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Rev Fr Michael Tița

*The Catholicity of the Church in Traditional Confessional
Theology and in Official Ecumenical and other Modern Debates.
A Comparative-Systematic Approach.*

ABSTRACT

This work seeks to explore the issue of the catholicity of the Church, as seen in the theology of the five Christian Churches which have an explicit or implicit understanding of it. That understanding refers both to what is commonly seen as a traditional (original) view and also later consequent developments, where they exist.

In chapter one we present that aspect of Church catholicity which deals with its universality both in terms of space and time, as seen in the perspective of the identity, continuity and eschatological fulfillment of the catholic Church.

In chapter two, through the Trinitarian, Christological and Pneumatological dogmas, we outline those qualities of the catholicity which remain at the very foundation of the Church.

Scriptural, Traditional, and Sacramental aspects of catholicity are discussed in chapter three.

Chapter four contains an analysis of the local and universal dimensions of Church's catholicity and the relationship between them.

Chapter five deals with the importance and significance of the ecclesiastical structures - the polity and agency of the Church - for catholicity.

In chapter six the missionary and ecumenical dimensions of Church's catholicity are presented, as well as matters regarding the relation existing between catholicity and culture.

Finally, chapter seven places the concept of catholicity within the modern ecumenical debates, suggesting also that, amongst various approaches to catholicity, one ought to necessarily take into account the dynamics of history marked by contingency and relativity.

It will be argued that in each type of theology, be it Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Reformed or indeed Orthodox, there is a clear direction on the basis of which the catholicity of the Church is construed and which would eventually determine a certain specificity for each respective Ecclesiology.

The appendix intends to bring some more significant Patristic argumentation that would help in consolidating our position.

THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH
IN TRADITIONAL CONFESSIONAL THEOLOGY
AND IN OFFICIAL ECUMENICAL AND OTHER MODERN DEBATES.
A COMPARATIVE-SYSTEMATIC APPROACH.

Rev Fr MICHAEL TIṬA

Submitted for the Degree of *Doctor of Philosophy*
University of Durham
Department of Theology
1993

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PhD. 1993

21 OCT 1993

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For these reasons, the thesis is dedicated to all of them and to the glory of God the Trinity.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not previously been submitted for any other degree in this or in any other University. It is the original work of the Author.

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ABBREVIATIONS

P.G. - *Patrologia Graeca Cursus Completus*, ed. J. -P. Migne, Paris 1857-.

P.L. - *Patrologia Latina Cursus Completus*, ed. J. -P. Migne, Paris 1857-.

W.A. - *Luther's Works*, Weimar edition, 1883-.

L.W. - *Luther's Works*, (56 vols.), American edition, ed. J. Pelikan et al., Concordia Publishing House, Philadelphia and Saint Louis 1955-.

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, the theme of the Church's catholicity has come more and more to the forefront of theological debate. For, in the realm of ecclesiology there has to be a recognition of the importance which that *quality* of the Church of Christ plays in acquiring a clear understanding of the nature and mission of the Church. That has become even more so in the light of this century's ecumenical endeavour towards a better and more profound rapprochement between Christian communities, on the way towards achieving visible unity in Christ.

The intention of this thesis is, first of all, to compare the ways in which the five major Christian groups understand the Church's catholicity. To that end, an analysis of their respective traditions is absolutely necessary, since modern and ecumenical tendencies have to be seen in that perspective. When used in this context, the term 'traditional' is intended to designate the origins of the present views of catholicity.

Of course, over the centuries each of those original views has undergone changes, which shaped a certain confessional 'tradition' and gave to a certain group of Christians its specificity. During that evolution, the theology of some Churches in general and their respective ecclesiology in particular did not always remain true to their original patterns. Thus, in the end, a rather different view from the 'traditional' (i.e. initial) form came into being.

Secondly, taking that into consideration, the thesis tries to *analyze* and discern if and to what extent that theological development, as seen in the case of certain Christian denominations, represented a legitimate evolution. The methodology used in that attempt is based on *comparison* and a *systematic*

examination of major primary sources, in each of the confessional theologies, in order to provide the kind of evidence needed for clear argumentation.

In that connection, it has to be said that the thesis is not intended to represent an exhaustive historical statement. What history does in this case is to provide examples of different views, so that a certain evolution, where present, could be traced more easily. The employment of such methods enables us to work both comparatively and synthetically.

It has to be emphasized, furthermore, that such a wide-ranging approach implies that only a limited coverage of particular theological positions can be dealt with. Moreover, it is impossible to undertake complete research in all primary sources. Therefore, the author had to limit himself to those particular aspects and essential resources which were reckoned as being indispensable in building the argument.

Thirdly, in trying to achieve its end, the argument of the thesis is based on Orthodox theology and ecclesiology, the assumption being that it presents a 'wholistic' understanding of the catholicity of the Church. Nonetheless, there are many elements in other Christian traditions which are important and useful in structuring a more diverse, comprehensive view on the concept of catholicity.

What the thesis tries to affirm, ultimately, is that 'catholicity' is to be defined primarily in terms of God's nature and work, that is to say *qualitatively*, and not from secondary issues like the quantity of members or geographical coverage. Of course, those and other similar quantitative aspects have their role in presenting a more complete understanding of the Church's catholicity. But they are not the essential ones.

Instead, the thesis argues that the Trinitarian, Christological and Pneumatological dimensions, as well as the catholic quality of Divine Revelation and its manifestation through sacramental life, in a locality, are paramount in defining the catholicity of the Church.

The Godhead, in whom the Three Divine Persons are but one in their *ousia*, is the very model on whom the mystery of the Church catholic is supremely expressed. Each of the Three Persons participates fully in the whole Divine Being: no outward manifestation is unilateral. Yet, each one of Them has specific attributes.

The hypostatic Person of Christ, in whom the Son of God Incarnate, the Saviour and the Head and Founder of the Church meet in a perfect synthesis, represents also a very important element in the analysis of the various aspects of the Church's catholicity. Jesus Christ's divine-human nature is fundamental to the way the divine-human constitution of the Church catholic, as expressing the fullness of Christ, is to be conceived of.

In the same context, the Holy Spirit is to be seen as the Divine Person who unites the 'many in one' and personalizes each individual, through the anointing of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which they share with the rest of those who bear the name of Christ. Thus, they become individually, but in communion with all the other members of the local sacramental community, partakers of the same richness of the spiritual life which has its source in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and the Giver of Life.

Moreover, different local communities relate to each other through the spiritual gifts which are present and shared by all those who are part of a community and which could be found also, in the same manner, in other similar localities. Therefore, each local catholic Church - congregation or parish, as well as regional or national Churches - represents, at a smaller scale, the wider catholic Church, different localities being interrelated with one another.

It follows that the local expression of the catholic Church takes precedence over its universal manifestation. In fact, the universal catholic Church is but the expression, at a wider level, of local, particular catholic communities, which recognize each other as having the essential features of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ and interrelate with one another. The

universal catholic Church exists in and through those local communities, which manifest the quality of being catholic. Even in this case, the absolute epitome of the catholic Church, both locally and universally, is that of the interrelationship existing within the Holy Trinity, whereby the oneness and the multitude are perfectly represented.

But, in creating a comprehensive picture of the Church's catholicity, the ecclesiastical structures play a significant role too. The relation between various members of a community, who have their specific ministries within that community, reflects also, in the human realm, the model existing in the diversity of the intra-Trinitarian life of the Divine Persons.

By being a divine-human institution, in which both the living and those who died in the Lord are in communion, the catholic Church is, at the same time, spiritual and visible. That double quality allows her to live simultaneously and proleptically as part of this age and of the *eschaton*.

In that process, continuity expressed through apostolic succession in faith and ministerial prerogatives, is also important in maintaining the identity of the catholic Church throughout the ages.

Mission is also very much part of what the Church is meant to be, namely the milieu which proclaims Christ's Good News to the world. By doing that, the Church *is* catholic because she proves to be the instrument whereby Christ's universal message is made known and spread to all nations. The accuracy with which that message will be appropriated by each community, in a way that will make it recognizable by others as a true manifestation of the original message of Jesus Christ, will be a criterion in establishing the quality of its catholicity. Yet, the local cultural and social context could generate a certain specificity regarding the way that message will be accepted and introduced in the religious consciousness of a certain community.

To the modern ecumenical debate, the Church's catholicity became a major theme for discussion, because many points of

divergence amongst Christian communities could find their solution in a common approach of the ecclesiological issues. For, as long as ecclesiology in general and the Church's catholicity in particular are not discussed thoroughly and in the perspective of human historical and spatial contingency and relativity, on the one hand, and of that of the dynamics of history, on the other hand, the matters which led to division and disunity in the past will continue to cause pain inside the Christian community.

What this work intends to bring as its original contribution to the understanding of catholicity is, on the one hand, that it gathers together several theological aspects of the Church's catholicity in one single place. Never before have so many facets of that *quality* of the Church been dealt with in the same work. On the other hand, some of those dimensions of the Church's catholicity have been analyzed more thoroughly in this thesis than in similar works.

As a last remark, it should be repeated that throughout the whole work, we shall have to content ourselves with a basic sketch, indicating the outline of the topic. For to present the complete picture in satisfying detail would demand an exhaustive exposition of all patristic ecclesiology and all subsequent Church history, a task which would prove to be almost impossible to accomplish.

I. Universality in Space and Time

I.1. The Spatial Aspect of the Catholicity of the Church

I.1.1. An Analytical Look at Historical Terminology

The various aspects of the Church's catholicity have preoccupied the thought of the theologians from the very beginning, long before the attribute 'catholic' was associated with a particular Church such as the Church of Rome. Although not a biblical term, the 'catholicity' of the Church was given careful consideration in the theology of the early Church, being numbered among the four basic notes or marks by which the Church of Christ is defined in the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed.

Two of the senses in which the term 'catholic' was first understood were 'general' and 'universal'. These were notions employed in state, civilian and philosophical terminology¹ before it became a theological term and acquired a specific meaning. The theology of the 'undivided Church' is full of references to the 'catholic Church', καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία, references which imply a consciousness of breadth and a coherent system of life and thought. Yet, it has to be pointed out that, for the first three centuries, the term was employed only in its adjectival form, and never substantivized.²

Etymologically, 'catholic' is a derivation from 'καθ' ὅλου' and means 'concerning the whole', 'in one', 'wholly' or even 'entirely' as opposed to καθ' ἑκάστου, which designates an 'individual', a single 'one' as a part of a whole. It appears in the New Testament under this form only once (Acts 4:18) with the meaning of 'thoroughly', 'completely', 'totally'. Yet, it is not associated in any place in the Bible with the Church as such.

In the Patristic period the word is first applied to the Church by St Ignatius of Antioch³ having a Christological connotation. In the *Martyrdom of St Polycarp of Smyrna* the 'Catholic' Church is presented as the 'whole' Church, a communion of local Churches, in contrast to, but not opposed to, the individual (local, gathered around the bishop) Church⁴; it is an all-embracing Church, extended over 'the whole *oikoumene*'.⁵ On the same lines, a fragment attributed to Constantine and quoted by Eusebius defines the Catholic Church as 'the whole Church spread out under heaven'.⁶

In combination with the notion of unity, catholicity in its actual manifestation was meant to bring forward the idea of the one Church extended over the whole world and which has the same creed, the same worship, and the same way of functioning. At the same time, in comparison to unity, which is mainly concerned with the relations between local churches, 'catholicity' seems to expand outside the limits of the Church into the world and to acquire a certain cosmic dimension.⁷ Such a proclamation was very much in line with the limited geographical perspective of the time when *Ecclesia Catholica* (from Theodosius' Edict of 380 onwards the only lawful religion of the Byzantine Empire) matched more or less the whole *oikoumene*, that is the inhabited world as it was known at that particular moment of history.

Later on, in those periods of time when polemics predominated (in the 4th and 5th centuries), the term 'catholic' was employed in order to point out the necessity for someone to be part of the 'orthodox' Church, the Church which kept the unity of the truth and discipline, as opposed to those communities which were heretical or schismatic.⁸ This development remains one of the most important evolution in the Church Fathers' understanding of catholicity, one which is concerned with the quality of the faith and which can be described as a 'qualitative catholicity'.

Catholicity refers, at the same time, to the numerous groups of Christians, each one of them called 'Church'. They were scattered all over the world and increased their numbers through the apostolic preaching and baptism. The call to go forth to all nations which the Apostles received from Christ was, thus, meant to

enlarge the presence of the Church to the furthest parts of the world.⁹ All those who responded affirmatively to this missionary work, irrespective of whether they were spread over the whole world or limited to a particular place, as long as they testified to the true faith and worship and remained under lawful government, were reckoned as being one with the Catholic Church.

Throughout the later history of the Church, the meaning of the term 'catholic' and its derivation, 'catholicity', has continued to be enriched and enlarged. The 'quantitative catholicity' which is concerned with a universality of space, time and number (universality being a quantitative concept as such) continued to prevail especially in medieval and modern Western theology up to the 19th century.¹⁰ The East attempted to remain faithful to the theology of the Fathers of the Early Catholic Church and, thus, to avoid, in the beginning, such an exclusive orientation. Later on, however, the universalistic tendency started to affect the Eastern Churches too, by appealing at the sophisticated Western theology.

According to the Orthodox understanding, the 'qualitative catholicity' (with its emphasis on the content of faith and sacramental life within the local eucharistic community) is seen as by far the more important dimension of the Church. While the external, 'quantitative' catholicity has some value in providing an overall picture of the Church catholic, the internal, 'qualitative' catholicity, that is 'the catholicity from within', the widespread Church which is manifested in a locality remains the fundamental feature of the *Una Catholica Ecclesia*.¹¹

Yet, most recently, this 'qualitative' understanding of catholicity has become increasingly the predominant feature of the modern theological debate. Today's theology speaks more about those elements which form the basis for this 'qualitative' dimension of catholicity¹² than it does about the 'quantitative' ones.

But catholicity seen as a qualitative substitute for universality refers also to the relationship which exists between a local community and other communities in the multitude of communities which are what is defined by the rather abstract term of 'Church universal'. The universal Church is abstract in that it has its reality only as a consequence of the existence of local

communities; it cannot subsist without the local presence of the Church catholic. Each of the local communities are *the catholic Church* of a certain place, such as in the case of Smyrna, where St Polycarp was bishop¹³ or in the case of Tertullian who uses the term 'catholic Churches' in the plural¹⁴, which certainly suggests that he thinks of each of these Churches as a 'catholic Church'. St Cyprian speaks of 'one bishop in the catholic Church'¹⁵ meaning by that that each *local Church* has a bishop as its head, as Eusebius also does.¹⁶

The shift in the use of 'catholic' from designating the whole Church in a locality to one which concentrates on spatial universality seems to have been the result of the struggle of the Church in the West with the 'provincialism' of the Donatists who, by their exclusivist claims to forming the true Church, were threatening the very oneness of the Church.

Thus, the term 'catholic' came to be identified with that of 'universal',¹⁷ exactly at the time when in the East catholicity received a 'synthetic definition' which made universality nothing but one of the constitutive elements of catholicity and the extension of the catholicity of the local communities into the wider realm of the world.¹⁸ There, the eucharistic community became the concrete locality in which the essentials of the catholicity of the Church were manifested. Thereafter, the eucharist was to be seen as 'a "catholic" act of a "catholic" Church', rather than 'an objectified means of grace'.¹⁹

This eucharistic connotation of the catholicity of the Church brought about a new dimension in which the geographical aspect was somehow obscured. The universality of the Church was therefore understood not as the cause or the foundation of the Church catholicity, but rather its consequence or its manifestation. Therefore, the Church catholic was not essentially a geographical, universal organic entity;²⁰ this was only a secondary expression of its ultimate content. In that sense, the geographic universality, as well as the cosmic character, which the eucharist receives always shows the same Church catholic in spite of the different locations and times at which it is present. Its quality of being catholic derives from the eucharistic act, which although local, is

still universal.²¹

If this is so, the numeric aspect of Church catholicity is secondary to its 'perfection in holiness'. Any 'growth' of the Church is ultimately growth in 'perfection of holiness' (John 17:23)²², while number remains a peripheral matter.

