CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH

LETTER TO THE BISHOPS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ON SOME ASPECTS OF THE CHURCH UNDERSTOOD AS COMMUNION

INTRODUCTION

1. The concept of *communion* (*koinonia*), which appears with a certain prominence in the texts of the Second Vatican Council(1), is very suitable for expressing the core of the Mystery of the Church, and can certainly be a key for the renewal of Catholic ecclesiology(2). A deeper appreciation of the fact that the Church is a Communion is, indeed, a task of special importance, which provides ample latitude for theological reflection on the mystery of the Church, *"whose nature is such that it always admits new and deeper exploring"(3)*. However, some approaches to ecclesiology suffer from a clearly inadequate awareness of the Church as a *mystery of communion*, especially insofar as they have not sufficiently integrated the concept of *communion* with the concepts of *People of God* and of the *Body of Christ*, and have not given due importance to the relationship between the Church as *communion* and the Church as *sacrament*.

2. Bearing in mind the doctrinal, pastoral and ecumenical importance of the different aspects regarding the Church understood as Communion, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has considered it opportune, by means of this *Letter*, to recall briefly and to clarify, where necessary, some of the fundamental elements that are to be considered already settled also by those who undertake the hoped-for theological investigation.

I

THE CHURCH, A MYSTERY OF COMMUNION

3. The concept of *communion* lies *"at the heart of the Church's selfunderstanding"(4)*, insofar as it is the Mystery of the personal union of each human being with the divine Trinity and with the rest of mankind, initiated with the faith(5), and, having begun as a reality in the Church on earth, is directed towards its eschatological fulfilment in the heavenly Church(6).

If the concept of *communion*, which is not a univocal concept, is to serve as a key to ecclesiology, it has to be understood within the teaching of the Bible and the patristic tradition, in which *communion* always involves a double dimension: the *vertical* (communion with God) and the *horizontal* (communion among men). It is essential to the Christian understanding of *communion* that it be recognised above all as a gift from God, as a fruit of God's initiative carried out in the paschal mystery. The new relationship between man and God, that has been established in Christ and is communicated through the sacraments, also extends to a new relationship among human beings. As a result, the concept of *communion* should be such as to express both the sacramental nature of the Church while *"we are away from the Lord"(7)*, and also the particular unity which makes the faithful into members of one and the same Body, the Mystical Body of Christ(8), an organically structured community(9), *"a people brought into one by the unity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"(10)*, and endowed with suitable means for its visible and social union(11).

4. *Ecclesial communion is at the same time both invisible and visible*. As an invisible reality, it is the communion of each human being with the Father through Christ in the Holy Spirit, and with the others who are fellow sharers in the divine nature(12), in the passion of Christ(13), in

the same faith(14), in the same spirit(15). In the Church on earth, there is an intimate relationship between this invisible communion and the visible communion in the teaching of the Apostles, in the sacraments and in the hierarchical order. By means of these divine gifts, which are very visible realities, Christ carries out in different ways in history his prophetical, priestly and kingly *function* for the salvation of mankind(16). This link between the invisible and visible elements of ecclesial communion constitutes the Church as the *Sacrament* of salvation.

From this sacramentality it follows that the Church is not a reality closed in on herself; rather, she is permanently open to missionary and ecumenical endeavour, for she is sent to the world to announce and witness, to make present and spread the mystery of communion which is essential to her: to gather together all people and all things into Christ(17); so as to be for all an *"inseparable sacrament of unity"(18)*.

5. Ecclesial communion, into which each individual is introduced by faith and by Baptism(19), has its root and centre in the Blessed Eucharist. Indeed, Baptism is an incorporation into a body that the risen Lord builds up and keeps alive through the Eucharist, so that this body can truly be called the Body of Christ. The Eucharist is the creative force and source of *communion* among the members of the Church, precisely because it unites each one of them with Christ himself: *"Really sharing in the body of the Lord in the breaking of the eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with him and with one another. 'Because the bread is one, we, though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread' (1 Cor 10, 17)"(20)*.

Hence, the pauline expression *the Church is the Body of Christ* means that the Eucharist, in which the Lord gives us his Body and transforms us into one Body(21), is where the Church expresses herself permanently in most essential form. While present everywhere, she is yet only *one*, just as Christ is *one*.

