of 'ministry' on which we fully agree;
to see how far we are divided on the 'sacerdotal aspect';
to gauge the bearing of this margin of disagreement on our global conception of gospel ministry as a whole;
to see whether we can talk of a substantial agreement.

J.M.R. Tillard

- (1) Lumen Gentium 28.
- (2) Voir dans la même ligne le Décret Presbyterorum Ordinis dont le titre lui-même est significatif. Mais le no 2, qui explicite la nature du presbytérat s'exprime ainsi : "le Seigneur, voulant faire des chrétiens un seul corps où tous les membres n'ont pas la même fonction (Rm 12:4) a établi parmi eux des ministres qui, dans la communauté des chrétiens seraient investis par l'Ordre du pouvoir sacré d'offrir le Sacrifice et de remettre les péchés et y exerceraient publiquement pour les hommes au nom du Christ la fonction sacerdotale (sacerdotali officio). C'est ainsi que le Christ a envoyé les Apôtres comme le Père l'avait envoyé, puis par les Apôtres eux-mêmes il a fait participer à sa consécration et à sa mission les évêques, leurs successeurs, dont la fonction ministérielle (munus ministerii) a été transmise aux presbytres à un degré subordonné : ceux-ci sont donc établis dans l'ordre du presbytérat pour être les coopérateurs de l'Ordre épiscopal dans l'accomplissement de la mission confiée par le Christ" (no 2). Quelques lignes plus bas se trouve l'expression sacerdotium Presbyterorum. Là encore les traductions ont gauchi le texte original en refusant d'employer le terme presbytre ou presbyter. La traduction anglaise donnée dans W.M. ABBOTT, The Documents of Vatican II est particulièrement défectueuse. Il est intéressant de comparer la technicité de Vatican II avec le
- (3) texte de la session XXIII du Concile de Trente (DS 1763-1778).
- (3) CHURCH OF ENGLAND LITURGICAL COMMISSION, A Commentary on Holy Communion series 3, Londres 1971, 28.
- (4) REPORT OF THE ANGLICAN-METHODIST UNITY COMMISSION, Anglican-Methodist Unity, I - The Ordinal, Londres 1968, 8-9. Voir G. WAKEFIELD and M. PERRY, Anglican-Methodist Unity, a short Guide, Londres 1968, 20 ("the term (presbyter) is thought to be less divisive than the word priest but the change of name indicates no change in doctrine"). Voir aussi Anglican-Methodist Unity, Report of the Joint Working Group 1971, Londres 1971, 15 qui conserve la triade "bishops, priests and deacons".
- (5) G.O. BUCHANAN, E.L. MASCALL, J.I. PACKER, THE BISHOP OF WILLESDEN, Growing into Union, proposals for forming a united Church in England, Londres 1970, 85-86.
- (6) Le texte latin porte sacerdotium.

- (7) LA CONFESSION HELVETIQUE POSTERIEURE (texte français de 1566), cap. 18 (dans l'édition de J. COURVOISIER, Neuchâtel-Paris 1944, pp. 105-106).
- (8) "We speak Ministers and Deacons instead of Priests and Deacons. The reason we thus speak is to avoid the name Priest, which we conceive to signify Sacerdos, that is one that sacrificeth, such as were those in the Law; but our curates of holy things in the Gospel are not to offer Sacrifice, and therefore ought not to be called Sacerdotes, and consequently not Priests. This is the reason. But if it is well examined, Priest is the english of Presbyter and not of Sacerdos, there being in our tongue no word in use for Sacerdos, Priest which we use for both being improperly used for a Sacrificer, but naturally expressing a Presbyter, the name whereby the Apostles call both themselves and those which succeed them in their charge. For who can deny that our word Priest is corrupted of Presbyter? Our ancestors the Saxons first used Preoster, whence by a farther contraction came Preste and Priest. The High and Low Dutch have Priester, the French prestre, the Italian Prete; but the Spaniard only speaks full Presbytero"; Diatribae, Book I, no 5, dans Paul Elmer MORE and Frank Leslie CROSS, Anglicanism, Londres 1962, no 157, p. 370.
- (9) Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament, Book V, cap. 10 et 11, (ed. G.E. DUFFIELD, The work of Thomas Cranmer, The Courtenay Library of Reformation Classics, Appleford 1964, 223-224).
- (10) Ainsi Sermons and Remains, ed. Parker Society, Cambridge 1845, 254-256.
- (11) La pensée de Roger Hutchinson est catégorique, ainsi Works, ed. Parker Society, Cambridge 1842, 49-50.
- (12) L'édition de l'Everyman's Library de Richard HOOKER, Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity (Book V), Londres 1964 transcrit en note, au sujet du texte que nous citons, une remarque de Daniel WATERLAND : "Mr Hooker feared not to say that 'sacrifice is now no part of the Church ministry' and that we have 'properly now, no sacrifice'. I presume he meant by proper sacrifice, propitiatory, according to the Trent Council, or of the new definitions. In such a sense as that he might justly say that sacrifice is no part of the Church ministry or that the Christian Church has no sacrifice. But I commend not the use of such new language, be the

meaning ever so right : the Fathers never used it" (p. 432, note 1).