Essentially, catholicity is neither a matter of geography nor one of numbers.²³

That is not to say, however, that the mission of the Church to expand the Gospel of Christ to the most remote parts of the world is to be emptied of the importance of its universal content and intention. In the realm of 'numerical catholicity', neither a Church which forms the majority, nor the one which counts as a minority, can automatically claim that it is *the* catholic Church. At the same time, one cannot label a minority as a manifestation of an utterly 'a-catholic individualism' or sectarianism by virtue of its reduced membership. Yet, after all 'catholicity does not depend even on the missionary success of the Church' since the Church is catholic from the very beginning.²⁴

On the other hand, there is always a danger that in emphasizing too much the ultimate nature of Church's catholicity as a 'spiritual and qualitative predicate' one may end up in completely losing sight of the concrete manifestation of that catholicity in the eucharistic locality. In other words, one should not abstract 'quality' from 'oecumenic' in the eucharistic locality. The obliteration of any concrete display of a catholic community by a 'spiritual veil' can make catholicity only a 'believed' feature, regardless of the number of those who made up that Church.²⁵ And that is just as detrimental to the right perception of the Church's catholicity.

At the same time, universality in space as a characteristic of the Church's catholicity can be, as in Luther's thought, basically a matter of individual attitude towards the preached Word of God which is spread out all over the world 'from above'.²⁶ Hence, although God's word is preached everywhere, it finds response only in some, in fact very few people, who, through their acceptance and

performance (in the two accepted sacraments), become a community of believers. In restraining the power of the Word to penetrate everyone and therefore making the existence of the catholic Church depend upon a personal response and not to the almighty presence and will of God, will result in a functional catholicity rather than an ontological one.²⁷

However, for Luther, there is a clear distinction to be made between true believers and those who are 'nominally Christian', and between a true 'community' free from external limitations and a community of 'nominal believers' who are under an external judgment. In making this distinction, Luther seems to create the image of an '*ecclesiola*', namely 'an inner community of believers within the larger mass which Luther always thought of as un-Christian'.²⁸

On the same lines, the Reformed tradition spells out a view of catholicity which defines the Christian catholic community in more specific terms as the fellowship of the 'elect' people.²⁹ Once again a certain 'élitism' seems to characterize the nature of such a Church by setting apart certain members of the community, while the rest will remain outside of that catholic fellowship, and that in spite of the fact that they are valid Christians by virtue of their baptismal incorporation (as it is, for instance, the reluctance to baptize infants). Such a view reconstitutes, in fact, holiness through the notion of divine determination as effected by this election.

Therefore, such a view will present a catholicity of the Church conceived in terms of 'spiritual universality' and 'selective membership' which is not in any way the sort of comprehensive catholicity that the common Tradition of the *Una Sancta* teaches us. By setting apart some of the members of the community while the rest remains outside the sanctifying grace of Christ, the Reformed ecclesiology acts directly against the very content of catholicity which is a whole-embracing reality of the Church.

I.1.2. 'Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus'.

The Limits of the Catholic Church

As far as 'spatial' catholicity is concerned, St Cyprian's axiom '*extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*'³⁰ has been given new qualifications in more contemporary ecclesiology in the sense that it must be interpreted 'as a hope and a promise for ourselves and our community [that]...there is no salvation outside the Church for me personally'.³¹ For instance, Vatican II, in affirming that grace and the Spirit of God are operative outside the visible limits of the Roman Catholic Church considered as an institution, recognizes that there is no certain way of drawing the limits of Church's existence in history.³² Moreover, to be truly catholic the Church must consider itself neither synonymous with nor an exclusive society vis-a-vis the world, but as 'an open community of people' committed to serve and work for the salvation of all. That task is to be fulfilled only in the unity for which Christ, the Head of the Church catholic, has prayed to the Father that they 'may all be one' (John 17:21). At the same time, catholicity requires a variety of forms. By virtue of its essential catholicity, the Church cannot be alien to any country or people.

Spread throughout the entire world, it [the Church] embraces all nations, all races, and all cultures, and would unite them in their diversity.³³

Following the example of the early Church, whose catholicity was not only inclusive but also expansive, the Church as a whole is called to preach the Gospel 'to the whole creation' (Luke 16:15). In this sense, Roman Catholic theology gradually came to affirm, especially after Vatican Council II, even that salvation is open to all 'not just to schismatics, heretics and Jews, but to non-Christians too and even to atheists if they are in good faith'.³⁴ If that is the case, then the Church, although existing in its integral fullness in the Roman Catholic Church, exists also, by the inherent power of the Church to transcend her limitations, in ecclesiastical bodies out of communion with that Roman Church. The inherent power which the Church possesses is the power upon

which Christ has built it so that 'the gates of hades will not prevail' against it (Matt 16:18) and by which it is called to witness to the entire world.

Hence, a re-examination of the 'limits' of the Church, understood in practical terms, could bring about a more flexible apprehension of where the limits of the catholic Church would be.

We know where the Church is; we cannot determine so confidently where she is not; *ubi Spiritus, ibi ecclesia*.³⁵

That would mean, in the end, that since the Holy Spirit is the One who continues to make Christ present in the Church and since He blows wherever He wants (indeed, He *is* at work everywhere), it follows that the Church catholic *can* be everywhere (understood in inclusive terms), although it *might* be only in certain places (through the self-exclusiveness of some of its members).

I.1.3. 'Catholic' and 'Ecumenical'

Making 'catholic' synonymous with 'ecumenical' or vice versa, as one might be tempted to, would mean a reduction of the content of what 'catholic' really does represent. This would be so since 'ecumenical', as a term which has its source in the Greek οἰκουμένη and which is in itself a quantitative meaning, is seen to focus on the outward, empirical form rather than on the inner characteristics of the Church.³⁶ It is in that perspective that the well-known assertion of the Vincentian canon is regarded by some Orthodox theologians, such as Fr Florovsky, as an over-simplification of the postulate of historical and universal content, for universal consent cannot be the ultimate guarantee of the truth. The acceptance of a certain postulate by a great majority of people is not necessarily a guarantee of its truthfulness. It is only the intrinsic quality of that affirmation which renders it the value of expressing the truth.

The opinions of the Fathers are accepted, not as a formal subjection to outward authority,³⁷ but because of the inner evidence of their catholic truth.

It is, therefore, impossible to judge Church catholicity only from the perspective of universality. On the contrary one should rather avoid seeking for 'outward, formal criteria of catholicity' and try 'not to dissect catholicity in empirical universality', that is to try to relate to the very essence of the catholic truth.³⁸

For others, as for instance Karl Barth, the catholicity of the Church refers primarily to a 'geographical identity' covered partially by the term 'ecumenical' and implying that the same Church can exist in the whole inhabited world and have the same features. But as it has already been stated, 'catholic' is a wider term than 'ecumenical'³⁹ the latter being only an external characteristic of the former one. For 'catholic' is an attribute which refers fundamentally to the quality of the subject to which relates, while outward characteristics are only external expressions of that quality, helpful, but not absolutely essential.

In the original, pre-Christian usage, οἰκουμένη was meant to define the known world, in a geographical sense, as opposed to the world outside the Greek-Latin social context, that is outside the 'ecumenical Empire'.⁴⁰ This geographical emphasis which the word 'ecumenical' carries with it is enforced by the missionary call of the Church: '(ecumenical) is properly used to describe everything that relates to the whole task of the whole Church to bring the Gospel to the whole world'.⁴¹ Later on the meaning shifted towards defining the union that ought to exist between all Christians through the means of faith and baptism. In that sense:

"Ecumenicity" can be taken to mean that part of the Church's catholic dynamic movement which recapitulates in full unity all those partly separated.⁴²

On the other hand, Barth sees catholicity as more orientated towards the inner content which is represented by Christ in whom *all things* are to be recapitulated. Thus, catholicity has its dynamic too, but as a gift and also as a task which at the same time seeks fulfillment.⁴³

In this case, 'catholic' and 'ecumenical' cannot mean the same

thing. The temptation to equate the two would not do justice to the concept of 'catholicity' as a whole and to that of 'catholic' in particular since catholicity represents much more than mere the geographical extension. In order to achieve a better understanding of the term 'catholic', the usage of such biblical terms as 'fellowship' (κοινωνία), 'harmony/agreement' (συμφωνία) and 'assembly/intimacy' (συναγωγή) would prove quite valuable.⁴⁴ For they bring with them qualitative elements that enlarge the perspective in which 'catholic', as an attribute of the Church, ought to be seen.

In more modern times, the word 'ecumenical' has been employed in order to reflect, on the one hand, the awareness of separate Christians of what they represent for each other and, on the other hand, the quality of being involved in a general effort towards obtaining a closer encounter between various Christian groups.⁴⁵

As a conclusion, therefore, we argue that the aspect of Church catholicity which deals with her spatiality or universality should be seen in a different perspective. Catholicity refers not to a world-wide dispersion, but rather to a *inner quality* which does not rely on quantitative or geographical characteristics.⁴⁶ In that respect, instead of talking about a world-wide Church with a universalistic connotation, it would be more appropriate to speak about the pre-eminence of the orthodoxy of the Church, as it stands over against any sectarian, separatist or individualist view (see Chapter III of this thesis). In other words 'it is the idea of integrity and purity that [is to be] expressed'.⁴⁷ That is precisely because the Church is not an universal presence spread all over the world (understood in practical terms).

Hence, it is not the empirical approach to the Church's catholicity which is to be emphasized, but rather a teleological and normative one (cf. Matt 5:45). The kind of fellowship to which Christ calls all of us is meant to embody all human beings, without distinction, in order to create *Ecclesia catholica*, the fellowship of all men and nations. *Ecclesia catholica*, which is in the world but not of the world, and the world as such, are both important for a more comprehensive view of the catholicity of the Church. Yet, the distinction between them is not to be overlooked in a more

balanced and realistic view on catholicity. After all, 'in relation to the Church, spatial universality is limited, very relative and strictly local'.⁴⁸

I.1.4. Sobornost

In order to have a clearer picture of the various meanings that the word 'catholic' bears, a brief look at the way it has been translated in nineteenth century Russian theology might prove to be of some help.

'*Sobornost*' was meant to convey in Slavonic the meaning of the Greek 'καθολικός'. In Khomiakov's view as well as in that of later Russian theologians, *sobornost* was a most appropriate way of translating the Greek term as it refers to the Church. In that sense, *sobornost* was intended to postulate that 'unity which is above and independent of all fragmentation'.⁴⁹ Thus, *sobornost* aimed at enriching the earlier meaning of *sobor* (assembly, council, synod) and making it appropriate to convey the full meaning of 'catholic'. In achieving that, both divine and human elements were to be used so as to arrive at the right meaning.⁵⁰

There are, however, critics such as Zizioulas, who consider that *sobornost* is a 'conceptualisation' of the Greek καθολικός and appeared as a consequence of eighteenth century philosophical influences. Initially, in its ecclesiastical meaning, *sobornost* was used to refer to a 'concrete gathering together' in the concrete expression of the eucharistic community. Later developments of *sobornost* towards a more technical sense, that of the councils, alongside the Western equation of 'catholic' with 'universal', did eventually conceal that original concrete meaning.⁵¹

As a conclusion, one can only hope that due to difficulties which arise in the endeavor for the best translation of a term into another language, the word and the terminology used when referring to *sobornost* is the best one can manage. If that enterprise is not always entirely successful, that will be understandable and further analysis will be for the benefit of all.

I.2. The Temporal (Historical) Aspect of the Catholicity of the Church

I.2.1. The Sameness of the Church through the Ages: The Case for Identity and Continuity

The spatial aspect of Church's catholicity is very much related to the temporal one, the Church's continuity in time and a guarantee of its identity with the primitive Church.

First of all, the temporal aspect of Church's catholicity has been related to the apostolic heritage of the Church: a faithfulness through time to the teaching and thought of the Apostles is the guarantee of its identity with the Church of the beginnings. It was this *identity* with the apostolic Church which brought the Church of today to be called 'catholic'. It is in these manner that the catholicity of the Church is seen as expressing the life and the existence of the Church as consistent and identical with the apostolic age. Hence, time becomes a way of preserving the Church's integrity and catholicity.⁵² In that respect, to be in communion with the Apostles has always been something essential to any Christian community (cf. Acts 2:42). In it an identity with the teaching and life of the primitive Church is preserved to such an extent that 'apostolic' and 'catholic' come eventually to be regarded as overlapping each other. There is, therefore, a continuity in terms of 'succession or survival in time, i.e. from the past to the present into the future'.⁵³

The case for identity with the 'one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church' has been a focal point for any Church and community throughout the ages.

Luther for instance always stressed the fact that the Church he proclaimed is not another and a new church, but the true old Church, one body with the entire holy Church, and one community of saints.⁵⁴ This Church has been preserved miraculously by God, in spite of all the adversities in the past, even in the midst of her 'Babylonian captivity'.⁵⁵ Therefore, when Luther uses the Apostles' Creed as a proof for what he is advocating, he intends it to show that for him continuity with the old Church means more than a

formal acknowledgment of the Church's canonical writings. For him, there has to be a strong commitment to the richness which the Church of all the ages up to his time had always taught and ceaselessly proclaimed.⁵⁶

On the other hand, the temporal dimension of the Church's catholicity is to be seen both from the perspective of its *continuity* with the Church of the first centuries and as the task of preserving and furthering the content of the right faith. The legacy which the primitive Church has transmitted to the Church of all ages until the end of the world is the faith which has been preserved through God's Word. That faith must be recovered in the Church's life where it was lost throughout the ages and replaced with human doctrines.

However, temporal catholicity understood in these terms alone does not make a church catholic, for catholicity should not be regarded primarily as a 'historical concept'. The most important thing is not antiquity as such, but preservation of the true nature of the origins as proved throughout the passage of time.

Antiquity without truthfulness is nothing else but inveterated error.⁵⁷

Nevertheless, a certain historical dimension of the Church's catholicity remains as important as ever, at least in one case, but for different reasons. The distinction which the Roman Catholic Church draws between itself (the 'Mother Church') and other Churches ('daughter Churches') is conceived on historical grounds, yet is unsustainable on dogmatic ones. The Church of Rome is neither more nor is it less a *Church* in terms of what are the things that defines it as such in its relation to other similar localities. It may be true that it used to hold a central position in the past, for various reasons (of which the dogmatic ones were never widely recognized) and that other communities turned to it for approval or advice. Yet, the ultimate court of appeal was the general consensus as reached through the reception of the decisions of an ecumenical council.

Thus, any future achievement of 'the necessary unity' and of 'the necessary catholicity' of the Church must be conditioned, in

the Roman Catholic view, by a 'positive account' of the relationship which both the Roman Church and the other Churches have to sort out in relation to each other in history.⁵⁸

Others, especially anglican theologians, conceive of this temporal catholicity as the way Tradition has been seen, namely as a 'catholic unanimity' completed in time by the middle of the fifth century. In that respect, what constitutes their churches' teaching is nothing but the teaching of 'the true primitive Christianity', nothing new being added to this bequest of faith.⁵⁹ In fact, the opposition against the Establishment which started in England with the Puritan movement was meant to restore a supposedly primitive pattern of the Church. That pattern referred to a catholicity in antiquity, which had been lost among insignificant 'rules, ordinances, rites, and ceremonies'⁶⁰; and that was the basis on which Anglicanism reckoned itself as being in continuity with the Church of the beginnings. Thus, it affirmed its catholicity through time.⁶¹

But this link across the ages is not the result of a mechanical process; there are 'certain living qualities of faith and order', as for instance universally recognized definitions of faith as interpreted by the Early Fathers of the Church, and those represent 'the assurance and the norm of catholicity'.⁶² Moreover, these qualities can be externally expressed in certain ceremonies which, by their ancientness, give more credibility to the content of the faith they mean to endorse. Hence, the concept of antiquity is related to that of continuity and, ultimately, to catholicity in its temporal aspect.

This antiquity has to be seen in the context of the interpretation of the Scriptures, since only the two conjoined - antiquity and the interpretation of the Scriptures' - could guarantee 'the accuracy and essential congruity' of any biblical interpretation over the centuries.⁶³ In the same sense, it can be said that a general consensus in doctrinal matters is to be conceived mainly in terms of temporal continuity rather than in terms of acceptance by the whole body of believers. There is, however, a connection between the increasing of the Church's membership and the temporal aspect of Church's catholicity since

'the Church grows with the passage of time'. The basis of this growth is Christ as the One who sustains the Church and remains always present in it according to His promise.⁶⁴ Hence, the Church, which is the Body of Christ, by virtue of Christ's innermost presence and activity, remains one, regardless of its temporal extension.