6. The Church is a *Communion of the saints*, to use a traditional expression that is found in the Latin versions of the Apostles' Creed from the end of the fourth century(22). The common visible sharing in the goods of salvation (*the holy things*), and especially in the Eucharist, is the source of the invisible communion among the sharers (*the saints*). This communion brings with it a spiritual solidarity among the members of the Church, insofar as they are members of one same Body(23), and it fosters their effective union in charity by constituting *"one heart and soul"(24)*. Communion tends also towards union in prayer(25), inspired in all by one and the same Spirit(26), the Holy Spirit *"who fills and unites the whole Church"(27)*.

In its invisible elements, this communion exists not only among the members of the pilgrim Church on earth, but also between these and all who, having passed from this world in the grace of the Lord, belong to the heavenly Church or will be incorporated into it after having been fully purified(28). This means, among other things, that there is a *mutual relationship* between the pilgrim Church on earth and the heavenly Church in the historical-redemptive mission. Hence the ecclesiological importance not only of Christ's intercession on behalf of his members(29), but also of that of the saints and, in an eminent fashion, of the Blessed Virgin Mary's(30). *Devotion to the saints*, which is such a strong feature of the piety of the Christian people, can thus be seen to correspond in its very essence to the profound reality of the Church as a mystery of communion.

II

UNIVERSAL CHURCH AND PARTICULAR CHURCHES

7. The *Church of Christ*, which we profess in the Creed to be one, holy, catholic and apostolic, is the universal Church, that is, the worldwide community of the disciples of the Lord(31), which is present and active amid the particular characteristics and the diversity of persons, groups, times and places. Among these manifold particular expressions of the saving presence of the one Church of Christ, there are to be found, from the times of the Apostles on, those entities which are in themselves *Churches(32)*, because, although they are particular, the universal Church becomes present in them with all its essential elements(33). They are therefore constituted *"after the model of the universal Church"(34)*, and each of them is *"a portion of the People of God entrusted to a bishop to be guided by him with the assistance of his clergy"(35)*.

8. The universal Church is therefore the *Body of the Churches(36)*. Hence it is possible to apply the concept of communion *in analogous fashion* to the union existing among particular Churches, and to see the universal Church as a *Communion of Churches*. Sometimes, however, the idea of a "communion of particular Churches" is presented in such a way as to weaken the concept of the unity of the Church at the visible and institutional level. Thus it is asserted that every particular Church is a subject complete in itself, and that the universal Church is the result of a *reciprocal recognition* on the part of the particular Churches. This ecclesiological unilateralism, which impoverishes not only the concept of the universal Church but also that of the particular Church, betrays an insufficient understanding of the concept of communion. As history shows, when a particular Church has sought to become self-sufficient, and has weakened its real communion with the universal Church and with its living and visible centre, its internal unity suffers too, and it finds itself in danger of losing its own freedom in the face of the various forces of slavery and exploitation(37).

9. In order to grasp the true meaning of the analogical application of the term *communion* to the particular Churches taken as a whole, one must bear in mind above all that the particular Churches, insofar as they are *"part of the one Church of Christ"(38)*, have a special relationship of *"mutual interiority"(39)* with the whole, that is, with the universal Church, because in every particular Church *"the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and active"(40)*. For this reason, *"the universal Church cannot be conceived as the sum of the particular Churches, or as a federation of particular Churches"(41)*. It is not the result of the communion of the Churches, but, in its essential mystery, it is a reality *ontologically and temporally* prior to every *individual* particular Church.

Indeed, according to the Fathers, *ontologically*, the Church-mystery, the Church that is one and unique, precedes creation(42), and gives birth to the particular Churches as her daughters. She expresses herself in them; she is the mother and not the product of the particular Churches. Furthermore, the Church is manifested, *temporally*, on the day of Pentecost in the community of the one hundred and twenty gathered around Mary and the twelve Apostles, the representatives of the one unique Church and the founders-to-be of the local Churches, who have a mission directed to the world: from the first the Church *speaks all languages(43)*.

