

CHURCH AND SALVATION

(on the Sacramentality of the Church)

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The conception of the profound nature of the Church has always been one of the points of friction between the Churches of the Reformed tradition and those of the Catholic tradition. While the 'ancient churches' do not hesitate to speak of the Church as 'servant' - as 'sign and instrument' as 'sacrament' of the salvation of which she is the beneficiary, the communities born of the Reformation prefer to avoid any formula which might obscure the great affirmation of faith that salvation comes from God alone.

In the past controversy has always turned on the link between the reality of the Church of God and the question of justification by faith. Now that serious and credible studies have shown that our views on the subject were closer than we thought in the heat of our quarrels (1) it is possible to approach our problem from a new direction. I put the question therefore in this way: is the Church external to justification, or is it simply the fruit thereof?

I. The human element of the Church in Salvation

1. Obviously the ecclesiological debate about the instrumentality of the Church hangs on an infinitely larger problem: the relation between Salvation and human freedom. No one has ever doubted that the assent of faith voices the free acceptance of God's design and expresses the lifelong adherence to the Word of the covenant. More than that, the theologians of the Reform, reacting against a christianity too 'social' and not 'personal' enough, have often given to that assent a capital importance (2). For all traditions it is true that the absolute gratuitousness of Salvation does not mean any aggression on God's part. The human person must at least allow himself to be siezed by the force of the Agapè.

For that matter Fathers and theologians from the beginning interpreted in this way the phrases with which the great kerygmas of the Acts of the Apostles usually end: "Repent" (Acts 2,38; 3,19, 26; 5,31; 17,30; 26,20). It is acknowledged that these discourses are built around

N.B.: Some supplementary notes have been added; they are indicated by (a), (b), etc.

two assertions. The first concerns the power of God at work in his son Jesus Christ: "through (him) forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone that believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses". 13.,38; the kerygma of Paul, cf. 15,11). To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name". ,43; kerygma of Peter).

The second is an appeal to human freedom: "(I) declared first to those at Damascus, then at Jerusalem and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and perform deeds worthy of their repentance 26 ,20: Paul's speech). "Repent therefore and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out." (3 ,19. Peter's speech) (a). The exegetes underline the kinship of the emphasis in these texts of Acts with the gospel tradition of Luke, which on the one hand (especially in chapter 15) insists strongly on the gratuitousness of divine mercy but on the other hand makes clear "I have come ... to call sinners to repentance" (Luke 5,32) "unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (13,3) (b).

A reading of the central items in the polemical writings of the Reformation and counter-Reformation on this basis brings out a point which has escaped the vigilance of certain commentators. All the Christian traditions are agreed in the certainty that Salvation comes from the absolute initiative of God. All admit that all human liberty has been taken up into the person of Christ. All say that this assumption of "my" liberty into that of Jesus Christ becomes "my" salvation. But some would see that Salvation first as a verdict of grace: "you are freed"; while others would see it first as a recreation of freedom restored to its true dignity and henceforth capable of living in covenant with God, in accordance with man's responsibility as the image of God. The problem is not the gratuitousness of Salvation, but its nature.

The most ancient traditions put the stress on Salvation as new life led through the Spirit given in baptism. They bank on the New Testament in which moral teachings have a prominent place and they think they are bound to deduce that, for the apostolic writings, the simultaneity of God's approach and man's attitude, the dovetailing of the divine invitation and of conversion which characterises entrance into the new Covenant, should encompass the whole of existence. According to these writings, there is no authentic christianity unless the believer, through the Spirit, lives "converted", i.e. in a state of metanoia, spiritually "turned back towards God". (1 Thess. 1,9; Gal. 4,8-10; Rom. 6, 12-19; etc...). To be sure salvation is not radically the work of human freedom. It comes only from God by the grace of the Spirit. Yet it is not achieved without liberty. The covenant between God and man which inaugurates the acceptance of the Gospel sealed by baptism, should spread and unfold throughout

existence. This is not merely thanksgiving for pardon received. It is also submission to the demands which the sermon on the mount (Mtt. 5,1-7,27) orchestrated by New Testament literature as a whole, gives the main lines. But this submission has nothing juridical about it. It brings about Salvation made actual - the recreation of freedom by the power of the Spirit of Christ. Far from appearing as a cause of Salvation, it is on the contrary required as a consequence and sign of belonging to the New Covenant. (Jerem. 31, 31-4). To be saved is not merely to be pardoned (c).

Moreover, in the new Covenant the structure of the old Covenant is not destroyed. It is "fulfilled". Teleiōsis (3) does not mean putting an end to what went before. On the contrary it implies that what was in preparation for the Christ-Event comes to completion. If in Christ's pasch the Promises reach "fulfilment", it follows that the Covenant, with all that goes with it not only of mercy and pardon from God but also of responsibility on the part of the People, reaches its fulness. In the New Covenant the people, which includes every believer, does not just benefit from forgiveness. It also lives Salvation in becoming the authentic servant of God, for the carrying out of God's plan of grace for humanity. It does this to the extent that, by its conduct, it is truly "light of the world" and "salt of the earth" (Mtt. 5,13-16), witness to Christ in face of the world's hatred, letting itself be led by the Spirit in the martyria of Jesus (John 15,18-27); imitator of the Lord (Col. 1,24; 1 Cor. 6,20; 2 Cor. 4,10). Such conduct implies liberty. Restored - by pardon and gift of the Spirit, to the image of God it can be what the Creator wished it to be, his associate. This is Salvation (d).

This, the nature of Salvation - radically the work of God's power, immeasurably transcending human forces and hence taking them up - explains the movement from the indicative to the imperative that we find in most of the moral passages of the New Testament. Ethical demands are not prerequisites of Salvation. Yet they are an element of it. They are called for by the new quality which the grace of the Spirit confers on the person. They are not a price to pay in order to have (merit) Salvation but on the contrary an attitude to adopt in order to live within the logic of salvation. The nuance - which our western logic finds hard to express but which semitic thought perceives instinctively - is here of capital importance.

For want of grasping this distinction, Catholic controversialists have often falsified the insight of the New Testament. They have forgotten for example that if the epistle of the Colossians calls on the faithful "to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work, (ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ ἀγαθῷ καρποφοροῦντες) and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1,10), it is because God "has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness

of sins (ibid. 13-14). We may translate the reasoning implicit in this text, and in others such as Rom. 4, 20-23; 1 Cor. 6,12-20; Eph. 4,22-24; 5,8-11. 21-33; Col. 3, 1-15; James 2,14-26; 1 Pet. 2,21-25; 1 John 3,17-20; 4,20 - into the following imperative: seeing that you are involved in the Salvation that comes from Christ, do the works of Christ. And we may explain it thus: seeing that you are re-created by the Spirit of Christ, do the deeds proper to the new creature, otherwise your Salvation will be only theoretical and abstract. Salvation does not come from action by the believer but includes it.

Perhaps it should be recalled that this conduct - which I would qualify as an epiphany (manifesting the work-of-grace) - is part of the prolongation of a vision which is outlined in the Old Testament. When Deuteronomy prescribes the freeing of slaves, it explains: "You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this today" (Deut. 15,12.15). The same reason is given for everything that refers to the protection of the weak; the rights of the stranger and the widow, tenderness for the orphan (ibid. 24,17-22). The behaviour of the faithful Israelite is like a "memorial", a repercussion, an "epiphany" of what the grace of God has accomplished for him (4). Clearly worship is set in the same perspective. Salvation is a gift received and a gift "radiated".

