

GRAYMOOR DRAFT

1. The beginning and end of the Gospel is the free grace of God: the loving mercy of the Creator who desired the salvation of the world He had made; the all-sufficient self-giving of the incarnate Son, whose death and resurrection accomplished God's saving purposes decisively for the whole human race; and the unfailing presence of the Paraclete who, by evoking faith, incorporates us into the life of Christ as a community of his brothers and sisters.

2. The doctrine of salvation has in the past been a cause of contention between Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Disagreements, focussing on the notion of "justification", had already surfaced in the Church of the later Middle Ages, and in the sixteenth century became a central matter of dispute between Roman Catholics and continental reformers. Though the matter played a less crucial role in the English Reformation, the Church of England adopted the moderate Lutheran formulations of the Augsburg and Wurtemberg Confessions. The Decree on Justification of the Council of Trent was not directed against the Anglican formularies, which had not yet been compiled, but the Church of England came later to understand that decree as a repudiation of its position. Since then various debates, both on the narrower issue of justification and on the wider issue of salvation, have been pursued also within each of the divided Communions. It is a question of such centrality to Christian faith that it cannot be ignored if full reconciliation between our two Churches is to be achieved.

3. However, even in the sixteenth century there was much more that was a matter of agreement on this subject than of disagreement. Above all it was

generally agreed that the heart of the Gospel, the act of God in bringing salvation to the human race and summoning individuals into a community to serve him, is due solely to the mercy and grace of God himself, mediated and manifested through Jesus Christ in his ministry, atoning death and rising again. It was also no matter of dispute that God's grace evoked a free human response of faith which took effect not only in the life of the individual but also in the corporate life of the Church. However, the difficulties arose in explaining how divine grace related to human response, and these difficulties were compounded by a framework of discussion that concentrated onesidedly upon the individual.

4. One difficulty concerned the bearing of good works on salvation.

Reformation theologians understood the Catholic emphasis on the value of good works and religious practices and ceremonies to imply that justification in some degree depended upon them in a way that compromised the sovereignty of God's grace. Catholics, on the other hand, saw the Reformation's understanding of justification as implying that God's judgement was arbitrary and that human actions were worthless. This, in their judgement, led to the negation of human freedom and responsibility, and to the denial that works, though supernaturally inspired, deserved any reward.

5. A further difficulty concerned the strict use of the word that is variously translated as 'righteousness', 'justice' or 'justification'. In their fear that justification might seem to depend upon entitlement arising from good works, Reformation theologians laid great emphasis on the imputation to humanity of the righteousness of Christ. By this they meant that, on account of the obedience of Christ and the merits of his passion, God declared the unrighteous to be accepted before him. Catholics on the other hand took them to be saying that imputed righteousness was a legal fiction, that is, a merely nominal righteousness that remained only external in the believer. This, they complained, left the essential sinfulness of the individual unchanged, and excluded the habitual and actual righteousness forged in the inner being of the regenerate person by the indwelling Spirit.

6. A third difficulty concerned the understanding of the faith through which we are justified. Reformation theologians took this faith in Christ and his merits to entail the individual's confidence in his or her own final salvation. Catholics suspected that this Protestant emphasis on assurance, when linked with an absolute doctrine of divine predestination, encouraged an antinomian neglect of the need for justification to issue in holiness. They also thought that this confused faith with a psychological state and would have the effect of undermining hope in God rather than supporting it. Protestants for their

1

These three terms render different aspects of the Greek noun dikaiosune. In Scriptural usage the meaning of the verb dikaion is 'to pronounce righteous'. In patristic and subsequent usage iustificare had the wider meaning 'to make righteous'. Reformation theologians used the term 'justification' in the narrower sense; Catholic theologians, and notably the Council of Trent, retained the broader usage.

part suspected that Catholics, through lack of confidence in Christ's work and over-reliance on human efforts, had lapsed into scrupulosity and lost Christian hope and assurance. While the break in communion encouraged each side to produce caricatures of the other's beliefs, there were also extremists among both the Catholics and Protestants whose words and actions seemed to confirm the anxieties of their opponents.