I.2.2. Temporal (Historical) Catholicity: Traditional and Institutional Expressions

What makes the Church ultimately a catholic Body is its organic constitution as expressed in her Christological and Pneumatological essentials. This represents 'an ontological principle' by which alone the true nature and shape of the Church can be expressed. The Church is catholic in her very nature and this quality never ceases to be part of Church's very essence. Two of the basic features of the life of the Church - unity and continuity - 'are expressible in an outward pattern which includes essential dogma, essential forms of worship, and essential ministry'.⁶⁵ Continuity with the Church of the Fathers and fidelity with their theology is one of the main concerns for any traditional theology in affirming a structured catholicity of the Church. This attitude of looking back to the Fathers and to their understanding of Church's catholicity as normative brings along, through the acceptance of their authoritative thinking, the idea of continuity of a Church of today with the Church of the first centuries.

The preservation of the truth found in Scripture, professed by the Church Fathers and handed over up to this day, is, for these theologians, the evidence that the Church they represent is not a new church but a church in continuation with the 'one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church' of Christ.

The task of securing the catholic unity of the Church in its temporal aspect is part of the episcopal mission, as representative for each community. Yet, in this action the ordained ministry remains always attached to the Body (cf. 1 Cor 12), the other members of the community being part of that communal effort.

(Through the bishop of the local community) every particular or local Church is included in the catholic fullness of the Church, is linked with the past and with all ages.⁶⁶

In the same sense, by carefully preserving the faith in the community, in line with the faith that the Church always taught, the bishop acts, as it were, on behalf of the whole Church. This is the Church which 'although scattered in the whole world, carefully preserves it, as if living in one house'.⁶⁷ Yet again, the didactic aspect of the episcopal office is to be placed in a more sacramental context, in order to reflect and to reveal more thoroughly the exact meaning of the Church's catholicity in its temporal aspect.

For others (as in the case of Roman Catholicism) 'historical catholicity' offers the image of a continuous, uniform development of the Roman Church from Christ to Peter, and from Peter to the Popes of later days. It was thought that nothing in history has disturbed that 'flat line' and everything or everyone must orientate itself or himself towards that line in order to retain the attribute of catholicity. Thus, it was not unusual for Pope Gregory VII to put in his *Dictatus papae* (1075) the following proposition: 'Whoever does not agree with the Roman Church is not to be considered catholic'.⁶⁸ Therefore, the historical continuity of the present Catholic Church with the Church of the Apostles is taken as evidence of a temporal identity with that primitive Church. Apostolicity strengthens the position of catholicity with the witness of the Apostles. For non-Roman Catholics, however, this is valid only to the extent to which they consent to remain in a certain relationship with Rome. Otherwise, the temporal identity of a non-Catholic and his/her perception of the value of apostolicity lack the essential 'ingredient': Rome's endorsement.

In more recent times the quest for temporal catholicity has been analyzed in a somewhat different way. The strong emphasis put on historical continuity in time by the Roman Church and on the centrality of the Pope in the universal Church which were characteristic of traditional Roman Catholic thought, have been reconsidered especially after Vatican Council II. Unlike the traditional view, Vatican II stated that the structures of the

Church, although fundamentally given by Christ, must continually be adjusted to the times. Periodically new doctrinal assertions, liturgical symbols, and pastoral structures are required to transmit the 'fullness' of Christ effectively to new generations.⁶⁹ Catholicity is not an unchanging continuity. The temporal aspect of the Church's catholicity, therefore, implies an element of discontinuity.

This type of historical catholicity understood in terms of identity with the primitive Church, which Roman Catholicism proclaims as one of its marks, is based ultimately on a linear continuity in time. The dynamism of the Church, as a more updated approach to history has shown, indicates that there is in the Church's life inevitably discontinuity alongside continuity. That discontinuity is clearly present in such extreme attitudes as: ecclesiastical totalitarianism, papalism, legalism, dogmatism, ritualism, and sacramentalism. Thus, for instance ecclesiastical totalitarianism or papalism (as it started to develop even before the formal schism of 1054), with claims to supreme authority in all ecclesiastical matters, are at the root of the rupture in a long-established egalitarian pattern of the primitive Church. The same can be said about legalism, dogmatism or indeed ritualism, which have each created breaches in the continuity of an apostolic Christian life, in the Western theology, either in the transmission of powers or in providing a normative way which has to be followed. These have generated, for instance, the view held in the Middle Ages concerning the transmission of powers and in the principle of Reformation of *sola Scriptura*.⁷⁰

It can be said, therefore, that this historical approach to the concept of Church catholicity is an introspective, anamnetic one since a 'consciousness of continuity with the past' is brought about by employing in a psychological way the anamnetic function of the Church, as the keeper and transmitter of a living continuous past.

The Church recalls a time "apostolic";...in this approach her apostolicity comes from the side of the past.⁷¹

In this process, Christ remains the One who provides the structure of this continuity, while the Spirit as the One who is sent by Christ plays the role of agency.⁷²

I.2.3. Identity and Permanence in the Church Catholic

The permanence of Christ's Church throughout the ages until the end of times is a fact of which very few Christians have any doubts. The Church - *Ecclesia* - ought to mean 'a Christian holy people', not only of the time of the Apostles, but to the end of the world; there is always living on earth a 'Christian, holy people', a community in which Christ is made manifest. From this community in the catholic faith are excluded only those who cause divisions and offenses (cf. Rom 16:17) by employing their own doctrines instead of teaching what the Church catholic always taught. That catholic Church was from the beginning, has been here from the time of Adam, and will remain to the end of the world. This is in accordance with Christ's promise (Matt 28:20) that God's people, that is His catholic Church, will remain to the end of time.⁷³

The essential Christological structure, respectively a doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ, conceived as an ontological and corporeal reality with human and historical form, has been replaced in Roman Catholic theology by external and juridical formulations. A highly juridical system of canon law together with legalistic views and practices as applied in the life of the Church made the medieval communities resemble less and less to the original pattern of the Early catholic Church. In such circumstances the dualism between visible assembly and the spiritual community or the earthly Church and the heavenly one remained unsolved, for, through those external, juridical means, the the visible and earthly community received pre-eminence in relation to the spiritual, heavenly Church.

It is therefore understandable that the Reformation laid stress upon a real inner structure of the Church, which 'derives from Jesus Christ Himself and, through Him, from a transcendent ground in the eternal communion of the Holy Trinity'.⁷⁴ The real

unity and continuity of the Church of Christ in history are therefore, for the Reformation, essentially spiritual.

In comparison with Luther, however, Calvin stressed the idea of a visible external Church in which there is an historical communication of the word of God in the building up of a 'Church that is visible in history'⁷⁵ alongside the hidden, invisible community of believers. This Church has its universal character in the fact that its extension in time covers the whole history from the beginning till the end of the world. But the recognition of such a Church as a concrete community is necessarily the result of the presence of Christ and of the hearing of the word.

The adjective 'catholic' as it is understood in Reformed theology means 'general', 'comprehensive'. In the realm of time catholicity refers to an identity and a continuity in spite of all the differences which may exist. In this sense the Church is catholic by virtue of the fact that it is 'always and everywhere the same and always and everywhere recognizable in this sameness, to the preservation of which it is committed'.

The adjective "catholic" means universal, all-embracing; it speaks of an identity, a continuity, a universality which imposes itself supreme over all diversities. As applied to the Church, it means that it has a character by virtue of which it is always and everywhere the same, and always and everywhere recognizable in this identity,⁷⁶ to whose preservation it is always and everywhere committed.

The identity in time with the primitive Church is kept inasmuch as a community reflects, activates or confirms Christ. Thus, catholicity becomes the point of reference by which a Church is judged in terms of its truthfulness: 'a Church is catholic or it is not the Church'.⁷⁷

At the same time, the fact that in her long history the Church never ceased completely to exist as a visible community of faith gives to her the attribute of catholicity in terms of time. In this sense, the focus is not concentrated so much on historical continuities visible to the eye of man, but on 'the event of faith in which Christ continuously calls his Church into existence' by the means of the Word and the Sacraments.⁷⁸

On the other hand, the Reformed tradition stresses the fact that neither the newness nor the modernity of a Church make it a 'catholic community'. Progress cannot count as a means of achieving a better expression of Church's catholicity, but only reformation, that is to say a new expression of the same truth. The Church catholic is an *Ecclesia semper reformanda*, although its 'abiding possession' transcends any temporal circumscription.⁷⁹

I.3. The Church's Catholicity, Time and the Kingdom of God: The Eschatological Aspect of the Catholicity of the Church

I.3.1. Between Imperfection and Fulfillment

The Church is not, as we have already suggested, a reality which is mainly concerned with this life. By her divine origin it receives also a divine purpose. In that sense one can look at the Church as being 'still *in statu viae* and yet already *in statu patriae*'.⁸⁰ This ultimate reality which is yet to come has already been revealed, although no final goal has been attained in this life. It is the mission of the Church as a historical reality to proclaim the world to come, and that is precisely her ultimate goal.

To eschaton does not mean primarily final, in the temporal series of events; it means rather *ultimate* (decisive); and the ultimate is being realized within the stress of historical happenings and events.⁸¹

In that respect the Church has to be seen as a reality structured in such a manner as to express in a 'relational existential and eschatological way the identity of each community with those of the past, especially with the original apostolic communities, and with those of the present, implying a constant openness to the future'.⁸²

In this context, Luther conceives of any Christian as both '*justus*' and '*peccator*', acting and living as earthly and heavenly at the same time according to the two Kingdoms. Consequently, he is

either under the law (in this life) or under grace in the 'novum regnum' set up by Christ, a 'regnum remissionis peccatorum' through which he receives the possibility to enter into the Kingdom of God.⁸³

Luther's vision amounts to a dualistic antithesis which stems from his inability to understand that the two Kingdoms are in fact one and the same: the latter is just the eschatological, perfected transposition of the former. Through Christ's coming and bringing salvation to the world, and afterwards through sending the Holy Spirit, the Comforter to establish the Church, the Kingdom of God had already been inaugurated. Seen in these terms, the continuation of the present Kingdom (the Church under the law) with the future one (the Church under the fullness of grace) is assured.

By her very spiritual structure, that is by having the Holy Spirit as its very life, the Church is not merely a historical, visible entity but more than that, it becomes involved in a *beyond-history* and *beyond-space* realm in the world to come. Hence, the Spirit makes relevant the features of τὰ ἔσχατα into the history of this world.⁸⁴ Instead of remaining strictly attached to the notion of the past, that is to say to an anamnetic understanding, the Spirit creates a new dimension by bringing τὰ ἔσχατα into our life, here and now. Thus, in a paradoxical way, we may acquire a 'memory of the future' which will help us in better understanding our historical consciousness.⁸⁵

At the same time, the Church transcends spatiality and temporality in infinity and eternity. Hence, a differentiation is made between an imperfect earthly form in which the Church is on the way to achieving its true affirmation, and a perfect heavenly form in which the Church is to appear like an eschatological reality. The contrast between a militant Church (*ecclesia militans*) and a triumphant Church (*ecclesia triumphans*) is to be understood in terms of fulfillment, of perfection achieved 'only in the glory of heaven'.⁸⁶

On the other hand, for some, the Church catholic should be conceived in a mystical and spiritual manner, and, thus, be concerned with a more ideal image. In fact, the widening of the realm in which the Church catholic is seen as transcending any

limitation of this world is under a constraint which the faith can exert upon the Church.⁸⁷ This extension of the Church catholic beyond any earthly temporal or spatial limitation is based, therefore, on a universal call and the unity of hope present in each one of the members of the Church.⁸⁸

Hence, this community of faith which is the Church, visibly manifested and actualized here and now as a catholic body, goes beyond her temporality and spatiality, receiving an eschatological dimension. The Church is seen as the movement of a Kingdom 'whose limits are wider than the whole world'.⁸⁹ This Church, by pointing towards the Kingdom as its final goal is already 'the community that shares in the new creation' of the age to come. Being a society of redeemed people, the Church in its earthly provisional status is a foretaste of the life of the limitless and timeless Kingdom of God: 'The eschaton has already broken into the present'.⁹⁰

I.3.2. History, Eschatology and Church's Catholicity

On its part, in rehabilitating the theme of a heavenly Church, Vatican II implicitly rejected the primacy of the institutional ecclesiology of the Counter Reformation. Through a mystical communion with one another in Christ, it said, men are joined together in a fellowship of love on earth which will be fully consummated in heaven. The Church existing already, incomplete in this life due to our weakness and shortcomings, will reach its fullness in the life to come. On a biblical basis one can regard 'the Church within history as a foretaste or anticipation of what the Church is to be'.⁹¹ Vatican II seems to promote an 'eschatology of continuity' in which every valuable thing that Christians achieved on earth will receive a final transfiguration in the Kingdom of God.⁹¹ Through having to fulfill a universal task in certain concrete historical and spatial circumstances, the Church enters into human history. Yet, both the Church and her context are basically eschatological, are part of the 'metachronic dimension of reality'.⁹³

In this perspective eschatology is generally seen not as the

consummation of history, but rather as the milieu in which the historical events acquire their eternal significance. The exemplary representation of this eschatological dimension of Church's catholicity is once again related to the eucharistic communion. 'The Eucharist not only remembers, it also prepares, awaits, anticipates'.⁹⁴

History is no longer a succession of events which come from the past into the present in a linear sequence; it also moves towards the future as the realm into which these events are transformed into 'charismatic-pentecostal events'. And that occurs in the Holy Spirit who is present in the eucharistic communion, through whom the past and the future receive a new, final meaning.⁹⁵

By making the Church always dependent on the Spirit, however, and thus, putting history into the perspective of eschatology the importance of Christ's redemptive acts receive new insights for history, whose value is not to be denied. In that respect there is no longer a disruptive tension between history and τὰ ἔσχατα as in the case of an ontological dualism. This is because the guarantee of the Kingdom 'which is the presence of the Spirit in history (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Ephes 1:14), signifies precisely the synthesis of the historical with the eschatological'.⁹⁶ The Church lives permanently in a ceaseless epicletic atmosphere in which she possesses the guarantee of Christ's presence on the eucharistic table and also has permanently the need for a deeper communion with Christ when it cries: 'Come, Lord, come' (Apoc 4-5; 21:17). It is thus always a pre-eminence of the *eschaton* in its relationship with the history and its structures; the *eschaton* determines history for 'the Church is the living image of eternity within time'.⁹⁷

Hence, the Eucharist is revealed as the one reality of the Church's life which is at the same time institution and event. That is precisely because the Eucharist constitutes 'the uniquely privileged moment of the Church's existence in which the Kingdom comes epicletically, that is without emerging as an expression of the historical process, although it is manifested through historical forms'.⁹⁸

It is in this respect that one can speak of a 'epicletic'

aspect of continuity according to which history is no longer the sole guarantee in securing the salvation. In the ecclesiological context, the *epiclesis* brings forth the Church's demands 'to receive from God what it has already received historically in Christ as it had not received it at all', that is to permanently renew Christ's message. It is the re-enactment of the history of salvation over and over again in order to make history part of the present and, thus, relevant to every single time of our existence.⁹⁹ This type of community bears in it a concept of the Kingdom of God which is already present within the world, within history, being at the same time a foretaste of a future state.

In those traditions born out of the Reformation the task of making relevant to this world the features of the world to come and of channeling the spiritual resources of this world towards the future Kingdom is given to the Word of God as the bridge between earth and heaven. This kind of understanding of the temporal and eschatological aspect of Church's catholicity is on the same lines as the dialectical concept of the two ages or 'regiments'. Unlike the teaching of the Early Church, Luther and those who followed him failed to comprehend them in terms of a divine action from within and, at the same time, transcending history, keeping the two realms in a state of total separation. There is an area where the Kingdom of God meets and matches this present world and where the Church finds her place both in history and beyond history. Instead, Luther talks about a '*duplex ecclesia*' which exists from the beginning of history.¹⁰⁰ As a result of this, the 'abrupt termination' of history (cf. Rom 9:28) is, for Luther, the only way to eradicate the continuous decline of humanity. Hence, he holds a Donatist, sectarian view as far as history and eschatology are concerned, for to him 'the whole world is evil and among thousands there is scarcely one true Christian'.¹⁰¹

In trying to draw some conclusions, one should first of all not deny the geographical, temporal or numerical aspects of Church's catholicity. The Church is bound to have such features for we live with them in our daily life. Our being is conditioned by these elements, but what the Christian way of life had brought about is the inclusion of these concepts and criteria of

understanding history and space within a theological perspective.

