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MINISTRY IN A DIVIDED CHURCH

A Position Paper prepared for ARCIC

by

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Prefatory Remark:

It would seem that a systematic presentation of a theology of ministry cannot be offered by ARC to ARCIC at this time because such a presentation should actually require a new general theology of the sacraments and a new ecclesiology which would be in accord with and spring from this new general theology of the sacraments. Why is this so?

It would appear that there is an increasing consensus among theologians that ministry is personal-corporate commissioned salvific action which as such is always sacramental-ecclesial action.¹ The philosophical category of action seems at first quite simple to understand. But on further analysis the understanding of action is a very difficult process indeed. When one specifies action as personal-corporate, representational, sacramental-ecclesial etc., this specification requires an epistemological analysis prior to that required of action. Thus what was a difficult problem in the first place becomes increasingly complex. Though it is a complex problem it is a very important one because no analysis of action as such would yield the specific qualities that make some action be ministry.²

Action of a personal agent in a phenomenologically descriptive context permits us to designate some action as ministry. In a sense the meaning of the context of some action allows action to be signified by the faith-signing judgment of the community as action that is ministry. Thus there is a 'more' to some action that makes it ministry. The 'more' derives from the context in which the action occurs. Hence it can be said that the intelligibility of the context is noetically prior to the intelligibility of some action as ministry. Grossly to oversimplify and syncopate what would be a lengthy and detailed analysis, action is ministry if the context is ecclesial (which requires the articulation of what Church is) and sacramental (which requires the articulation of what Christ presently is and what sign and community are now and will become). The oversimplification becomes acutely felt when the analysis of how one moves from the glorified Christ to sign action to community to Church is not presented.³ But granted the possibility of making this analysis, it would seem that a theology of ministry should be presented systematically after one had constructed an ecclesiology in accord with a previously worked out theology of sacraments as such. The point is not that this is the only way that a theology of ministry could be grounded and presented. Rather, the point is that this way of proceeding would be fruitful for ARCIC since the discussion of ministry in a divided Church is closely associated with the theology of Baptism and Order and the theological understanding of these two sacraments requires the articulation of a theology of the Church and its mission.⁴

Introduction: Catholic theology distinguishes two sorts of ministry: (1) The Ministry of the baptised and (2) the ordained ministry.⁵

Baptism: Through Baptism, Christians are so joined to Christ that he may continue to work through them for the

fulfillment of His redeeming task in history. Because the baptised Christian has received the sacramental character of Baptism, Christ is able to use him as minister in continuing His priestly action through incorporating him in His Body, the Church. In this sense each baptised Christian shares in the ministry of Christ who brings salvation and hope to humankind through His life, death and resurrection. Our baptism into Christ is the foundation for our common ministry to the world and forms the theological basis for our seeking to heal the visible rift between our two Communions so that as there is but one Lord and one Baptism so may there be one faith and one Church.⁶

Order: Though we share the ministry of the baptised, the Roman Communion does not believe that the Anglican Communion shares with it the ordained ministry. Pope Leo XIII in Apostolicae Curae clearly taught that the Anglican Communion lacks the sacrament of Order.⁷ Leo's teaching forms the basis for the present practice of the Roman Communion in ordaining Anglican deacons and priests when they wish to exercise the ordained ministry in the Roman Communion and in forbidding Romans to go to communion at the Anglican Eucharist.⁸

Problems: What steps may presently be taken to exercise jointly our common baptismal ministry? To what end ought we to exercise this ministry? Assuming that mutual sharing in the 'actions' of the ordained ministry of both Communions is essential to the organic unity which ARCIC has stated as its goal, how may this mutual sharing be brought about? Since the answer to the third question enters so closely into the responses to the first two questions a provisional reply to that question will be given so as to provide a context for the first two questions, for the answers to them are shaped by the desire "to discover some way of deliverance from imprisonment in the legacy of the past".⁹