7. Although the sixteenth century disagreements centred largely on the relationship of faith, righteousness and good works to the salvation of the individual, they also presuppose different understandings of the role of the Church that were not sufficiently addressed at that time. The Church is inevitably connected with the doctrine of salvation. Already in the Old Testament God displayed his loving kindness by calling to himself a Covenant people; individuals had their standing before God by being faithful members of that people. In Christian thought, too, our new existence before God is a standing in community, although not a community based on race or nation; it is not an exclusively individual relation to God. To be accepted by God is, whether explicitly or implicitly, to be part of the community that is finally accepted in Christ, the renewed humankind. Of this community the Church is a sign and foretaste, representing it, though imperfectly and incompletely; and it serves the purpose of God as a steward and instrument, by proclaiming the Good News of Salvation in Christ to those who have yet to hear it.

SALVATION AND FAITH

8. When we confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, we proclaim our certitude that God's purpose for creation and salvation is realised in the one whom the Father sent, who redeemed us by his blood and who gives the Holy Spirit. This wholly unmerited love of God for his creatures is expressed in the language of grace. Grace does not only speak of the once-for-all death and resurrection of Christ, but also of God's continuing work on our behalf, when he calls us to respond to his love, forgiving our sins and conforming us to the image of his Son. Even this ability to respond to God's initiative is itself a gift of grace, though it is a truly human, personal response. It is through grace that God's new creation is realised. Salvation is the gift of grace; it is by faith that it is appropriated. The content of this saving faith may be summed up in the conviction of the whole Christian tradition, solus Christus.

9. The gracious action of God in Christ is revealed to us in the gospel. The gospel's proclamation of the finality of Christ's atoning work, the certainty of God's promise of eternal life, and the gift and pledge of the Holy Spirit to every believer, brings the Christian the assurance of salvation. God's gracious will for us includes the confidence that we have the gift of eternal life as children of God (1 John 5:13; Romans 8: 15,16). Our response must be from our whole being. Faith includes an assent to the central truth of the Gospel. It also involves commitment of our will to God in repentance and obedience to his call, otherwise it remains a dead faith. Living faith is inseparable from love and issues in good works. Christian assurance does not in any way remove the Christian's responsibility to work out his salvation in

fear and trembling. Because the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts, this is not a presumptuous confidence. It is always founded upon God's unfailing faithfulness and not upon the measure of our response.

10. God gives the faithful all that is needed for their salvation. This is to believers a matter of absolute certitude. The word of Christ and his sacraments give us this assurance. However grave our sins may be, we are sure that God is always ready to forgive and has already provided the way. Even though the Christian tradition is dominated by the certitude of the infinite mercy of God, who gave his Son for us, there is also in the Gospel itself a warning note: "Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord', will enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 7:21). Christians may never presume on the gift of final perseverance, yet should live their lives with a sure confidence in God. Because of what God has revealed of his ultimate purpose in Christ Jesus, faith and hope are inseparable.

SALVATION AND JUSTIFICATION

11. Faith in Jesus Christ comes to fruition in the sacrament of baptism. It is here that, confessing Christ together with the whole Church, we enter into communion with his death and resurrection. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we are delivered from our previous existence and raised to a new life, to be consummated when we shall be transformed into the Son's likeness. This salvation includes our sharing in the efficacy of Christ's once-for-all atoning death and resurrection, our sharing now in the new life of the Spirit and our future sharing in the transforming vision of God the Father. Thus Scripture speaks of God's eternal will realised in the historic sacrifice of Christ, of God's decisive act in reconciling each sinner who believes, of our initial response to the Gospel. It also speaks of the abiding presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the Church, of his present gifts of grace, of our continuing life and growth in this grace. Furthermore it speaks of our entry with all the saints into our final inheritance, of our vision of God face to face, of our participation in the joy of the final resurrection.