Eschatology is no less real and significant to our life than are the past or the present. The only authentic catholicity is one which transcends or, to say the least, sets itself free from, the contingency of the present by appropriating to itself the actions of God both as performed in the past and as forthcoming. Of course, such an approach would seem somehow very little connected with practice, but after all 'catholicity transcends practicality, as it must also transcend history, geography, culture'.¹⁰² The milieu in which this always happens is the Eucharist conceived both as a memorial (history) and as an anticipation or expectation (eschatology). Only in this way does the Church's being transcend the natural context in which it lives and liberates itself from any human boundary, be it historical, geographical, numerical or rational-determinist. That is precisely because the resurrected Christ liberates us all.

This is what one may call a concept of the Church mainly centered on sacramental, eschatological and iconic elements present in the Eucharist as the ultimate expression of a 'φάνεια', that is to say a manifestation of those realities of the Kingdom of God as they are brought about here on earth.

I.4. The Church Catholic: a 'Communion of Saints'

Catholicity in time and space is expressed at its best in the eucharistic communion where the past is present not only through the teaching preserved in the Church but also through the gathering together of those who are part of the communities and also of those who now are departed. This is what is commonly called the 'communion of saints'.¹⁰³

Remaining with those who are no longer part of the visible community and yet are part of the same community is essential. For the faith that they confessed is the same faith that we confess and therefore 'that faith is concerned with history'. It is in this sense that history gives us not only the image of successive

changes but at the same time identity.

(The Church) thinks of the past not as of something that is no more, but as of something that has been accomplished, as something existing in the catholic fullness of the one Body of Christ.¹⁰⁴

The eucharistic experience is therefore the place where the catholic dimension of the Church is thus essentially manifested and revealed in its integrity. It is the eucharistic gathering which shows that the characteristics of that experience of the Church belongs to all times.¹⁰⁵

In these terms, one can say that the Church exceeds her limitations in time and space, due to the fact that between those who are still in this life and those who passed into the life beyond there is a strong link of love. The prayers for the dead and the veneration of the Saints strengthens this union 'through the exchanging of spiritual goods'. Those who are in heaven already united with Christ 'establish the whole Church firmly in holiness', being at the same time linked by the Holy Spirit with the Christian communities of today.

This concern for the "communion of saints" has sometimes also been called "catholicity in time". Without that aspect of catholicity, "catholicity in space" - that is, the external, geographic¹⁰⁶ universality of the Church - has very little meaning.

In this context the Church should be seen in its communal dimension, as a community in Christ of all members, a *koinonia* held together by the gifts of the Spirit poured over everyone who bears the name of Christ. Hence, a dialogue is established on the one hand between each Christian and God, and on the other hand between themselves as responsible for each other before God and the Church as a whole. 'That is what catholicity is all about'.¹⁰⁷

Therefore, this *communion of saints*, which brings together quick and dead, 'militant' and 'triumphant', temporal and spatial with eternal and infinite develops an idea of a catholicity which extends the limits of the Church beyond visible and ephemeral boundaries.

Having said that, the main conclusion which one can draw is the need for theology to keep its identity with the catholic Church in terms of loyalty to the faith which has been given to the Church by Christ. Such axioms as '*Ecclesia semper reformata*' as in Luther's case acts as a permanent safeguard in the process of preserving this *depositum fidei* unaltered through the vagaries of the history. For others different methods are used, yet they all aim at achieving the same goal: being in time and space what they aim at being into the perfect Kingdom of God.

But the way in which both the relationship between different local Churches and also the relationship between the community and its members are conceived reveals that in practice many communities act in a sectarian manner, proving themselves as hopelessly a-catholic Churches. Thus, instead of working for the affirmation in practice of a catholic Church, they remain at the level of a collectivity of individuals which can hardly be called a catholic gathering. Until they will come to understand that the real content of the Church is its capacity to overcome individualism and to establish sound communal relationships among themselves, no catholicity can ever become a reality, a way of being.

II. One Trinity, One Christ, One Spirit, One Catholic Church.
Trinitarian, Christological, and Pneumatological Foundations
of the Catholicity of the Church

Any activity which the Church performs in the world is ultimately related to the Trinitarian character of God within which the Christological and Pneumatological dimensions are of crucial importance and relevance. The inner relationship which exists between the Persons of the Holy Trinity has a profound impact on the whole life of the Church in determining how the Church is shaped and grows in this life on the way towards the eschatological fulfillment.

At the same time, Christ remains always the focus in every aspect of the Church as a whole, and for its individual members, while the Holy Spirit penetrates the Church with His life-giving gifts in which the glory of the Father is fully revealed, because the very content of these *charismata* is Christ, one with the living Father who has sent Him (John 6:57).

II.1. The Holy Trinity:

the Supreme Expression of the Mystery of the Catholic Church
(The Trinitarian Dimension of the Church Catholic)

II.1.1. The Iconic Character of the Holy Trinity for the Church

In order to understand fully the way in which the entire life of the Church catholic is fundamentally connected with and

reflected in its source - the Holy Trinity - one has to give priority to an essential assertion: the Holy Trinity is a unity of three Persons among whom there is a mutual interrelationship of love. Based on that understanding, one can then establish how that inner relationship affects the life and the expression of the Church in the world, a Church which in itself ought to represent in a concrete manifestation the interior life of its divine model.

It is of extreme importance for the Church to be conceived in personal terms. This emphasis on the 'personal'¹ is nothing else than the transposition of the pattern of a divine 'prototype' into the concrete, human context. This transposition can be seen as an 'iconic' representation of the Divine Trinity by which the Church acquires characteristics proper to its 'original' model.

From the creation, man has been destined to a life of communion. By creating him in His 'image and likeness', God, the One who is Personal Being, intended to have man as a relational being as well, to whom He may refer. This type of relation receives a superior expression in the communion existing in the Body of the Church catholic, in which members of the Church join together and contribute personally to the life of a Christian community through their individual *charismata*, but referring permanently to God.

Certainly, a certain relationship existing between people, as individuals or as collectivities, and God could exist in the world at large. Yet, that relationship does not have, as its point of reference, God the Trinity as revealed through Christ, but an unknown god. Thus, that relationship is one between an 'impersonal', that is to say a remote, unapproachable god and people, who refer to divinity only in fear, but not in love.

The Trinitarian God does not create an 'I' from the 'I' of God, but the 'thou' of man - man and woman - out of which the 'we' of the human race can grow. That is why it is only² in the Church that man can be defined as a being-in-communion.

The Church is therefore the projection of a divine constitution into human existence whereby a network of personal relations is established. The personal Trinity and the divine communion which characterize God the Trinity are the very

foundation upon which a communion with the creation is realized as means for human community. Only in that communal context, which is the catholic Church, can human beings fully manifest their purpose in this life as witnesses to the superior status which they have to proclaim and attain, that is to say the perfect life with God in eternity. 'Man is what he is when he shares in the ecclesiastical communion'³, for in it that life with God, through the saving work of Christ and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as shared in the catholic communion of the Church, has already been inaugurated.

The Church is a gathering which reflects the communion of love present in the Holy Trinity because it is the result of the activity of all the Three Persons. One should be careful not to separate any of the Three Persons from the life of the Church as a community in which God and man meet each other. On the day of Pentecost, when the Church established by Christ on the Cross and through the Resurrection became a concrete community, it was the whole Trinity who acted (cf. John 15:26). In that, God's 'new intervention' in the world has realized and actualized in time 'the once and for all event in and of Christ, the personal "link" between Him and all men'.⁴ That link is the one to which man is called permanently to give evidence by integrating himself more fully in the life of the catholic Church as the 'milieu' in which God the Trinity is always present and at work, strengthening the life of dialogue within it.

II.1.2. The Holy Trinity, the Church and the Unity in Diversity

An essential characteristic of the Church as a catholic community is its unity in the diversity of persons. That again is a reflection of the unity of God's nature as well as His diversity of Persons. But more than that, the unity in the diversity of nature of the Church catholic is a way whereby one can catch a glimpse of how the Trinitarian dialogue operates.

God - Trinity cannot be known other than in the unity - diversity of the Church catholic and, on the other hand, if the Church possesses the catholicity it is because the Son and the Holy Spirit sent by the Father revealed to it the Trinity.⁵

On the one hand, God is One in the unity of His nature (οὐσία) as identically shared by all the Divine Persons. The Son through His work as the Redeemer of the fallen creation, and the Holy Spirit, the One who effects Christ's redemptive acts, both respond to the Father's will to be sent so that 'the world might be saved' (John 3:17). This unity is what the Greek Fathers of the Church called 'the hypostatic union' of the Holy Trinity, that is to say 'the internal cohesion of the Three who are One' by 'the flowing together of substance within the Trinity'.⁶ From that internal common substance the Church draws its life of communion because its very nature is based on what God chose to do in, and to give to, His creation.

On the other hand, God is Trinity in the diversity of His Persons (πρόσωπα). The Church comprises in itself a variety of persons who constitute its richness in the same way in which the Three Divine Persons reflect a plurality of characteristics without undermining the unity of the Holy Trinity. This is particularly relevant in the eucharistic assembly which is one of the most expressive events in the life of the catholic Body of the Church and where, for instance, the Holy Spirit plays a specific role.

It is the *paraclesis*, that is, the answer of the Trinitarian God to the invocation of His name by the Church, in which the Spirit acts in place of the exalted Christ, re-enacting the whole of the divine economy as if Christ with the Father were present among us here and now.⁷

In the same way, Christ as the Son of God Incarnate is the 'response' to the invocation performed by the communion of persons in the Church catholic as done through the intercession of the Holy Spirit. Thus, worship becomes the means by which the Triune God comes to re-establish communion with man in the Church which 'in its catholicity... becomes the created similitude of Divine perfection'.⁸ On the basis of the differentiation which the Persons of the Holy Trinity display, the Church in its turn uses the multiplicity of the persons which it comprises in order to express more fully its catholicity. Following the pattern of the Trinity as stated by the Trinitarian dogma, the catholicity of the Church

appears as a 'mysterious identity of the one and the many, - unity which is diversified and diversity which remains one'.⁹

Against such a view which takes into account the reality of a Trinitarian foundation of the catholic Church run concepts that by emphasizing far too much the Christological dimension of the Church tend to become monochrome and one-sided. In that category fall both the traditional Protestant almost exclusive emphasis on Christ's role in the redemption of the world and the Roman Catholic focus on the unity of the Divine Being with a strong monarchianist tendency.¹⁰ These concepts affect the way in which the Church and its catholicity are to be conceived.

Drawing their inspiration from St Augustine, these views profess a tight centralization of Church's existence around Christ's person. Christ either provokes someone to react to an exterior agent - the word of God - and thus contributes to the expansion of the Church through faith (which leads to Christomonism or pan-christologism) or He causes the Church to exist in a historical linear way in order to transform it in a unique society based on moral principles (ecclesio-monism and monarchianism). In both cases the relationship is based on individualism and is conceived on a linear unitary development which does not allow the existence of plurality.¹¹ The only diversity which is acceptable would be the one whereby the unity is achieved.

Such views are in fact the direct consequence of the failure to understanding properly the relationship which exists within the Holy Trinity and which is one characterized by dynamic exchange in a common nature diversified in a multitude of attributes.¹² The Church does nothing but mirror that relationship in the way it is constituted as a catholic community. It is in that sense, therefore, that one can speak of a Trinitarian character of the Church in its catholicity as *κοινωνία*¹³ alongside a Christological and a Pneumatological one and in which its quality of being a unity in diversity is fully valued.

II.2. The Person of Christ
and the Catholic Body of Christ, His Church
(The Christological Dimension of the Church Catholic)

II.2.1. Christ as a Relational Personality
through His Human Nature

The quest for the Church's catholicity, as it is understood in terms of Christology, lies mainly in an ontological approach and is not concerned, in the first place, with an ethical perspective, which comes afterwards as a consequence of what the Church *is* in its very being. The Church is catholic ultimately because it *is* the Body of Christ, and therefore its catholicity depends essentially not on itself but on Christ who by His presence creates and brings into being the Church as a 'catholic body'. The person of Christ is the one which by His unity appeals to a community to be experienced and revealed in the unity of the whole creation. This community is the Body of Christ and 'lives out of the same communion which we find in Christ's historical existence'.¹⁴ It is through Christ's deified humanity that man is called to participate and also to share in His deification in which 'the whole man' participates in the 'the whole God'. In Christ as God Incarnate, human existence is at the same time revealed and accomplished. One may, therefore, say that the Church is the extension and the fulfillment of the incarnated life of the Son.¹⁵

In order to fulfill the necessary requirement of being in a permanent relationship with Christ every individual has to become a person. The model for that person is and remains always Christ who, by His very essence, reveals Himself as a person and not as an individual. Christ is a relational reality who refers both to *me* and to *us*. Therefore, it is impossible for the Church to speak of Christ other than in terms of communion. Following that understanding, one can apply to Christ the notion of 'corporate personality' in which our humanity, as it is reflected both at a singular level or in a multiplicity, finds its real meaning.

At the same time this is also shown by the close relationship which exists between Christ and the Spirit. It is in that respect

that ontologically speaking Christ is understood not in terms of an individuality which 'affirms itself by distancing itself from the other individualities', but rather in terms of a relational person who reaches beyond particularity in establishing a relationship and communion. 'Without Pneumatology, ontology becomes substantialistic (*sic*) and individualistic (*sic*)'.¹⁶ That is not to say that unity displaces the individual. It rather tries to avoid the danger of overemphasizing the individual (seen as an isolated entity), as different from the person (as a relational being), which could eventually end up in individualism.

Having stated the basic necessity of the relationship between Christ and the Spirit one can understand why it is also impossible to think of Christ as an individual. Therefore, it would be inconceivable to speak of Christ, the Head without His Body, the 'many'. In the same manner, with regard to the Church, it cannot be conceived as being one without considering it at the same time as being 'many'.

Therefore, in this fundamental relationship which is based on personhood, individuals disappear as such and become 'sharers of the eternal and true life only as members one of another' and that in the context of the Body of Christ.¹⁷ The focus tends to be upon the whole rather than parts. In this sense each individual has to conform himself to the life of the whole and not vice versa in order to form the kind of Body which has Christ as both its Head and centre. On that understanding, the presence of Christ in the worshipping community 'is the meaning and the unity of the whole Church'.¹⁸

The unity of Christians among themselves is realized only if we are one in Christ. He remains the Lord of the unity who acts together with the Spirit through whom 'we were all baptized into one Body' (1 Cor 12:13). It is Christ in whom the Church dwells and, therefore, He is neither above nor outside the Church but He is the inner essence of the Body. To speak of the *many* as Christians is the same as to speak of *the One Christ*.¹⁹ Hence, membership of the Body renders to the individual membership of Christ.

Luther also speaks about Christ as God Incarnate in the son of

Mary and therefore represents the unity of a divine-human person in whom the two natures are perfectly united to each other and therefore never separated or divided. Hence, since 'the deity withdrew and hid', Christ appeared to anyone as a mere man, with all the human afflictions which every human being carries with him.²⁰ However, Christ as God Incarnate manifests His omnipotence due to His divine nature, which retains and at the same time transmits its attributes to the entire person of Christ as such. As a consequence of that, the characteristics of each of the two natures of Christ, through the process of exchanging qualities with each other, become characteristics of Christ's person as a whole, 'the whole Christ'.²¹ The fact that Christ represents the complete unity of the divine with the human in His person and work made Him capable of becoming completely at one with all humankind and of undertaking the task of liberating it from sin.²²

Thus, for Luther, Scripture gives testimony to what Christ did for our redemption, as the external word through which God 'speaks'²³ and which unites Christians to Christ (cf. Gal 2:20). The proclamation of the Gospel which is to be done at any time and by anyone will reveal the whole Christ, *totus Christus*.

For Calvin, on the other hand, the fact that *ecclesia catholica* appears as a community that everywhere, always and in relation to all other societies and individuals is one and the same is actually reflected in that of the Body, 'the earthly-historical form of Jesus Christ'.²⁴ That community is catholic inasmuch as Christ lives, speaks and acts inside it. Christ is the one who is the bond of the identity of the Church in time and space by being the same here and now, regardless of whatever forms the community and the individual may take.