Referring to the acceptance of the Kerygma, we spoke, together with most exegetes (e), of an initial assent or "yes". It would be more exact to speak of the first utterance of a "yes" which goes on to embrace the whole Christian life. For the latter is entirely implicated in that first instant, just as the whole of life is implicated in the moment of the "yes" which the partners say to each other on the day of their marriage. It is a matter of a word for a lifetime, of an acceptance for as long as we exist, above all of a "yes" the truth of which will be realised and put to the test (πειρασμος) in the hard struggle for fidelity (1 Cor. 9,24-27).

Now it can happen, as Paul himself reminds the faithful of Corinth in a solemn and eucharistic context (ibid. 11, 29,34) that in this struggle human fidelity is defeated. In the drama of such a defeat, the initial "yes" will be so to speak dissolved. The act of baptism should be, in the fine image of Philippians, the starting-point of a movement forward to a goal (Phil. 3,12-16; cf. 1 Cor. 9,26-7). "I press on to make it my own because Christ Jesus has made me his own" (ibid.). But in that course everything comes from the all powerful grace of God. Man has grown weak. God can do everything except to constrain man to love him and serve him faithfully. Respect for human responsibility forms part of Salvation. Before this mystery of God's Agapè and human freedom reason is left stammering. If freedom should be violated, fidelity would be that of a slave - without object; if sinful man were to remain the master of his destiny, God would no longer be Agapè. We know that to resolve this dilemma many have no recourse but to the theology of predestination.

2. In connection with this biblical conception of the covenant between God as Agapè and the "royal race" (restored and re-created in Christ) it is as well to examine at some length two of the images used in revelation to express the mystery of the Church. The first, belonging to the Pauline writings, is that of the "body of which Christ is the head". The second, more simple, takes up again an Old Testament theme, that of the Spouse of Christ. Of the many New Testament images, it is these that are given a privileged place in the liturgical life of the Great Tradition, undoubtedly because they express most aptly the relationship which the Holy Spirit establishes between the Saviour and the multitude of those saved. We can sketch them only briefly here.

A - No one has ever denied that, in the Pauline view of the Body of Christ, the Head, Christ Jesus is so far transcendent that everything derives from and depends on him. In the ecclesial Body all life is focussed on the Head. This is the source and centre, just as (according to the physiology of Hippocrates to which the epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians seem to adhere) the human body receives from the head the nervous influences, the main sensory indications it needs. Thought, volition, essential sense perceptions (sight, hearing, smell, taste) are found (for Greek learning) in the head (5).

To say then that Christ is the head of the Church amounts to recognising him directly as the one without whom or apart from whom there would quite simply be no Church, because poor humankind, left to itself, would never become the Church. The latter depends radically on what God and the Holy Spirit have brought about and given in Jesus Christ. A sound reading of the scriptural material on the Body of Christ rules out any flavour of Pelagianism. Believers do not find salvation except in being grafted on to the Body of Christ (6). And this Body does not exist except by the Spirit from whom, in his death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus has obtained the mastership (Acts 2,32-33; Eph. 4,4). Never can human merits, however noble, pull the switch that gives life to the Church. That life can come only from the Head which God himself has "constituted" in his son the Lord Jesus Christ, filled with the Spirit.

Nevertheless, if there is a Head there is a Body. A head without a body is as illusory as a body without a head. Head and body demand each other. Since Pentecost Christ is unthinkable without his Body. And if at the Resurrection he was made Christ and Lord (Acts 2,36) this Lordship should have an object. The object is none other than the community of those who freely embrace the Gospel and "join" the group of those first beneficiaries of the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit (Acts 2,38-41, linked with 2,4). Now the ecclesial body is the form which the Spirit gives to that community. It is not a simple collection of disciples with nothing in common but conviction of purpose. It is communion (koinônia) in the real possession of one and the same Life, coming from animation by one and the same Spirit. But this koinônia has two dimensions. What is in the Head passes into the Body, from the "justice" of the acquittal of offence down to final glorification (Rom. 8,1-4; 3,21-26; 1 Cor. 15,50-53). On the other hand all the members of Christ the Head have

part in the same reality of "justification" and of that movement forward which "will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body" (Philip. 3,21). And this communion, seen in these two dimensions, is so close and inward that in the words of the exegete J.A.T. Robinson (7) the Church is as much the Body of Christ as is the eucharistic bread, though in another mode (8). The identification points to the deepest being. It is not a mere figure of speech.

Thus welded to the Head, the Body is not purely passive. Animated by the Spirit of Christ it produces works which, in him and through him, are works of the Lord. The Epistle to the Romans acknowledges this truth even though it does not refer explicitly to the Body of Christ (Rom. 8,10-13). It is a thread running through certain passages of the Pauline epistles: "I have been crucified with Christ: it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2,20; cf. 6,14,17), "always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies" (2 Cor. 4,10). But sometimes the link with the theme of the Body of Christ becomes explicit. The realism of the following two texts has often been emphasised (9): "Do you know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!" (1 Cor. 4,15). The epistle to the Colossians sums up: "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the Church" (Col. 1,24). And straightaway he connects this with the fatigues of the ministry and the charge to "make the word of God full known" (ibid. 1,25-29).

It is then no mere concordism to conclude from this last text that the works of the ministry - "ambassadors for Christ" (2 Cor. 5,20) "entrusted with a commission" (1 Cor. 9,17) and all the ecclesial activities which go to the spreading of the Gospel make up a commitment of the Body of Christ to manifest, extend and make present that Salvation gained by its Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is true that only the Johannine literature, in another context, says that the disciples are sent as the Son was sent (John 17,18) and the Greek conjunction $\kappa\alpha\theta\omega\varsigma$, which I translate "as", expresses a link both of dependence and of similitude (10). But in this appreciation of the apostolic function - his own and that of others (1 Cor. 3,5-15) Paul himself shows that he is convinced of the essential role the Church plays in the spread of Salvation.

We must above all take seriously the great affirmations of the epistle to the Romans. Sometimes their importance is minimised: "... how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? ... So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ" (Rom. 10,14,17). It is because he knows himself to be a fellow-worker with Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 6,1) "a minister of the Gospel" of God (Rom. 15,16) "in the priestly service of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles" (cf. ibid.) charged

with "the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5,18) that Paul declares:

"In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has wrought through me to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Holy Spirit... I have fully preached the gospel of Christ". (Rom. 15,17-19).

What would happen if Paul were unfaithful, and what is implied in the cry "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" (1 Cor. 9,16).

To be sure God's power goes beyond even the most marvellous things he has done. He could have done other than what he freely chose to accomplish in Christ Jesus. We do not know how or by what means. But one thing is certain. In the present economy the association of the Head and the Body is such that it involves an active role for the Church in the work of Salvation. The Church has not the initiative in Salvation (1 Cor. 9,17). It is itself no more than a fruit of grace, a gift received. Yet the gift of the divine goodness is such as to make of the Church, through its ministers but also through all its members, the servant, the assistant, the fellow-worker (1 Cor. 3,9) the propagator, the "missionary" of what it has received.

Further, its members, in their diversity and solidarity, each having its function and its charism from the same Spirit and for the same end, (1 Cor. 12,4-30), are not there only to serve grace which is confined to the community of the served, as a kind of secondary distribution of God's gift. They are there also to proclaim and spread Salvation, which means in practice, so that Salvation shall be what it is intended to be, something offered to the multitude of mankind. Now this proclamation cannot be made except by the Church. The Church thus fulfils a function which is no luxury or appendage which (in the present economy) could be dispensed with. It is not simply (in the present economy) ad bene esse. It fits into the gift of Salvation while itself being the prime beneficiary. We can say that it is the "sacramentum" of Salvation (11).

B - A well-known passage of Ephesians links the theme of the Body of Christ with that of the Bride of Christ. It is well to quote this passage, the language of which has a particular resonance in relation to what I am expounding.