12. In order to describe this transcendent richness of salvation, the New Testament does not restrict itself to one form of terminology. Rather, it employs a diversity of expression. [run on]

Though some forms employed are of more fundamental importance than others, there is no single all-embracing term or concept; they complement one another. The concept of salvation (soteria), probably the most comprehensive, has the broad meaning of the deliverance of human beings from evil and their restoration (e.g. Luke 1:77; John 3:17). The idea of reconciliation and forgiveness stresses the restoration of broken relationships (e.g. 2 Cor. 5:18; Eph. 2: 13-18; 4:32). The language of expiation or atonement (hilasmos) is drawn from the context of sacrifice and denotes the putting away of sin (e.g. Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10). To speak of redemption or liberation is to speak of rescue from bondage so as to become God's own possession, and of freedom bought for a price (e.g. Eph. 1:17; 1 Pet. 1 18f; 2:9). The notion of adoption speaks of our restoration as children of God (e.g. Rom. 8:15-17, 23, 29). Terms like regeneration and rebirth speak of a work of recreation and the beginning of new life (e.g. 1 Pet. 1:23). The theme of sanctification underlines the fact that God has made us his own and calls us to holiness of life (e.g. John 17:17; 1 Cor 3:17; 6:11). The concept of justification relates to the removal of condemnation and to a new standing in the eyes of God (e.g. Rom. 3:24; 4:5; 5:1). Moreover all these terms apply both to the whole people of God and to the individual.

13. At the time of the Reformation it became clear that, while there was agreement concerning the meaning and significance of most of the language of salvation, the relation between justification and sanctification was not understood in the same way by the Catholic and Anglican Churches. Catholics were felt by Anglicans to be emphasising sanctification in such a way that the absolute gratuitousness of salvation was threatened. On the other side, Anglicans were accused by Catholics of so stressing the justifying action of God that sanctification and human responsibility were gravely depreciated. However, sanctification and justification are not wholly distinct nor unrelated acts of God. The pronouncement by God of the removal of our condemnation and the gift to us of a new standing before him is not a reward for our faith or works; yet it is indissolubly linked with his transforming recreation of us in grace. God's grace effects what he declares. He imparts a righteousness which is both his and ours: we are required not to receive the grace of God in vain.

14. Because God is righteous, to be in communion with him requires righteousness in us. This is the goal of salvation. God's verdict that we are just and accepted by him because of Christ includes the Christian hope that we shall become fully what we are stated to be and the sure conviction of this fulfilment through the present working of the Holy Spirit within us, the first instalment of that final consummation. In the life of the Church, this is reflected in the relation between baptism, which is the unrepeatable 'sacrament of justification' and incorporation (Augustine, sermon 152.3; see 1 Cor. 6:11), and the Eucharist, which is the repeated sacrament by which the life of Christ's body is nourished, when the death of Christ is proclaimed until he comes again.

15. Sanctification is the making in the believer of this righteousness and holiness without which no one may see the Lord. It involves the restoration of the image of God in humanity marred by sin. This means that we must be conformed to Christ, the perfect image of God, until he appears and we shall be like him. The law of Christ has now become the pattern of our life, enabling us to produce works which are the fruit of the Holy Spirit. God's final judgement is invariably presented to us in Scripture as resting on those works, inspired by love, which spring from our justification through faith. So the righteousness of God our Saviour is not only a judgement made by God in favour of sinners declaring them just, but also a gift which God bestows on them to make them righteous. Just as the proclaimed Word of God in Scripture, even when it relates to a future event, is conceived as already fulfilled when uttered, so the declaration of the righteousness of the believer is seen as already accomplished. "God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6).

Nevertheless we continue to be subject to time with the daily temptations and pressures of earthly life.

16. It is impossible for Christians to perceive how they may be righteous without due regard to what the New Testament understands by justification. On the one hand, the term 'justification' speaks of a divine declaration of acquittal, of the love of God manifested to an alienated and lost humanity prior to any movement on the part of the human soul (Romans 5:8). God declares we are forgiven and accepted and that we are reconciled to him through the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, the supreme sign of divine love and mercy. This declaration is expressed in the New Testament by using the language of law, as a verdict of acquittal of the sinner. On the other hand, the divine court is the court of the judge who is both the creator and redeemer of those whom he judges. While in a human law court an acquittal is an external, even impersonal act, the declaration of divine forgiveness and reconciliation does not leave the person unchanged where there is the human response of repentance and faith. This is why the remission of sins brings a present renewal, the rebirth to newness of life. Accordingly the juridical category of 'justification', which expresses an important facet of the truth, is not the exclusive notion within which all other biblical ideas and images must be contained. For the New Testament stresses that our whole salvation stems from the grace of God. God gave his beloved Son to do for us what we could not do for ourselves. It was through his self-oblation and sacrifice on the cross that God was able both to be just and the justifier of those who put their faith in his Son and so are able through the Holy Spirit to say, "Abba, Father" (Rom. 3:26, 8:15).