From the Church, which in its origins and its first manifestation is universal, have arisen the different local Churches, as particular expressions of the one unique Church of Jesus Christ. Arising *within* and *out of* the universal Church, they have their ecclesiality in it and from it. Hence the formula of the Second Vatican Council: *The Church in and formed out of the Churches (Ecclesia in et ex Ecclesiis)(44)*, is inseparable from this other formula: *The Churches in and formed out of the Church (Ecclesia in et ex Ecclesiis)(45)*. Clearly the relationship between the universal Church and the particular Churches is a mystery, and

cannot be compared to that which exists between the whole and the parts in a purely human group or society.

10. Every member of the faithful, through faith and Baptism, is inserted into the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. He or she does not belong to the universal Church in a *mediate* way, *through* belonging to a particular Church, but in an *immediate* way, even though entry into and life within the universal Church are necessarily brought about *in* a particular Church. From the point of view of the Church understood as communion, this means therefore that the universal *communion of the faithful* and the *communion of the Churches* are not consequences of one another, but constitute the same reality seen from different viewpoints.

Moreover, one's *belonging* to a particular Church never conflicts with the reality that *in the Church no-one is a stranger(46)*: each member of the faithful, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist, is in *his or her* Church, in the Church of Christ, regardless of whether or not he or she belongs, according to canon law, to the diocese, parish or other particular community where the celebration takes place. In this sense, without impinging on the necessary regulations regarding juridical dependence(47), whoever belongs to one particular Church belongs to all the Churches; since belonging to the *Communion*, like belonging to the Church, is never simply particular, but by its very nature is always universal(48).

III

COMMUNION OF THE CHURCHES, EUCHARIST AND EPISCOPATE

11. Unity, or communion, between the particular Churches in the universal Church, is rooted not only in the same faith and in the common Baptism, but above all in the Eucharist and in the Episcopate.

It is rooted in the Eucharist because the eucharistic Sacrifice, while always performed in a particular community, is never a celebration of that community alone. In fact, the community, in receiving the eucharistic presence of the Lord, receives the entire gift of salvation and shows, even in its lasting visible particular form, that it is the image and true presence of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church(49).

The rediscovery of a *eucharistic ecclesiology*, though being of undoubted value, has however sometimes placed unilateral emphasis on the principle of the local Church. It is claimed that, where the Eucharist is celebrated, the totality of the mystery of the Church would be made present in such a way as to render any other principle of unity or universality non-essential. Other conceptions, under different theological influences, present this particular view of the Church in an even more radical form, going as far as to hold that gathering together in the name of Jesus (cf. *Mt* 18, 20) is the same as generating the Church: the assembly which in the name of Christ becomes a community, would hold within itself the powers of the Church, including power as regards the Eucharist. The Church, some say, would arise "from base level". These and other similar errors do not take sufficiently into account that it is precisely the Eucharist that renders all self-sufficiency on the part of the particular Churches impossible. Indeed, the unicity and indivisibility of the eucharistic Body of the Lord implies the unicity of his mystical Body, which is the one and indivisible Church. From the eucharistic centre arises the necessary openness of every celebrating community, of every particular Church; by allowing itself to be drawn into the open arms of the Lord, it achieves insertion into his one and undivided Body. For this reason too, the existence of the Petrine ministry, which is a foundation of the unity of the Episcopate and of the universal Church, bears a profound

correspondence to the eucharistic character of the Church.

12. In fact, the unity of the Church is also rooted in the unity of the Episcopate(50). As the very idea of the *Body of the Churches* calls for the existence of a Church that is *Head* of the Churches, which is precisely the Church of Rome, *"foremost in the universal communion of charity"(51)*, so too the unity of the Episcopate involves the existence of a Bishop who is Head of the *Body or College of Bishops*, namely the Roman Pontiff(52). Of the unity of the Episcopate, as also of the unity of the entire Church, *"the Roman Pontiff, as the successor of Peter, is a perpetual and visible source and foundation"(53)*. This unity of the Episcopate is perpetuated through the centuries by means of the *apostolic succession*, and is also the foundation of the identity of the Church of every age with the Church built by Christ upon Peter and upon the other Apostles(54).