Apostolicae Curae: So long as the Roman Communion maintains that the sacrament of Order is lacking in the Anglican Communion, members of the Roman Communion cannot share in the "actions" of the ordained ministry of the Anglican Communion. It is hoped that the Roman Communion will see the existence of the sacrament of Order in the Anglican Communion. To achieve this a development of the Roman Communion's doctrine on the Church and Sacraments from that which underlay the Bull Apostolicae Curae will have to be shown to have occurred and to be officially accepted by the Roman Communion. Once this task of showing the development of the Roman Communion's understanding of the mystery of the Church and Sacraments has been accomplished the Anglican Communion may be asked if it understands itself and its sacramental actions in terms consonant with the theological understanding accepted in the Roman Communion of these realities. If both Communions are in principle agreed on these points and some working arrangements for cooperation and coordination in the Church's mission to the world and adequate pastoral preparation of the members of both Communions have been achieved, it would seem that the Roman Communion's reply would be the granting of permission to the members of the Roman Communion for communicatio in sacris with the Anglican Communion. In effect this would mean that the Roman Communion sees the existence of the sacrament of Order in the Anglican Communion. With eucharistic sharing particularly, the future would bring further growth in organic union but that growth should not result in absorption of one Communion by the other. The growth of the two Communions ought not to take place in such a way that the Anglican Communion with its liturgy, traditions and ties with its member Churches ceases to give its living witness as a Communion in the Church of the West.¹⁰

Sharing in the Ministry of the Baptised: Though there is actual involvement for social justice by both Communions as Communions on the international, national, regional, and in some instances, parish levels in dealing with the problems of the just determination and execution of priorities to meet the needs of the international and various national and local communities and help afforded at all levels by both Communions to overcome the present social evils of poverty, disease, illiteracy, racism and war, the efforts of the two Communions do not seem to be coordinated as Communions which seek organic union. It would appear that a study of the efforts of the two Communions, their present programs and future plans should be undertaken so that both Communions could cooperate so as jointly to contribute to the social mission of the Church. Although much of the good work which is done in this area of ministry proceeds from a solid Christian common sense, few studies sponsored by either Communion have been undertaken to provide the theological basis for both Communions' quite considerable involvement in this sort of ministry. It is true that the Roman Communion does possess a heady corpus doctrinae on matters of social justice¹¹ and that the Church of England has been especially fortunate in producing theologians who addressed themselves to these issues.¹² Yet it seems fair to say that neither Communion currently possesses a contemporary spirituality widespread among its members which is the wellspring from which the social action of the Communions takes its rise. Thus the proposal to explicate the theological basis for the social commitment of both Communions ought also to have a pastoral dimension and focus on the development of a contemporary Christian spirituality that will motivate the whole people of God in the social action that flows from the acceptance of its baptismal ministry. Could it be due to the lack of a viable Trinitarian spirituality that in the United States, at least, Church sponsored social action is so often criticised from within and without the Church for insensitivity and shallowness and faces the charge from non-Christians of 'Christian imperialism' for actions that seem rather an exercise in Prep-school proletarianism than genuine ministry to the world and its needs?¹³

For yet another reason the development of this spirituality seems to merit serious study. As ARCIC prepares its theological studies to see the real measure of convergence of doctrine which has always existed between the Communions or has developed under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit despite the four hundred years of visible separation of the two Communions, ARCIC could well concern itself with the pastoral situation which it will face when its work is completed. Members of both Communions will be challenged in their spiritual loyalty to the traditions which have meant most to their lives - traditions that have in no small measure been formed not by ecumenical concerns but by polemical apologetics. The pastoral preparation of the members of both Communions for the acceptance of organic union by providing a means of contemporary spirituality seems essential to the success of ARCIC's work. It is for this reason that the study proposed may merit rather high priority among the tasks of the Commission.