- (13) Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, Book V, cap. 78, 2; ed. cit. 429-432.
- (14) Voir F. PROCTER and W.H. FRERE, A new History of the Book of Common Prayer, Londres 1911, 149.
- (15) Le Livre des prières communes, de l'administration des Sacraments et autres Cérémonies en l'Eglise d'Angleterre, traduit en francoys par Francoys Philippe, serviteur de Monsieur le grand Chancelier d'Angleterre, De l'imprimerie de Thomas Gaultier, imprimeur du Roy en la langue Francoise, pour les Isles de sa Majesté, avec le privilège général dudit Seigneur, 1553.
- (16) Voir F. PROCTER and W.H. FRERE, op.cit., 196.
- (17) L'exposé des auteurs de Growing into Union, pp. 69-84 nous paraît aller dans cette ligne.
- (18) "A notre avis, aucune étude exégétique du Nouveau Testament ne parviendra jamais à rouver l'existence ni même la possibilité d'existence d'un ministère sacerdotal dans l'Eglise. La question devrait être posée autrement : comment expliquer l'existence de fait d'un ministère sacerdotal dans l'Eglise et comment en comprendre la signification? Or pour répondre à cette question, il est nécessaire de sortir du cadre des textes du Nouveau Testament" P.A. HARLE, Sacerdoce et ministère dans le Nouveau Testament, dans Verbum Caro 15, 1961, 356-371 (371).
- (19) Voir C. SPICQ, L'Épître aux Hébreux, T.II, Commentaire, Paris 1953, p. 197, note 24.
- (20) Voir L. SABOURIN, Les noms et les titres de Jésus, Desclée de Br. 1963 et surtout O. CULLMANN, Christologie du Nouveau Testament, Neuchâtel Paris 1958.
- (21) Pour le Temple voir cependant C.K. BARRETT, The Gospel according to St John, Londres 1962, 167-168 : le vocabulaire n'est pas sacerdotal, mais il s'agit d'affirmer que "the human body of Jesus was the place where a unique manifestation of God took place and consequently became the only true Temple, the only centre of true worship".
- (22) Voir en particulier O. CULLMANN, op.cit., 74-94.
- (23) Voir P. GRELOT, Le sacerdoce chrétien dans l'Écriture, dans Bulletin du Comité des Etudes, 1962, 279-337 (294-295); V. TAYLOR, The Atonement in New Testament Teaching, Londres 1945; J. JEREMIAS, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, Londres 1966, 218-237.
- (24) Voir en particulier S. LYONNET, La sotériologie paulinienne, dans A. ROBERT et A. FEUILLET, Introduction à la Bible, T.2, Paris 1959, 868-877. & P. GRELOT,

