

ARCIC 186 C: The Spirit's Abiding in the Church

Some Comments on Infallibility

by

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Archbishop McAdoo has provided ARCIC with two valuable papers: (1) "Anglicanism and the nature and exercise of Authority in the Church"¹ and (2) "The Spirit's abiding in the Church"². The Archbishop and I were each to treat the theme of the Spirit's abiding in the Church and how this theme relates to the concepts of the indefectibility and infallibility of the Church. Archbishop McAdoo has provided ARCIC with an Anglican view of this theme and these concepts. I was asked to provide a Roman Catholic view and to respond to the Archbishop's work.

In paragraph 18 of the Venice Statement ARCIC has already reached substantial agreement that the Church can be described as indefectible.³ May the Church also be described as infallible?

Archbishop McAdoo has made clear that although the Caroline Divines maintain that Scripture and the Creeds are an infallible rule of faith, the Anglican Communion does not use the term "infallible" to describe the Church. I am convinced that ARCIC has arrived at a broad and profound agreement on the action of the Spirit in the Church.⁴ Roman Catholic theological terminology would express this agreement by saying that the Church is infallible. But the agreement must be stated in such a way that Anglicans will recognise their faith in what ARCIC writes. They will not do so if ARCIC uses Roman Catholic terminology to express its agreement.

ARCIC is not in agreement regarding the Bishop of Rome's exercise of "the infallibility with which the Church is endowed." In fact, Lambeth '68 seems specifically to reject what might be popularly called "papal infallibility."⁵

In this brief paper I hope to do four things: (1) Examine the lexicon meaning of the terms "indefectible" and "infallible" and suggest language to describe the agreement that ARCIC has to this point reached on the "infallibility" of the Church. (2) Study some of the Scriptural data on the Spirit's abiding in the Church in the light of the Roman Catholic theological concern that is summarised by the term "infallible." (3) Respond to Archbishop McAdoo's concerns regarding "papal infallibility." (4) Point to some possible areas of convergence and propose some questions for mutual study and discussion.

Part I: Indefectible and Infallible

It would clarify matters to discuss the two terms indefectible and infallible.

(a) indefectible

- (1) not subject to failure or decay; lasting; that will not and cannot collapse or be done away with; e. g., an indefectible friendship; maintained that the Church is indefectible.
- (2) free from and incapable of defects or error; having no shortcomings; free of faults; flawless; e. g., possessed what appeared to be a sort of indefectible wisdom; a spokesman who could hardly be considered indefectible.⁶

It is clear that ARCIC has used the term indefectible in its first meaning and not in its second meaning.

(b) infallible

- (1) not fallible; incapable of error; unerring; e. g., infallible marksman; infallible ear for pitch in music; infallible memory.
- (2) not liable to mislead, deceive or disappoint; sure, certain, indubitable; e. g., infallible remedy; his accent is an almost infallible index of his family background and education; infallible scheme for making money.
- (3) incapable of error in defining doctrines touching faith or morals.

syn inerrable, inerrant, unerring; infallible describes that which is exempt from possibility of error or mistake or that which has been errorless: e. g., no mathematician is infallible; he may make mistakes; believed in an infallible Bible. Inerrable and Inerrant are erudite synonyms for Infallible sometimes used in its stead to escape connotations arising from the discussion of papal infallibility; the latter (Inerrant) that whatever is described has not so far erred, e. g., the Church was ubiquitous, omniscient, theoretically inerrant and omniscient; at the moment we lack, in all English speaking countries, the inerrant literary sense which gave us the Prayer Book Collects, often quite as beautiful in translation as in the original Latin. Unerring

may imply freedom from error coupled with sureness, reliability, and exactness: e. g., an unerring marksman; a man's language is an unerring index of his nature; the unerring scent of the hounds in pursuit.⁷

If one uses the term infallible in its second sense (not liable to mislead, deceive or disappoint: sure, certain, indubitable) the meaning is very close to indefectible in the sense which ARCIC has used the term in paragraph 18 of the Venice Statement.⁸ In Roman Catholic theology, however, the term infallible is used in its third sense (incapable of error in defining doctrines touching faith or morals). The nearest synonym to infallible in the way in which Roman Catholic theology uses the term is unerring (unerring may imply freedom from error coupled with sureness, reliability and exactness). This is the sense in which the Caroline Divines also use the term when they speak of the Scripture and Creeds being an infallible rule of faith.