13. The Bishop is a visible source and foundation of the unity of the particular Church entrusted to his pastoral ministry(55). But for each particular Church to be fully Church, that is, the particular presence of the universal Church with all its essential elements, and hence constituted *after the model of the universal Church*, there must be present in it, as a proper element, the supreme authority of the Church: the Episcopal College *"together with their head, the Supreme Pontiff, and never apart from him"(56)*. The Primacy of the Bishop of Rome and the episcopal College are proper elements of the universal Church that are *"not derived from the particularity of the Churches"(57)*, but are nevertheless *interior* to each particular Church. Consequently *"we must see the ministry of the Successor of Peter, not only as a 'global' service, reaching each particular Church from 'outside', as it were, but* as belonging already to the essence of each particular Church from 'within'"(58). Indeed, the ministry of the Primacy involves, in essence, a truly episcopal power, which is not only supreme, full and universal, but also *immediate*, over everybody, whether Pastors or other faithful(59). The ministry of the Successor of Peter as something *interior* to each particular Church is a necessary expression of that fundamental *mutual interiority* between universal Church and particular Church(60).

14. The unity of the Eucharist and the unity of the Episcopate *with Peter and under Peter* are not independent roots of the unity of the Church, since Christ instituted the Eucharist and the Episcopate as essentially interlinked realities(61). The Episcopate is *one*, just as the Eucharist is *one*: the one Sacrifice of the one Christ, dead and risen. The liturgy expresses this reality in various ways, showing, for example, that every celebration of the Eucharist is performed in union not only with the proper Bishop, but also with the Pope, with the episcopal order, with all the clergy, and with the entire people(62). Every valid celebration of the Eucharist expresses this universal communion *with Peter* and with the whole Church, or *objectively* calls for it, as in the case of the Christian Churches separated from Rome(63).

IV

UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN ECCLESIAL COMMUNION

15. *"The universality of the Church involves, on the one hand, a most solid unity, and on the other, a* plurality *and a* diversification, *which do not obstruct unity, but rather confer upon it the character of 'communion'"(64)*. This plurality refers both to the diversity of ministries, charisms, and forms of life and apostolate within each particular Church, and to the diversity of traditions in liturgy and culture among the various particular Churches(65).

Fostering a unity that does not obstruct diversity, and acknowledging and fostering a diversification that does not obstruct unity but rather enriches it, is a fundamental task of the Roman Pontiff for the whole Church(66), and without prejudice to the general law of the

Church itself, of each Bishop in the particular Church entrusted to his pastoral ministry(67). But the building up and safeguarding of this unity, on which diversification confers the character of communion, is also a task of everyone in the Church, because all are called to build it up and preserve it each day, above all by means of that charity which is *"the bond of perfection"(68)*.

16. For a more complete vision of this aspect of ecclesial communion -unity in diversity- one needs to bear in mind that there are institutions and communities established by the Apostolic Authority for specific pastoral tasks. They belong *as such* to the universal Church, though their members are also members of the particular Churches where they live and work. The manner of belonging to the particular Churches, with its own particular *flexibility(69)*, takes different juridical forms. But it does not erode the unity of the particular Church founded on the Bishop; rather, it helps endow this unity with the interior diversification which is a feature of *communion(70)*.

In the context of the Church understood as communion, consideration should also be given to the many institutes and societies that express the charisms of consecrated life and apostolic life, with which the Holy Spirit enriches the Mystical Body of Christ. Although these do not belong to the hierarchical structure of the Church, they belong to its life and holiness(71).

Given their supradiocesan character, rooted in the Petrine ministry, all these ecclesial realities are also elements at the service of communion among the various particular Churches.

V

ECCLESIAL COMMUNION AND ECUMENISM

17. *"The Church knows that she is joined in many ways to the baptized who are honoured by the name of Christian, but who do not however profess the Catholic faith in its entirety or have not preserved unity or communion under the successor of Peter"(72)*. Among the non-Catholic Churches and Christian communities, there are indeed to be found many elements of the Church of Christ, which allow us, amid joy and hope, to acknowledge the existence of a certain communion, albeit imperfect(73).

This communion exists especially with the Eastern orthodox Churches, which, though separated from the See of Peter, remain united to the Catholic Church by means of very close bonds, such as the apostolic succession and a valid Eucharist, and therefore merit the title of particular Churches(74). Indeed, *"through the celebration of the Eucharist of the Lord in each of these Churches, the Church of God is built up and grows in stature"(75)*, for in every valid celebration of the Eucharist the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church becomes truly present(76).