Some Means for Developing a Common Ministry of the Baptised: One of the more successful means employed in the United States for developing a common ministry through marshalling the spiritual resources of both Communions has been the ecumenical retreat.¹⁴ These retreats are led by two clergymen; one Anglican and one Roman Catholic. An example of such a retreat was that held at Kansas City in May of this year for 21 bishops, 11 Anglican and 10 Roman Catholic who had jurisdiction in the same geographical area (congruent dioceses). The retreat which lasted three days commenced with an agape which introduced the theme around which the retreat was built, viz., The Presence of God in the Christian Life. The first day considered

the mission of the Holy Spirit; the second, that of the Son and the third, the presence of the Father. The Scripture passages on which the meditations were based were read aloud by each Bishop to a small group of his fellows immediately prior to all the Bishops' convening to hear the exposition of the passages by the retreat leader. All the bishops attended these points in common. Each made his meditation and then returned to his small group to discuss what he had prayed over. Each day the Anglican and Roman liturgies were celebrated in the same chapel and attended by all the bishops. At each celebration of the liturgy a Bishop was homilist. In the evenings the Bishops gathered in one group to discuss such topics as: joint projects for mission in the Bishops' diocese, programs for counselling partners in Anglican-Roman Catholic marriages and the Holy See's new norms for mixed marriages, treatment of priests on passing from one Communion to the other.

This same general format is used for priests' retreats, joint parish groups or Church organizations and professional societies (doctors, teachers, lawyers etc.). Out of these retreats have come common projects for joint Anglican-Roman sponsored housing projects for the aged and the under-privileged, tutoring programs for disadvantaged students, a drug information program, hospital guilds, a service for foreign students studying in the U.S.A., a neighborhood action program, several series of clergy conferences and study groups, a genetic counselling service and a legal aid society for securing civil rights. It would appear that the acceptance of the baptismal ministry when realized on the basis of a Trinitarian spirituality which Anglicans and Romans find mutually acceptable produces quite creative and sensitive forms of contemporary ministry.

Other means of developing a joint ministry within the framework of the spiritual tradition shared by both Communions have involved the mutual sharing of trained personnel or physical facilities. One example would be the effort of both Communions in the United States to use the same resource persons in the development of catechetical methods and materials, even to the extent of the joint training and employment of catechists. Use of Roman Catholic school buildings for joint projects for youth, summer schools for the urban poor etc. has begun. In the U.S.A. it is not too uncommon for a Roman parish, especially a newly founded one, to have a school but not a church and many newly founded parishes do not presently plan on ever building a church. Thus the common use of the Roman Catholic school will perhaps be a good indication of how recommendation 9(b) of the Malta Report is being put into practice in the United States.

To What End Ought We Exercise This Common Ministry? Owing to the context in which this question is now raised, the ministry with which we are dealing is the spiritually realized common baptismal ministry of all members of both Communions that as Communions are seeking visibly to manifest their unity in the one Church by moving towards organic union. Thus it would seem fitting that one value in the choice of common projects for ministry should be that the common project proceed from and foster the spiritual deepening of the members of both Communions who engage in the project. In the range of values which make up the criteria for choice of common ministry this need not be the primary value or the decisive criterion for choice - urgency of need and the non-availability of other agencies to alleviate it should most probably be the ultimate criterion - but surely this value of spiritual deepening and the consequent growth towards organic union which that deepening would entail should pervade the choice for common projects of ministry and this criterion should be made known to other members of national and regional Councils of Churches to

which member Churches or dioceses of Churches of both Communions belong. The acceptance of this criterion would not imply that Anglicans and Romans must always support the same position or project in these multi-church agencies but that their disagreements ought to be few and these regarded as unfortunate for in the multi-church agency as well as elsewhere the two Communions should be distinguished for the special charity they bear one another as they move towards organic union.

The theological basis for this strategy for common ministry is that as communicatio in spiritualibus becomes more widespread and is deepened as a source for the motivation of common ministry both Communions will enter a period of communicatio in Spiritu.¹⁵ This renewal of the awareness of the Holy Spirit abiding in the Church and moving each member of both Communions towards that unity of which He is the source should so invigorate the Church by the power of His love that we would be enlightened to see ourselves as members incorporate of Christ's Body and so instructed by Him in the means of expressing our common faith that we shall be able mutually to declare it and so celebrate communicatio in sacris.