- op.cit., 295 qui écrit : "de toute façon, ces allusions ont besoin d'être placées dans le contexte plus large du Nouveau Testament entier pour prendre leur juste place dans la théologie du sacerdoce".
- (24 bis) Dans Rm 3:25 c'est Dieu qui expose Jésus en "instrument d'expiation" par son propre sang.
- (25) Voir les remarques pertinentes de R.E. BROWN, Priest and Bishop, biblical reflections, New York 1970, 16-20, *largement inspirés des vues de M. COGUEL, cités infra, à la note 30.*
- (26) E. HAENCHEN, The Acts of the Apostles, Oxford 1971, 192 "with one accord the Christians make daily attendance at the Temple, thus demonstrating that they have not forsaken the religion of their fathers". HAENCHEN refuse l'explication qui voit dans cette présence uniquement "the best opportunity for missionary work" (ibid., note 7).
- (27) Voir C.H. DODD, The Prophecy of Caiphas (John 11:47-53), dans Neotestamentica et Patristica, coll. Supplements to Novum Testamentum VI, Leiden 1962, 134-153 (138-142).
- (28) Voir C. SPICQ, op.cit., 189 et B.F. WESTCOTT, The Epistle to the Hebrews, Londres 1889, 63-67. Voir aussi P.A. HARLE, art.cit., 364 : "on attendrait que l'Épître ajoute : avec Jésus Christ est inauguré un sacerdoce nouveau. Or jamais, ni dans l'Épître ni dans le Nouveau Testament, il n'est question d'un sacerdoce nouveau".
- (29) P. PRIGENT, Épître de Barnabé, dans SC 172, Paris 1971, 30-31 écrit : "le qualificatif (nouveau, nouvelle) n'implique pas pour notre auteur une succession de deux économies, de deux alliances, de deux peuples. En effet si les chrétiens sont appelés peuple nouveau, c'est parce qu'ils sont des créatures nouvelles : au baptême ils sont nés de nouveau, ils sont recréés comme en une nouvelle genèse (6, 11; 16, 8b). Voilà pourquoi on peut dire qu'ils sont régit par une loi nouvelle. Cette nouveauté, rendue possible depuis le Christ, correspond donc simplement à l'intention première et unique de de Dieu, telle qu'elle était annoncée depuis les origines, mais refusée par Israël".
- (30) On connaît l'affirmation de M. COGUEL, qui nous paraît fort éclairante pour notre problème : "Galiléens et Jérusalémites, malgré le sentiment qu'ils avaient de la nouveauté de leur foi, n'avaient aucunement conscience de s'être, en croyant

à la résurrection de Jésus, séparés du Judaïsme dont ils ne reniaient pas les traditions et dont ils ne répudiaient pas l'héritage; tout au plus avaient-ils le sentiment d'être un groupe dans son sein, un peu à la manière des pharisiens, des sadducéens, des esséniens qui, malgré leurs idées et leurs doctrines particulières, opposées les unes aux autres, avaient, les uns et les autres, leur place dans le cadre du Judaïsme, sans qu'aucun des groupes qu'ils constituaient aient eu la prétention d'être seul à le représenter. Aux yeux des Juifs, le Christianisme a longtemps été une secte juive, rien de plus. De leur côté, les Chrétiens n'ont pas cessé de se sentir Juifs et de participer à toute la vie religieuse et culturelle du Judaïsme (Le 24,53, Actes 2,46). Ils n'ont éprouvé d'abord aucun besoin d'une organisation qui aurait donné à leur vie religieuse un cadre indépendant et n'ont pas facilement renoncé à l'espoir de voir leur peuple tout entier se rallier à leur foi. Ils ont fini par être exclus du Judaïsme plus qu'ils ne s'en sont séparés. Le sentiment de la pleine autonomie de leur foi leur a été imposé plus qu'ils ne l'ont conquis. De leur côté, les Juifs, malgré certaines apparences qui résultent d'une sensible transposition de la tradition, se sont montrés assez largement tolérants à l'égard du Christianisme, aussi longtemps que celui-ci est resté fidèle à toute la Loi juive. Un fait illustre cette situation. Quand Paul est venu pour la dernière fois à Jérusalem, en l'an 58, alors que sa présence provoqua parmi les Juifs une profonde émotion ... l'Eglise de Jérusalem n'a été aucunement inquiétée', Les premiers temps de l'Eglise, Neuchâtel Paris 1949, 46-47. Voir aussi H. CAZELLES, Naissance de l'Eglise, secte juive rejetée?, Paris 1968.

(31) Voir les auteurs cités par E. GRASSER, Der Hebräerbriof 1938-1963, dans Theologische Rundschau 30, 1964, 138-236 (151-152). Mais tenir compte des réserves exprimées par C. SPICQ, L'Epître aux Hébreux, T. I, Introduction, Paris 1952, 253-261; F.F. BRUCE, The Epistle to the Hebrews, Londres 1964, xlii-xliv; A. VANHOYE, Situation du Christ, Hébreux 1-2, Paris 1969, 42-50.