17. The final judgement will be the full manifestation of the triumph of grace

over all that is evil. The glory of the elect will be the fruition of their acceptance of the will of God through faith, a faith that will have expressed itself in righteousness. In the meantime the message of the New Testament is:-

"Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that - and shudder" (James 2:18,19).

SALVATION AND GOOD WORKS

18. The response of faith to the Gospel must be free, since it involves a relationship of communion with God and a share in his life. This freedom God has given us in his Son. It is not the natural freedom to choose between two alternatives. It is freedom from sin and death, and consequently freedom to do God's will. 'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from sin and death in order that the just requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us' (Rom. 8.2,4). While it is God who works within them, the righteous are enabled to work out their own salvation (cf. Phil 2.13). This freedom is, in short, the 'power to become children of God', which is given 'to all who received him, who believed in his name' (Jn 1.12).

19. The works of the righteous performed in this God-given freedom receive God's commendation and his reward (Mt. 25.14-40; Mt. 6.4; Heb. 11.6). Still, the reward promised to the righteous is itself a gift which depends wholly on God's grace. It is only with this understanding that the language of 'merit' can be used, so that we can say with St. Augustine: 'When God crowns our merits it is his own gifts that he crowns' (Ep. 194.5). God is true to his promise to 'render to everyone according to his works' (Rom. 2.6), yet when we have done all that is commanded we must still say, 'We are unprofitable servants; we have only done our duty' (Lk. 17.10).

20. The language of merit, therefore, when properly understood, in no way implies that human beings, once justified, are able to put God in their debt. Still less does it imply that justification itself is anything but a totally unmerited gift. Even the very first movements which lead to justification,

such as repentance, the desire for forgiveness and even faith itself, are the work of God as he touches our hearts by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Certain beliefs and practices in the Roman Catholic Church, such as purgatory and indulgences (cf. Art. XXII), have been taken to imply a false view of merit, namely that the work of Christ was incomplete and that human beings contributed to their own salvation. We are agreed that the interpretation of such beliefs and practices is not to be sought outside our two Churches' understanding of salvation as set out in this statement. (A fuller treatment of this subject is given in an Appendix.)

SALVATION AND THE CHURCH

21. God's purpose is to draw humanity into communion with himself and with one another so as to share his life. Salvation is achieved for all and offered to all in Christ. Through our incorporation into Christ and his saving mystery, the koinonia of the Church is realized. Therefore the once-for-all atoning work of Christ and its continuing actualization in the life of the Church together constitute the free gift of God which is proclaimed in the Gospel. The Church "is the community of those reconciled with God and with each other because it is the community of those who believe in Jesus Christ and are justified through God's grace" (ARCIC-I, F.R. Intr. par. 8)

22. In forming this community God chose for himself a people to serve his eternal plan that all humankind should be saved. Those who respond to his call by faith and baptism become members of this community. The good works which God's grace enables them to perform are the gifts of his Spirit given for the building up of the whole community and therefore for the salvation of all humankind.

23. Since God's purpose is that we should all be conformed to the image of his Son (Rom. 8:29), the Church's vocation is to devote itself to the achievement of that goal, thus revealing and embodying the redemptive power contained within the Gospel. What Christ achieved through his cross and resurrection is communicated by the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church (Rom. 8:1-4). In this way the Church becomes a sign to the world both of God's gracious purpose for his creation and of his power to realize this purpose for sinful humanity. The Church is a sign and foretaste of God's Kingdom. Yet it is called to follow the

way of Jesus, at the same time the divine image and the suffering servant, who had to be made perfect by suffering and so become the Lord of all creation (Heb. 1:3; 2:10; Phil. 2:8-11). In the opposition and persecution it experiences, the Church is a living reminder and witness that in his compassion God chose the way of the Cross to save the world.

24. A sign, in making known the reality it designates, serves this reality.

The Church, therefore, as the sign of God's purpose of drawing the human race into reconciliation and fellowship with himself, is called to be the Servant of this purpose. This service takes the form of stewardship. It includes the Church's faithful proclamation of the Gospel, as well as its sacramental, pastoral and missionary activities. Although in exercising this stewardship the Church has no authority to change the essential content, it is bound to adapt its presentation of the Gospel to meet the needs of each age and culture. However, its power to affect the hearer comes not from itself but from the Holy Spirit, who enables it to be truly the servant and steward of God's design.