Since, however, communion with the universal Church, represented by Peter's Successor, is not an external complement to the particular Church, but one of its internal constituents, the situation of those venerable Christian communities also means that their existence as particular Churches is *wounded*. The wound is even deeper in those ecclesial communities which have not retained the apostolic succession and a valid Eucharist. This in turn also injures the Catholic Church, called by the Lord to become for all *"one flock"* with *"one shepherd"(77)*, in that it hinders the complete fulfilment of its universality in history.

18. This situation seriously calls for ecumenical commitment on the part of everyone, with a view to achieving full communion in the unity of the Church; that unity *"which Christ*

bestowed on his Church from the beginning. This unity, we believe, subsists in the Catholic Church as something she can never lose, and we hope that it will continue to increase until the end of time"(78). In this ecumenical commitment, important priorities are prayer, penance, study, dialogue and collaboration, so that, through a new conversion to the Lord, all may be enabled to recognise the continuity of the Primacy of Peter in his successors, the Bishops of Rome, and to see the Petrine ministry fulfilled, in the manner intended by the Lord, as a worldwide apostolic service, which is present in all the Churches *from within*, and which, while preserving its substance as a divine institution, can find expression in various ways according to the different circumstances of time and place, as history has shown.

CONCLUSION

19. The Blessed Virgin Mary is the model of ecclesial communion in faith, in charity and in union with Christ(79). *"Eternally present in the mystery of Christ"(80)*, She is, in the midst of the Apostles, at the very heart of the Church at its birth(81) and of the Church of all ages. Indeed, *"the Church was congregated in the upper part (of the Cenacle) with Mary, who was the Mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. We cannot therefore speak of the Church unless Mary, the mother of the Lord, is present there, with the Lord's brethren"(82)*.

In bringing this *Letter* to a close, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, echoing the final words of the Constitution *Lumen gentium(83)*, invites all the Bishops and, through them, all the faithful, especially the theologians, to entrust to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin their commitment to communion and to theological reflection upon communion.

The Sovereign Pontiff John Paul II, at the Audience granted to the undersigned Cardinal Prefect, approved this Letter, agreed upon in the ordinary meeting of this Congregation, and ordered its publication.

Rome, at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 28th may 1992.

Joseph Card. Ratzinger
Prefect

+ Alberto Bovone
Tit. Abp. of Caesarea in Numidia
Secretary

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(1) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, nn. 4, 8, 13-15, 18, 21, 24-25; Const. *Dei Verbum*, n. 10; Const. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 32; Decr. *Unitatis redintegratio*, nn. 2-4, 14-15, 17-19, 22.

(2) Cf. SYNOD OF BISHOPS, Second Extraordinary Assembly (1985), *Relatio finalis*, II, C), 1.

(3) PAUL VI, *Opening address for the second period of the Second Vatican Council*, 29-IX-1963: AAS 55 (1963) p. 848. Cf., for example, the perspectives for further reflection indicated by the INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, in its *Themata selecta de ecclesiologia*: "Documenta (1969-1985)", Lib. Ed. Vaticana 1988, pp. 462-559.

(4) JOHN PAUL II, *Address to the Bishops of the United Sates of America*, 16-IX-1987, n. 1:

"Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II" X, 3 (1987) p. 553.

(5) *1 Jn* 1, 3: *"that which we have seen and heard, we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ"*. Cf. also *1 Cor* 1, 9; JOHN PAUL II, Ap. Exh. *Christifideles laici*, 30-XII-1988, n. 19; SYNOD OF BISHOPS (1985), *Relatio finalis*, II,

C), 1.

(6) Cf. *Phil* 3, 20-21; *Col* 3, 1-4; Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 48.

(7) *2 Cor* 5, 6. Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 1.

(8) Cf. *ibidem*, no. 7; PIUS XII, Enc. *Mystici Corporis*, 29-VI-1943: AAS 35 (1943) pp. 200ff.

(9) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 11/a.

(10) ST. CYPRIAN, *De Oratione Dominica*, 23: PL 4, 553; cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 4/b.

(11) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 9/c.

(12) Cf. *2 Pet* 1, 4.

(13) Cf. *2 Cor* 1, 7.

(14) Cf. *Eph* 4, 13; *Philem* 6.

(15) Cf. *Phil* 2, 1.