"For the husband is the head (κεφαλή) of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, his body, and is himself its Saviour. As the Church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed

her by the washing of water with the word, that the church might be presented before him in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one'. This is a great mystery, and I take it to mean Christ and the church" (Eph. 5,23-32).

Note at once that an undoubtedly Pauline text applies the same symbolism to the work of the apostolic ministry: "I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I betrothed you to Christ to present you as a pure bride to her one husband" (2 Cor. 11,2). The passage is not then so cut off from the Pauline theology as has been asserted by some in considering the problem of the authenticity of Ephesians (12).

The organic union of the two themes of the Body and the Bride of the Head (Kephalê, "head" in the double sense of a part of the body and chief) and the Bridegroom is here remarkable. And the verse of Paul that I have quoted shows that in his mind the relation between ministry and Church go easily together. In the epistle to the Ephesians the transcendence of Christ is firmly underlined, orchestrated at will from semitic anthropology. He is at once the Saviour of the ecclesial Body and the Bridegroom who has all initiative and all power. The beauty and holiness of the bride come from him. In spite of this transcendence he makes the Bride his own body and the two are but "one flesh" - his own. Christ and the Church are thus in total union, a "communion" entirely owing to the Bridegroom (the Head) and to him alone, but one in which the Bride (Body of the Bridegroom) is not so dissolved as to lose her personality. Quite the contrary, sanctified, made resplendent she sees herself called to play the role which belongs to him. The Old Testament texts which are read as a background (Hos. 1,2; Is. 1,21; 50,1; 54,1-7; 62,4-5; Jer. 2,2; 3,1-12; Ez. 16,1-63; 23,1-48; Ps. 45,1-18) echo a bridal fidelity which has nothing to do with mere passivity. They deal with a Covenant!

In the Old Covenant, indeed, the People owes to Yahwe (its jealous God, according to Deut. 4,24) the specific fidelity of a bride. This demand extends to the Church. The fidelity required is love, worship but there is also a summons to make the force embodied in her bear fruit, to give birth for him. In the passage of Genesis to which Paul explicitly

alludes in 2 Cor. 11,2-3, the bride is the "helpmeet" formed from the body of Adam (Gen. 2,18-22). It may be deduced that thus also Israel will be the helper of Yahwe and the Church the helper of Christ.

Even if Ephesians does not say so, we can still specify, with the support of the Pauline tradition that in supplying this help the Church will be a mother, Mater Ecclesia. The epistle to the Galatians (4,21-31) shows that if the old Jerusalem bears children for slavery (4,24) the Jerusalem above is our mother, who gives birth in freedom (4,26), the messianic Jerusalem of which Christians are the children (4,31). Paul's reasoning rests explicitly on the great chapter of Deutero-Isaiah which sings of the fecundity of her whom Yahwe has chosen for his bride (Is. 54,1-10). We know what drama is made in the Old Testament, right up to the threshold of the New (Lk. 1,7. 25), of the sterility of the bride (Gen. 11,30; 25,21; 29,31; 30,23; Judges 13,2-3; 1 Sam. 1,10; Is. 4,1; 2 Sam. 6,23). There is then nothing artificial about the passage from the theme of the Bride of Christ to that of the Mater Ecclesia (13).

The standpoint of Revelations (19,5-10; 21,1-14) is different. Yet we find again the Covenant (21,3), the insistence on the grandeur of the new Jerusalem (21,2, 10, 12), the splendour which comes to her from the glory of God (19,8; 21,11), the connection with the Lamb who redeems and saves (cf. 9,9). The allusion to "the righteous deeds of the saints" of which is woven the "fine linen, bright and pure" in which the bride is clothed (19,7-8) forbids again any interpretation which pays too little attention to the action of the Church itself. In the splendour of the eternal nuptials something comes from her, from her fidelity. And the letters to the seven churches which open Revelations show that that fidelity counts. The Lord wants conquerors (2,7. 11. 17. 26; 2,5. 12. 21). They alone have the white garment of triumph (3,5.18; 7,9.13-14; 22,14), the marriage robe of the Bridegroom; they alone are inscribed in the book of life (3,5).

The theme of the Bride thus echoes the conclusion forced in us in another context by the Pauline theology of the Body of Christ. The Church has nothing to do with the essence of the act which gained Salvation for humanity and earned its Redemption. All comes only from the Cross of the Lord, which the Spirit transforms at the Resurrection into the tree of Life. But the Church is nevertheless involved in the preparation, manifestation and spreading of Salvation. As the Bride and Mother she transmits what she receives, preaches, baptises, nourishes (through the means of grace which the Spirit endows her with for the purpose) the children of God born of faith and sacrament, preserves them in fidelity to their being and their mission by the action of the ministers to whom the Spirit grants what this task requires, incites them to the good works which are like an epiphany of the wealth of grace. Thus she is God's "helper" in diffusing the Salvation won by the Lord Jesus; the good deeds of the saints (that is, the baptised) are her own and are the fruit in

her of Salvation. She is the sacramentum of Salvation and as such is integrated in its spreading abroad through human history.

The celebrated affirmation of the epistle of James (2,17-24), which I have purposely avoided citing until now, appears, at the end of our analysis, less of an obstacle than might have been thought. True, its immediate concern is with the personal state of the believer and it has no ecclesiological pretensions (James 2,14-26). It fits none the less into the same picture. When the author writes "I by my works will show you my faith" (2,18) and recalling the case of Abraham explains "faith was active along with his works and faith was completed by works" (2,22) he shows that there is osmosis between faith and works without putting both on the same level (f).

In the mystery of Salvation the human does not dominate at all, is not the source of anything. It exists only as entirely in the grasp of the power of God. At the root of whatever it accomplishes the Spirit is always to be acknowledged. But we have shown that it is so grasped as to be restored to its freedom, becoming capable of producing "works" which will be those God expects from his royal creature. In the mystery of Salvation - whether seen in its collective or in its personal light - the human (even restored) is never at the origin but is everywhere else. By the sacramentality of the Church we intend to articulate, clumsily perhaps, this "everywhere else" and this "never at the source", this seizing of the omnipresence of the human (respected because restored in its nature as image) by the transcendent power, unique and alone "justifying", of the Spirit of the Lord. Is not this the economy (oikonomia) that presides at the Incarnation itself? (14).

II. The Shape of the Sacramentality of the Church

Tradition has very often reflected on the degree of the Church's responsibility in the Covenant whose main lines I have been recalling; and it has expressed the responsibility in terms of tension. For it has sensed that the truth is not fully respected except by holding together in one two at first sight contradictory affirmations: "Salvation comes from God and from him alone" and yet "it restores to human freedom its authentic dignity and hence its function". Thomas Aquinas tried to reconcile these with his notion - rather halting it is true - of merit non de condigno sed de congruo, i.e. having a relation with salvation, though not being a retribution in strict justice, as if man "paid for his salvation", was its "purchaser" (15). The West, always tempted to choose, out of regard for logic, between components of the Christian mystery at first sight hard to reconcile (aut ... aut) and not to hold them in tension (et ... et) has shown itself less wise than the East. Many, following Pelagian lines, have opted for human "merits" forgetting the absolute character of the divine transcendence; others, relying on an often over-simplified interpretation of certain pages of Luther, have exalted that transcendence in a way that sometimes brings into extreme contempt the dignity of the image of God.

1. The Church is evangelised by God, but it also evangelises for God. This is the first and undoubtedly the fundamental level on which the tension I have referred to operates. For it is clear that the mystery of the Church is founded on the Revelation which God makes of himself and that, as the Fathers were to put it, jam ab Abel justo (16).