But, in Calvin's thought, although the Church has an essential spiritual nature, in spite of its concrete existence in this world, there is always room for an imperfect expression of its very essence. The only hope for the Church to maintain and to remain identical, continuously universal and committed to its mission is to accept and to follow Christ, who is the norm of its identity. He gives to a community the means by which that community is reckoned as a *veritas catholica*.²⁵ No one and nothing can give to the Church

the recognition as a catholic body except Jesus Christ alone, who is the One who makes His Body - the Church - a catholic Church, the true Christian Church, as distinct from a false one.

In the case of Luther as well as Calvin, the centrality of Christ in the context of the catholic Church is without any doubt a very important feature. What differentiates them from one another and from other theologians about this aspect of the Church are two things.

On the one hand, for Luther the external factor which is constituted by the scriptural word and which unites Christ with individuals or communities, through the two-way process of preaching and receiving, does not effect in those individuals the sort of ontological change and orientation that the person of Christ has really brought about. Those who relate to Christ do so in His capacity of being the One who assumed our afflictions and weaknesses, that is to say in His humanity, which alone cannot cause a deep, essential change in their lives. The appeal is to compassion rather than effective sanctification which can only be enacted through the sacramental *charismata*.

On the other hand, Calvin tends to overstate the spiritual aspect of the Church, and thus to undermine the visible dimension of the Christian catholic community in which the human nature of Christ in complete union with the divine one is the means whereby that community receives its true meaning. It is only in the unity of the divine-human person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God Incarnate and in His relation with the Holy Spirit that the right balance between spiritual and visible dimensions of Church catholic is kept. Furthermore, for Calvin, the community seems to be so tightly centered on Christ that the Holy Spirit, the 'agent' which realizes the unity and the catholicity in the Church, is somehow left out and the community is joined together in a rather mechanical way by a solitary Christ.

In that respect both Luther and Calvin seem to fall into the category of Christomonism where Christ *only* constitutes the content of catholicity, while the Holy Spirit remains very much ignored.

II.2.2. Christ's Redemptive Acts as Basis for Our Inclusion in the Church

The perfect unity between the divine and the human natures as it exists in the person of Christ is the means whereby we are brought into communion with God and with each other, that is in the catholic Church. Through His divinity Christ is God descended among us, becoming 'one of us'. In His humanity freely assumed, Christ is also 'one of us' representing the entire human species before God the Father. His *kenotic* coming into this world is the starting point of a series of redemptive acts by which the world is once again orientated towards its Creator and Sustainer. Thus, man is challenged to respond to God's call for his spiritual emancipation from the state of decadence into which the sin of pride and disobedience had thrown him. Such a task is fulfilled by accepting Christ's role and activity as the Saviour of all and by integrating ourselves into the Body of Christ, His Church.

It is the restoration of the old Adam which Christ achieved through His entire life and sacrifice that gives to all of us the possibility of becoming full members of the catholic Church. Moreover, Christ's redemptive activity means the re-creation of the entire humanity and its 'drawing' into the shape of the Church.

Christ ceaselessly offers His sacrifice for us to the Father and maintains everyone with Him in a dialogue and this is the source of the catholicity of the Church.²⁶

It is the universality of Christ's sacrifice for all, and of the message to all to which His Gospel bears witness, that makes Christ, the Head, the essential, indispensable element of the Body. The exact position that everyone has in regard to each other and to the whole Body has to take primarily into consideration an assessment of one's relationship with Christ.²⁷

But at the same time *the same* Resurrected Christ who 'ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead'. Therefore, He contains in Himself the *eschatata* through the Spirit, who is the sanctifying and teaching Spirit of the catholic Church, whereby we

already participate into the life eternal and, thus, He contains us as we shall be. By participating in Him, the Church becomes the Body of the Resurrected Christ and, thus, historical Jesus and eschatological Christ become one. In that respect, history and *eschata* are joined into a synthesis in the community of the Body of Christ, the same now and into the age to come.²⁸ This eschatological dimension of the Church, which now in this world bears witness to a future completion of our present status, is the anticipation of the glorified Christ, a taste of the things to come.

The redemptive acts of Christ's sacrifice for us all is an essential part of Luther's concept of the uniqueness and unity of Christ's person, and at the same time it refers to the union of Christ with us by the means of His sacrifice. In taking up a human nature and becoming like 'one of us', the Son of God intended to endure the Passions of the Cross, and also to give us an example of what He wants human beings to be in order to be able to move from this present status into the Kingdom of glory.

In this sacrifice of Christ, the Church and its continuity are deeply rooted.²⁹ Christ's sacrifice would be enough for the entire world and for all ages; and any other qualification attached to the daily act of sacrifice, as performed in Christian communities throughout the world, commemorating the unique sacrifice of Christ would be superfluous. The continuity of the Church in an unbroken line with Christ's eternal, unique, and sufficient sacrifice, would be conditioned by a 'daily' ecclesiastical sacrifice performed by 'sacrificing priests and ordaining bishops'.³⁰ Luther therefore rejects any real constitutive importance to the eucharistic sacrifice in the expression of a catholic community. The only thing which matters is the once and for all sacrifice of Christ on the Cross.

Connected to the acts of preaching and receiving the word as means through which Christ comes to us in order to unite us to Him, there is also, in Luther's view, the element of the faith that brings us together into one 'flesh and bone' (cf. Ephes 5:30), and makes us one person with Christ who will last forever.³¹ Consequently, our life as persons united to Christ's person, as

seen in the perspective of justification, gives us the possibility 'to escape' the law and, thus, to live in Christ (cf. Gal 2:20); otherwise, one remains under the judgment of the law, living by its rules but dead before God.³²

Moreover, for Calvin, by participating in the wholeness of Christ the Church is already 'the new creation whole and complete' as well. Hence, the idea of continuity of the Church in this world with the Church of the elect ones, is conceived in fact in terms of discontinuity in the sense that it cannot be 'an extension in the time of this fallen world of the risen Body of Christ Jesus of the New Creation'.³³ There is a radical distinction to be made between 'a living continuity of the Church as the New Creation' already pertaining to the fullness of Christ and the ongoing presence of this 'sinful world'.³⁴

The Calvinistic doctrine of a 'total depravity' of man becomes fundamental in the assertion of a concept of the universal redemptive death of Christ for all men and for each one personally. Salvation and grace are characteristics of the whole Christ, and one is asked to incorporate oneself into Christ and to unite with Him in order to participate in this wholeness. In its historical development, the Church must have as its essential pattern the death and Resurrection of Christ through which we, as members of the Church, are ontologically united with Him.³⁵

For both Lutheran and Calvinist theologies the radical separation between the sacrifice of Christ and the re-enactment of that sacrifice in the sacramental life of the Church is the result of the way man is seen as totally unable to refer to God after the Fall. For them, God's relationship with man has not just been weakened; it has been completely broken. Even after the once and for all sacrifice of Christ on the Cross it seems that man is still incapable of any real dialogue with God. Thus, the entire concept of the Church as the Body of Christ suffers from too rigid a relationship between God and man. In the context of justification, man is 'crushed' by the omnipotence of God, God's justice and mercy or man's freedom being totally ignored.

II.2.3. The Church Catholic: the Fullness of Christ

Inside the Body of Christ the union between the members is realized through the quality of love which is constitutive. In order to build up a catholic Church, each one of the component members has to be 'a catholic member' himself, that is to say one who is capable of dialogue through an open relationship in the context of personhood. This goal is only achieved if each member of the Body is in the closest relationship to the Head and to each other. The only way of manifesting our participation in the Church's catholicity is by 'rejecting ourself' in order that we will accomplish 'the catholic transfiguration' of our personality into the communion of the Church.³⁶

According to this understanding of the relationship which exists within the Church as the Body, in order to effectively coordinate the life of the Body, inside the Church there has to be a certain type of ecclesiastical authority seen as deriving from 'the eternal Father, the Incarnate Son, and the life-living Spirit'. Thus, through that authority, the unity is once more stressed and the whole life of the catholic Church remains 'a continuing experience of the Holy Spirit through His faithful people in the Church'.³⁷ This fact determines each part of the catholic Church to restrain its freedom in such a way as to perform its individual functions only under the supervision of the Head and also for the benefit of the entire Body. Otherwise its own life is in danger of divisiveness and the whole Body is weakened, although it might well not be totally separated from the Body. Therefore, ultimately, Christ and the Church become intimately one, 'one whole Christ' since all Christ's attributes (holiness, unity, love, etc.) apply also to the Church as the Body of Christ.³⁸

The Church is one, for it is founded on the one faith in One Lord, that faith which makes the many one by their agreement in it. By joining the Head in order to unite oneself to the Body, one becomes part of the whole Body. This essential requirement, namely that one becomes united with the Head, Christ Himself, is fundamental in order that one becomes united with the rest of the Body which is the Church. In this sense, Christ and the Church,

that is to say the Head and the Body, become the One Church catholic extended in time and space and even beyond it.³⁹

Conversely, in order to have Christ as Head, one should join the Body of Christ, the entire Church as it is expressed in its spatio-temporal manifestation. There is a growth of the Church in which one can only participate if one is inside the Body, and not outside it. However, in his relation to the catholic Body, the Christian looks essentially and primarily always to his relation to Christ, when referring to the others and that by means of confessing the true faith of Christ.

Without the Church the Christian does not grow, since the Christ is fulfilled in the totality of all His members.⁴⁰

Calvin's doctrine of the mystery of the Church as the Body of Christ in the world continuously actualized within history has been a major feature of the entire Reformed theology ever since.

The Church is 'the fruit of the death of Christ and proceeds from his atonement'⁴¹ and therefore salvation is achieved only through Christ and inside the Church. Christ remains always the starting point in any attempt to re-form His Body - the Church - in its institutional and administrative life, in order to reshape it 'conform to the Christ of the apostolic witness and to the apostolic foundation of the Church in Him'.⁴² Only by so doing can the Church permanently affirm itself as a catholic Body, the same with the one, catholic Church of the apostolic times.

For Calvinist theology, this catholicity or 'wholeness' of the Church has its roots in 'the once-and-for-all *wholeness* of Jesus Christ' which subsequently requires a 'dogmatic wholeness' in which the Christological doctrine is at the center.⁴³ This kind of understanding of the relationship between Christ as the Head and the Body (the Church) is based on biblical teaching, the most authoritative - if not the exclusive - source of Church's doctrine.

Historical incorporation in Christ's Body will be fully revealed in the Kingdom as the 'eternal foundation of our union with Christ'.⁴⁴ There in the coming Kingdom of God, there will be the final completion of human history alongside the consummation of the individual destiny of each single person. Therefore, in brief,

for Calvin, the Church as the Body of Christ represents a 'community of reconciliation bringing to men the healing of the Cross' which tries to draw them into 'a fellowship of peace with God and with all men'.⁴⁵

In Roman Catholic theology this body is the Body of Christ, for Christ is the One who leads it and brings the members together. In speaking about the relation between Christ and His Church, the accent falls not on the Church as the Body, but on Christ as the active and permanent present Head of the Church.

Any reflection on the Church as the Body is made only to stress the unity of the Body, given by the Head through the Spirit.⁴⁶

But, for theologians like Kung, this inner unity which exists between Christ and the Church reveals, at the same time, the fact that since Head and Body cannot be either divided or simply identified, Christ is not wholly contained in the Church, although He is present in the entire life of the Church.⁴⁷ There are directions in which the Church, as the Body of Christ, grows. The Church grows at the same time from the Head (Col 1:19), towards its Head (Ephes 4:15), inwards (Colos 1:24), and outwards (Ephes 1:23). 'It is the fullness of Christ, who fills all things with his body'.⁴⁸

These directions are also expressions of the way in which the Church, only in obedience to Christ, grows through Christ's work who penetrates the world by the activity of His Church in history. In doing so, the Church proves to be one with its Head, in the unity of one catholic Body.

However, the Body of Christ relies not on an achieved unity and catholicity as the result of the efforts and desire for unity of individual members of the community; 'the Body of Christ has been constituted by Christ and in this sense pre-exists'.⁴⁹ The members of the Body are one *through* Christ and *in* Christ. To be 'in Christ' (Rom 8:1; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 2:17) refers ultimately to the state of being part of the Body of Christ, a catholic community of faith and love (Gal 1:22; 3:28; Rom 16:17; 1 Cor 1:30; 1 Thess 2:14).

In that respect, the relationship between Christ and His Body

- the Church - can be conceived in several ways. This is an interrelationship which relies on an indivisible bond. By His position as Church's Head, Christ is at the same time the origin and the goal of Church's growth. Moreover, for Roman Catholic theologians such as Kung, this relationship presents Christ as reigning over the Church, in the same way in which the head does over the body, and, on the other hand, asks for the Church (the Body) to be obedient to Christ (the Head).⁵⁰ Nevertheless, ultimately, this relationship has to be underlined by love, through which all the differences that remain between Christ and His Church and the permanent reign of the Head over the Body receive new insights in order to reveal a relationship of unity in mutual self-giving.

The Roman Catholic approach to the theme of the Church as the Body of Christ appeals to the Fathers of the Church as, for example, to St Augustine⁵¹ who presents the Church in terms of a mystical and invisible communion which brings together all those who are moved by the grace and the presence of Christ in the world. In this concept, Christ as Head forms one totality together with all the members of the Body. This is the result of His redemptive acts directed towards all. There is already a communion between all those who accept Christ as the universal Redeemer, though in a variety of ways of reception. Hence, the Church is made up of all who are brought into union with God by the grace from above which comes from Christ as Head.⁵²

This issue of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ has been subsequently subjected to challenge from an ecclesiology with a strong emphasis on institutionalism, so often present in medieval theology and continuing to the middle of nineteenth century. The Church was, thus, no longer seen primarily in its inner quality as Christ's Body, mystically joining together its members with the Head and with each other, but merely as a legalistic institution.

The return to biblical and patristic sources which occurred in the early twentieth century in Roman Catholic theology gave the opportunity for a fresh approach to the notion of the Mystical Body as 'the unity of those who live with the life of Christ'.⁵³ The encyclical *Mystici Corporis* of Pius XII is an attempt to harmonize

the 'Mystical Body' concept with Bellarmine's social concept of the Church. In that presentation, the hierarchy retains a pre-eminent position in the 'Body', while the laity assists the pope and the bishops (the organs of the sacred power in the Body) in their work. In this, the Mystical Body is identified with the Roman Catholic Church itself.⁵⁴

A new approach to the theme has been made in the documents of Vatican II especially in *Lumen Gentium*, although the idea of the Church as the Body of Christ has been retained. Vatican II makes a clearer distinction between the Church conceived in hierarchical terms and the Church as the Body of Christ; yet the two remain in a close relation to each other. At the same time, the catholic Church as the Body of Christ is no longer identified as coextensive with the Roman Catholic Church. Instead of using the word 'is' (as in the previous draft of the Constitution), the Council replaced it with 'subsists in' thus trying to avoid an exclusive concrete identification of the catholic Church with the Roman Church.⁵⁵

The above perspectives on the Church proper to Roman Catholic theology show ultimately a community which is founded in and through the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit in human history. Those perspectives still require qualifications.

The Church cannot grow automatically. That growth must be only in obedience to its Head, Christ. If the Church does 'betray' this aspect of its obedience to Christ by replacing Christ with itself, as the Roman Church has been often accused of doing (as for instance at the time preceding and during the Reformation), then the inner unity and catholicity of the Church ceases to be present effectively. At the same time, by alteration of the original revelational deposit and its transformation into a pure human pattern of traditions, as has sometimes been alleged (the case of selling indulgences), the Church cannot give evidence of the true Christ and the true Spirit of God, who are respectively, the leading Head and the Soul of the entire catholic Body. Moreover, the Church tends to become an autonomous and autocratic Church which replaces Christ with its own image. That did happen sometimes in the history of the Roman Church when an over-institutionalized Church, with the 'vicar' of Christ, i.e. the Pope, failed to show

evidence of being a true catholic Church with the real Head (i.e. Christ) and a vivifying Soul (i.e. the Holy Spirit).