- (32) Voir P. GRELOT, art.cit., 294, note 21, qui souligne le recours parallèle aux mêmes textes de l'Ancien Testament dans les récits de l'Institution et dans l'interprétation de la Mort du Christ par la lettre aux Hébreux.
- (33) Sur le lien entre l'écriture et l'affirmation des implications sacrificielles de l'Eucharistie, voir J. de WATTEVILLE, Le sacrifice dans les textes eucharistiques des premiers siècles, Neuchâtel-Paris 1966.
- (34) Sur ces textes de Paul voir A.M. DENIS, La fonction apostolique et la liturgie nouvelle en esprit, étude thématique des métaphores pauliniennes du culte nouveau, dans RSPT 1958, 401-436, 617-656. Sur le sens de λογικὴ λατρεία voir C.K. BARRETT, The Epistle to the Romans, Londres 1971, 230-232.
- (35) Voir aussi au sujet des croyants Ph 2:17, 3:3, 4:18.
- (36) Il est intéressant de noter que Rm 12:1-2 ouvre une longue explicitation (12:1-15:12) des devoirs de la charité.
- (37) On sait que le terme leitourgein lui-même n'a pas un sens très net, et que chez Paul lui-même il est souvent plus "profane" que "cultuel" (2 Co 9:12 par exemple). Voir H. STRATHMANN et R. MEYER, Leitourgein dans TWNT IV, 221-238.
 Voir R. de VAUX, des institutions de l'Ancien Testament, T.II, Paris 1960, 209-210.
- (38) Sur la vérification de cette affirmation chez Paul, voir Cl. WIENER, Hicourgein, dans Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus Catholicus 1961, T. 2, Rome 1963, 399-404, résumé dans Ceux qui assurent le service sacré de l'Evangile, dans Les Prêtres, coll. Unam Sanctam 68, Paris 1968, 257-259. Citons cette conclusion : "(Paul) emploie certes fréquemment le vocabulaire cultuel pour évoquer le culte spirituel qui est, soit l'offrande de soi-même au Seigneur, soit l'acte de l'évangélisateur (par lequel on conduit les autres à s'offrir). Mais jamais ce culte ne semble comporter l'intervention d'un personnage humain qui en soit 'le prêtre'" Ceux qui assurent ... 258.
- (39) On trouvera une bibliographie et une étude synthétique dans J. COPPENS, Le sacerdoce royal des fidèles, un commentaire de la 1^{re} Pet. II.4-10, dans Au service de la Parole de Dieu, Mélanges Charue, Gembloux 1969, 61-75.
- (40) John Hall ELLIOTT, The Elect and the Holy, an exegetical examination of 1 Peter 2:4-10 and the phrase basilikon hierateuma, coll. Supplements to Novum Testamentum, Leiden 1966.

- (41) Voir J. COPPENS, art.cit.; JTS 18, 1967, 471-474; CBQ 29, 1967, 255-257;
- (42) "the statement a holy body of priests to offer Spiritual sacrifices thus designates the believing community as the elect, holy and priestly people of God, whose task is the communication of the word of His mighty acts and the leading of a holy life as a witness to men and as Spirit-empowered oblations acceptable to God", John Hall ELLIOTT, op.cit., 185.
- (43) ibid., 186-188.
- (44) "you are to lead a holy life of obedience, well-doing, and witness and can lead this life because He in Whom you believe, as a holy and perfect sacrifice, has redeemed you from your former polluted way of life. He has given you a second birth, nourishment, and growth. In reality you are the elect and holy eschatological community of God because He to Whom you come in faith is the Messiah, the raised, elect Stone of God through Whom you too receive life and election and the Spirit of holiness. Thus your task as the Spirit's royal house and the holy body of priests is to offer through the same Jesus Christ Spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God", c'est ainsi que John Hall ELLIOTT, ibid., 218 retranscrit le point central de la lettre.
- (45) "Since the idea of Christ's priesthood is developed according to the Levitical pattern whereas hierateuma relates to Ex.19:6, and since no connection is made in 1 P between Christ's priesthood and hierateuma (an idea of the priesthood of Christ is nowhere developed in 1 P), there is no basis for the common assumption that in 1 P the community is a body of priests by virtue of participation in the priesthood of Christ" ibid., 220.
- (46) J. COPPENS, art.cit., 72.
- (47) "The predicates for this new elected society are collective and corporate, applicable only to a people, a community and not to individuals" John Hall ELLIOTT, op.cit., 223.
- (48) "as the other corporate predicates, both basileion and hierateuma are only ascribable to the community qua community and only relevant in this context qua substantiva corporativa" ibid., 223.