Sharing in the Ordained Ministry: Among the major obstacles facing the two Communions in this area is the Bull of Pope Leo XIII, Apostolicae Curae. For the Roman Communion this papal document is an authoritative doctrinal pronouncement.¹⁶ This doctrinal pronouncement depends upon a theological judgment which is expressed in the technical language of Roman canon law:

Itaque omnibus Pontificum Decessorum in hac ipsa causa decretis usquequaque assentientes, eaque plenissime confirmantes ac veluti renovantes auctoritate Nostra, motu proprio certa scientia; pronuntiamus et declaramus, Ordinationes ritu anglicano actas, irritas prorsus fuisse et esse, omninoque nullas.¹⁷

Pope Leo's language here is highly technical. By using the phrase irritas prorsus fuisse et esse, omninoque nullas Pope Leo denies the existence of the sacrament of Order in the Anglican Communion from the time of the introduction and use of the Edwardine Ordinal until September 13, 1896. Without consulting the minutes of the meetings of the Roman Commission of 1896, the theological presuppositions underlying this statement seem to be the following. (1) Ordained ministry is exclusively passed on by the successive valid celebration of the sacrament of Order. (2) The succession once broken, remains broken. (3) A validly ordained Bishop using an Ordinal subsequently judged to be defective in regard to form can by his internal intention to exclude a notion of sacrifice from priesthood and Eucharist break the succession of the required valid celebration of the sacrament of Order.¹⁸ (4) Underlying this third presupposition is a deeper and more fundamental theological position: That the Roman Catholic Church as visibly constituted in 1896 is exclusively to be identified with and is coextensive with the Kingdom of God which is the one, true Church. It is to be noted that none of these presuppositions is taught as dogma in the Roman Communion. These presuppositions are still held today by many theologians of the Roman Communion but it is doubtful whether these theologians would merit the support of the major et sanior pars of their fellows.

It is also valuable to note how Pope Leo phrases his decision: Itaque omnibus Pontificum Decessorum in hac ipsa causa decretis usquequaque assentientes..... These words may well reveal a fifth presupposition of the Pope's theology. (5) The practice of former Popes in ordering the ordination of Anglicans upon their seeking to exercise the ordained ministry in the Roman Communion is a precedent to be defended and maintained. One may call this

principle, the principle of consistency - a principle that expresses the high value given to tradition in Roman Catholic theology. One may judge that the major et sanior pars of Roman theologians would still hold this principle. Thus it would be incumbent upon anyone who would seek to change the practice of the Roman Communion in regard to the ordination of Anglican clerics in major orders when seeking to exercise their ministry in the Roman Communion that he show that a new situation exists between the two Communions that is not covered in the tradition of their relationship with one another and to which the principle of consistency ought not to be applied to the prejudice of the newness of the situation. Rather, the principle of consistency would require the formation of a new policy to meet the new situation. The new policy to be adopted would have to be shown to be consistent with accepted principles of Roman Catholic theology.

In order to show that a new situation exists between the two Communions it will not be sufficient to point to a series of theological postulates but the new situation must exist as a pastoral fact. Furthermore Roman Catholic theologians would have to be aware that a development of doctrine has occurred in regard to Pope Leo's theological presuppositions. But as the case with the development of the doctrine of religious liberty, the development must be shown to be consistent with the principles which supported perhaps a quite different practice in the past.¹⁹ Change of practice may occur in the Roman Communion if one shows clearly that doctrinal development has taken place and that the change in practice is required by a new situation in order to be consistent with the doctrine presently taught. But doctrine itself, if it is properly to develop, must be consistent with the dogma of the Roman Catholic Church.²⁰ Thus if one is to show that a consistent development of doctrine has occurred, one must clearly show that no dogma has been denied, but only that theological presuppositions have been changed.

Shape of the Study Required: It would be most helpful to have the records of the Roman Commission of 1896 to see what theological presuppositions were actually operative in its deliberations. The grasp of the factual situation possessed by previous Popes and on which they had based their decisions, though valuable, is actually ancillary in the strategy of argument here proposed. The study envisioned here does not seek to open once more the question of the validity of Anglican Orders. Its aim is quite limited both historically and theologically. Historically the study would involve tracing which of the arguments from the Commission found their way into the Bull, Apostolicae Curae. Theologically the task would be: (1) To analyse the arguments to see what the theological presuppositions behind them were; (2) to see whether Roman Catholic theology can show a genuine and consistent development of doctrine in regard to these presuppositions from 1896 to the present time. This study would then be put into the larger context which is one of the tasks of ARCIC, viz., to judge whether there is presently sufficient doctrinal convergence between the two Communions to permit them actually to see one another as two Communions subsisting in the one Church.²¹