As regards the concept of the Church as the Body of Christ, as seen by Luther, the whole idea of a church which is founded upon purely historical and material structures seems to be built on a false basis. By its very nature, the Church permanently united to its invisible Head, Jesus Christ Himself, has to be understood spiritually, though within the concrete, physical and visible appearance. In this sense, the Church is both concomitantly a '*corpus naturale*' and a '*corpus mysticum*'. In its relation to Christ this '*corpus*', that is the Church, is a '*corpus fidelium*', a group of believers, organized as a communion of individuals intimately related to each other in Christ. At the foundation of this Body, Christ as the One who set it up has placed love, humility and unity in order to create a fellowship of love and not a historically and sacramentally structured Body.⁵⁶ For Luther, the element which ultimately makes possible the coming into being of the Church as a spiritual entity is the dividing power of the word, that word which selects the true believers from the mass of 'nominal Christians'. Only by so doing does the Church manifest itself as the communion of true believers gathered around the same Head, Christ, and invisibly extended over the entire world.⁵⁷

Broadly speaking, the Orthodox understanding of the concept of the Church as the Body of Christ, which has Him as its Head, is based fundamentally on the personal redemptive activity of Christ. In such a context every ecclesiological aspect has to be motivated by soteriological connotations. One may even see Christ and the Church as two expressions of the same reality (cf. 1 Cor 12:12).

The Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, is a type, an 'icon', of the hypostatic union; everything static and ontological in her becomes⁵⁸ existential and dynamic by the quickening of the Holy Spirit.

Obviously, for the Orthodox, the central concept remains that of the Body of Christ in which He is the Head while the Christians are the members. In these terms, the Church is seen as the fullness (*τὸ πλήρωμα*), the completion of Christ, because of the special

relationship which exists between Christ as the Head and the members as the Body. They are mutually necessary in that the Head needs all His members in order that the whole Body be complete.⁵⁹

In such understanding, the 'objectivity' of catholicity (as a possessed gift or as a fulfilled order) loses any meaning. Catholicity is to be seen rather as a presence which 'unites into a single existential reality' Christ's presence 'who sums up in Himself the community and the entire creation by His being existentially involved in both of them'.⁶⁰ Christ's presence is the reality which renders the Church catholic 'by virtue of it being inseparably united with Christ and constituting His very presence in history'.⁶¹ This is what one may call 'our inclusiveness' in Christ, He who is 'our first-born brother' (Rom 8:29). Each one of the members of the Body of Christ therefore becomes united with the entire Body in as much as each member ceases to be exclusive and impenetrable; there is no more '*mine*' and '*thine*'.

But, alongside this Christological aspect of Church's catholicity, which presents the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ, as well as a Trinitarian one, there is also a Pneumatological aspect.

II.3. The Holy Spirit:

the Dynamic Constitutive Personality of the Catholic Church
(The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church Catholic)

II.3.1. Christ and the Holy Spirit.

A Personal Relationship inside the Catholic Church

The redeeming acts upon which Christ founded His Body were only the beginning of the existing Church catholic. The continuation of its life is the task of the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ and thus the Spirit of the Body. Only those who are inside the Body share the Spirit and His gifts. This is an idea dear to the early Fathers of the Church. And that is precisely because Christ and His Spirit are so intimately related that wherever Christ is His Spirit dwells. Consequently the Spirit

reveals Christ. This follows Christ's promise regarding the permanent presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church (cf. John 14:16).

It is only in the Spirit and by the Spirit that Christ is present in His Church.⁶²

The fullness of God which dwells in Christ (Col 3:19) is uncovered to those who have hearts open to the Spirit of God (1 Cor 2:12). Christ is dynamically at work in the Church through His Spirit, who is considered as the soul for the body. At the same time, the Holy Spirit is seen as 'the principle of unity that dwells in Christ and in us, binding us together with Him and in Him'.⁶³

This involvement of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church by empowering the community through the office of the magisterium as well as in transmitting and interpreting Christ's scriptural message and the Tradition of the Church, expresses once more the inner interdependence existent between the Holy Spirit and the Son of God Incarnate. For the Holy Spirit is the One who will guide us 'into all the truth' and take what is Christ's and 'declare it' to us (John 16:13-14).

The Holy Spirit, in making real the Christ - event in history, makes real at the same time Christ's personal existence as a Body or community.⁶⁴

Christ's existence cannot be conceived apart from a pneumatological qualification, both as 'a distinct personal particularity inside the holy Trinity' 'or in His capacity as the Body of the Church and the recapitulation of all things'. The dynamic of catholicity relies on Church's character as pneumatological, that is in having the Spirit present and permanently at work in its as the Body of Christ.⁶⁵

Luther thought that the Holy Spirit is present in the Church, as part of its life and contributing in the building up of a 'communion of saints'. This Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ, penetrates the Body of Christ, which is the Church, namely the believers scattered all over the world. In this way the Holy Spirit

gives testimony of Christ, the Head of the Church, to all the members of this spiritual Body.⁶⁶

There is a fundamental relationship between Christ and the Holy Spirit in Luther's thought. On the one hand, the only Spirit that is the 'milieu' in which the risen Christ is revealed 'as a present and redeeming reality' is the Holy Spirit; outside this divine Spirit Christ would be only 'an idea'.⁶⁷ On the other hand, 'the living Christ' reveals Himself to us only through the Spirit who, by bringing Christ to us, unites us with the living Christ. This unification is made possible by the fact that the Spirit is given to us as a *donum* which, together with the Gospel, constitutes the gift of the risen Christ shared with us all and thus made 'the all-decisive factor in our life'.⁶⁸ In all these respects the Holy Spirit proves to be of a vital importance in any understanding of the Church as the catholic Body of Christ.

II.3.2. The Holy Spirit:

the Power Which unites the Many in One Catholic Community

The Holy Spirit touches also our own personality. He is the Spirit who manifests Himself as 'power' or as 'giver of life' and thus opens up our entire existence so that we become relational beings in order to enter into the same communion (*κοινωνία*: 2 Cor 13:14). That is why the whole mystery of the Church is essentially conceived as 'one' and 'many' at the same time.⁶⁹ The involvement of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church creates for the concept of catholicity an objective dimension. He does not merely unite isolated individuals, but rather brings together fully 'grown' persons.

Through His presence, the Holy Spirit works for the building up of the Church as a fellowship of people (*κοινωνία*) in which there is a consensus and 'oneness in thought, in mind, and in the sharing of goods, of sufferings, and of a life which is not their own but Another's'.⁷⁰ By so doing, He works in every single part of the catholic Church and acts as the effective intermediary which

holds together the members of the Body in the fellowship of love.

Vatican II, in speaking of the Body of Christ and the People of God as coextensive, tried to emphasize on the one hand 'the immediate relationship of all believers to the Holy Spirit, who directs the whole Church' and on the other hand the inter-relationships of the members towards one another.⁷¹ This kind of union of different persons which preserves their distinctive particularities, is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit, who makes us one without molding us into an amorphous monolith.

The Church is one Person (the Holy Spirit) in many persons (Christ and us).⁷²

Roman Catholic theology since Vatican II has turned more and more towards a sociological type of community in the way it aims at achieving a renewed type of Church. The Church is regarded as a great community made up of many correlative communities. The unifying presence of the Holy Spirit, manifested by His interior graces and gifts shared by all the members of the Church, is the One who brings together the many families of Christians into a single large community.⁷³ In the same terms, Vatican II speaks of the Holy Spirit as the One whom Christ has shared with us, that Spirit 'who, existing as one and the same being in the Head and in the members, vivifies, unifies, and moves the whole body'.⁷⁴

Calvin presents the Church as being united with Christ and acknowledging Him, in all its parts and at any time in history and beyond history into eternity. Thus, one must not forget the work which the One Spirit of Christ is performing in the Church as complementing the role played by the Word.⁷⁵ By pouring out the love of God into humanity, the Holy Spirit creates a communion of love which is the Church, in which people are called to share together in their earthly life according to Christ's commandments. The Spirit acts as an instrument through which Christ speaks and binds together into unity the entire ecclesiastical community.

II.3.3. The Holy Spirit and the Inauguration of the Eschata into the Church's Life

With the event of Pentecost, history becomes *eschata* and the whole Church is mystically consecrated (Acts 1:5). What the Spirit works in believers is precisely their incorporation into Christ, their integration into one Body (1 Cor 12:13), the Body of Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who gives meaning both to the Incarnation and reconciliation in Christ, as well as to the 'personal commitment to Him in His community of faith'.⁷⁶ Moreover, the event of Pentecost transcends history and reveals an anthropological eschatological significance. Thus, on the one hand 'the outpouring of the Spirit' brings about the 'last days' in history. On the other hand, the entire humanity is affirmed and accepted as a 'diversity of charisms'. Hence, the model of the community of the *Parousia* has been set up in a 'here-and-now reality'.

The Spirit *communicates, personifies* and *actualizes* in time the personal revelation of God. It is in Him and His energy that the plan of God is actualized and made a historical reality.

The presence of the Holy Spirit as the life-giving source for the entire existence of the Church catholic is reflected in each individual eucharistic assembly where the concrete 'recapitulation' of the entire humanity is enacted over and over again. Therefore, one can say that it is the Spirit who makes the Church what it really is. The Holy Spirit is the One who actually ontologically builds up the Body of Christ. The inauguration of the one initial Pentecostal event as 'an ecclesiologically constitutive' one and its prolongation into the history, 'takes the form of events (plural), which are as *primary ontologically* as the one Christ event itself'.⁷⁸

For Luther, the spiritual inclusion of our ecclesiastical existence as members of Christ's Body into the wider realm of God's universal loving act of redemption, will result in the recognition of each individual as part of the eschatologically orientated organism of the Church. This has been inaugurated by the eternal

work of the Spirit which will last until Christ's second coming.⁷⁹ The Holy Spirit is also the One who, by anointing each Christian and sanctifying him, makes him a 'priest' capable of administering the Word and the Sacraments. In doing so, Luther implicitly recognizes the Holy Spirit as a means by which the Church is built up by the work of individuals who possess the authority of preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments.⁸⁰ Thus, the Spirit becomes a constitutive element on the path towards the completion of the catholic (Christian in Luther's terminology) community of believers.

Therefore, the Trinitarian unity in nature in a diversity of Persons, the oneness of Christ in His divine-human person and that of the *κοινωνία* of the Holy Spirit are the elements on which the concept of the one and catholic Church is fundamentally conceived.

The Trinitarian dimension of the catholicity of the Church rests upon the unity of the divine nature which the three divine Persons display in the diversity of their personal features. Based on that model, the Church is constituted 'in the likeness' of the prototype according to which the 'many' become 'one', in a synthesis like the hypostatic union.

The Christological character of catholicity lies in the fact that the Church is catholic as a community which experiences and reveals the unity of all creation insofar as this unity is founded upon the reality of the person of Christ. The Church reveals in its 'catholic being' Christ's unity and His catholicity. This means that the Church's catholicity is a presence which unites into a single existential reality both what is given and what is expected. Christ's presence sums up in Himself the community, and more than that the entire creation (a catholic view of existence). In our continuity in Christ, determined by an event of communion, we find ourselves as historical persons in a permanent process of growth towards the eschatological fulfillment. Christ is present *here and now* as the One who realizes a communion with God's life in the existential form of a concrete community created by the Holy Spirit.

For certain theologies, as in the case of Luther, in such a catholic community Christ is not ontologically a constituent part.

Instead, performative acts such as the Word and the Sacraments, are 'agents' through which Christ is *made* present and through which each of those who come together recognize themselves as a community through this presence. Therefore they are not gathered in order to *become a community* but rather to hear the Word and to respond individually to it. Instead of being preoccupied with the very being of the Church, Luther remains at the stage of inquiring how Christ continues to be present in the Church. In this sense, Luther understands the Church's catholicity as being a functional, performative one in which collectivity cannot achieve the status of a proper community in the full sense of the word.

There is also a very difficult task one has to perform in the attempt of reconciling an universal redemption accomplished once and for all by Christ with the doctrine of a 'private' election of some of the Church's members, which is so much present in the Calvinist tradition. Setting aside its general and moral doctrinal implications, more specifically predestination distorts the meaning of the Church's catholicity. In the end, the universality of Christ's redemptive acts seems in fact to be effective only partially, for they refer only to some who are elected, not to all. To pre-elect would mean ultimately to select some to whom the 'universal' redemption is addressed. But, by so doing, universality becomes partiality, and the whole concept of catholicity suffers. Even the new attempts by some Reformed theologians⁸¹ to give new dimensions to the concept of predestination by arguing for single predestination and universal salvation cannot avoid the problems which such a doctrine brings about.

Generally speaking, the way in which Anglican theology presents the relationship between Christ and the Holy Spirit on the one hand, and the Body and the members on the other hand, seems to cover all the aspects of the problem. There is a well balanced position which tackles the topic both from the perspective of Christ's initiative, as the Head of the Body, and from the view-point of the involvement of the Christians into the life of the Body. Anglican theologians such as A.M. Ramsey or E.L. Mascall are very much in the forefront of presenting the Church and its catholicity in a Christological and Pneumatological perspective.

In Anglican theology, the Holy Spirit does play a paramount role inside the Body, as the communal factor which brings together the Head and the members, and also gives strength to the relationship between different members to each other. However, one might say that a more elaborated theology of *κοινωνία*, perhaps, would have helped in presenting a more comprehensive image of the Church catholic as the Body of Christ, one in the diversity of its members. The contribution made by A. M. Ramsey towards that requirement has to be considered and expanded for the benefit of all.⁸²

In the case of Roman Catholicism, as we have already stated, problems arise from the over-institutionalized type of Church which it envisages. On those lines, the catholic community which is the Body of Christ tends to be seen more of a monolithic type, with its unity stressed at the expense of diversity.

In order to understand how the Church is identical with the Body of Christ as a visible reality, one has to perceive the deep meaning that the eucharistic word 'This is my Body' bears. 'Christ (the only priest) becomes in the Holy Spirit the community (His Body, the Church)', and, thus, that eucharistic community receives 'His image' as its Head offers 'with and on behalf' of the community the eucharistic gifts to the Father.⁸³ In such a context there is no longer an individualism; the catholicity of the Church is revealed in a concrete oneness of faith and act, thus expressing the life and the consciousness of the whole.

What has to be always borne in mind, however, is the awareness that the corporate should not dissolve the personal while 'Christian togetherness' must not become impersonalism. Therefore, besides the concept of organism one need to employ the idea of a 'symphony of personalities, in which the mystery of the Holy Trinity is reflected (cf. John 17:21 and 23)'. That is ultimately what the catholicity of the Church would have to represent.⁸⁴

But the Church as a whole bears witness to the Gospel, to its Tradition, and also to a sacramental life derived from the 'unction of the Holy Spirit' (cf. 1 John 2:20 and 27). In all those aspects, the catholicity of the Church is expressly manifested and receives very important qualifications.

III. The Catholicity of the Divine Truth.
A Scriptural, Traditional and Sacramental Approach to
the Catholicity of the Church

It is widely acknowledged that, in the Orthodox theology, the sacramental life is an important concrete manifestation of the faith of the Church. The fundamental point of reference for faith is neither the external authority of the magisterium (the Roman Catholic approach) nor that of the preached word (the Protestant view). The sacramental life of the Church as a whole and especially the eucharistic communion is considered both 'a source and an expression' of the inner essence of the Church.¹ The whole sacramental life with its 'peak' in the eucharistic gathering is the ultimate representation of the faith that the Church professes, and of the Church itself.

It follows that one could say that 'catholic' becomes synonymous with 'orthodox' for faith receives its external expression (which is no less valuable than the inner quality of its content) in acts of sacramentality. Those who rightfully worship God as the consequence of the fact that they hold the right faith, are thereby distinct from those who do not worship Him because they have detached themselves from that common mind (right faith) through heresy or schism².

But, while the entire Church's sacramental life is one of the most representative expressions of the preservation of right faith, at the same time the possession of right faith will help in keeping a 'catholic rule of practice'. Therefore, the process and the benefits work in both directions: practice checks and manifests the faith, while faith checks and 'proves' the practice.³

III.1. The Scriptures as God's Revelation and the Truth as professed by the Catholic Church

III.1.1. Christ - the Content of Revelation

In order to see in a right perspective the message of the Scriptures one has to bear in mind the fact that Christ, as the essential message of the Bible, puts forward the universal dimension of salvation. From the 'typology' of the old Israel with a very important pattern of a national ethos, the new '*genus Christianum*' which is the people of God, the Church, comes into being. Hence, the scriptural content loses its national connotation and becomes the heritage of the Christian nation, that is the Church catholic.