In my opinion ARCIC can state that Roman Catholics and Anglicans believe that the Church is unerring in proclaiming the Gospel and teaching the Creeds. This more dynamic statement which describes the Church acting is closely related to the more static statement made by Roman Catholic theology that the Church is endowed with infallibility. Lumen Gentium of Vatican Council II puts the matter this way:

The body of the faithful as a whole, anointed as they are by the Holy One (cf. 1 John 2: 20, 27), cannot err in matters of belief. Thanks to a supernatural sense of the faith which characterizes the People as a whole, it manifests this unerring quality when 'from the bishops down to the last member of the laity' it shows universal agreement in matters of faith and morals. #12

There is firm agreement⁹ with this statement of Vatican Council II and Laud's Conference (Section XXXIII).

That the Church in general can never err from the faith necessary to salvation; no persecution, no temptation, no gates of hell, whatsoever is meant by them, can ever so prevail against it. For all the members of the militant Church cannot err, either in the whole faith, or in any article of it; it is impossible. For if all might so err, there could be no union between them as members and Christ the Head; and no union between head and members, no body; and so no Church, which cannot be....

Part II: The Spirit's abiding and the Roman Catholic Concern Summarised by the term "Infallible"

Archbishop McAadoo begins his article on "Anglicanism and the nature and exercise of Authority in the Church" with an excellent observation. "The first step towards understanding the nature of anything is to ask, what is it for?" In Roman Catholic theology what is "infallibility" for?

The concern that Roman Catholic theology summarises in the non-biblical and non-patristic term "infallible"¹⁰ is that the Church because it has the mission to preach the Gospel to all nations may be trusted because of the Holy Spirit's guidance of her to proclaim throughout time the revelation once for all given to the saints and to reformulate it unerringly in the diverse cultures of humankind.

Strictly speaking the word infallible can be predicated only of God. Moreover, when the attribute of infallibility is predicated of the Holy Spirit's guiding the Church this is an instance of attribution in theological language of the Trinity's action to one of the Persons of the Trinity since in Trinitarian theology as the Council of Florence affirms all actions of the Trinity ad extra are common to all three Persons. Thus the Trinity guides the Church.

But does the Trinity so constantly and permanently guide the Church that the Church may be said to be "infallible"? When Scripture says that the Spirit abides in the Church, the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - abides in the Church. Because the Trinity, infallible God, abides in the Church, the Church may be said to be "infallible." To state that the Church is "infallible" is to use language in an extended sense. In the communicatio idiomatum of classical Christology attributes proper to either the divine nature or the human nature are predicated of the one divine Person. Though the Trinity is not incarnate in the Church, Roman Catholic theology at times employs an ecclesiological communicatio idiomatum and predicates of the pilgrim Church attributes proper to the indwelling Trinity. Instances of this usage are Roman Catholic theological predications such as the Church is "one," "holy" and, in the present case, "infallible."

Does the concern that Roman Catholic theology summarises in the term "infallible" have a basis in Scripture?

The Church does have a mission to preach the Gospel to all nations (Mt. 28, 18-20). Enablement to carry out this mission comes from the Holy Spirit (Acts 1, 8). An illustration of the unerring adaptation of the revelation is provided in the Acts of the Apostles which has

been called the "Gospel of the Spirit." Under the Spirit's guidance (Acts 10, 19-21; 11, 12-16) the mission to the Gentiles began (Acts 10 and 11 - the "Pentecost of the Gentiles"). This mission entailed a change of policy for the Christian community regarding the observance of the Jewish dietary laws. The mission and the dropping of observance of the dietary laws are justified by an appeal to the Spirit's action and are accepted by "the apostles and brethren in Judea" as unerring judgments made under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The "Pentecost of the Gentiles" is a helpful illustration in the history of the early Church of the dynamics of adapting the Gospel to a different cultural setting. That the adaptation was unerring is ascribed to the Holy Spirit who initiates the process, moves Peter to recognize it and recalls to Peter's mind a saying of Jesus to explain his actions to his brethren who accept it as the Spirit's work.¹¹ Does the New Testament indicate that the guidance of the Holy Spirit is more permanent and constant than in extraordinary manifestations such as the "Pentecost of the Gentiles"?