- (49) Ibid., 183, 224. Voir aussi A. JAUBERT, La notion d'Alliance dans le judaïsme aux environs de l'ère chrétienne, Paris 1963, 394-407.
- (50) Ces textes sont analysés par John Hall ELLIOTT, op.cit., 118-119.
- (51) Ceci est souligné avec raison par R.T. BECKWITH, Priesthood and Sacraments, Appleford 1964, 17 qui écrit : "since the New Testament gets no nearer to relating the two priesthoods, it is rash to jump to the conclusion that when Christ is called a priest the writer intends us to connect this with the fact that Christians are priests, and vice versa". Voir aussi John Hall ELLIOTT, op.cit. 220.
- (52) Growing into Union ... 86. La même critique porte sur les termes employés par la Preface de l'Ordinal prévu pour l'union entre Anglicans et Méthodistes : "the royal priesthood which the whole Church has received from Christ her Lord and in which each member of his Body shares is exercised by the faithful in different ways. The distinctive Ministry is a special form of this participation" REPORT OF THE ANGLICAN-METHODIST UNITY COMMISSION, Anglican-Methodist Unity, II: The Ordinal, Londres 1968, 12. Et nous croyons difficilement acceptable l'explication donnée par Anglican-Methodist Unity, Report of the Joint Working Group 1971, 22 : "ministerial priesthood is to be understood as a divinely appointed 'special form' of 'participation' in the royal priesthood of the whole Church. There is no assertion of a 'priestly virtue inherent in the office', or of 'a priesthood which belongs exclusively to a particular order or class of men'". Sur ce point précis la Constitution Lumen Gentium, 10 est plus fidèle à l'Écriture lorsqu'elle souligne avec force que "sacerdotium commune fidelium et sacerdotium ministeriale sive hierarchicum, licet essentia et non gradu tantum differant, ad invicem tamen ordinantur" (Though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated). Mais par la suite la Constitution reprend la vis courante qui voit dans ces deux types du sacerdoce deux types de participation au sacerdoce du Christ. On aimerait ici également plus de nuances.

- (53) Voir John Hall FELLOTT, op. cit., 192-196.
- (54) Ibid., 195.
- (55) Voir les deux études de Cl. WIENER, citées supra, note 28, surtout la première. L'auteur se sépare ici de la position de A.M. DENIS, art. cit., 405.
- (56) Ceci est bien montré par H. STRATHMANN et R. MEYER, op. cit.
- (57) Voir G. SCHWENK, Hierourges, dans ENT III, 251-252 et surtout Cl. WIENER, op. cit. 401-404 qui analyse des témoignages les plus nets de la littérature juive.
- (58) Voir Cl. WIENER, ibid., 404.
- (59) Sur le sens de 1 Co 9:13-14 voir C.K. BARRETT, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, Londres 1971, 207-208 qui croit que le parallèle renvoie surtout à la pratique païenne et non pas d'abord au sacerdoce lévitique. J. HERNING, La première épître de saint Paul aux Corinthiens, Neuchâtel Paris 1949, 73-74 ne pense qu'à une comparaison avec les prêtres et les lévites du Temple.
- (60) Celle-ci est bien mise en relief par A. CODY, A History of Old Testament Priesthood, coll. Analecta Biblica 35, 1969, 114-124. Voir aussi R. de VAUX, Les Institutions de l'Ancien Testament, T. II, Paris 1960, 200-208. Le P. de VAUX conclut son étude en remarquant : "Le rôle des prêtres dans les sacrifices est certainement ancien, mais il s'est progressivement affaibli, à mesure que disparaissait leur rôle oraculaire et que leur rôle enseignant était partagé avec d'autres. Par une évolution inverse, l'action sacrificielle leur a été de plus en plus réservée, elle est devenue une fonction essentielle et, conséquemment, la ruine du Temple a marqué la fin de leur influence : la religion de la Tora a remplacé le rituel du Temple et les prêtres ont été supplantés par les rabbins" (op. cit., 210). Ces lignes sont éclairantes pour notre sujet.
- (61) Cl. WIENER, art. cit., 464. On sait que les Pères de VATICAN II ont, à cause de ce point, modifié par deux fois leur traduction de Ec 15:16 dans Presbyterorum Ordinis, 2:4. Ils ont opté pour "sacerdo Evangelii munus fungentes" au lieu de "sacerdotio Evangelii fungentes" et de "sacratificantes Evangelium Dei". Voir Cl. WIENER, Ceux qui assurent ... 257.
- (62) Comme le dit le P. L. BOUYER, Eucharistie, Desclée 1966, 107 : "l'accent ne porte pas sur la prescription : 'faites ceci' mais bien sur la précision : 'faites-le

(pour-entendu : désormais) en mémoire de moi'. Plus exactement, comme Jeremias le met en lumière, ces paroles doivent être traduites : 'Enfin ceci comme moi "mémorial"'. Voir J. JEREMIAS, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, Londres 1966, 249-255. Est-il fidèle aux textes d'interpréter Jc 2:42-47 en disant "d'après Jc 2:42-47, on voit que les apôtres, après avoir prêché la Parole (kerygme) et fondé l'Eglise en baptisant ceux qui ont cru, donnent aux fidèles un enseignement (didachè), président à une vie liturgique qui comporte la fraction du pain et les prières, gardent la haute main sur la réalisation concrète de la koinônia en organisant la distribution des aumônes et les collectes. L'allusion liturgique, pour laconique qu'elle soit, attire l'attention sur le rôle des apôtres dans l'aspect proprement religieux de la vie ecclésiale et notamment dans le culte eucharistique" (P. GRELOT, art.cit., 310, c'est nous qui soulignons)?