Undoubtedly for the Orthodox, as for other Christian denominations too, the Scriptures are the primary source of God's revelation within history by which God conveys Himself to the world. One cannot do away, however, (as does for instance the Protestant principle of *sola Scriptura*) with acts of transmission of the divine message as done through direct or individual revelation and which are testified by the Tradition of the catholic Church. In this respect the Bible is considered as the history of the divine revelation and not a certain system of belief. Therefore it should not be regarded as a '*summa theologiae*'.⁴ Understood in such terms, the Scriptures are God's revelation in history and as revelation appeals to our reason. Since it has an universal message, this revelation has to be followed by a 'catholic' understanding of this message. Hence, the interpretation of this content that the Scriptures possess has to be put in the framework of the community of the Church catholic and not left for individuals to decide how it should be done.⁵

Scripture is absolutely necessary for the edification of a community and it cannot ever be separated from communal understanding. The entire message - which the Old Covenant as well as the New conveys - is a vital element for the Church in order to exist.⁶ That is precisely because the Scriptures give evidence for

the entire Church's experience and faith. One may even say that in itself the Church 'is a part of revelation - the story of "the Whole Christ" (*totus Christus: caput et corpus*, in the phrase of St Augustine) and of the Holy Ghost'.⁷ It is only inside the Church that 'the true meaning, or intent of Scripture, taken as an integrated whole, had to be elicited'. That is why heretics or schismatics who are *outside* the Church cannot grasp this very meaning which the Scriptures bear.⁸

The Scriptures are indeed *one* Holy Scripture with one main theme and message throughout its whole content. That is what one may call the identity of the message which overcomes the diversity of the ways in which this message is transmitted, in order to reflect the unity of the whole. And since the very fundamental content of the Bible is Christ, the One Christ, the final 'product' of Christ's presence into the history is the one Scripture. In it, Christ gives references of God and of Himself, as the One and only Saviour of the world, who redeemed it once and for all ages. It is in this context that the message of the Scriptures needs to be interpreted and permanently updated in order to convey the word of God in understandable language. Thus, since the proclamation of the word of God is part of the *esse* of the Church as one of its fundamental tasks, this message is continuously rediscovered as part of this process.

The designation of the Church as the one which has to fulfill the task of proclaiming the word is the result of the fact that 'the Church belongs itself to the revelation, as the Body of the Incarnate Lord'.⁹ In such a context there is no separation whatsoever between the content of the Gospel, its message and the way it is received in the Church's catholic preaching and interpretation. That is precisely what St Augustine understood by '*Catholicae Ecclesiae auctoritas*' as the fundamental source of any interpretation of the Bible.¹⁰

III.1.2. Christ - the Truth of the Catholic Community

Christ is the ultimate truth which God has willed to reveal to us. Since Christ is *the* Truth, He is not a truth '*in* a community,

but as a community'.¹¹ In this sense, Christ is the very content not only of the message conveyed by the Bible, but also of any consequent dogmatic formulation based on Christ's personal presence. Therefore, when the Church promulgates dogmas it envisages the protection of 'the original εἰκὼν of Christ the truth' from any deviation which would act against the affirmation of this truth. The aim of this dogmatic formulation is to preserve 'the correct vision of the Christ-truth and to live in and by this presence of truth in history' and eventually 'to lead to communion with the life of God, to make truth into communion and life'. For that matter, within the truth which the Scriptures express Christ also receives an eschatological connotation.¹² It is in this context that dogmas become expressions and symbols of the communion which exists within the Church as community in its present form as well as in its extension into the age to come. That is the result of the life which the Spirit bestows to the truth of dogmas inside the communion. 'Communion is the only way for truth to exist as life'.¹³

But, in Luther's view, Christ is not only the content of the word, but also God's Word Himself. As the One who represents and voices God's will in the world Christ comes to us through the Holy Scriptures communicating Himself to us and acting upon us.¹⁴ Through the acceptance of the word present in the Gospel, one comes closer to salvation which cannot be otherwise achieved¹⁵ for the Gospel refers to Christ the Redeemer, the *Logos* of God Incarnate.

In their attempt to recover those features of the Church proper to the beginning of Christianity and which were lost or diminished across the centuries, the Reformers brought forward the element of faith as it is revealed essentially in the Bible. Thus, the word of God as present in the Scriptures became the only norm of reference for Christians in terms of their faith and practice.

The word is regarded by Luther as a Sacrament in the sense that he sees all the other sacraments depending on it. Through this word found in the Scriptures, Christ comes to us and challenges us to respond to His justifying truth by faith.¹⁶ The way in which the two signs of the Church, the word and the sacrament, are conceived in regard to the quality of one's faith will establish what and

where the Church's limits are. However, the true Church will remain hidden and amalgamated with such alien elements as unbelief, erroneous belief, and hypocrisy.¹⁷

In the Nicene Creed the Church is defined as 'one, holy, catholic (or 'Christian' in Luther's translation) Church' because it represents one plain, pure Gospel, doctrine as 'an outward confession thereof, always and everywhere, regardless of dissimilarity of physical life, or of outward ordinances, customs and ceremonies'.¹⁸ Thus, for Luther the entire life and substance of the Church consist of the word of God¹⁹ since the Church is centred around the Gospel and built up through the Gospel. The Word is necessarily the decisive mark which qualifies this group of people as a community, 'the holy Christian people of God', beside the two accepted sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.²⁰ This Church cannot subsist without God's Word, which is preached to the believers and heard and received by them and who, by so doing, become more than an ordinary group of people. They are the Church.²¹

There is an essential connection between the preached word and the responding believers in the process whereby the latter category becomes a Church. From the proclamation of this word the Church, as the communion of believers in Christ, who is the very content of God's word, receives its life and manifests itself as the one holy Christian (that is catholic) Church on earth.²² The Church's catholicity in Luther's theology is therefore to be understood in the light of the tension created between the proclamation and the reception of the word of God by individuals, in their own localities. Thus, catholicity is the result of a performative act, individuals reacting to faith in order to receive the benefits of Christ's justification.

The same concern for a Church structured on the basis of the relationship between a preached word and a necessary response from individuals, is also present in Calvin's thought. For him, the scriptural message requires a positive response from the community at large and from each one of the individuals who is part of that community in order for the community to be the true catholic Church. And only by so doing can that gathering manifest itself as

more than an ordinary assembly of individuals.²³ Their knowledge and confession of faith are part of the knowledge and confession of that community, and are therefore fully integrated into it. Hence, they participate in the building up of that community which is gathered by the proclamation of the word and having as its main aim the wider propagation of the word into the world. Since 'building up means integration',²⁴ the individuals come together in the community, becoming part of it, but never ceasing to remain 'particular individuals' freely united with every other person in that community.

At the same time, there is, in Calvin's view, the danger that a community could cease to remain in the true faith, precisely because in the Church there is always a mixture of people who are at different stages of perfection. Although the catholic Church as such cannot err to the extent of ceasing to exist, there is a possibility that certain parts of it can be misled due to the feebleness of the Church's members.²⁵ Hence, the blame rests upon those who sever themselves from the whole body of the catholic Church by misinterpreting the message of Christ's Gospel. However, if predestination is to be taken seriously, then responsibility should be shifted somewhere else.

III.1.3. The Authority of Christ's Word and the Authority within the Catholic Church

In Calvinist theology, the primary way through which God reveals Himself to the world is His Word foretold by the prophets and fully present in Jesus Christ, the *Logos* of God Incarnate (Heb 1:1-2). Everything which Christ taught His apostles has been handed over to all the generations up to the end of the world as Christ's Gospel. Therefore, any approach to the Scriptures and any preaching of Christ's message must be done with regard to the essential perspective in Christ of whom the Scriptures give witness. Thus, Christ is at the same time the subject of the Scriptures, its content, and its ultimate completion.²⁶ This teaching has been the basis on which Christ has built His Church and is sustaining it in

order to fulfill it in the Kingdom of God.

Moreover, according to this kind of understanding, the primacy and the essential role that the Word, as God's message, has in the Church's life is sustained by the permanent presence of the Word in the prophesies and also in the writings of the apostolic age.²⁷ In this sense, therefore, the Church is catholic by virtue of its scriptural basis for the Scriptures are meant for everyone, in all places, with a timeless moral and existential value.

For Reformed theologians as for instance Barth, the Gospel of Christ receives its authority in the Church by the fact that the Bible is indisputably the earliest written source of Church teaching. This means that the confession of faith relies upon the authority which the Scriptures bear as the revealed word of God. Thus, any authority which the Church might reserve for itself is ultimately an authority exercised by the means of the word, that is to say by the Scriptures.²⁸ Neither the Church, nor any one of its members can claim a direct, absolute, and material authority or freedom for himself but only for the Scriptures as God's own word.²⁹

For Anglican theology, Scripture is the norm in testing the true faith, while alongside it, the catholic traditions (e.g. the writings of the Fathers of the first Christian centuries, the 'catholic' Creeds, etc.) were very important elements in affirming the integration into the universal Church. That can be noticed in the fact that both Scripture and elements of early Christian Tradition were appropriated and introduced in the faith and the theological debate, as well as in the sacramental life of the Anglican Communion. In fact, it can be said that, this theology makes use of the Bible as the test of doctrine, and also the Church Fathers and the continuous Tradition of Church life, combined in a special way with characteristics of the Reformation.

There are certain fundamental features in Anglican theology that constitute the basis on which the Anglican Communion can claim that it is part of the Church catholic. Among these necessary and sufficient elements for salvation, besides the Scriptures, which are to be given a notable priority, there are also the three Creeds, the first four Councils, and 'the unanimous consent of the

Fathers'. The Church is catholic only if it teaches all the good things which the Holy Spirit entrusted the Apostles with and which they left to the Church for the well-being of the Christians.³⁰ In this process, the norm of scriptural interpretation should be that found in the primitive Church, for that would help the Church in preserving the right 'treasure' of faith and thus to retain the attribute of catholicity.³¹ On that account, the doctrinal unity of different parts of the Anglican Communion would be safeguarded only if Church comprehensiveness or catholicity is reflected in the way those groups find a common ground on which to stand. Such a sharing area of discussion should necessarily comprise the Scriptures, the central Creeds of Christendom, and 'the general acceptance of and willingness to use the formularies and services of the Church of England'.³²

On its part, Roman Catholic theology sees the Church as giving evidence to the world of what it really is and stands for by the way it is reflected in its teaching based on Scripture, in the Tradition of the one, catholic, and apostolic Church of Christ and also in its sacramental life. None of them can be neglected without jeopardizing the others' contribution and only together are they able to construct a complete picture of the Church's doctrine. At the same time, these sources from which the Church receives the revelation of God help in understanding how the Church expresses itself in its catholicity of faith and acts of worship.

God's revelation in the history of humanity has been strongly attached in Roman Catholic theology to the idea of an institutional Church. The Church plays the role of the guardian and the conserver of revelation. It acts with and by the authority which its office possesses, and therefore it retains the privilege of administering the truth on the basis of that authority. This position which it enjoys makes any acceptance of the word of the Church 'an act of obedience to divinely constituted officers'.³³

This authoritative teaching of the Church is the result of the presence of God who reveals Himself to the world, ultimately and supremely in Christ, His Word Incarnate. Therefore, the Church teaches whatever it received 'from the mouth of Christ himself', or 'by the dictation of the Holy Spirit' and which is fully contained

'in the written books and unwritten traditions' according to the apostolic legacy.³⁴

In the same terms, Vatican I stressed the necessity of accepting what the Church proposes for belief, as being divinely revealed through its ordinary or universal magisterium. Furthermore, those things are to be treated as representing the 'divine and catholic faith'.³⁵ That view reveals a highly conservative and defensive position, which compels everybody to obey and fully accept the doctrinal teaching of the Church handed down from the apostles up to this day without alteration or distortions. It is, therefore, understandable that such a climate generated new institutional developments as the concept of papal infallibility. Hence, a highly juridical, authoritarian and indicative presentation of the revealed deposit of the faith became the norm to be obediently accepted. Thus, the content of Revelation became increasingly referred to in juridical, legalistic terms, proper to an ecclesiology which emphasizes the concept of institution and law. Consequently, the magisterium of the Church teaches for the entire Church and for each one of the believers as representative of God's authority.

More recent Roman Catholic theology presents a somewhat different image of the relation between revelation and the Church's authority and nature mainly due to a new development of the concept of the Church as Mystical Body. The notion of revelation is regarded in a rather special perspective as personal communion with God. Revelation receives a 'corporeal aspect' of the life communicated interiorly; and therefore, the acceptance of those revealed things gives evidence of a personal encounter between the believer and the personalized content of the revelation, that is God Himself.³⁶

Vatican II also tried to change the old image of the Roman Catholic Church, which maintained a too conservative and private position as far as the concept of revelation was concerned. The emphasis lies now upon the notion of a mystical fellowship of grace which God, in revealing Himself to us, establishes with those who accept access to Him through Christ (Eph 2:18; 2 Pet 1:4). 'Through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God... speaks to men as

friends... so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself'³⁷ In this sense, the Church is seen less as a mediator or transmitter of revelation, and more as an assembly of those who gather freely around the Word of God, the supreme revelation of God to the world. The grace which each member of the Mystical Body receives through the work of the Holy Spirit in that gathering gives the opportunity to each one of them 'to recognize one another as fellow recipients of the same grace' and as a consequence of that they come together in order to form the Church.³⁸

III.2. The Holy Tradition and the Identity of the Church Catholic

There is another side of the Revelation of God into the world apart from the written word, not separate from it but interdependent with it and yet distinct from it: Church Tradition which comprehends creeds, dogmas, sacred rites and symbols. All this traditional treasure which is valued both in the early Church and in most of mainstream theological thinking is meant neither to undermine nor to replace the Scriptures; they should rather be understood as complementing each other as two parts of the same coin.³⁹ In fact, Scripture has been interpreted authentically by Tradition and in this sense Tradition is seen as 'co-extensive to the Scripture'. Tradition is actually 'Scripture rightly understood'.⁴⁰ That is precisely why the Apostolic Tradition was conceived as an indispensable aid in the understanding of Scripture and as the ultimate guarantee of its right interpretation.

III.2.1. The Holy Tradition and the Holy Scriptures

The importance of Church Tradition is acknowledged by some Churches, though sometimes differently and only to a certain extent and with specific qualifications.

Thus, Anglican theology retains the focus on Scripture as a trace of its Protestant legacy, so much so that some of its theologians would proclaim it the sole 'sufficient certainty'.⁴¹ In a slightly more conciliatory position, the Scriptures remain

nonetheless 'the rule and ultimate standard of faith' as the Nicene and the Apostles' Creeds are accorded greater importance.⁴² At the same time, still loyal to its Catholic background, Anglicanism has tried to reconcile such strong Protestant attitudes with more traditional ones. Hence, alongside the Scriptures, Church tradition has been admitted as part of a more comprehensive theology worthy of careful consideration and use.

Although Holy Tradition could not supplement the Bible, as an 'independent authority' apart from it,⁴³ nevertheless it plays a very significant role, at least for some Anglican theologians. Moreover, some of these theologians suggest that the 'unwritten Word of God' should be given the same respect and have the same reliability as the written one.⁴⁴ Those traditions which prove to be 'universal and apostolic' and also 'of great, both authority and use in the Church' should be retained by the Church since they help for a better explanation of the Scriptures.⁴⁵

The universality of such traditions is the distinctive and paramount mark which enables them to remain part of Anglican theology. Thus, Church tradition is to be kept alongside Scripture if it is the result of a long universally accepted practice in the Church⁴⁶ and helps to manifest the Scriptures.⁴⁷ At the same time, however, any element which constitutes what Hooker called 'the essence of Christianity' - limited only to the works of Irenaeus and Tertullian and found also in the two main Creeds - should be always referred to and judged by the Holy Scriptures as interpreted by the Church catholic.⁴⁸

As far as the Holy Tradition of the Church is concerned, Luther's main attitude was to give it a quite low profile, if not to reject it altogether, in comparison to the paramount importance which he attached to the written word.