Salvation comes from faith, and the distance between the risen Lord and the believer who puts himself with his wretchedness "under the mantle of Christ's Justice" is infinite, abysmal, unplumbed. Man is not saved unless he covers himself with the Justice freely offered by God. This gratuitousness of Salvation is revealed and proposed by faith. This process is based on the Word. Yet we must guard against a naive, fundamentalist view of the transmission of the Word. God speaks, but how does he speak? The Word which gives birth to faith is the Word preached by a confessing community (Rom. 10,14-18). But what is the content of that preaching?

The Koran falls from heaven into the mind of the Prophet Mohammed in its precise, literal form as a "literary miracle", the transmission of the Book present in heaven from all eternity (17). It is quite otherwise with the Bible. This is composed, under the inspiration and guidance of the Spirit of God (Ruah, Pneuma) by the Holy People. It is this people which, supported by the God of the Covenant, works out the meaning of its "history", perceiving therein a design through which God reveals himself. God has taken the initiative. There is no antecedent merit to account for his move. But between him and the Holy Book comes the history of the People. That history forms so to speak a screen on which is slowly unwound a meaning rather than words. Scrutinising it, interpreting it, re-reading it, meditating on it - under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit - through its prophets, lawgivers, sages, compilers, chroniclers - the People of God acquires that perception of the deep meaning of its destiny, and through it that discovery of the God of the Covenant, which we call Scripture. The latter comes then at once, inseparably, from God whose initiative, whose high deeds, whose mirabilia it recounts, and from a People attentive to the Spirit. In other words, the People brings out in words the mystery which explains it, dwells in it, guides it - the mystery which concerns at once God and itself.

The same process is found again in the New Testament. We do not know the mystery of Jesus except through the reading of it made by the apostolic community. The New Testament never gives us bruta facta: always events read through the eyes of the apostolic faith. The latter - which is inseparable from the Event of the death and resurrection of the Lord which aroused it - precedes and conditions the reading, and it comes from the Spirit of God, as a free gift. But supported by this faith, the apostolic community, when it intends to transmit the deeds and even the message of Jesus, cannot abstract from its own conviction. It reads the acta et dicta of Jesus in the light of what it believes about Jesus. In his well-known lecture at Marburg on "the problem on the historical

Jesus" Ernst Käsemann says: "all history (Historie) becomes accessible to us only through tradition and comprehensible only through interpretation" and he goes on:

"Primitive christianity was clearly conscious of this. This alone explains why it did not compose the Gospels first of all as narratives, and why its own kerygma is superimposed on and masks the figure of Jesus ... It was not from carelessness or stupidity that the community blended its own message with that of its Lord, or even substituted the one for the other. It could not have done otherwise, given that it was concerned not with the reproduction of a memorable event but with the decision it had to make between faith and incredulity... Paradoxically we might say that it maintains historical continuity with Him who once appeared on earth in such a way as to let the greater part of the historical events of that earthly life be forgotten, and to replace them with its message." (18).

To preach then is to proclaim the Word as the primitive community lived and understood it in the Holy Spirit. The redactors who wrote down the traditions of their communities could not separate, in "what had been handed on to them", the Word of Jesus from the apostolic word. For them the latter supported and guaranteed the former. The Word preached - that which elicits faith - thus comes both from God (who alone has the initiative, since he has sent his Son, has brought about the events from which the meaning emerges, has given the Spirit who guarantees the truth of what emerges) and from the Church anchored in the apostolic tradition. The Word of God is then a Word to which the Church itself is no stranger. In "bringing to remembrance" (John 14,26) what God in Jesus Christ has said and done, the Church "makes (performs, produces) the Word". And it is this Word from which springs the faith which justifies (Rom. 3,22).

Such is the first stratum of the sacramentality of the Church. Fully "evangelised" by God - i.e. transformed by the Good News of Salvation (evangelion tou Theou) it is nevertheless she who, on the basis of what has been freely bestowed on her, gives out from her experience, which comes from God, a Word which "evangelises" for God, so that the salvific plan may reach out to the whole of humanity. Through the Word she becomes the servant of the eternal mysterion (cf. Rom. 16,25-6; 1 Cor. 2,7; Eph. 1,9; 3,3-9).

Earlier, describing preaching as St. Paul sees it in the epistle to the Romans, I said that the Church of today is charged to "serve" the Word in spreading it. What we have just seen shows how profound, and I would dare to say radical is this "service" in the present economy. Faith comes only from God, but the Word of God which elicits faith will pass through the Covenant. The revelation of a gratuitous Salvation gushes out like "a spring of living water", but after slowly infiltrating through the rock of human history. Again the tension I have pointed to!

2. The Church is reconciled by God, but also it is the Church which reconciles for God. It is striking that Paul straightaway describes his ministry as centred on reconciliation (2 Cor. 5,18; cf. Col. 1,20), in a passage entirely dominated by the certainty that only God reconciles - a synthesis of all his theology:

All this is from God who through Christ reconciled us to himself (καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ) and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; (τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς); that is, God was in Christ reconciling the world (κόσμου καταλλάσσων) to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation (τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς). So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us (δι' ἡμῶν). We beseech you on behalf of Christ to be reconciled to God (καταλλάγητε τῷ Θεῷ). For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ). (2 Cor. 5,18-21).

This passage is indisputably dense with meaning and its links with chapters five and three of Romans (Rom. 5,9-11; 3,21-27) are obvious (19). It presents reconciliation as the goal that God willed to attain in Christ. If he "identified" the latter "with sin", this was so that we might be clothed with "justice" by his benevolent initiative - our faults being no longer placed to our account. He reconciles humanity to himself by justifying it. Chapter three of Romans speaks of justification "by his grace as a gift" (3,24). This explanation cuts out any form of self-justification (cf. 4,2-10; 10,3-4; Gal. 2,16). It ascribes the whole of Salvation to God alone whose verdict is radically a verdict of grace. And it is clear that the Church exists only because it is the fruit of this reconciliation received by God.

Nevertheless in the total gratuitousness which makes her and remains the foundation of her being as "communion", the Church is charged to become the help, the servant through whom this reconciliation is proclaimed and made present. Through her ministers (who preach and preside at the sacraments) but more widely through the whole of her sacramental life, she ensures that men are brought under the "justice" of Christ and that their freedom is challenged, invited to say "yes" to the divine offer. In this service, this ministry she does not remain purely passive, as though she were simply the channel, the passage-way of a gift totally extraneous to her responsibility and in every way accomplished without her. Because making reconciliation actual in the world belongs to her obedience to the ministry which God has entrusted to her (cf. 1 Cor. 9,16-18) not so that she may acquire merit - "it is a duty" - but solely

so that she may serve his design, as the very logic of the Covenant demands. But to speak of obedience is at least to speak of a free decision, to submit to what is demanded.

Moreover it is the Church who preaches. In doing so she pledges the quality of her attachment to Christ. The hard words of Paul to the Galatians show that it is possible to preach "a different gospel", to "pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal. 1,6-9); And what would happen if the Church were to keep silent, to fold her arms? For the letter to the Philippians the "service" of the Word appears even as a "necessity" required for the advancement and the fidelity of the community itself (Phil. 1,22-26). Again it is the Church which by baptism seals the believer's entry into reconciliation (Col. 2,12-15). In certain cases she decides whether to give or to refuse this baptism (Acts 10,47-48). Much more, the community as such celebrates the Memorial of the Event in which reconciliation is effected. In the Holy Spirit it makes present that Event. For the Holy Spirit does no more than respond to its prayer, its epiclesis; in the liturgy he never imposes himself. Paul can say to the Corinthians that some ways of celebrating the Lord's Supper, for from immersing the assembly in the ministry of reconciliation, cast it back into condemnation "along with the world" (1 Cor. 11,27-34) (g).