- (63) Voir E. HAENCHEN, op.cit., 585.
- (64) Sur les diverses apparitions de presbyteroi voir A. LEMAIRE, Les ministères aux origines de l'Eglise, coll. lectio divina 68, Paris 1971, surtout 71, 111, 113-118, 125-127, 131, 184; M. CUBRRA Y COMEZ, Episcopos y presbyteros, Burgos, 1962, présente la toile de fond.
- (65) Voir A. LEMAIRE, op.cit., 21-27, 40-41.
- (66) Voir J. JEREMIAS, Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu, Göttingen 1962, 252-257 (Jerusalem aux temps de Jésus, Paris 1967, 301-305).
- (67) R. de VAUX, op.cit., T.I, Paris 1958, 212-213.
- (68) Voir G.F. MOORE, Judaism, T.I, Cambridge 1950, 269; W. BACHER, Synagogue, dans J. HASTINGS, A Dictionary of the Bible, vol. IV, Edinburgh 1909, 640-642; H. HRUBY, La synagogue dans la littérature rabbinique, dans L'Orient Syrien, 9, 1964, 473-514.
- (69) Voir G.F. MOORE, op.cit., 294-295.

- (70) Voir R. de VAUX, op.cit., T.II, 209-210.
- (71) R. de VAUX, op.cit., T.II, 209 oblige à corriger H. HAAG, Pâques, dans SDB VI, 1960, 1139.
- (72) On connaît le contenu du traité Pesahim de la MISHNA. Voir aussi STRACK-BILLERBECK, IV, ed. 1928, 41-76.
- (73) Voir L. HAAG, op.cit., 1139.
- (74) Pour la discussion de ce point voir J. JEREMIAS, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, Londres 1966, 41-84.
- (75) C'est ce que souligne T.W. MANSON, Ministry and Priesthood : Christ's and ours, Londres 1959, 44.
- (76) Voir J.P. AUDET, La Didachè, Instructions des Apôtres, Paris 1958, 219 (Antioche, entre les années 50 et 70); P. BATIFFOL, L'Eglise naissante, introduction historique à l'étude du Nouveau Testament, III - Les institutions hiérarchiques de l'Eglise, dans RB 4, 1895, 473-500 (490) parlait des environs de l'an 60; J. DANIELOU Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme, Desclée 1958, 39-40 (origine palestinienne, premier fond daté d'avant 70).
Sur
- (77) En la nature de ces apostoloi et leur lien avec les prophètes, voir A. LEMAIRE, op.cit., 139-144.
- (78) Voir J.P. AUDET, op.cit., 372-433.
- (79) On a parlé d'un repas d'agapes. Pour J.P. AUDET les chapitres 9 et 10 décriraient non l'Eucharistie mais ^{une} fraction du pain qui en serait l'introduction. Cette fraction du pain serait différente de l'agape du monde grec. Mais voir les réserves de P. NAUTIN, La composition de la Didachè et son titre, dans RHR 78, 1959, 191-214; J.N.D. KELLY, dans JTS 12, 1961, 329-333 (332); J. de WATTEVILLE, op.cit. 26.
- (80) Voir en particulier J.N.D. KELLY, loc.cit.
- (81) "Le jour du Seigneur, assemblez-vous pour la fraction du pain et l'eucharistie ... Choisissez-vous donc (oun) des évêques et diacres dignes du Seigneur, hommes doux, désintéressés, véridiques et sûrs, car ils remplissent eux aussi auprès de vous l'office des prophètes et des docteurs. Ne les prenez donc pas de haut ; ils comptent parmi vos notables, avec les prophètes et les docteurs" (14:1 - 15:2). Voir A. LEMAIRE. op.cit. 141-142.

