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Ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι, μιᾷ ψυχῇ  
συναθλοῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου  
Phil. 1:27

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each component of the program—the music, the continuity which the announcer reads, and the featured talk. Usually the talk comes somewhere about the middle of the show. Now if all the other elements are carefully timed, and the talk runs too long or too short, the producer will just have one more worry added to those he already has.

This is, then, not only a question of etiquette, so to say, towards the producer, but it makes for a smooth show if the talk runs the length it ran during rehearsal. For then, at the last minute the producer will not have to make adjustments which always subtly show up to the audience.

Most people, it might be noted here, have a tendency to talk slower on the air than they do in rehearsal.

On remote pick-ups, that is, where the speaker is in one studio and the choir is in another city, perhaps, the matter of timing is most important, for the poor producer with the choir will be at his wits' end wondering when the talk is going to end. Besides, he has carefully timed his end of the program, and if the speaker "slops over," it will just add the proverbial grey hairs to his head in trying to make everything come out even at the end.

There is another aspect of timing which hasn't too much to do with the length of the program but rather belongs to the delivery of the talk, and we shall discuss it then.

*(To be continued)*

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#### MISSION INTENTION

The Mission Intention for the month of November, 1948, is "that the rights of workmen in Africa may be vindicated in accordance with Christian principles."

## FACTORS IN CHURCH UNITY

The recent and eminently well-publicized Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam has attracted a great deal of attention to the problems of ecclesiastical unity. According to one of its leaders, this Assembly was meant to "draw together into fuller understanding and co-operation the divided groupings of the servants of Christ in the world."<sup>1</sup> The magazine, *Time*, with the somewhat drooling enthusiasm it ordinarily manifests for certain favored movements and persons, asserted that "Amsterdam set up a better human means toward the blessed end of Christian unity than the world had known since the first great schism, between the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox churches, in the year 1054."<sup>2</sup> There is reason to believe that a great many people share this naive notion.

There can be no doubt whatsoever that the Amsterdam assembly took a long and important step in the direction of some sort of religious unity. Unfortunately, however, the emergence from Amsterdam as one of the leaders of the World Council of an individual whose previous claims to prominence had been based almost exclusively on an interminable series of wearisome and spectacularly unscientific tirades against the Catholic Church and its hierarchy has given rise to questions about the type of unity envisioned by the World Council. In the past there have been calls to Protestant religious unity which, behind the facade of sonorous and pious pronouncements, have actually centered around the idea of united opposition to the true Church of Jesus Christ. It is to be hoped that no such primary motive lies behind the organization formed at Amsterdam.

From the theological point of view, the procedure and the mentality of the Amsterdam assembly are quite interesting. The groups taking part in this conference set out to co-operate with each other, regardless of their doctrinal differences. Thus, in one way or another, all of them acted on the supposition that the common work they hope to accomplish must be considered as something of greater import than and objectively superior to the accurate presentation of divine revelation.

<sup>1</sup> *Time*, LII, 5 (Aug. 2, 1948), 37.

<sup>2</sup> *Time*, LII, 11 (Sept. 13, 1948), 55.

Each one of the religious bodies entering into the new federation holds some kind of teaching as its creed, as its concept of what God has revealed to mankind. By allying itself with other organizations, each holding a distinct profession of religious belief, the individual communion in a general assembly of the Amsterdam type seems to imply that doctrinal divergence is not a matter of essential importance at all.

Furthermore, the unity desired and achieved at Amsterdam consists in an association of already existent religious societies, each with its individual beliefs and customs. The federation itself is not regarded as God's kingdom on earth, but simply as a means for the advancement of this objective. Although religious communities which profess to believe in the existence of a visible Church as God's kingdom in this world took part in the meeting, the mentality behind the association itself is obviously that of the invisible Church, the doctrine that the company of Christ on this earth consists, not in any one society, but in the unorganized mass of people who sympathize with the teachings or the work of Our Lord. Objectively the Amsterdam conference simply seeks to bring these people together for more complete and efficacious common religious activity. Out of this communal labor, the participants hope to achieve more effectively, through social and perhaps political channels, their common purpose. In a federation composed of groups whose professions of faith differ rather sharply from one another, that ultimate purpose will be largely humanitarian.