(16) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, nos. 25-27.

(17) Cf. *Mt* 28, 19-20; *Jn* 17, 21-23; *Eph* 1, 10; Const. *Lumen gentium*, nn. 9/b, 13 and 17; Decr. *Ad gentes*, nn. 1 and 5; ST. IRENAEUS, *Adversus haereses*, III, 16, 6 and 22, 1-3: PG 7, 925-926 and 955-958.

(18) ST. CYPRIAN, *Epist. ad Magnum*, 6: PL 3, 1142.

(19) *Eph* 4, 4-5: *"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism"*. Cf. also *Mk* 16, 16.

(20) Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 7/b. The Eucharist is the sacrament *"through which in the present age the Church is made"* (ST. AUGUSTINE, *Contra Faustum*, 12, 20: PL 42, 265). *"Our sharing in the body and blood of Christ leads to no other end than that of transforming us into that which we receive"* (ST. LEO THE GREAT, *Sermo 63*, 7: PL 54, 357).

(21) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, nn. 3 and 11/a; ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *In 1 Cor. hom.*, 24, 2: PG 61, 200.

(22) Cf. Denz.-Sch`n. 19, 26-30.

(23) Cf. *1 Cor* 12, 25-27; *Eph* 1, 22-23; 3, 3-6.

(24) *Acts* 4, 32.

(25) Cf. *Acts* 2, 42.

(26) Cf. *Rom* 8, 15-16.26; *Gal* 4, 6; Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 4.

(27) ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *De Veritate*, q. 29, a. 4 c. Indeed, *"lifted up on the cross and glorified, the Lord Jesus poured forth the Spirit whom he had promised, and through whom he has called and gathered together the people of the New Covenant, which is the Church, into a unity of faith, hope and charity"* (Decr. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 2/b).

(28) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 49.

(29) Cf. *Heb* 7, 25.

(30) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, nn. 50 and 66.

(31) Cf. *Mt* 16, 18; *1 Cor* 12, 28; etc.

(32) Cf. *Acts* 8, 1; 11, 22; *1 Cor* 1, 2; 16, 19; *Gal* 1, 22; *Rev* 2, 1.8; etc.

(33) Cf. PONTIFICAL BIBLICAL COMMISSION, *UnitJ et diversitJ dans l'Eglise*, Lib. Ed. Vaticana 1989, especially, pp. 14-28.

(34) Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 23/a; cf. Decr. *Ad gentes*, n. 20/a.

(35) Decr. *Christus Dominus*, n. 11/a.

(36) Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 23/b. Cf. ST. HILARY OF POITIERS, *In Psalm.*, 14, 3: PL 9, 301; ST. GREGORY THE GREAT, *Moralia*, IV, 7, 12: PL 75, 643.

(37) Cf. PAUL VI, Ap. Exh. *Evangelii nuntiandi*, 8-XII-1975, n. 64/b.

(38) Decr. *Christus Dominus*, n. 6/c.

(39) JOHN PAUL II, *Address to the Roman Curia*, 20-XII-1990, n. 9: "L'Osservatore Romano", 21-XII-1990, p. 5.

(40) Decr. *Christus Dominus*, n. 11/a.

(41) JOHN PAUL II, *Address to the Bishops of the United States of America*, 16-IX-1987, n. 3: as quoted, p. 555.

(42) Cf. SHEPHERD OF HERMAS, *Vis.* 2, 4: PG 2, 897-900; ST. CLEMENT OF ROME, *Epist. II ad Cor.*, 14, 2: Funck, 1, 200.

(43) Cf. *Acts* 2, 1ff. ST IRENAEUS, *Adversus haereses*, III, 17, 2 (PG 7, 929-930): *"at Pentecost (...) all nations (...) had become a marvellous choir to intone a hymn of praise to God in perfect harmony, because the Holy Spirit had brought distances to nought, eliminated discordant notes and transformed the varieties of the peoples into the first-fruits to be offered to the Father"*. Cf. also ST. FULGENTIUS OF RUSPE, *Sermo 8 in Pentecoste*, 2-3: PL 65,

743-744.

(44) Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 23/a: *"it is in these and formed out of them that the one and unique Catholic Church exists"*. This doctrine develops in the same line of continuity what had been stated previously, for example by PIUS X, Enc. *Mystici Corporis*, as quoted, p. 211: *"out of which the one Catholic Church exists and is composed"*.