Though there is a nascent theology of the Spirit in Paul's letters¹² and a richer theology of the Spirit in Luke's Gospel (Jesus is the Spirit-filled agent of God's salvific activity) and especially in Acts¹³ (Spirit as power bringing the Church into its Catholic destiny), it appears that not until the nineties with the redaction of John's Gospel does Christian reflection clearly affirm that the Spirit is permanently present to the Church and constantly active within her (Jn. 14, 8-27).¹⁴

Some of Bruce Vawter's comments on John's treatment of the Holy Spirit¹⁵ are worth quoting at length and will be used in the third part of this paper.

At first glance, the Spirit seems to play a smaller part in John's conception of Heilsgeschichte than in that of the Synoptics. There is nothing in John corresponding to the statement that after Jesus' baptism the Spirit "drove him forth" into the desert and on to his public ministry (Mk. 1, 10-12); neither is there anything corresponding to the Lucan description of Pentecost (Acts 2, 1-11). Although we note in John that the Spirit is present at the baptism of Jesus, the Spirit is introduced as a sign to John the Baptist rather than as the guiding force in Jesus' ministry. We can add to this the fact that in 1 John references to the Holy Spirit are quite vague and problematic (1 John 2, 20, 27 "anointing"; 1 John 3, 9 "seed"). Indeed, the term "Paraclete," used for the Holy Spirit in the Gospel, refers to Jesus in 1 John 2, 1. . . .

At all events, it is by no means correct to say that the Spirit has been subordinated in John's theology. What is true is that John has treated of the Spirit in a unique way. In doing so, he has brought out, perhaps more consistently than any other New Testament author, the implications of the New Testament revelation that the Spirit of God is more than a personification--that he is a true person standing in relation to the Father and the Son. . . . It is in light of the major Johannine theme of God as Father that we see a partial reason for the distinctive treatment of the Spirit. In John, the Spirit is presented less as the divine power that has directed Jesus' ministry than as the divine power that continues and completes it; the Spirit is, as it were, the perpetuation of Jesus' presence among his followers. . . .

The Spirit is the principle of the new life that Jesus has come to give (Jn. 3, 5-8) and is operative in virtue of Jesus' glorification (Jn. 7, 38-39; 1 John 3, 24; 4, 13). He is sent by the Father in the name of Jesus (Jn. 14, 16 and 26), which is to say that he is the gift of Christ himself, sent by him from the heavenly Father to abide with his disciples forever (Jn. 15, 26; 1 John 2, 20 and 27). He is called "the Spirit of truth" in that the life that he gives is a share in the divine existence itself (Jn. 1, 14; 4, 24). The life that was revealed in Jesus is perpetuated in and communicated by the Spirit, and in the Spirit man's longing for truth is to be satisfied. What this means in practical terms is that the Spirit makes possible the God-given knowledge that comes to man by faith (Jn. 16, 13). In even more practical terms, John like Paul sees the activity of the Spirit manifest in the preaching of the word by the Church, through which the saving power of Christ is brought to mankind.

The designation of the Spirit as the Paraclete is distinctively Johannine in the New Testament (only Jn. 14, 16 and 26; 15, 26; 16, 7 - in 1 John 2, 1 it refers to Jesus). The term is brought into the Gospel without introduction, so that we must determine its meaning from its usage there. We are aided by Jewish usage that had already transliterated the Greek parakletos into Hebrew as paraqlit (Pirke Aboth 4, 11); in fact, it is likely that in this form it was used originally by Jesus himself. "Paraclete" means "helper," "advocate": that Jesus is our advocate with the Father is a common Christian conception (Heb. 7, 25; Rom. 8, 34); therefore it is easy to see how John can call him our Paraclete (1 Jn. 2, 1). The Holy Spirit is "the other" Paraclete (Jn. 14, 16) whose activity begins with the return of the Son to the Father, and whose activity remains till the end of time. The activity of the Paraclete is to reveal the mind of Christ (Jn. 16, 13) even as Christ revealed the mind of the Father (Jn. 14, 10): "He will

not speak on his own authority." Yet the Paraclete will glorify the Son (Jn. 16, 14), just as the Father has glorified the Son and the Son the Father. In other words, the Spirit stands in the same relation to the Christian of the Johannine church (and of all times) as that in which Jesus stood to his disciples during his ministry. The Spirit, that is to say, the Son and the Father in the Spirit, is the route by which man enters into the way, the truth, and the life proclaimed by Christ. Thus we are reminded that it is not by the words of the "historical" Jesus alone that we live, but by the words of Jesus as made known by the Church enlightened by the Spirit (Jn. 16, 13: "He will teach you all the truth"; cf. Jn. 14, 25-26). In the Apocalypse, too, the Lord speaks to the living Church through the Spirit (cf. Ap. 2, 1 and 7; 2, 8 and 11; 2, 12 and 17; etc.)...