25. Thus we may say that in its koinonia the Church is God's instrument for the carrying forward of his eternal design, the salvation of humankind, for it is within the Church that the Holy Spirit gives and nurtures new life so that the Gospel becomes a manifest reality. As this instrument, the Church is called to be a living expression of the Gospel, evangelized and evangelizing, reconciled and reconciling, gathered together and gathering others. In its ministry to the world the Church seeks to share with all people the grace by which its own life is created and sustained.

26. The Church is therefore called to be, and by the power of the Spirit actually is, God's sign, steward and instrument in the fulfilment of his saving designs. However, this by no means implies that the Church is without failure in the fulfilment of its calling. In its struggles with sin the Church is constantly reminded that by its weakness it has undermined the credibility of what it proclaims, and so is in continual need of repentance. Nevertheless the Gospel contains the promise that despite all its failures the Church will be used by God in the fulfilment of his saving designs in human history.

CONCLUSION

27. We believe that our two communions are essentially agreed on those aspects of salvation which have caused difficulty in the past. God, in giving his Son, has given his righteousness to an unrighteous humanity, both as an unconditional gift and as a world-transforming vitality. We began our study by examining the differences of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and can now say that they do not divide us. But this is far from brushing them aside, for they have disclosed to us in a fresh way the dynamism of God's saving act. The only proper expression of our agreement is a united commitment of our Churches to common mission, articulating the saving message to the world which our loving God continues to address in all its created beauty and fallen squalor.

THE CHURCH'S MESSAGE OF SALVATION IN
MODERN CULTURE

28. The gift of God's righteousness is the gift of acceptability. It sets us free to be truly righteous by liberating us from the need to prove ourselves to one another. The word of salvation loosens the shackles of human anxiety — and never has this been more necessary than in the modern culture with its constant undertow of competition. Anxiety ties us (individuals and societies alike) to the over-worn currencies of public esteem: power, affluence, technological mastery of the future. It makes us captive to the efforts of our will, and slaves to lesser goods. Freedom from anxiety is freedom to cling to that which is most truly good, because God's unconditional acceptance is the basis of secure and proper self-esteem.

29. The gift of God's righteousness, secondly, is the gift of his justice — for the two English words render different aspects of the one notion of iustitia

or *dikaionē*. The righteousness of God is a social gift, which demands that we care about just settlements within the political societies to which we belong; for they can witness, though in imperfect ways, to the coming righteousness of the City of God. It offers an absolute reference-point for the temporal judgements that we must make, and authorises us to redress the wrongs of the poor and oppressed. Yet since at the same time it is also a reconciling gift, it never lets us rest content with the limited and provisional settlements that social judgement can achieve, but draws our attention further to those who are de facto excluded from any settlement: the criminals, the victims of war and those whose claim to human regard is simply passed over. The righteousness of God therefore is a critical principle, which challenges every shade of political absolutism.

30. The gift of righteousness, in the third place, is the gift of a community, which is free to witness, in a way that political societies cannot, to the coming righteousness of the City of God. Immediately after expounding the doctrine of justification in his Galatian letter, Paul goes on to speak of a fellowship in which ^{the} seemingly insuperable divisions of his world have been transcended where "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). The presence of such a healing community, where all are equally accepted, speaks with immediacy to the world, and gives its message of salvation a palpable integrity. The Church of our own day, as it seeks the renewal of its life, must understand and respond to the challenge that such a picture of its life presents; and so must offer the world the "joy and peace in believing" through which, by the gift of God and the work of the Spirit, it may "abound in hope" (Rom. 15:13).

31. We offer this agreement to our two communions as a further proof of their unity in Christ, and also to the wider Church, praying that it may be assisted to hear God's call afresh.

DRAFT APPENDIX ON CATHOLIC PRACTICES

1. It has been suggested to us that Catholic practices and doctrines connected with Purgatory, prayers for the dead and indulgences are an obstacle to the reconciliation of our communions. Anglican reformers rejected some or all of these practices because they thought them to be "repugnant to the Word of God" (Article XXII).