- (82) Voir J.P. AUDET, op.cit., 464.
- (83) Pour le sens du texte de Malachie, voir A. DEISSLER, Malachie, dans L. PIROT et A. CLAMER, La Sainte Bible. commentaire exégétique et théologique, T. VIII/1, Paris 1961, 635-638.
- (84) Sa citation de Malachie est teintée d'un certain ton polémique que n'a pas la Didachè (Dial 28:5; 41:2; 117:1).
- (85) Voir A. JAUBERT, Clément de Rome, Epître aux Corinthiens, dans SC 167, Paris 1971, 19-20. Sur cette page importante de la tradition voir également J.B. LIGHTFOOT, The Apostolic Fathers, T. I/2, Londres 1890, 121-136. On trouvera une analyse du texte dans J. COLSON, La succession apostolique au niveau du premier siècle, dans Verbum Caro 0961, 154-168 et ID., Ministre de Jésus Christ ou sacerdoce de l'Évangile, Paris 1966, 217-256.
- (86) Voir A. JAUBERT, op.cit., 57-58; J.B. LIGHTFOOT, op.cit., 112.
- (87) A. JAUBERT, op.cit., 73-74.
- (88) De même qu'il n'hésite pas semble-t-il à recourir à la conception biblique de l'organisation du Peuple dans les camps du Désert pour appuyer sa vision de la soumission mutuelle (37:2-3). Voir A. JAUBERT, Les sources de la conception militaire de l'Église en I Clément 37, dans Vigiliae Christianae 18, 1964, 74-84.
- (89) Voir A. JAUBERT, Clément de Rome, 82.
- (90) Ici l'episkopè semble bien désigner la charge des presbytres. Voir A. LEMAIRE, op.cit., 149-151.
- (91) Voir J.B. LIGHTFOOT, op.cit., 134-135 et A. JAUBERT, Clément de Rome, 173, note 4.
- (92) "les prêtres eux aussi étaient honorables, mais chose meilleure est le grand prêtre à qui a été confié le Saint des Saints, à qui seul ont été confiés les secrets de Dieu" (Philad. 9:1)
- (93) Voir M. JOURJON, La présidence de l'Eucharistie chez Ignace d'Antioche, dans Lumière et Vie 84, 1967, 26-32; S.M. GIBBARD, The Eucharist in the Ignatian
- (94) Epistles, dans Stud. Patr. VIII, Berlin 1966, 214-218.

- (94) On s'explique mal l'affirmation de J. de WATTEVILLE, op.cit., 52 qui appuie la signification sacrificielle de l'Eucharistie ignatienne sur le caractère sacerdotal du rite. Chez Ignace le pas n'est pas explicitement franchi.
- (95) Ainsi Adv. Haer. IV,8:2, SC 100, 470.
- (96) Comparer Adv. Haer. IV,8:3 (SC 100, 472-477) avec V,34:3 (HARVEY, 422) : "ostendimus autem in superiori libro quoniam Levitae et sacerdotes sunt discipuli omnes Domini, qui et Sabbatum in templo profanabant et sine culpa sunt" (voir SC 100, 222-223). P. DABIN, Le sacerdoce royal des fidèles dans la tradition ancienne et moderne, Bruxelles 1950, pp. 511-512 voit lui aussi dans ce texte, à la suite de MASSUET (PG 7, 995, note 1) une affirmation concernant tous les fidèles, tous les "justes". L. CERFAUX, Regale sacerdotium, dans Recueil Lucien Cerfaux, T.II, Gembloux 1954, 282-315 (312) semble plus hésitant.
- (97) Adv. Haer. III,11:8, SC 34, 194-197. Voir le commentaire de F. SAGNARD : "les êtres animés symbolisent 'l'activité du Fils de Dieu', activité souveraine, royale (lion, S.Jean), sacerdotale et sacrificielle (jeune taureau, S.Luc), humaine (homme, S. Matthieu), pneumatique (aigle, S.Marc)" (ibid., 201, note).
- (98) Cette conclusion est différente de celle de beaucoup de théologiens. J.A. JUNGSMANN, Die Stellung Christi im Liturgischen Gebet, Münster 1962, 129, fait sienne l'opinion de DUNIN-BORKOWSKI qu'il cite : "Ursprünglich nannte man zweifellos die christlichen Liturgen Hierois, um eine gewisse Analogie mit dem jüdischen Priestertum zu betonen. Bei Irenäus und in der syrischen Didaskalie ist dieses Bestreben noch deutlich wahrzunehmen". Il ne convient pas de durcir l'approche d'Irénée.