Conclusion: If these tasks are achieved, then the question of the existence of the sacrament of Order in the Anglican Communion is solved by implication. The Roman Communion will be able to see the existence of the sacrament of Order in the Anglican Communion and respond to the new situation by granting permission to its members for eucharistic sharing at the Anglican Eucharist and desist from ordaining clerics in major orders from the Anglican Communion when they wish to exercise their ordained ministry among Romans (for these clerics would already be doing so in regard to Eucharistic sharing).²²

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Footnotes

1. L. Guillot, Ministry in Ecumenical Perspective. Catholic Book Agency, Rome, 1969, pp. 71-95. An excellent treatment of the biblical data on this question is R. Dillon, "Ministry as Stewardship of the Tradition in the New Testament", Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America XXIV (1969), pp. 10-62.
2. This is an extremely difficult point. What seems to be at issue is the proper criteria for establishing an essential distinction in the supernatural order. The problem area is treated from a Molinist viewpoint in K. Rahner, "Die anonymen Christen", Schriften zur Theologie, VI, Benziger, Einsiedeln, 1965, pp. 545-54 and developed by P. Chirico, "One Church: What does it Mean?", Theological Studies XXVIII (December, 1967), pp. 659-82.
3. No one work is satisfactory here. K. Rahner, The Church and the Sacraments. Herder and Herder, New York, 1963. E. Schillebeeckx, Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God. Sheed and Ward, New York, 1963. Otto Semmelroth, Church and Sacrament. Fides, Notre Dame, 1963. G. Barauna and Y. Congar (Editors). L'Eglise de Vatican II. Editions du Cerf, 2 vols., Paris, 1967. Cf. esp. J. Witte, "L'Eglise, 'Sacramentum Unitatis' du cosmos et du genre humain", Ibid., II, pp. 457-91.
4. In addition to the documents of Vatican II and the commentaries upon them (especially H. Vorgrinler (Editor), Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II. Herder and Herder, 5 vols., New York, 1967-69.) the bibliography on this point is extensive. A good starting point on the Roman Catholic side is J. Hamer, The Church is a Communion. Sheed and Ward, New York, 1964. A good overview of this literature by a Lutheran is G. Lindbeck, The Future of Roman Catholic Theology. Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1969. A 'popular' American Roman Catholic treatment is R. McBrien, Do We Need the Church? Harper and Row, New York, 1969.
5. Cf. Lumen Gentium, 10, 30-32 and the standard commentaries. For newer developments E. Ruffini, "Character as a Concrete Visible Element of the Sacrament in Relation to the Church", Concilium XXXI, Paulist Press, New York, 1968, pp. 101-14. The Trinitarian aspect of the sacramental character is well presented in C. Sepe, La Dimensione Trinitaria del Carattere Sacramentale. P.U.L. Press, Rome, 1969.
6. A. Bea, The Unity of Christians. Herder and Herder, New York, 1963 and B.J. Cooke, Christian Sacraments and Christian Personality. Doubleday, Garden City, 1968, esp., pp. 13-66.
7. "Apostolicae curae et caritatis" of Sept. 13, 1896. Acta Sanctae Sedis XXIX (1896-97), pp. 198-205.
8. "A Catholic in similar circumstances may not ask for these sacraments except from a minister who has been validly ordained." Directory, 55. "Notes on the Application of the Ecumenical Directory", Oct. 6, 1968. Declaration of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, "The Catholic Position on a Common Eucharist between Christians of Different Confessions", Rome, January 7, 1970.
9. H. Chadwick, "The Discussion about Anglican Orders in Modern Anglican Theology", Concilium XXXIV, Paulist Press, New York, 1968, p. 149. This article as well as that of J.-M. Tillard, "Sacramental Questions: The Intentions of Minister and Recipient", Concilium XXXI, Paulist Press, New York, 1968, pp. 117-33 are highly recommended.