It is in the Spirit that man encounters the way, the truth, and the life that the Son has brought as the Father's gift into this world. But how and under what conditions does one possess the Spirit? John's answer to this is simple: The Spirit is to be had in the Church. As we have already noted, it is in the preaching and the teaching of the Church, inspired and guided by the Spirit, that the word of God and therefore the Word of Life is encountered. The truth that makes men free resides in the community which exists as the result of Jesus' exaltation (Jn. 8, 28-32) and is presided over by the Spirit. This is the house of God, in which the Son lives with his disciples in the Spirit (Jn. 14, 2-4; cf. Jn. 2, 19-22). The word of God is accepted by faith as it is transmitted by the Church's ministry (1 John 1, 5; 2, 7). Here men find the way that leads to eternal life and is the beginning of that life (1 John, 2, 17).

In the Church, moreover, men find not only the teaching of Jesus, his words, but also his works of salvation. Salvation is not a matter of human activity following on divine inspiration; this is not the meaning of faith. Salvation is the acceptance of a divine activity that continues to do its work in those who believe. The works of Christ that the Spirit perpetuates in the Church are chiefly the sacraments... The sacraments draw their efficacy from the sacrificial death of Christ (Jn. 19, 34). Jesus Christ is Savior not simply by having been declared the Messiah at the time of his baptism ("through water"), but by having fulfilled his mission in death on the cross ("through blood"); therefore, as the object of faith, he must be confessed as one who has come "not in the water only, but in the water and the blood" (1 John 5, 6). John customarily writes on several levels, making his narrative of historical events significant to his readers in respect to the enduring Christian realities. And so, "water and blood" also means

the continuing witness given water and blood in the Church through the Spirit, that is, in the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist: "Therefore there are three who testify, the Spirit and the water and the blood, and the three make up one" (1 John 5, 7). The Spirit, then, rather than the water only, gives the new life of Baptism (Jn. 3, 5).

Part III. Response to
Archbishop McAdoo's Concerns About Papal Infallibility

There is a broad and profound agreement between Archbishop McAdoo's two papers and Roman Catholic teaching on the subject which the Archbishop treats. These areas of agreement are the following: (1) The Holy Spirit is permanently present to the Church and continuously at work in the Church's life in Christ and proclamation of the truth of the Gospel (ARCIC 186A, 78). (2) The Scriptural record of this early period became and remained the primary standard of assay for the truth of the Gospel (Ibid., 79). (3) The deposit is to be guarded (1 Tim 6, 20) (Ibid., 79). However, I do not agree that 2 Tim 1, 14 refers to Holy Scripture in the sense of the written New Testament. This would be an impossible anachronism. Whether paratheke in 2 Tim 1, 12 is to be taken in reference to 2 Tim 4, 8 or whether paratheke has the same meaning in 1 Tim 6, 20; 2 Tim 1, 12 - 14 the meaning seems clear. God is able to preserve the entire content of Christian faith until "that day," viz., the parousia, in 2 Tim 1, 18. (4) Authority's "judicial" function in the Church is to be declarative of the truth (Ibid., 79). This "judicial" function is part of the Church's witnessing function by means of which the Church declares what the truth is and has been. (5) No assessment of authority in the Church can exclude the authority of authentic Christian praxis or that of special charisms within the community (Ibid., 80). (6) Orthodoxy and orthopraxy are two aspects of the one faith - commitment of the koinonia. . . Truth is not only a matter of believing but also of being and doing. This too is part of the deposit which authority must guard lest it be distorted or sentimentalised into the proposition that it doesn't matter what someone believes so long as he thinks he is doing right (Ibid., 80). (7) As they discharge the function of authority which is to maintain the Church in the truth, the human authorities have the "ability to distinguish the true spirits from the false" (1 Cor 12, 10). This discernment has at times to be exercised in the interests of all. But since the apostolic community is a priestly people, the gift of discernment is not solely theirs nor even that of the episcopate of the ordained ministry but belongs to the whole Church though this episcopate has its special and authentic role here. The consent and response of the faithful enter into the process. What this must increasingly imply for the exercise of authority in the Church will be more co-responsibility, more consultation and testing -- more of a process and fewer pronunciamenti. The norms and criteria must be applied in the interests of "the truth of the Gospel"; even on occasion an edict of "the authorities" can and ought to be part of the authority-process, for "the Church hath authority in controversies of faith" (Ibid., 81).