It is unfortunate that, at a time when the interest of the world at large is centered about the concept of ecclesiastical unity, our own scholastic text-books deal with the oneness of the true Church of Jesus Christ almost exclusively in terms of a visible note of the Church. Thus Hervé speaks of the unity of the Church as "the property by which it is undivided in itself and distinct from every other society in the profession of the faith, in government, and in cult."<sup>3</sup> Dorsch deals with the Church's unity under its symbolical, liturgical, and social functions.<sup>4</sup> Zapelena explains that the true Church is one in its faith, in its rule, and in its communion.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Manuale theologiae dogmaticae* (Paris: Berche et Pagis, 1929), I, 357.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Institutiones theologiae fundamentalis* (Innsbruck, 1928), II, 562 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *De ecclesia Christi* (Rome: The Gregorian University, 1946), I, 384 ff.

In every instance these modern ecclesiologists confine their teaching on the unity of the Church to something which the older scholastic doctors considered only one element or aspect of that unity. They deal with what the classical ecclesiologists called the "outward" or the "bodily" bond of unity within Our Lord's society. This particular factor is one of the realities which St. Robert Bellarmine designated by the metaphor, "the body of the Church."<sup>6</sup> It consists of three elements, the profession of the same divine faith, the partaking of the same sacraments, and subjection to legitimate ecclesiastical rulers, and ultimately to the successor of St. Peter, the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, the Bishop of Rome.

This "outward" bond of unity owes its importance in modern theology to the fact that the great classical ecclesiologists showed that actual membership in the true Church of Christ on earth is definable in terms of this element, and of no other. A man is really a member of the true Church only when he has not publicly recanted his baptismal profession of the divine faith, when he has not been completely excluded from participation in the sacraments, and when he retains his subjection to the legitimate authority within this visible society. The immediate purpose of St. Robert Bellarmine's *De ecclesia militante* was to prove that, according to the clear teachings of divine revelation, no other characteristics are requisite to constitute a man as a member of God's kingdom on earth. All and only the men united with Our Lord by the outward or visible bonds of unity are members of the true Church.

St. Robert and the other classical ecclesiologists were, however, well aware of the fact that this outward bond of unity was by no means the only factor uniting men to Our Lord within His kingdom on earth. What they called the spiritual or inward bond of unity (and what St. Robert referred to on one famous occasion as "the soul of the Church") included the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity.<sup>7</sup> As components of this same bond of unity, St. Robert also mentioned "other gifts of the Holy Ghost." Here the expression obviously refers, not exclusively to the seven gifts as distinct from the virtues, but to any and all benefits other than the three theological virtues, infused into the soul by God to bring man to Himself in the unity of His Church.

This spiritual or inward bond of unity works quite differently

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *De ecclesia militante*, cap. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

from the other. The outward bond of unity, that in function of which a man is constituted as a member of the Church militant, is something which does not admit of degrees, in the proper sense of the term. A man either is or is not a member of the true Church. Strictly speaking, one man cannot be any more a member than another. All of those who possess the threefold qualification that makes up this outward bond of unity are members of God's household.

Faith, hope, and charity, on the other hand, actually admit of degrees of intensity and perfection. One man's faith may be stronger than another's. The man with the stronger faith is no more truly a member of the Church than his fellow Catholic, but he is more perfectly united to Our Lord in the Church in this way. The same thing holds true of hope, and, most completely, of charity. The man with a more perfect charity is more fully joined within the actual unity of the Church than the man with a less intensive love for God and his neighbor.

Hence, according to the teachings of Catholic theology, every member of the true Church of Jesus Christ should work for and accomplish a definite advance in ecclesiastical unity within the framework of his own life. By the power of God's grace, every man is able to make his belief in God more resolute, his hope in God more firm, and his love for God more intense and effective. In progressing thus, a man unites himself more perfectly to God and integrates himself more completely within God's kingdom. The apostolic work which strives to increase the intensity of the spiritual life within the Church is, therefore, essentially a labor for the increase of Church unity. That co-operation of the laity in the work of the hierarchy which the men of our day know as Catholic Action has precisely the same effect.

Another way of working for the advance of ecclesiastical unity is, of course, the missionary effort itself. The true Church of Christ does not become any more perfectly unified by the accession of new converts. Still it remains true that a man works for the unity of the Church by laboring to bring the ineffable benefits of that unity to souls for whom Christ died.

That, for all practical purposes, marks the difference between the concept of ecclesiastical unity which guided the conference at Amsterdam and the true notion of Church unity, enshrined in the teaching of Catholic theology. The men gathered at Amsterdam

worked on the assumption that Church unity in itself is something which has yet to be achieved. They sought some new form of association among the followers of Christ.

Catholic theology, on the other hand, knows that the essential unity of the Church itself is something which has been constituted, once and for all, by Our Lord. The true Church as such will never become any more perfectly or completely one than it is at this moment, even though its individual members may and should become ever more completely integrated into it. The visible or outward bond of unity admits of no degrees. The Church is, and ever will be, as completely and perfectly organized a society as it has been since the day of its inception.