2. The concern of this appendix is not to set out full and detailed agreement on these matters but rather to state both our judgement and conviction that these issues properly considered do not in themselves contain unresolved points detracting from our agreement on justification.

3. We would like to begin by enunciating some principles for the interpretation of these and other practices and doctrines.

(i) Their interpretation and practice must be regulated by the doctrine of Salvation and the Church which we have agreed upon in this statement and not otherwise.

(ii) The central core of a doctrine to which a council or some other authoritative statement has definitively committed the Roman Catholic Church is frequently much less wide-ranging than the developments of it which have arisen in discussion and exposition.

(iii) Some doctrines are expressed in concepts which require a symbolic, rather than a literal interpretation.

(iv) Some doctrines are differently interpreted by theologians and no one interpretation can claim to be the Catholic belief.

4. In considering the practice of prayers for the faithful departed it is felt that understanding can best be reached by seeing this within the context

of the intercession of the Church as a whole. The Church, in obedience to God, prays that God's good and loving purpose be fulfilled in and for every member of His Church. In so far as this purpose is patently unfulfilled in the course of our earthly pilgrimage, our prayers may be said to continue, for those who die in faith, that God's good intention for each of His children be fulfilled, as in the same sense as we pray "Thy Kingdom Come". This we pray, as Our Lord has commanded, but never doubting that God's Kingdom will indeed come, our prayers being caught up in the Divine purpose for the universal establishment of His rule.

5. Our consideration of purgatory leads us away from unhelpful associations that issue from temporal or spatial imagery or excessively literal interpretations associated with such images. We recognise the diversity of practice and opinion associated with some excessive literalism. We would here note that the conformity of the individual to the likeness of Christ, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, is God's purpose for humanity. This process is manifestly incomplete in this life and remains part of the Divine recreative work until the image of God, broken in man, is wholly restored in the redeemed. Thus and similarly, the Church, not yet splendid and without blemish, likewise awaits that consummation when both the Church is indeed spotless and without blemish and each of her members bears the image of the man of Heaven.

6. Some Anglicans fear that Catholic penitential doctrine and discipline may imply that the divine act which justifies the repentant sinner is incomplete and that it must be supplemented by human good works. This is not so, as we have explained in our statement on Salvation and the Church. Works of penitence which follow the declaration of forgiveness in the sacrament of reconciliation

have another meaning. They are a recognition of the fact that sinful actions have consequences in the world and in the person of the sinner. Those who have sinned must acknowledge their sin, repent of it, ask God's forgiveness and determine not to sin again. This they are enabled to do by the reconciling grace of God. But, once forgiven and restored to a life of grace and charity, there remains the task, consequent on forgiveness and flowing from the gift of divine grace, of making good the personal and social values which have been destroyed by sin. This requires patient acceptance of the sufferings God permits (Heb. 12:4-11) and the performance of freely chosen good works, of which the most important are prayer, self-denial and works of justice and mercy.

7. The language and practice of indulgences developed in the course of many centuries in connection with the sacrament of reconciliation and the concern of the pastors of the Church to help and guide the Christian faithful in the amendment of their lives. They are deeply marked by their history and the cultures in which they were formed, matters too complex to discuss here, but which must be borne in mind when considering them.

8. Indulgences can perhaps best be understood as assurances that the repentant sinner who performs works of penitence recommended by the Church is supported by the prayer and life of the whole Church. The Church constantly prays that her members will be given the love without which all human activity is fruitless, "Apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15.4). The prayer of the Church is always heard because the Church prays with her Head who constantly intercedes for us with the Father. The individual for whom the prayers of the Church are applied must however be truly repentant. The notion of the Treasury of the Church, which the Church claims to administer when she grants indulgences,

must be interpreted Christologically. It can be nothing other than a claim on the salvific will of God, made effective in the atoning life and death of Christ and further manifested in the lives of the faithful in Him. The claim of the Church to "remit the temporal punishment due to sin" is best understood as an assurance that those who seek to amend their lives by trusting in God and performing the works recommended by the Church do not work in vain. In their work of amendment Christians are united with Christ in His struggle against evil and their actions can benefit themselves and each other because of what He has done for us.