Though Archbishop McAdoo describes the following picture as emerging from Anglican thinking and practice of the nature and exercise of authority in the Church, it is one with which the Roman Catholic Church would completely agree. (8) . . . Authority as truth-maintaining and authority as power to legislate and administer, are inseparably linked and firmly sited within the framework of the koinonia. Authority in the Church is Christ's; the faith is that which was delivered, the truth of which is established by scripture and antiquity; the exercise of authority is through the bishops, synods, and ecclesiastical courts, and the ecclesial structure which governs and contains this exercise in that of the episcopate of the Catholic Church (Ibid., 81).

If there is so much agreement on these eight fundamental points between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church, where is the disagreement? The basic disagreement is over the relationship of the Bishop of Rome to the college of bishops and those bishops' local churches. If one grants that the Bishop of Rome is head of the college of bishops then the problem of papal infallibility is put in its proper ecclesiological setting. The Anglican Communion does not grant this and Archbishop McAdoo's picture of the nature and exercise of authority in the Church understandably is drawn without reference to it.

However, Archbishop McAdoo does have some concerns about papal infallibility and has expressed them in both his papers. Before commenting on these concerns I would like to state the Roman Catholic position on papal infallibility as succinctly as I can. Roman Catholics believe that the Bishop of Rome as head of the college of bishops and always in union with the college of bishops, while not bound to seek the subsequent consent or placet of national episcopal bodies in order that his proclamation be unerring, exercises in very narrowly specified circumstances the infallibility with which Christ willed the entire Church to be endowed when he proclaims the faith once for all given.

In ARCIC 186 A Archbishop McAdoo has made three references to papal infallibility. (1) ". . . never as a result of isolated action by any individual bishop" (p. 86) and quoting Lambeth '68 which had the publication of Humanæ Vitæ in mind. (2) "It is a concept of the nature and exercise of authority. . . leans to an emphasis on process rather than the juridical" (p. 86). (3) "No office of infallibility was necessary to declare these fundamentals of the faith once for all given." On page 8 of ARCIC 186 B, Archbishop McAdoo has made four references to papal infallibility. (4) Anglicans (and Orthodox) looking at history do not see that there is a need for papal infallibility in this process (Spirit's maintaining the Church in the truth). (5) History cannot ignore

Liberius, Zosimus, Vigilius, Honorius and Eugenius. (6) Promulgation of the Marian dogmas. (7) Difficulty of reconciling these dogmas with the wording of the 1870 decree, "Neque enim Petri successoribus Spiritus Sanctus promissus est, ut eo revelante novam doctrinam patefacerent, sed ut, eo assistente, traditam per Apostolos revelationem sui fidei depositum sancte custodirent et fideliter exponerent." (8) #6 and #7 combined have added to the anxiety about ex sese, non autem ex consensu Ecclesiae irreformabiles. Then Archbishop McAdoo voices a general concern with the notion of papal infallibility. "It is probably fair to say that what causes uneasiness here is the Anglican conviction that truth authenticates authority and that this is part of the understanding of how the Church is led by the Blessed Spirit and by the word of God (to quote Laud)."

Before addressing Archbishop McAdoo's concerns it would be helpful to give a summary of what Bishop Gasser said to the bishops at Vatican Council I before the bishops voted on Pastor Aeternus. Bishop Gasser was the relator of the Doctrinal Commission that presented the final draft of Pastor Aeternus to the Council. The bishops approved the document in the sense that Bishop Gasser indicated to them.

Bishop Gasser stressed that absolute infallibility is proper to God alone. The infallibility of the pope is limited and conditioned. "In fact," said Gasser, "the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff is restricted in regard to the subject (pope), when the pope speaks as teacher of the universal church and as supreme judge seated on the Chair of Peter, i. e., in the center of the communio. It is restricted regarding the object (subject matter), insofar as it concerns matters of faith and morals and it is restricted in regard to the act, when the pope defines what has to be believed or rejected by all the faithful." (Mansi, LII, 1214).