Within this broad service of communion with God, calling for fraternal reconciliation, a more specific ecclesial activity already appears in those communities to which the New Testament witnesses. It can happen that a member cuts himself off from the community, or that the community feels constrained to exclude him. The question of excommunication arises very early, as does its opposite; that of the "reconciliation" of those who have been excluded but are now repentant (20). Here obviously the term reconciliation no longer has the very rich sense given to it in the texts I have cited (2 Cor. 5,18-21; Rom. 5,9-11; cf Eph. 2,16; Col. 1,20). It means re-entering the communion anew after having been separated from it. The Old Testament already knew some such exclusions, sometimes temporary. Some see the influence of these in the text of Matthew about fraternal correction (Mtt. 18,15-17) (h). Paul sometimes conforms to the most radical measures of Jewish legislation: "Drive out the wicked person from among you" (1 Cor. 2,6-11) (21). When it is a question of doctrine the pastoral epistles in their turn show themselves very severe.

The author of the first epistle to Timothy says of two disciples who have lost the faith, "I have delivered (them) to Satan" (1 Tim. 1,20) which recalls the advice given by Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 5,5). Exegetes interpret this formula as signifying expulsion from the community (22). The second Joannine letter demands that there should be no bond of communion with one who carries false doctrine (2 John 1,10) and the third letter deplores Diotrephes doing the same with the disciples of the Elder (3 John 1,9-10) (23).

It is clear then that very often the Church claims for itself - and is sure that it is faithful to its Lord and its vocation in claiming -

a certain margin of authority as regards the maintaining of the baptised in the community of reconciliation. Excommunication is a grave decision, even if it does not pre-judge the eternal Salvation of the person concerned and is seen primarily as medicinal (24). For it is the Spirit himself who, at baptism, first makes the believer a member of the community. Conversely, the fact of re-integrating him, thereby signifying God's pardon, is full of implications. The community does what it did not do at his baptism - it passes judgement on the state of the guilty person, on the genuineness of his repentance. Here is a certain, indeed profound, intrusion into the field of reconciliation.

The tangled development of penitential legislation and rites in the first centuries shows the profound implications of this role of the ecclesial community and of those responsible within it in reconciling both the lapsi and sinners in the wider sense. Tradition considered it as a close combination of judgement, healing and pardon, the source of which is Christ's Pasch. The Church has received from its Lord the charge of putting "outside its communion", which is that of the body of Christ, thus depriving those concerned of a whole range of means of grace, and then of correcting and restoring to that communion those who in its judgement should pass through penance, that is through that mysterious blend of exigency and triumphant mercy which marks the attitude of the God of faith (25).

3. The Church is gathered by God, but it also gathers for God. it proclaims the Gospel, reconciliation, with the effect of making actual the purpose which the Joannine gospel gives as that of the death of Jesus: "to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad" (John 11,52). Specialists emphasise the solemn tone the author gives to this phrase, making the High Priest a prophet (11,51) (i).

Fundamentally the Church is a gathering so close and confined that it forms a communion, a koinônia (26). The Joannine literature and the epistle to the Ephesians, undoubtedly belonging to the same milieu - the Church of Ephesus meeting-place of several apostolic heritages (27) - enable us to grasp the authentic nature of this koinônia. It is not just some vague gift of God. It is a gift embracing two gratuitous gifts of God: the gratuitousness of the gift of creation recaptured in the unfathomable gratuitousness of the Father's mercy.

Indeed, the epistle to the Ephesians connects unity, the heart of the ecclesial reality, with the "mystery hidden for ages in God" which concerns the entire universe. (Eph. 1,10; 3,9; cf. Col. 1,26-27; Rom. 16? 25-26; 1 Cor. 2,7-9). It makes this the fulfilment of God's eternal plan and as such absolutely gratuitous. The famous affirmation "... by grace you have been saved ... and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" (2,8) holds for the inseparably collective and personal

form of Salvation, the reverse of division and hostility (2,14-15) which is the access of all in one Spirit to the Father (2,18), constituting one body (2,16), one Holy Temple, one dwelling-place of God (2,20-22), one household of God (2,19). None but God and God alone gathers broken humanity in Christ Jesus.

The Joannine literature makes radical this conviction which is the foundation of faith. It sees the "communion" (koinōnia) between Christians as locked in the very mystery of the living God, of which creatures have no grasp. For "our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1,3) and this koinōnia of the Father and the Son is that same which brings all Salvation. Chapter 17 of the Joannine gospel goes so far as to say that unity between Christians belongs to the unity of Father and Son (John 17,21-23). The absolute character of the gift of grace can be explained only by the gratuitousness of the Father's Agapè. In the light of it, many verses of the Joannine texts become singularly clear and link up with the great Pauline statements:

"God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through him. He who believes in him is not condemned ..." (John 3,16-18, cf. 12,44-47), "... not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation of our sins" (1 John 4,10; cf. 4,19).

Gathered by the Spirit of the Lord and him alone, the Church yet knows herself to be charged to intervene in this gathering of humanity ἐν Χριστῷ. In the present economy, there is nothing undesigned about this intervention. It has an integral part, God-given, in making present the eternal mysterion.

We find a clear indication in Ephesians which describes in this way the responsibility of each believer towards the gift of Christ which he bears. Christ himself "joins and knits together be every joint" (4,16) and yet it belongs to the faithful to "maintain the unity of the Spirit (την ἐνότητα τοῦ Πνεύματος) in the bond of peace" (4,3). If each one must use the gift he has received, he must do it in such fashion that the entire Body of Christ may attain "to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4,11-13). The always gratuitous action of God the Father, Son and Spirit (4,4-6), which explains the existence of ministries (4,7-13), does not dispense the community from incessant effort against falling into the toils of division (cf. 4,2) or doctrinal aberration (cf. 4,14).

Paul's warnings on the subject of charisms (Rom. 12,6-8; 1 Cor. 12,1; 14,25) and his stress on fraternal charity also echo the same truth.

If love is the "still more excellent way" (1 Cor. 12,31) to exercise all gifts, this is because it reflects the love of God and is the cement of fraternal unity. For God wills "that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another". Now all "are the Body of Christ and individually members of it" (12,25-27).

The community's fidelity to the gift it has received causes the koinōnia to be realised from day to day. Without it, the koinōnia would be a gift offered to believers but not truly accepted by them.

The Joannine gospel emphasises that this acceptance has very grave consequences, which overflow into the community itself. It puts twice into the mouth of Jesus the request: "that they may be one ... that they become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou has sent me and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me" (17,21-23). Koinōnia lived out (28) becomes not only a proclamation of God's saving action but the demonstrative proof of its truth. On this plane it does more than speak the Word: it is the Word in fulfilment. It also allows the ecclesial assembly to spread, with itself as starting-point. To be sure the faith of those who, thanks to the community, are to believe in Christ (cf. John 17,20) will come from God and only from God (cf. 6,37). It is he who, according to the remarkable expression of Acts (Acts 2,47) which concludes one of the summaries of the first apostolic koinōnia "(adds) to their number day by day those who (are thus) being saved". Yet without the Church's witness, would the Spirit - which challenges, moves hearts, enlightens minds - have the material, the human reality which occasions, supports, confirms his intervention: a reality adapted to the listeners because it harmonises with their expectations?

This dialectic is found pre-eminently in the demands of truth which the New Testament, through Paul, connects with the fructification of the Eucharist. The latter has as its chief fruit the deepening of community being. In the reception of the eucharistic body the koinōnia asserts itself. But when a community "assembles" itself for the Eucharist - it is the verb which Paul uses (1 Cor. 11, 17.18.29.33.34, συνερχομένων ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό - it takes by itself the initiative of manifesting the "communion" which comes to it from God and also of tightening it by asking the Holy Spirit to give it the body of Christ. For it is the community that celebrates, not God. Moreover, the harsh words of Paul to the Corinthians show that the dispositions of the celebrating community are not without effect on the fruit to be expected from its liturgy: it can even sign its own condemnation (11,29-34). Augustine comments in these terms:

If then you are the Body of Christ and its members, it is your own mystery which lies on the Lord's table; you receive your own mystery, you respond "Amen" to what you are, and that response marks your adherence. You hear "the body of Christ"; you answer "Amen". Then be a member of the Body of Christ, so that your Amen may be true (29).