10. These views are merely my prognostication. The Latin terminology used is taken from Unitatis Redintegratio, 8, 15 and the Directory, 25, 29-31, 38-9.
11. The major texts besides Gaudium et Spes are: Rerum novarum (May 15, 1891), Acta Leonis XIII 11 (1892), pp. 97-148. Quadregesimo anno (May 15, 1931), AAS 23 (1931), pp. 177-228. Mater et magistra (May 15, 1961), AAS 53 (1961), pp. 401-64. Pacem in terris (April 11, 1963), AAS 55 (1963), pp. 257-304. Populorum progressio (March 26, 1967), AAS 59 (1967), pp. 257-99. The most comprehensive work on this 'corpus doctrinae' is P.E. Bolté, Mater et Magistra, Univ. of Montreal Press, 5 vols., Montreal, 1968.
12. The bibliography on F.D. Maurice, Stewart Headlam, C. Gore and the Christian Social Union and William Temple is too extensive to list. R. Lloyd, The Church of England 1900-1965. SCM Press, London, 1966, esp. pp. 291-350 is helpful but a full, scholarly study is much needed.
13. A balanced critique is that offered by Charles V. Willie, Church Action in the World. Morehouse-Barlow, New York, 1969. Dr. Willie is one of the most distinguished laymen on the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church. He is Chairman of the Department of Sociology, Syracuse University.
14. In the United States this work has been greatly stimulated by the Gustave Weigel Society and its Executive Director, Mr. Robert Balkam.
15. For terminology, cf. footnote 10. The term communicatio in Spiritu is the author's coinage and was suggested to him by reading W. Temple, Readings in St. John's Gospel. Macmillan, London, 1953, pp. 304-06.
16. By 'dogma' I mean those statements of the magisterium that are taught de fide explicite definita; by 'doctrine', all other authoritative statements of the magisterium; by 'theology', the scientific investigation of the meaning of the revelation as it is passed on from the Apostles' time to our own. Cf. Address of Pope Paul VI, April 15, 1970.
17. ASS, Ibid. and cf. DS, 3319.
18. This seems to be the burden of Francis Clark's argument which centers on Barlow's defect of intention. Cf. F. Clark, Anglican Orders and Defect of Intention. Longmans, Green, London, 1956, pp. 198-202. How was Barlow's internal intention known? Clark, Op. cit., pp. 9-10 begins with what is the ultimate defense of his position - the theory of papal infallibility relating to dogmatic facts - and applies this to the determination of what Barlow's internal intention was. Three observations might be in order: (1) The hypothesis of 'dogmatic facts' is a theological theory and as such is not doctrine and a fortiori not dogma. (2) This theory requires and assumes the exclusive identification of the Church with the Roman Communion and (3) the magisterium with the Pope.
19. In addition to Dignitatis Humanae Personae and the commentaries on this Declaration of Vatican II, cf. J.C. Murray, The Problems of Religious Freedom. Newman, Westminster, Md., 1965; Freedom and Man. Kenedy, New York, 1965; Religious Liberty: An End and a Beginning. Macmillan, New York, 1966; "The Declaration on Religious Freedom", Concilium XV, Paulist Press, New York, 1966, pp. 3-16. R.J. Regan, Conflict and Consensus: Religious Freedom and the Second Vatican Council. Macmillan, New York, 1967. J. Hamer and Y. Congar (Editors), La liberté religieuse. Editions du Cerf (Unum Sanctam LX), Paris, 1967.

20. Recall the distinctions made in footnote 16. Cf. A. Dulles, "Dogma as an Ecumenical Problem", Theological Studies XXVI (Sept., 1968), pp. 397-416 and F. Crowe, "Development of Doctrine: Aid or Barrier to Christian Unity", Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America, XXI (1966), pp. 1-20.
21. Cf. the address of J. Willebrands at Great St. Mary's Church, Cambridge, Jan. 19, 1970 and the Relatio of F. Seper distributed to Extraordinary Synod of Bishops at Rome October 11, 1969. Cf. esp. Part I, "Communion of the Faithful".
22. The author anticipates no 'service of reconciliation', no petition for a sanatio in radice, no decree for the 'recognition' of Orders.