Even on the plane of the invisible or spiritual bond of unity, the oneness of the Church in itself is something which does not change from age to age. We must not forget the paramount fact that Our Lord is, according to His own promise, within the Church militant always. The faith of the members of the Church militant is essentially an effect produced by the truth and the understanding of Christ. The charity of the Church is basically and essentially His charity.

Thus, work for Church unity must be judged according to the standards of work for God Himself. Work for God does not seek to increase and to perfect His happiness. It strives simply to bring God's creatures to share and to enjoy His eternal goodness. Similarly, work for Church unity, according to the true teaching of divine public revelation, does not seek to make the kingdom of God on earth in any way more perfectly or completely one. It seeks simply to bring within the company of Christ men who have not as yet enjoyed the blessings of that unity, and to increase the fullness of integration into the unity of Christ's body in those men who already possess the grace of association with Him in His Church.

The ultimate cause of the Church's unity, along the lines of both the visible and the invisible bonds, is to be found in the presence of Christ as the Head of the Church and in the indwelling of the Holy Ghost within this society. The divine Head of the Church preserves and protects it, maintaining it indefectibly in the face of manifest forces which, apart from His influence, would quickly destroy or modify it. Thus, in continuing to exist and to act as one society according to the constitution which Our Lord originally

gave it, the Church itself is a true miracle of the social order, and a real motive of credibility in favor of the message it presents to the world as divine revelation. The sacred humanity of Christ is the supreme instrument of this ecclesiastical unity.

The real indwelling of the Holy Ghost within the Catholic Church is also a cause, a principal cause, of the Church's unity. The Holy Ghost is said to reside within His creatures in a new and supernatural way, that is, in a manner distinct from that in which God dwells in all the things He has brought into being, when He is present as the principle and as the object of the life of sanctifying grace. According to the divine dispensation itself, the life of sanctifying or habitual grace finds its corporate expression in this world in and through the activity of the Catholic Church. The essential work of the Church, manifested in its liturgy, is that of charity, motivating Christian hope, and enlightened by divine faith. Hence the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, to whom as the divine principle these activities are attributed, must be designated as the cause of that ecclesiastical unity which results from faith, hope, and charity.

The sacraments of the Church, especially Baptism and the Eucharist, also figure as instrumental causes of the true unity of Our Lord's Church. Objectively, Baptism constitutes an act of incorporation into the one body of Christ. It is the profession of faith in God, the manifestation of acceptance of the one teaching Our Lord presented to His followers. Thus it stands as a factor in the unity of these disciples of Christ, organized into one visible society by the divine Master Himself.

The Blessed Eucharist is an outstanding principle in the unity of the Church. St. Thomas Aquinas described it as "the sacrament of ecclesiastical unity,"<sup>8</sup> and taught that, in the case of the Eucharist, the *res sacramenti* is "the unity of the Mystical Body."<sup>9</sup> In the final analysis, the effectiveness of the Eucharist as a principle of the Church's unity stems from the fact that this sacrament is ultimately ordered to manifest charity itself, and to bring about an increase in grace through the exercise of charity in the person who receives it. Charity stands as the ultimate and perfective element in the spiritual bond of unity within the Church. It is the force, produced by Our Lord, and by the Holy Ghost dwelling within this society, which gathers the disciples of Christ into that oneness He procured for them by His prayer and sacrifice.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. II-II, q. 73, a. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. II-II, q. 73, a. 3.

We must not lose sight of the fact that the so-called outward bond of ecclesiastical unity, comprising the profession of divine faith, the communication of the sacraments, and subjection to legitimate ecclesiastical authority, has traditionally been termed the "bodily" bond, while the inward factor, including faith, hope, charity, and the other gifts of the Holy Ghost, has been designated as "spiritual." The theologians who employed this terminology meant to teach that these two groups of forces were related to one another in something like the manner in which the human body is referred to the soul.

The human body exists and acts for the sake of the soul. The soul is the perfective and active element. In much the same way, the profession of the faith, the communication of the sacraments, and the subjection to divinely instituted ecclesiastical authority exist for the sake of the faith, hope, and charity that compose the inward bond of union within the Church of Jesus Christ.