The effect of grace, which here is nothing other than koinōnia in the one body of Christ, has nothing of the automatic or magical about it.

It acts on a community wishing to be faithful and loyal to what it has become by God's initiative, and therefore living in charity its coming-together. The Spirit who gathers it wants from the community a response to his action. He does not gather together a community which divides itself (30).

Ministries thus appear as one of the key elements of the reality of the New Covenant in this world. They are given to the Church so that it may remain the People of God "gathered together" by the Spirit. Present dogmatic reflection, in trying to understand them, perhaps neglects unduly their deep affinities with the miscellaneous functions which, according to the New Testament, made possible not only the setting-up but also the life of the first christian communities (31).

Indeed, the New Testament presents two situations. There is that of the communities founded by an apostle or one of his disciples, who then set out to preach the Gospel elsewhere. This is clear in the ministry of Paul. Then there are - very soon it seems - (32) groups of converts who have moved away, taking with them their faith and diffusing it more by the contagion of witness in a very Joannine way than by mission ad extra (33). In both cases we find two types of "ministerial" intervention. The first is that we have already dealt with at length - the apostle or preacher proclaiming the Word, which elicits the adherence of faith. Of this fundamental ministry which confronts the "believer" with the absolute gratuitousness of Salvation by inserting him in the koinōnia of Christ, I would say that it is the ministry of "justifying faith" (Eph. 2,8). The second type of ministry is different. It aims to maintain the community in fidelity to this state of koinōnia and to make it grow therein. I would call this the ministry of preserving and maintaining in fidelity, in other words of episcopè. If we re-read the pastoral epistles we shall find that they bear above all on the state of communion to be kept up and deepened. They are thus concerned with episcopè rather than with kerygmatic proclamation.

This distinction seems to me of capital importance. It leads to a precision which is able to throw light at the end of this slow process, on all our search. It has long been noted that the apostolic preaching is addressed to the whole of humanity ("all nations", Mtt. 28,19; Acts 1,8) and that it seeks the adherence of the hearer to God himself in the obedience of faith (34). Human authorities, even those of the Church, do not enter in here.- The hearer does not believe in even the preacher: he accepts his message and believes in God whom he announces. No human authority could command faith. Let us be even more radical: the Church's task or function (munus) is to proclaim the Word, but it has no power (potestas) over the act of faith. The Church serves the Word by expressing it, articulating it, reflecting in it the experience which the Spirit has granted her of living in the wake of the Pentecost event - of which the initiative is God's alone; but she has no power over the effect the Word has in the believer (35). On that plane, which is the fundamental

one, the Church is the simply servant confining herself to presenting to men the means which God himself has placed in her hand.

But it has always been noted that on the other plane, when we are dealing with the community as such, already bound together by faith and baptism, ministers are endowed with a certain power (potestas) and hence a certain compelling force not over the faith as such but over life-lived-in conformity-with-the-faith. If in celebrating the sacraments, especially the eucharist, the minister is only the icon of Christ, a pure transparency, his part in the internal administration of the community allows him a wide margin of initiative. I have already established this in looking at the question of excommunication but other areas of church life are involved here. From New Testament times onwards, those responsible for the community have in fact been able to demand that the faithful obey their injunctions. Now the word obey here has no longer the same connotation it had when we spoke of the obedience of faith. Here we are concerned with submission to a command, to a head. Besides the Greek language uses another term, not ὑπακούω (to be all ears) as in the case of faith, but ὑποτάγῃ as when describing the attitude of a child to its parents, or of a citizen towards the head of state (36).

This obedience to the decisions of those responsible in the community comes to be conceived and presented as an integral part of Christian fidelity as such. Something of the potestas which Christ, Head and Lord, it to possess (because he is, in the Spirit, at once the author and the source) passes to the minister as a derivative. The minister is thus enabled to discern and to decide - in accordance with his own judgement enlightened by the Spirit and constantly compared with the Word and with the intuitions of the sensus fidelium - what the community and its members ought to do and to avoid in order to be faithful. And if in many cases it is a question of simple counsels (thus 1 Cor. 7,6.12.40) in others the order is imperative (1 Cor. 5, 5.11; 10,25-28; 11,10; 14,34-35; 2 Cor. 6,14; 2 Thess. 3,6; 1 Tim. 2,8-12; 2 Tim. 4,1-2; Tit. 3,1; Heb. 13,17; 1 Pet. 3,1-3; etc.,). Certain expressions stand out: "...we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 3,6); "I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men" (1 Tim. 2,12). Here we are in the realm of the power of "binding and loosing" (cf. Mtt. 16,19; 18,18).

Indwelt by the power of the Risen Lord and his Spirit, the Church has thus received (not given herself) the task - matched by the power to accomplish it duly - of collaborating actively in her own maintenance in the gift of God. Through the "articulations" of her ministries (Eph. 4,16) and above all the fidelity of all the baptised, she keeps herself in her wholly gratuitous koinōnia of grace. She does not live in perpetual expectation of God's dictates. The Spirit has given her the mandate and grace to perceive by herself what he wills and to give it to herself.

.../...

This shows her nature as Spouse, as it shows respect for re-created human liberty.

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At the end of this inquiry, I would like to enunciate a truth which I have developed at length elsewhere (37). The assumption of the human into the service of grace is an important element in the character of grace and in the revelation of it. I have said repeatedly that the Church of God is an absolute gift, the purely gratuitous fruit of God's Agapè. At the heart of the gift is the supreme generosity of God: he saves his "image" (humanity) by making it capable of being "justified by Him" and "associated with Him". He redeems it by immersing it in a covenant where it is respected, loved not as a slave but as a Spouse. It does not justify itself; however because of the way in which it is "justified" it can act according to the "justice" which God bestows on it by the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

J.M.R. Tillard, O.P.

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NOTES

- (1) See Vincenz PFLING "Beyond an Old Polemic: sola fide, opus operatum in Origins 8, 1979, 478-490; ID., Eining in der Rechtfertigungslehre der Confessio Augustana (153) und die Stellungnahme der Katholische Kontroverstheologie Zwischen 1530 und 1535, Wiesbaden 1970; O.H.PESCH, Die Theologie der Rechtfertigung bei Martin Luther und Thomas von Aquin, Mainz 1967. See also in the U.S.A. Lutheran-Catholic document.
- (2) Discussion with those who only allow believers' baptism, revived in the Lima document (B.E.I'), shows that for them the 'yes' of personal faith plays so essential a part that without it there is neither baptism proper nor even a christian act preparing for baptism. See the fine book by J.J.Allmen "Pastorale due Baptême, Paris 1978, (written by a Protestant theologian) and the classical work of O.Cullman Le baptême des enfants et la doctrine biblique du baptême, Neuchâtel, Paris 1948.
- (3) On the nation of teleiôsis, besides the classing article by Delling in TWNT, T.XIII, 1969, 50-88, read especially C.H.Fodd's little book According to the Scriptures which exists in several editions.
- (4) This is well shown by Jean LHOUB, La Morale de L'Alliance coll. Cahiers de la Revue Biblique No.5, Paris 1966, especially pp. 19-20, 42-51. The author first underlines strongly "the absolute priority of the gifts of Yahwe" and the radically unilateral character of the initiative

"on which Israel has no hold" because "it was not Israel that discovered Yahwe or gave itself for God: it was Yahwe who first came down to Israel" (p.15). Nothing then was owing to Israel, all is pure grace. But the author shows later how, by the mere fact that he institutes the Covenant and demands a recover from Israel, Yahwe promotes Israel's moral grandeur(p. 20). He writes : "the chosen people grasp little by little that this present life is more than the static product, acquired once for all, of a past event; it is that event continued, but this time with the cooperation of Israel. (p.42).

