

17.12.80  
3.45 pm.

ARCIC 235/INFALLIBILITY/CONTINUATION/2.

Paragraph 7.

Result of Comparison of Paragraphs 5 and 6.

From comparison of the preceding paragraphs 5 and 6 it leaps to the eye that there is a large area of common ground shared by Roman Catholics and Anglicans. <sup>the term 'infallibility' is an unsolved difficulty (see kbs)</sup> It is not in dispute that the Church can make a decisive judgement in matters of faith, (provided it be consonant with scripture) and so exclude error. This judgement <sup>is</sup> normally ~~be~~ given through synodal decision, i.e. in a crucial matter of concern to all Christian people, by <sup>the gen.</sup> the universal primate in council; <sup>is</sup> but in special circumstances ~~by~~ the universal primate acting, <sup>in communion with his fellow bishops</sup> after due consultation, without having called a synod. Although the reception by the people of God does not first confer authority on a definition, the final knowledge that a definition has settled a question and is what it purports to be comes when Christians are led by the Spirit to appropriate it so that it is accepted by the Church at large in what becomes moral unanimity. The source of objective confidence is found first in the universal faith of the people of God, articulated and guided indeed by a teaching office and authority, but that authority is nevertheless secondary to the other.

In regard to the two Marian definitions, to say that ~~by grace she~~ <sup>by grace</sup> Mary was prepared, <sup>unique</sup> to play a crucial role in the incarnation and life of Jesus Christ and that her glory in heaven is proportionate to the honour God gave her on earth, is a confession of faith with an obvious kinship to the defined faith of Roman Catholic believers. Christian understanding of Mary is in no way divorced from the doctrines of Christ and the Church; and the question between us is that of the appropriateness and need for the Church to make statements of essential doctrine in Marian rather than directly Christological terms.