- (99) Les traductions sont souvent équivoques (ainsi SC 35, Paris 1952, 90).
- (100) "Leurs ordinations (ordinationes) se font au hasard, sans sérieux, sans suite ... Aussi ont-ils aujourd'hui un évêque, demain un autre; aujourd'hui est diacre tel qui demain sera lecteur; aujourd'hui est presbytre tel qui demain sera laïque (laicus); ils chargent même des laïques de fonctions sacerdotales (et laicis sacerdotalia munera injungunt)" (De praescr., 41:6-8).
- (101) Les autres emplois du vocabulaire sacerdotal chez Tertullien sont nombreux. Parmi les plus importants citons Adv. Jud., 6:1, 14 (CSEL 69, 269-271, 327-329); De exhort. cast., 11:1-2; De Monogamia 12 (CSEL 76, 69-71); et de façon plus indirecte De corona 3:3 (CSEL 69, 157-158).
- (102) La position de F. WIELAND, Der vorirenaische Opferbegriff, München 1909, 142 et 224 ne nous paraît pas exagérée.
- (103) Ainsi Adv. Jud., 6 et 14 (CSEL 69, 269-271, 327-329).
- (104) Parmi les nombreux textes que nous avons rencontrés mentionnons surtout Enist. 5:2; 63:14; 69:8; De Cath. Eccl. Unit., 13, 17 (noter dans ce dernier texte la distinction entre episcopi et Dei sacerdotes où la dernière expression pourrait désigner les presbyteri bien qu'il nous paraisse improbable que Cyprien soit déjà dans cette ligne); De Dominica Oratione 4.
- (105) Trad. Apost. 3, ed. B. BOTTE, La tradition apostolique de saint Hippolyte, essai de reconstitution, coll. Liturg. Quellen und Forsch., Münster 1963, 10-11.
- (107) Voir aussi dans la prière de l'oblation eucharistique le "ad stare coram te et tibi sacerdotium exhibero" (ibid., 16-17, avec la note 3).
- (106) Commentaire sur saint Jean, I, 2:9-11, GCS 4, p. 5 (SC 120, 62-65).
- (107) Ainsi Hom. in Lev. VI, 3, GCS 6, 363.
- (108) Voir sur ce point H. von BALTHASAR, Le mystère d'Origène, III- Mystère et Sacrement, dans RSR 27, 1937, 38-64 (45-51). G. BARDY, La théologie de l'Eglise de saint Irénée au Concile de Nicée, coll. Unam Sanctam 14, Paris 1947, 142-143 est plus absolu que H. von BALTHASAR lorsqu'il écrit : "faut-il en conclure que seuls sont capables non pas seulement d'exercer les fonctions ecclésiastiques, mais de recevoir valablement l'épiscopat ou le sacerdoce, ceux qui sont de véritables saints (...)? Origène semble aller jusque-là, lorsqu'il é-

- crit : "il y a des hommes qui simulent le martyre; il y en a d'autres qui portent la marque de l'épiscopat, du presbytérat, du diaconat, de la science et de la doctrine ecclésiastique, et qui jouent la comédie des vertus, mais qui en réalité sont les ennemis de ces mêmes vertus qu'ils simulent" (In Matth. comment. series, 24)". Voir comme autres textes Hom. in Lev., VI,6, GCS 6, 368; In Jerem., XI,3, GCS 3, 80-81; In Num., II,1, GCS 7, 9-10 (SC 29, 82-83).
- (109) De Oratione XXVIII, 9-10, GCS 2, 381.
- (110) Voir Contra Celsum III, 29 (SC 136, 70); Hom. in Num., II,1, GCS 7, 9-10 (SC 29, 82-83); In Matth. comment., XVI,8, GCS 10, 494.
- (111) Certains ont même émis l'hypothèse d'un maintien du culte officiel à Jérusalem, peut-être sur les ruines du Temple, après 70. Voir K.W. CLARKE, Worship in the Jerusalem Temple after A.D. 70, dans NTS 6, 1960, 269-280.
- (112) Voir H. von BALTHASAR, art. cit.
- (113) On découvre alors la part de justesse de l'opinion traditionnelle qui liait l'apparition du "sacerdoce" à la Sainte Cène. Si ce que nous disons est exact c'est à l'intérieur de l'expérience de l'eucharistie qu'apparaît non pas certes le ministère mais la qualité "sacerdotale" de celui-ci.
- (114) Nulle part nous n'avons trouvé de position analogue à celle de l'Épître de Barnabé.
- (115) Le souci qu'ont l'auteur de la lettre aux Hébreux, Clément de Rome, Origène de montrer que le sacerdoce de Jésus est dans la ligne des affirmations de l'Écriture est ici très important. Voir C.H. DODD, According to the Scriptures, Londres 1951, Sur l'évolution de la perception "sacerdotale" du ministère, voir J. MOINGT, Caractère et ministère sacerdotal, dans RSR 56, 1968, 563-589.