- (5) On this point see Markus BARTH, Ephesians: I-II New York, 1974, 184-185; N. HUGEDE, L'Épître aux Ephésiens, Geneve 1973, P. RENOIT, "Corps, Tel Pler ôme dans les Épîtres de la captivité, "Le corps dan le theologie de Paul selon J.A.T. Robinson", in Exégèse et Theologie, T.2 Paris 1966, 107-153, 154-162, 581-585; L. CERFAUX, La theologie de L'Eglise sui vant Saint Paul, nouvel edition, coll. Unam Sanctam 54, Paris 1965, 223, 140, 175-179; II Le christ dans la théologie de saint Paul, Paris 1954, 264-266, 320 322.
- (6) This is especially emphasised by Pere RENOIT in his study on the Eucharist "Les recitsde l'institution et leur Portée , in Exégèse et Theologie T.I. Paris 1961, 210-239. esp. 234, 236.

- (7) J.A.T. POPIEWSKI, The Body, a Study of Pauline Theology, London 1952.
- (8) Hence the development of the expression corpus mysticum
- (9) This is in L. CERFAUX, Le Theologie de l'Eglise... 235-236.
- (10) The difference between hōs and kathōs, which I translate by "as" is important here. Hōs normally indicates a likeness founded on imitation, an external resemblance, while kathōs indicates a likeness coming from a relationship of causality or origin between the two things in question.
- (11) I have relied here only on the Pauline idea of the Body of Christ. But from other points of view Joannine theodgy (gospel and epistles) shows the same relationship between Christ who gives the gift and the community which diffuses it.
- (12) On the authenticity of this see especially Markus BARTH, Op.cit. There is an excellent reflection on this theme in Daniel VON ALLMEN, La Famille de Dieu, Fribourg 1981, 238-256.
- (13) This theme has been studied above all by Karl DELAHAYE, "Ecclesia Mater chez les Pères des trois premiers siècles" coll. Unam Sanctam 46, Paris 1964. CERFAUX shows how even if in Galatians IV,26 Paul does not explicitly mention the Church, the idea is there; (op.cit. 292 sqq). See also the important study of E. LANNE, "Eglise soeur et Eglise mère dans le vocabulaire de l'Eglise ancienne", in Communio Sanctorum: mélanges offertes à Jean-Jacques von Allmen, Genève 1982, 86-97.
- (14) It will be seen that my position is not the scarcely acceptable one of the Church as "prolonged Incarnation". See Y. CONGAR "Dogme Christologique et Ecclesiologie: vérités et limites d'un parallèle" in Sainte Eglise, coll. Unam Sanctam 41, Paris 1963, 69-104.

- (15) On merit de congruo and de condigno see especially Summa Th. I. II ac Qu. 114 art 3.
- (16) See Y. Congar, "Ecclesia ab Abel" in H. ELFERS and F. HOFMANN, Abhandlungen über Theologie und Kirche (Feste K Adam) Dusseldorf 1952, 79-108. John Chrysostom, in an oft-quoted passage, writes: "What should we understand by the one body (of Christ)? The faithful spread throughout the whole universe, those who were and those who will be - even those who lived before Christ and whose lives also belonged to this Body (In. Ephes. Hom. X.1)
- (17) Koran LXXXV 22; F. Louis MASSIGNON, Situation de l'Islam, Paris 1939, 9
- (18) In Ernst KASEMANN, Essais exegetiques, Neuchatel. Paris 1972 148, 149 and 150
- (19) But it will be noted that the idea of reconciliation does not appear in chap. III. The most explicit parallel is V, 9-11.
- (20) The record of the first centuries will be found in Heinrich KARPP, La Penitence. Textes et Commentaires des origines de l'ordre penitential dans l'Eglise ancienne, version françoise for A. SCHNEIDER, W. RORDORF, P. PARTHEL, Neuchatel 1970. See also J. PALMER, Sacraments and Forgiveness, History and Doctrinal Development of Penance, Extreme Unction and Indulgences, Coll. Sources of Christian Theology 2 London 1960
- (21) The punishment has been inflicted on the believer by the community ("the many" of the Qumran). Many exegetes think Paul is pleading for a re-instatement in the community.
- (22) Thus, C. SPICQ, Les Epitres Pastorales, coll. Etudes Bibliques 44, Paris 1947, 50-51; C. K. BARRETT, A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, London 1968, 125-127

- (23) On this question see the comments of Raymond BROWN, The Community of the Beloved Disciple, New York 1979, 10. The Epistles of John, New York 1982.
- (24) See C. SPICQ, loc.cit., C.K.BARRETT, loc. cit.
- (25) See my article J.M.R.TILLARD, "La Penitence sacramentelle, une theologie qui se cherche" Studia Moralia 1983.
- (26) On the idea of Koinonia see J.HAINZ Koinonie, Kirche als Gemeinschaft bei Paulus Dusseldorf, 1983; G. PANIKKAR, Koinonia in the New Testament, coll.Analecta Biblica 85, Rome 1979; Sckylar BROWN, "Koinonia as the basis of the New Testament Ecclesiology" in "One in Christ" 12, 1976, 157-167 J.M.MCDERMOTT, "The Biblical Doctrine of Koinonia in Biblische Zeitschrift 19,1975; J.M.R.TILLARD " KOINONIA, communaute et communion" in Dict. de Spir. 1976.
- (27) See Raymond E.BROWN, The Community of the Beloved Disciple, 171-182; Raymond E.BROWN and John P.MEIER, Antioch and Rome New York 1983, 214
- (28) But the term koinonia is not used here. Exegetes emphasise that the unity in question is ecclesial unity incarnated in a community life.
- (29) Sermo 272, PL 38, 1105
- (30) It would be interesting to show how the Anglican theories called "receptionist", expressed by Cranmer or Jewell, are in their way in line with what I am saying here.
- (31) A careful exposition will be found in A.LEMAIRE, Les Ministères aux origines de l'Eglise, coll Lectis divina, 68 Paris 1971, J. DELORME, Le Ministère and les ministères selon le nouveau Testament, Paris 1974, P.GRELOT, Eglise et ministère, Paris 1983.
- (32) This is what is brought out in the book by Raymond E. BROWN and John P.MEIER, Antioch and Rome.
- (33) The view of P. Jacquemont, J.P.Jossua and B Quelquejeu, Le Temps de la patience, Paris 1976 seems to me more and more to touch on an essential point.