Vatican I did not define the infallibility of the successors of Peter as a permanent property, definitively attached to the person of the pope. Even though a personal infallibility is ascribed to a pope, it is present, as Gasser explained, "Only when he exercises in reality and in act the function of supreme judge in the controversies of faith and doctrine of the universal Church (Ibid., 1213 A).

Comments on Archbishop McAdoo's concerns are now in order. Roman Catholic doctrine does not see the exercise of papal infallibility as an "isolated action by an individual bishop" but as the exercise of the final act of discernment by the head of the college of bishops after a period of research, discussion and consultation. In Roman Catholic

doctrine the head of the college of bishops is at the center of the Communio and never can act in isolation, though he does act as an individual bishop, the Bishop of Rome who is the successor of Peter.

When papal infallibility is exercised, as Gasser explained it, the pope is functioning as "supreme judge in the controversies of faith and doctrine of the universal Church." Thus the language used is that of a juridical process. In this language are overtones of the late patristic period when there existed an elaborate "appeals process" in the Pentarchy with the Roman Patriarch and his sedes as the ultimate court of appeals in ecclesiastical disputes among and within the other four patriarchates. Though this language is time honored, it might in today's world suggest a pastoral insensitivity to the process of discernment which it is seeking to describe. Archbishop McAdoo's concern here is a very valid one.

The Archbishop's third concern is that no office of infallibility was necessary to declare the fundamentals of the faith once for all given. In Roman Catholic doctrine the Church is infallible and so are the bishops of the college united with the head of the College. One form of exercise of the Church's infallibility is the teaching of an ecumenical council. Since the "fundamentals" have won conciliar approval I do not agree with the Archbishop's statement.

Archbishop McAdoo's next concern deals with the necessity of papal infallibility. The point at issue is not whether history shows a necessity for papal infallibility but whether Vatican I was correct when it stated "Docemus et divinitus revelatum dogma esse definimus" (DS 3073).

The fifth concern deals with specific popes' reputed errors in doctrine. These cases were known at Vatican I in 1870 and historical research both of that period and today has never demonstrated that a pope, acting under the stringent conditions outlined in Pastor Aeternus, has taught erroneous doctrine. Instances of popes erring in matters of doctrine when they are not teaching in their capacity as "supreme judge" may be readily admitted and have in fact occurred.¹⁶

The Archbishop's next two points deal with the Marian definitions. Since there is a separate subcommission to treat of these points, I shall not substantively comment on them. However the Archbishop raises the question of the meaning of the phrase: "ideoque eiusmodi Romani Pontificis definitiones ex sese, non autem ex consensu Ecclesiae, irreformabiles esse. Sixteen years ago Georges Dejaive showed

that this phrase was added to Pastor Aeternus to exclude the opinion of some Gallicans and Conciliarists who regarded subsequent approval by the bishops as necessary in order to give infallibility to any papal definition.¹⁷ This was Vatican I's reaction to the fourth Gallican article of 1682¹⁸ which maintained that papal decrees are not irreformable until the assent of the Church (ecclesiae consensus) supervenes. The term consensus in this phrase of Pastor Aeternus is to be taken in its strict juridical sense meaning "official approval" and not in the more general sense of "agreement" or "acceptance by the Church as a whole."

There is a connection between this last consideration and Archbishop McAdoo's first point. According to Gasser agreement or acceptance by the Church as a whole can never be lacking to a papal infallible definition (Mansi, LII, 1214 A). The pope's infallibility is not separate or isolated. He is protected from error only when he teaches as successor of Peter and thus as representing the universal Church (Ibid., 1213 B-C).

Part IV: Areas of Convergence and Questions for Mutual Discussion and Study

Part I of this paper attempted to show that ARCIC had already achieved a broader and deeper agreement on the Church's being unerring in the proclamation of the Gospel than the Commission has so far expressed. In the light of the Roman Catholic theological concern summarised by the term "infallible," Part II presented some reflections on the New Testament data about the Spirit's abiding in, or indwelling, the Church.¹⁹ The permanent presence of the Trinity to the Church is the theological ground for asserting that the whole Church is infallible (Universitas fidelium, qui unctionem habent a sancto, in credendo falli nequit - Lumen Gentium #12). The missio of the Holy Spirit is the ground for asserting that some human acts (proclaiming the Gospel and celebrating the sacraments) become by the Holy Spirit's involvement with them acts that transcend the merely human plane. Consequently, attributes can be predicated of these transitory acts that properly pertain to the Holy Spirit (and ultimately to the Trinity), e.g., to teach "infallibly," to forgive sins, etc.²⁰ Part III of this paper briefly explained the wide area of agreement between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church in the matter of how God "maintains the Church in the truth," isolated the problem area of how the head of the college of bishops is related to the college²¹ and responded to Archbishop McAdoo's concerns regarding papal infallibility. Part IV of this paper attempts to designate further or new areas of convergence and then to suggest some questions for mutual discussion and study.