The human body is a dead thing apart from the soul. In somewhat the same manner, the elements which go to make up the outward bond of unity have no meaning or purpose apart from the faith, hope, and charity they are meant to manifest and aid. It was perfectly proper, then, for the greatest of all the scholastic ecclesiologists, St. Robert Bellarmine, to indicate faith, hope, and charity as constituting in a certain fashion "the soul of the Church."<sup>10</sup> Subsequent theological writers were to abuse that terminology, and to employ it in propounding a conclusion quite opposed to St. Robert's basic teaching. The abuse of the term was unfortunate, but the reason for the expression in the *De ecclesia militante* is tremendously important to the modern student of sacred theology. Practically speaking, it means that a treatment of ecclesiastical unity which omits or neglects an element of it which can be compared to the outward bond of unity as the soul is compared to the body is hopelessly inadequate.

It is interesting to note that when St. Thomas taught about the unity of the Church in his *Expositio super symbolo apostolorum*, he spoke only in terms of the unity of faith, of hope, and of charity.<sup>11</sup> After the conciliar disputes of the fifteenth century, the Cardinal

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *De ecclesia militante*, cap. 2.

<sup>11</sup> This opusculum is numbered 33 in the Mandonnet edition and 6 in the old Roman collection.

John de Turrecremata offered a much more complete explanation, mentioning that the Church is one in terms also of one supreme pastor, the vicar of Christ on earth.

It was Turrecremata's contention that there are no less than eight factors which must be taken into consideration in any explanation of the Church's unity. He pointed first to the unity of the Prince or Head of the Church, Our Lord Himself. The Church is one reality because it is an association gathered together and held together by Our Lord.

The second element mentioned in Turrecremata's teaching on the unity of the Church is the oneness of the faith. Under this heading the old Cardinal expressly adverted to the fact that Our Lord's true followers believe and profess one body of teaching. The third factor is the unity of the sacrament of Baptism, and of the other sacraments, particularly of the Blessed Eucharist. The fourth element is the unity of hope, and the fifth, the unity of charity.

The sixth factor in this unity is the oneness of the Holy Ghost, residing within the Church and animating this society in its salvific function. The seventh is the unity of purpose, the oneness of the end for which the Church militant labors on this earth. The eighth and final element to be considered in explaining the oneness of God's kingdom in this world is the unity of government within the visible society instituted and maintained by Our Lord.<sup>12</sup>

It is unfortunate that a somewhat misguided effort to explain the note of unity has induced many of our modern theological writers to neglect what is objectively the most important portion of the traditional teaching about the oneness of Our Lord's Church. It is imperative, especially in view of the conditions prevailing in our own times, that the members of the true Church be made to realize that faith, hope, and charity in themselves are factors tending to unite Catholics with each other and with Our Lord in His Church. The all-too-prevalent notion that our faith joins us indifferently to all of those who employ the name of faith to designate their opinions on matters religious, and that charity joins us primarily to some amorphous group of "men of good will" can only be countered and rectified by the true teaching that faith and charity are ties which unite us to Our Lord and with each other within His kingdom on earth.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Summa de ecclesia* (Venice, 1561), pp. 7v ff.

An adequate exposition of the doctrine on the unity of the Church should manifest the dangerous and unwarranted attitude of those Catholic publicists who are ever ready to defend "religion in general," or the broad religious truths which we are supposed to hold in common with the members of other religious communities, but who seem somewhat reluctant to deal with specifically Catholic doctrines and attitudes. These men, many of whom obviously mean well, have lost sight of the fact that the realities of faith and charity, far from being opposed to the "juridical" bonds of unity within the visible Catholic Church, are actually the factors to which these outward bonds are themselves ordained. They have forgotten that the unity of faith and of charity, no less than the unity brought about by the Christian's submission to Christ's vicar on earth, is something effected within that visible society which we know as the Catholic Church. Moreover, any attempt at the Christian unity of faith and charity outside of this visible society is objectively something which runs counter to the intention and teaching of Jesus Christ.

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#### FAITH A CHRISTIAN BOND OF UNION

"One Lord, one faith," writes the Apostle: the faith, that is, by which we hold fast to God, and to Him whom He has sent, Jesus Christ. The beloved Apostle tells us how closely this faith binds us to God: "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God." This Christian faith binds us no less closely with each other and with our Divine Head. For all of us who believe, "having the same spirit of faith," are illumined by the same light of Christ, are nourished by the same food of Christ, and live under the jurisdiction and teaching authority of Christ. If the same spirit of faith breathes in us all, we are all living the same life "in the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and delivered Himself for us." And once Christ, our Head, through an ardent faith enters into us and dwells within our hearts, He becomes the "Author and Finisher" of our faith.

—Pope Pius XII, in the encyclical *Mystici corporis*, issued June 29, 1943.