- (34) See J.M.R.TILLARD, "Obeissance" in Dict. de Spiritualité
- (35) See Y.CONGAR "Sur la trilogie: Prophète - Roi - Prêtre in R.S.P.T. 67, 1983, 97-115
- (36) See J.M.R.TILLARD "Obeissance", where I have studied the distinction between the obedience of listening to God and the obedience of submission.
- (37) J.M.R.TILLARD, "Qu'est-ce qu l'Eglise de Dieu" which will appear in Proche-Orient Chretien, 1984

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

- (a) See Ernst HAENCHEN, The acts of the Apostles, Engl.tr. London 1971, 208, 251, 525. There is a beautiful passage in the first homily of John Chrysostom on the beginning of Acts (French text in J. BAREILLE, Oeuvres complètes de Saint Jean Chrysostome, T.V, Paris 1866, 101-103):-

"Now I wish to speak to the newly enlightened. I address as 'newly enlightened' those who have been so for two, three or ten days, and also those who have already been so for over a year and even longer; this title fits all of them. Let us zealously busy ourselves with our souls and we will have the right, even after ten years, to claim this title as having preserved the youthfulness with which we were clothed at baptism. It is not time that makes someone 'newly enlightened', it is purity of life. It is easy, unless one is on one's guard, to lose the right to this title after only two days. I will give you an example of this by telling you how someone newly enlightened lost this honour and this grace in two days. I give this as an example so that, warned by this fall, you may work to ensure your own salvation. For there are not only the faithful who remain upright; there are those who have fallen, and remembering them should help to heal you and reform you. Simon Magus was converted; after his baptism he joined himself to Philip, seeing his miracles. But a few days later he returned to his former perversity and wished to buy his salvation for a sum of money. What was Peter's answer to this newly enlightened man: "I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. Pray therefore to the Lord that the intent of your heart may be forgiven you" (Acts VIII, 22-3). He had hardly begun his rise and at once he had a most deplorable fall. If it is easy to fall after two days and to lose the name and the grace of 'newly enlightened', it is equally easy to preserve this beautiful name, this precious privilege, for ten years, for twenty years, to our very last breath. We have Paul himself as a witness of this; in his old age he shone with even greater brilliance. For this is not a youthfulness dependent on our nature; these two things depend upon our will; it is in our power to grow old or to preserve our youthfulness... Do you want to understand how, even after a very long time, one can still be

'newly enlightened'? Listen to what Paul says to men who were like this long before: 'You shine among them as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life' to my glory (Phil. II,15-16). You have stripped yourselves of your tattered old garments, you have received anointing with spiritual balm, you have recovered full liberty; May no one ever return hereafter to his former slavery. This is a war, a combat, you have to sustain ... See how good is the One who leads us in our struggle. He is not concerned with our past deeds, but with what we do after baptism; of this he will require an account from us. When you were still slaves you had an infinite number to accuse you -- conscience, your sins, all the demons. Nevertheless, says the Saviour, none of these provoked me against you; I did not think you unworthy of my struggles, and I have given you entry to the arena, not because of your merits but because of my mercy. Stay here, then, and fight; it is time for the race, the contest, the wrestling. Do this with a set plan and goal for the great day."

- (b) See H. HAENCHEN, op.cit., 687, with reference to Luke III,8.
- (c) This is happily expressed in the text of Chrysostom quoted above. See also Augustine, Sermo 231,3: 62-85; 5:165-9. (French translation S. POQUE, Sermons sur la Pâque, SC 116, Paris 1966, 249-253, 259): "Let us hear the words of the Apostle: 'If you have been raised with Christ...' When did we rise, we who are not yet dead? What did the Apostle mean by saying, 'If you have been raised with Christ'? Could he himself have risen if he had not first died? Now the Apostle was speaking to the living, to people who had not yet died. How, then, were they already risen? What does it mean? See what he says:- 'If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on this earth. For you have died'. It is the Apostle that says it, not I. But what he says is true, and so I say it also... Why do I say it also? 'I believed and so I have spoken'. If we live well we are dead and risen. Whoever continues to live an evil life is neither dead nor risen. Indeed one who lives an evil life is not living at all. He has to die in order not to die. What does it mean, to die in order not to die? That he must change in order to not be condemned. 'If you have been raised by Christ', again I repeat the Apostle's words, 'seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are on this earth. For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.' Such are the Apostle's words. To one who is not

yet dead, I say 'Die'; to one who continues to live an evil life, I say 'Change'. For someone who was living an evil life but has now given up that evil life, such a one is dead. If he lives well he is risen... So now that we are living in this perishable flesh, we die with Christ by changing our life. We live with Christ by loving justice. We will not find happiness except by going towards Him, who came to us, except then by beginning to live with him who dies for us."

- (d) The text from Chrysostom quoted above continues: "Listen to one characteristic of Paul; hardly had he come up from the font after receiving baptism than he marched to the fray, preaching that Jesus is the Son of God and thus confounding the Jews from the very moment of his conversion. You cannot preach? You are unable to dispense the word of teaching? Very well, teach by your works, your conduct, the splendour of your actions. Christ says, 'Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven' (Matth. V,16). You cannot confound the Jews by what you say? Then so act that you confound them by your behaviour; so act that by your changed ways the very Greeks may be moved. When they see you — once impure, wicked, indifferent corrupt — change all of a sudden and confirming by your change of behaviour this change of which grace is the principle, will they not be confounded and say what the Jews once said of the blind man: 'Is it he? Is it not he? Is it he?'"
- (e) See L. CERFAUX, Le chrétien dans la théologie paulinienne, coll. Lectio Divina 33, Paris 1962, 119-136. See also R. BULTMANN, Jésus, mythologie et démythologisation, Paris 1968, 49-68 ("the hour of decision", "the hour which manifests whether he is one of the elect or the rejected", "it is the last hour").
- (f) See Peter DAVIDS, Commentary of James, Grand Rapids 1982, 47-51, 120-134: "Even if James assumed the value and validity of the law, he is not a legalist. He never argues that the essence of Christianity is anything other than a commitment to God in Christ or a reception of grace from God. The regeneration of the Christian comes through God's action in his word (1:18). Salvation comes through the 'implanted word' which must be 'received in meekness' (1:21). God gives grace to the repentant (4:6). None of these sentiments is at all at variance with Paul." (p.50), (...) "For Paul the ἔργα he is against are always ἔργα νόμου, either explicitly stated or clearly intended in the context. These are never moral descriptions, but rather ceremonial rites added to the work of Christ. In James ἔργα are always moral deeds, especially acts of charity, the type of things Paul would command people to do (e.g. Gal. 6:6, 10), for they flow naturally from

true faith. Thus there is no essential conflict between Paul and James at this level." (p.50-51), "In summary, then, James believes that through a gracious act of God one becomes a Christian. One's response to this act is repentance and faith from one's entire being. This commitment ought to be expressed through appropriate moral action, the fruit of the renewed life. The authoritative guide to the character of this action is the law. Particularly as interpreted by and in accordance with the sayings of Jesus. An intellectual faith which lacks such fruit is not salvific; it is an abomination showing a lack of endurance and a double mind." (p.51), (...) "James states that Abraham's faith is perfected (ἔτελειώθη, doubtless meaning 'is brought to maturity' and thus indicating the unfinished state of faith without works) through his works (ἐκ τῶν ἔργων). Here, then, is a balanced statement. James wishes to reject neither faith nor works. Both are individually important. Yet for the person to receive God's declaration that he is righteous (2:21 presents the goal in ἐδικαιώθη) they must mix together. Faith assists works, works perfect faith (notice that perfecting, as in 1:4, 15, not completing, is in view)." (p.128).

See also Sophie LAWS, A Commentary on the Epistle of James, London 1980, 134: "The relation between Abraham's faith and his works is not properly one of consequence, demonstration or confirmation, all of which terms assume a measure of distinction between the two: for James they go together in a necessary unity, faith co-operated with his works, and by works faith was made complete."

- (g) See E. KAESMANN, Essays on New Testament Themes, Coll. Studies in Biblical Theology, 41, 1964, 108-135 (118-126); C.K. BARRETT, A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, London 1971, 272-277.
- (h) See K. STENDHAL, The School of St. Matthew, New York 1954, 138-9. Also DUPONT-SOMMER, Les écrits esséniens découverts près de la Mer Morte, Paris 1960, pp. 100, 163-4.
- (i) So in Raymond E. BROWN, The Gospel according to John I-XII, Coll. The Anchor Bible, New York 1966, pp. 439-440, 441-444