Archbishop McAdoo has indicated that the reason why the Roman Catholic position on papal infallibility causes uneasiness among Anglicans is that this position seems to go counter to "the Anglican conviction that truth authenticates authority and that this is part of the understanding of how the Church is led by the Blessed Spirit and by the Word of God (to quote Laud)." But this conviction of Anglicans conforms completely with Roman Catholic doctrine. ARCIC should explicitate this convergence in regard to revelation and the act of Christian faith.²²

The second area of convergence occurs in Christian maturation, "growing into Christ," the spiritual life of individual prayer and corporate prayer and sacramental worship. If this convergence were explicitated, the time when Anglicans and Roman Catholics would have full eucharistic sharing would be brought much closer. Furthermore, the explicitation of this convergence would provide readily available evidence of a commonly shared context in which the Roman Catholic and Anglican theological traditions seem to be coming to differing

pastoral decisions concerning what is required of individual Christians for corporate Christian witness in matters of sexual morality and the promotion of social justice.

To conclude this paper may I propose the following seven questions for mutual discussion and study:

- (1) What binding force attaches to the Anglican formularies of the sixteenth century? Are these formularies among the "fundamentals"? In the event of full, visible, ecclesiastical communion between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church, would Roman Catholics be required to ascribe to these formularies?
- (2) Does either the Anglican Communion or the Roman Catholic Church possess an official listing of those Councils which either body would hold to have been ecumenical?
- (3) How have Vatican Council II (specifically, Lumen Gentium #8, #25 and Unitatis Redintegratio #6) and Mysterium ecclesiae of 1973 modified or clarified Pastor Aeternus of Vatican Council I? Furthermore, where in the "hierarchy of truths" (Unitatis Redintegratio #11) does the Roman Catholic Church place papal infallibility and the Marian dogmas?
- (4) In Roman Catholic teaching is one theologically justified to refuse the Eucharist to a Christian who in good conscience rejects in Roman Catholic doctrine only papal infallibility and the Marian dogmas?
- (5) Is there a limitation to the subject matter which the pope may infallibly define?²³
- (6) What "allegiance of will and intellect" is required to be given to "the authentic teaching authority of the Roman pontiff even when he is not speaking ex cathedra (Lumen Gentium #25)? Would this extend to Anglicans if full, visible, ecclesiastical communion is restored between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion?
- (7) Given the ecumenical commitment each has made to the other (an assumed consensus in the faith), what measure of previous consultation prior to binding decision (consensus) do the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church mutually owe one another?

Footnotes

1. H. R. Mc Adoo, "Anglicanism and the nature and exercise of Authority in the Church," New Divinity (Winter, 1976), 76-95. ARCIC 186 A.
2. H. R. Mc Adoo, "The Spirit's Abiding in the Church," ARCIC 186 B.
3. Yet in Christian hope, we are confident that such failures cannot destroy the Church's ability to proclaim the Gospel and to show forth the Christian life; for we believe that Christ will not desert his Church and that the Holy Spirit will lead it into all truth. That is why the Church, in spite of its failures, can be described as indefectible. Venice Statement #18 contains no mention of teaching the Creeds.
4. ARCIC 186 B, 3-7. Note that the Windsor and Canterbury Statements attribute sacramental action to the Holy Spirit. Part II of this paper will point to the Johannine basis for this attribution. Hopefully this will clarify Bicknell's position concerning the action of the Spirit.
5. ARCIC 186 B, 9.
6. William Benton et al. (Editor), Webster's Third New International Dictionary. Chicago, 1961, vol. II, 1147 B.
7. Ibid., 1157 B.
8. This appears to be the sense of the term in the King James version at Acts 1, 3, "To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."
9. Note that both quotes allow for the presence of error in the Church and that both Vatican II and Archbishop Laud appeal to stable divine assistance to assure that the error does not win universal assent in the Church: Lumen Gentium, the Holy Spirit's indwelling; Laud, the union between Head (Christ) and members of his Body, the Church.