(45) Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Address to the Roman Curia*, 20-XII-1990, n. 9: as quoted, p. 5.

(46) Cf. *Gal.* 3, 28.

(47) Cf., for example, C.I.C., can. 107.

(48) ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *In Ioann. hom.*, 65, 1 (PG 59, 361): "*whoever is in Rome knows that the Indians are his members*". Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 13/b.

(49) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 26/a; ST. AUGUSTINE, *In Ioann. Ev. Tract.*, 26, 13: PL 35, 1612-1613.

(50) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, nn. 18/b, 21/b. 22/a. Cf. also ST. CYPRIAN, *De unitate Ecclesiae*, 5: PL 4, 516-517; ST. AUGUSTINE, *In Ioann. Ev. Tract.*, 46, 5: PL 35, 1730.

(51) ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH, *Epist. ad Rom.*, prol.: PG 5, 685; cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 13/c.

(52) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 22/b.

(53) *Ibidem*, n. 23/a. Cf. Const. *Pastor aeternus*: Denz.-Sch`n. 3051-3057; ST. CYPRIAN, *De unitate Ecclesiae*, 4: PL 4, 512-515.

(54) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 20; ST. IRENAEUS, *Adversus haereses*, III, 3, 1-3: PG 7, 848-849; ST. CYPRIAN, *Epist.* 27, 1: PL 4, 305-306; ST. AUGUSTINE, *Contra advers. legis et prophet.*, 1, 20, 39: PL 42, 626.

(55) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 23/a.

(56) *Ibidem*, n. 22/b; cf also n. 19.

(57) JOHN PAUL II, *Address to the Roman Curia*, 20-XII-1990, n. 9: as quoted, p. 5.

(58) JOHN PAUL II, *Address to the Bishops of the United States of America*, 16-IX-1987, n. 4: as quoted, p. 556.

(59) Cf. Const. *Pastor aeternus*, chap. 3: Denz.-Sch`n 3064; Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 22/b.

(60) Cf. *supra*, n. 9.

(61) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 26; ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH, *Epist. ad Philadel.*, 4: PG 5, 700; *Epist. ad Smyrn.*, 8: PG 5, 713.

(62) Cf. ROMAN MISSAL, *Eucharistic Prayer* III.

(63) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 8/b.

(64) JOHN PAUL II, *Address*, General Audience, 27-IX-1989, n. 2: "Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II" XII,2 (1989) p. 679.

(65) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 23/d.

(66) Cf. *ibidem*, n. 13/c.

(67) Cf. Decr. *Christus Dominus*, n. 8/a.

(68) *Col* 3, 14. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Exposit. in Symbol. Apost.*, a. 9: *"The Church is one (...) through the unity of charity, because all are joined in the love of God, and among themselves in mutual love".*

(69) Cf. *supra*, n. 10.

(70) Cf. *supra*, n. 15.

(71) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 44/d.

(72) Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 15.

(73) Cf. Decr. *Unitatis redintegratio*, nn. 3/a and 22; see also Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 13/d.

(74) Cf. Decr. *Unitatis redintegratio*, nn. 14 and 15/c.

(75) *Ibidem*, n. 15/a.

(76) Cf. *supra*, nn. 5 and 14.

(77) *Jn* 10, 16.

(78) Decr. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 4/c.

(79) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, nn. 63 and 68; ST. AMBROSE, *Exposit. in Luc.*, 2, 7: PL 15, 1555; ST ISAAC OF STELLA, *Sermo* 27: PL 194, 1778-1779; RUPERT OF DEUTZ, *De Vict. Verbi Dei*, 12, 1: PL 169, 1464-1465.

(80) JOHN PAUL II, Enc. *Redemptoris Mater*, 25-III-1987, n. 19.

(81) Cf. *Acts* 1, 14; JOHN PAUL II, Enc. *Redemptoris Mater*: as quoted, n. 26.

(82) ST. CROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA, *Sermo* 30, 1: "Sources ChrJtiennes" 164, p. 134. Cf. PAUL VI, Ap. Exh. *Marialis cultus*, 2-II-1974, n. 28.

(83) Cf. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 69.