10. Paul De Vooght, "Esquisse d'une enquête sur le mot 'infaillibilité' durant la période scholastique" in O. Rousseau et al. (Editors), L'Infaillibilité de l'Eglise: Journées oecuméniques de Chevetogne, 25-29 septembre, 1961. Chevetogne, 1963, 99-146. Guido Terreni in the 14th century is the first to pose the question "on the Infallible Magisterium of the Roman Pontiff." Cf. Brian Tierney, Origins of Papal Infallibility. Leiden, 1972. The word infallible had before Terreni's time been used of God's truth, God's revelation and of Scripture as a norm of faith. In the latter sense it is used widely in American Churches springing from the Reformation's more radical wing.
11. Cf. Richard J. Dillon and Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J. "Commentary on Acts of the Apostles," in Raymond E. Brown, S.S., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J. and Roland Murphy, O. Carm. (Editors), The Jerome Biblical Commentary. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1968, volume 2, 188-190. Abbreviated hereafter as JBC.
12. Cf. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., "Pauline Theology" in JBC, II, 800-827 and especially, 814.
13. Cf. Carroll Stuhlmueller, C.P., "Commentary on the Gospel According to Luke" in JBC, II, 115-64 and Dillon & Fitzmyer, Ibid., 165-214.
14. Cf. Bruce Vawter, C.M., "Commentary on the Gospel According to John" in JBC, II, 414-66 and especially, 452-54.
15. Bruce Vawter, C.M., "Johannine Theology" in JBC, II, 828-39. The long, excerpted quotes are from 836-37.
16. A case in point is that of Pope John XXII. Cf. Marc Dykmans, Les sermons de Jean XXII sur la vision béatifique. Gregorian University Press, Rome, 1973, especially p. 93. For John XXII's retraction and the correction made by Benedict XII, cf. DS 990-91 and 1000-01.
17. Georges Dejaive, "Ex sese, non autem et consensu Ecclesiae," Salesianum XXIV (1962), 283-97.
18. In fidei quoque quaestionibus praecipuas Summi Pontificis esse partes, eiusque decreta ad omnes et singulas ecclesias pertinere, nec tamen irreformabile esse iudicium nisi Ecclesiae consensus accesserit. Cf. DS 2284.
19. Congar has an excellent treatment of this theme. Cf. Yves Congar, O.P., "The Holy Spirit in the Church," in Y. Congar, The Revelation of God. Herder & Herder, New York, 1968, 148-67.
20. Cf. Joseph Powers, S.J., Spirit and Sacrament. Seabury Press, New York, 1973, especially 146-211.
21. Cf. Willy Onclin, Commentary on the Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church of Vatican Council II. Paulist Press, Glen Rock, New Jersey, 1967, especially 17-39.
22. Three works might serve as a good starting point. M. F. Wiles et al. (Editors), Christian Believing: The Nature of the Christian Faith and Its Expression in Holy Scripture and Creeds, SPCK, London, 1976. Louis Monden, S.J., Faith Can Man Still Believe? Sheed & Ward, New York, 1970. Henri Bouillard, The Logic of the Faith. Sheed & Ward, New York, 1967.
23. Cf. Gustave Thils, L'Infaillibilité pontificale. Duculot, Gembloux, 1969, 251.

Addendum

The first section of Lumen Gentium #12, upon which much has been written to show the shift in emphasis in dealing with infallibility, could perhaps just as well show what Vatican Council I meant by the infallibility with which the Church is endowed. In Mansi, LI, 579 where the draft of the first schema of Chapter IX of De Ecclesiae Infallibilitate is printed, one finds the following text under adnotatio XVI.

Et cum dicimus, ecclesiam non posse errare, id intelligimus tam de universitate fidelium, quam de universitate episcoporum, ita ut sensus sit eius propositionis 'ecclesia non potest errare', id est, id quod tenent omnes fideles tanquam de fide, necessario est verum et de fide; et similiter id quod docent omnes episcopi tanquam ad fidem pertinens, necessario est verum et de fide.

This is a quote from St. Robert Bellarmine, De controversiis Christianae fidei disputationes.