For instance, in trying to argue, in favor of the true presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, Luther appeals to biblical proof but, at the same time, gives some credit to the theology of the early Fathers of the Church and also to a continuous 'use' in the whole Church from the beginning.⁴⁹ This tradition must have the endorsement of the Scriptures in order to maintain its inerrancy.⁵⁰ Yet, the old traditions - though kept as 'promoting tranquility' -

have no power for the justification of a Christian,⁵¹ which is proper only to the word. In fact, the whole work of the Reformation was meant to restore the Church in its real form, to reshape that 'earlier old Church' as 'the right new one'; and that has been done mainly through the Reformers' rejection of 'the Apostolic faith and all the strange novelties that it brought with it' in favor of the word.⁵²

III.2.2. The Holy Tradition as the Living Memory of the Catholic Church

The notion of tradition goes back to New Testament times, to the idea of παράδοσις or λογία. Those were expressions of the apostolic κήρυγμα which were historically transmitted from place to place and from time to time (cf. Lk 12:3; Acts 10:42; Col 1:23; 1 Tim 3:16; Rev 5:2).⁵³ This Holy Tradition is in a sense part of the history since its content reflects the right and prevailing attitude in certain concrete historical circumstances. The acceptance of Tradition implies therefore an appeal to the past and thus establishes a communion with those who lived and contributed to the realization of the Tradition. This is at the same time a preparation for the future.

Tradition is far more than the structures of institutional continuity; it is a living reality, the unifying power by which the Holy Spirit quickens the entire⁵⁴ existence in history, past and present, of the Body of Christ.

In the concept of Tradition, as understood by the Orthodox, there is an historical dimension, since Tradition is necessarily connected to the past, to what is commonly known as 'Patristic period' or 'ecumenical times'. That does not mean, however, that the reference to that past situates one outside a real and full connection with the Church's present experience. For that matter, 'Tradition is a *charismatic*, not a historical principle.'⁵⁵

This experience of the Church therefore comprehends Tradition (παράδοσις) which comes from Christ Himself (διδασκαλία) through the Apostles, and faith (πίστις) of the Church catholic; all these

are the foundation (θεμέλιον) of the Church. Thus, the Church's Fathers were 'witnesses of the permanence or identity of the *kerygma* as transmitted from generation to generation'. Hence, the authenticity of the faith which Tradition brings to us has been guaranteed by its origin and through an undisturbed preservation.

In the Church we call those who have attained it (catholicity) Doctors and Fathers, because *from them we hear not only their personal profession, but also the testimony of the Church; they speak to us from its catholic completeness, from the completeness of a life full of grace.*⁵⁶

The responsibility of preserving this apostolic heritage is the task of the entire community since no ecclesial authority alone would be able to impose or readjust the content of the Apostolic Tradition - be it doctrinal, liturgical or disciplinary matter - on its own. In this sense any change which indeed may take place in the content of Tradition requires a 'slow process of "reception"'.

At the same time, when speaking about this corporate responsibility, the power of teaching and indeed all the prerogatives which the hierarchy possesses are not to be denied. The hierarchy has the duty and power of 'testifying, of expressing and speaking the faith and the experience of the Church, which have been preserved in the whole Body'.⁵⁷ In this respect, therefore, a council is not above the Church but rather a 'representation' of what the entire Church teaches and preserves.

As has already been suggested, Tradition is not only concerned with preserving. Neither does it primarily aim at restoring the past as the criterion for the present. It is rather ultimately a principle of growth and regeneration. For this, tradition plays an important role in the life of the Church; it is a living experience as an external manifestation of its catholicity.⁵⁸ This whole experience is an integral part to the apostolic message (*kerygma*) intrinsically related to the 'rule of faith' (*regula fidei*).⁵⁹ Such an inner connection between Tradition and Scripture is illustrated by the fact that Tradition was initially an hermeneutical principle and method; the living Apostolic Tradition was very much a vital element of Christian existence through which

Scripture was fully understood.

But, in the end, the One who preserves within the Church the Tradition and inspires the Scriptures is the Holy Spirit present in the whole Body of the Church. It is in this light that one can see the Tradition as 'a continuity of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church, a continuity of divine guidance and illumination'.⁶⁰

Vatican II also states that the Apostolic Tradition is the common inheritance of the whole Church and the function of the magisterium is to preserve and to proclaim its content and connotations. Yet, the Roman Pontiff, as the supreme teacher of the universal Church, on the basis of the charisma of infallibility of the Church 'individually present in him, expounds and defends the doctrine of Catholic faith'.⁶¹

III.2.3. The Holy Tradition and Other Traditions

But tradition is not synonymous with uniformity. Tradition is still catholic in spite of local varieties; the only thing which counts is for it to be what has been defined by common ecumenical consensus and decisions. This is precisely because the one apostolic truth has different ways of being expressed and because Tradition is a *living* reality with specific features for each human cultural or social environment.

The catholicity of the Christian faith, an essential complement of unity, implies a wide scope for an authentic diversity of expressions of truth [which nevertheless should not lead to] breaches of fellowship.⁶²

The Orthodox theology sees the relationship between the Holy Tradition and other traditions as being also important. In order to grasp the true sense of catholicity the Church has to make a clearer distinction between the Holy Tradition which belongs to the Church catholic, and human traditions. Any tradition as contained in a particular confessional theology and practice has to be a reflection of the living Tradition of the Church catholic itself.

In this sense, a tradition should be tested and confirmed by 'an universal *consensio* of Churches'. By this consensus or conciliarity the Apostolic Tradition is seen as entrusted to all the Churches and therefore as having a 'collective responsibility' applied to the entire Christian Church in order to preserve the catholic faith. Such a consensus reflects the extent to which the perennial identity of Church's faith is preserved and thus it gives the approval for a tradition to be accepted or rejected.

For the Byzantine Church division meant the falling away of one or several local Churches from catholic agreement and, consequently, from the *true faith* expressed in and through this agreement, not... a separation from a universal organism, nor the breaking away from Eastern Church, regarded in some sense of the word as the *source of the Church*, but the violation of Tradition and Truth.⁶³

There is also another aspect of Church's catholicity worthy of mention here: the place of Tradition in the teaching of the Church.

The almost exclusive emphasis which the Reformers put upon the Scriptures has influenced very much the way in which the Tradition is understood in the Church. The Apostolic Tradition has to be seen as distinctive from any other later tradition. And therefore the witness which the Apostolic Tradition bears, although it remains in permanent historical continuation with that later tradition, cannot be put on the same level. That is due to the fact that the written transposition of the apostolic witness and Tradition which is constituted by the Scriptures prevails over any other form of *kerygma*, for the Tradition has been subordinated to Scripture in the formation of the New Testament canon. Thus, the Reformed Churches 'insist on the sole supremacy of Scripture as the substance of the apostolic witness and tradition regarded as part of the ἔφαναξ of the Revelation of Jesus Christ'.⁶⁴

The norm of interpretation remains Christ, the content of the *kerygma* which gives witness of Him, while the power of His Spirit is given to the apostles so that they may be able to know and correctly interpret Christ's person and work.⁶⁵ Hence, catholicity understood in terms of wholeness refers to *the wholeness of Christ* who is the centre and the foundation of the Church and of whom

Scripture gives evidence. In this sense, the Church is at the same time apostolic and catholic in as far as it 'exists on the basis of Scripture and in conformity with it'.⁶⁶

On its part, Anglican theology tries to handle various opinions concerning theological issues together without breaking the inner unity of the Anglican Communion. Such disunity of opinion is possible because, in Anglican view, there is always a difference to be made between 'theological verity' (which although true is not fundamental for salvation) and 'catholic faith',⁶⁷ that is to say between essentials and non-essentials to salvation. Hence, it classifies theological matters as fundamental or non-fundamental by how important they are for salvation. Therefore, while an agreement on fundamental issues is absolutely necessary, a disagreement on non-fundamental ones would not create problems for the unity and catholicity of the Anglican Communion. This Anglican theological 'comprehensiveness' implies the existence within the same theology and practice of various elements which in other theologies might be seen as 'mutually exclusive'.

However, that is not achieved by compromising or making up a syncretic system. It is rather the first step towards a fullness of apprehension of the truth through a continuously growing Christian theological understanding. In other words, the special feature of the Anglican theology is its ability to reconcile the Catholic element with the Protestant one, that is 'to aim at being Catholic, in the sense of being comprehensive of all that is Christian'.⁶⁸

III.3. The Sacramental Dimension of the Catholicity of the Church

III.3.1. The Sacramental Life of the Catholic Church as the External Criterion of the Faith

As stated before, every act of worship is an affirmation of the integrity of faith and has profound doctrinal implications. All the aspects of Church life, in one way or another, are to be seen in the context of worship in general and in that of eucharistic communion in particular. 'The Eucharist actualizes the Church, for

it is the central act of its existence.'⁶⁹

This brings Orthodox theology, as founded on the patristic heritage, to the conclusion that the ultimate representation and value of doctrine rest in the content of the eucharistic gathering and not in doctrine itself.⁷⁰ Hence, in any theological statement the 'kerygmatic' and 'doxological' approach to the doctrinal content has to be brought into a synthesis so that the 'historical' and the 'eschatological' dimensions of the Church's catholicity become relevant to us.

Catholicity is usually understood by Orthodox ecclesiology as expressing the wholeness, fullness and totality of the Body of Christ as typically portrayed in the eucharistic community. That is the consequence of the fact that in each eucharistic community celebrated in a certain place the whole Christ and the 'ultimate eschatological unity of all in Him' are fully revealed.⁷¹ The Eucharist is the most expressive manifestation of the Christian community as the *ekklesia*, as a sacramental community (*communio in sacris*), the fellowship built through the work of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the Eucharist is, by virtue of its sacramental power whereby a human community is transformed into 'the Church of God', the 'ultimate criterion and basis of ecclesial structure'.⁷²

It is therefore the emphasis on the identity of faith which is manifested in the sacramental communion. When people gather around the eucharistic Lord, under the presidency of the bishop and presbyters, the true teaching which they confess together is opposed to any schismatic or heretic attitude. Hence, the truth is experienced by being received and accepted. Thus, the whole community 'expresses the "catholicity" or fullness of the divine presence.'⁷³

The preached word is to be understood in similar terms with the eucharistic offering since the same Christ is both preached and eucharistically shared. 'The liturgy of the word' becomes an integral part of the eucharistic liturgy, and, therefore, the historical (the apostolic *kerygma*) ceases to be merely a feature of the past but at the same time comes from the future as well. This is what one theologian calls 'to eschatologize the historical.'⁷⁴ The Eucharist becomes the milieu through which the faith is

thought, the continuity with the apostolic times is kept and the whole faith of the Church is received and maintained by the entire people of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit. There, once again, traditional and historical are synthesized in one entity with the eschatology. For that matter, in the Christian revelation '*alpha and omega do coincide*', '*because life and truth coincide.*'⁷⁵

III.3.2. Sacramentality and Ontology

For Orthodoxy, the entire sacramental life of the Church has, at the same time, to be the reflection of a totally different perspective from which one looks at one's life as individual. Once again, in order to manifest more clearly a sacramental catholic community and not an ordinary gathering, there is a need for every individual to become a personal being. For only someone capable of establishing and sustaining a relation with others possessing the same quality of personhood can effectively pertain and contribute to the building up of a catholic community understood in terms of sacramental life. This transformation is the result of a decisive baptismal 'passover' 'from the "truth" of individualized being into the truth of personal being'. Hence, Baptism receives an ontological dimension through the fact that it is '*incorporation into the community.*'⁷⁶ The elevation of our being from the level of individuals to that of persons is absolutely necessary for normal birth is a state of individualization which has to be transcended into the new birth of Baptism. Through 'the birth of the Spirit' who is the Spirit of the Church catholic, the same with the Church of Pentecost and following Christ's model one dies as an individual and is resurrected through the baptismal water as member of a community, namely the catholic sacramental Church. 'Each baptized person can himself become "Christ", his existence being one of communion and, hence, one of true life.'⁷⁷

Furthermore, Confirmation (Chrismation) as the sacramental act of anointing with consecrated oil (Chrism) receives an eschatological finality by the fact that the 'seal (*σφραγίς*) of the Spirit' becomes the sign by which Christ will recognize us as His

own at the *Parousia*, as pertaining to the same Body, His catholic Church.⁷⁸ At the same time, one has to look at the sacraments, especially at Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist as ways whereby the newly baptized becomes '*member of a particular "ordo"*' inside the community. One is not in fact externally attached to a pre-existing group but rather one acts as a constitutive element of the community, because the community grows and is enriched with each new member.⁷⁹ And the more a community grows, the more it manifests the one catholic Church of Christ.

The relation which exists between the eucharistic community and the Church as a whole is, therefore, to be seen in personal terms. Inside the Church communion (*κοινωνία*) the Eucharist is never the action of a particular group of believers. It does not serve any partial or accidental purpose either, but it is always offered 'on behalf of all and for all' by the entire Church catholic.⁸⁰ It is therefore the *anamnetic* and *epicletic* character of the Eucharist which indicates the aspect of *κοινωνία* of the Holy Spirit since the Spirit is not only participant and fully involved within the history of the Church catholic. He is also permanently present into the Church through *charismata*, which He bestows upon the members of the catholic Church through the whole sacramental life as exists in it.⁸¹ Thus, the Eucharist reminds, manifests and projects the entire life of the Church in an all-embracing dimension both temporal and spatial.

III.3.3. Eschatology and Church Catholicity in the Sacramental Context

The One who realizes the Church's catholicity in history, seen in the perspective of the *eschaton*, is the Holy Spirit invoked through the prayer of the community gathered for eucharistic communion.⁸² The Spirit is the One who creates the Church as a reality ἐφ' ἅπαξ by bringing into present, through *anamnesis*, events from the past of the Church. Hence, the eucharistic community takes the shape of an 'existential realization, a re-presentation of the Body of Christ.' Orthodox theology employed

the notion of 'synergy' to express this pneumatological dimension of the Eucharist. The Holy Spirit is the One who manifests Christ's presence in the period of time between Incarnation, Ascension and *Parousia*.⁸³

The catholicity of the eucharistic community is not only an ecclesiological catholicity, but presupposes also a '*catholic anthropology*' and a '*catholic view of existence*' in general. That is precisely because in the eucharistic community the human being achieves its final goal, that is deification (θεώσις).⁸⁴ This deification is not the achievement only of a personal effort, namely one becoming part of an integrated fellowship (the Eucharist). More than that, it is very much connected with the eschatological unity of all in Christ (Jn 17), when our spiritual endeavour finds its final perfection. The similarities between the worshipping eucharistic communities on earth and the actual worship around God's throne are striking.⁸⁵ In the Eucharist, the presence of the Lord already glorified is a reality and yet is to come. Thus time is transcended and the expression of 'deification' is experienced *now*.⁸⁶

This eschatological approach from the point of view of the eucharistic community is revealed also in the fact that the Eucharist gathers the dispersed people of God in the same way in which as at the *Parousia*. The presence *here and now* of the Kingdom through the eucharistic gathering is an 'iconic' and liturgical representation of the age to come.⁸⁷ The Christ present in the Eucharist is ultimately the Resurrected Christ, who will come into the glory. Hence, sharing the same Christ in dignity is the sign of a catholic communion, and the signs of the Kingdom when Christ will be 'all in all' (Col 3:11).

Nevertheless, sharing Christ unworthily will bring punishment. One will be cast away and left outside the benefits of the communion (in the same way as at the *Parousia*). It is in this sense that the Eucharist is seen as the 'eschatological moment of the Church *par excellence*, a remembrance of the Kingdom' since it calls for the dispersed people of God up to the end of the times to come together in one place. The Eucharist unites the 'many' in the 'one' (1 Cor 10:16-17) and offers the possibility of tasting the eternal

life of God 'here and now' (Jn 6:27-51).⁸⁸

This is, therefore, the way one should understand the possibility of being in Christ, of 'participating' in divine life: an anticipation of the eschatological fulfillment, essentially revealed in the sacraments (*mysteria*) of the Church and especially in the Eucharist. These sacraments are acts of the whole Church since 'coming together' is the same as fulfilling the Church, that is 'to re-present, to make present the One, in whom all things are at their *end*, and all things are at their *beginning*.'⁸⁹

III.3.4. The Liturgical Dimension of the Sacraments as performed within the Church Catholic

At the same time the eucharistic community transcends not only social but also natural divisions as in fact will happen in the Kingdom of God (Mt 22:30; Mk 12:25; Lk 20:34f); and thus it manifests itself as a *catholic community*.⁹⁰ In this new type of gathering, 'membership' is rendered according to requirements other than age, race etc. These requirements are a free acceptance of Christ's message ('Take, eat... Drink of it, all of you'; Mt 26:26-28) done in good faith and in the love of God and of the neighbour with whom one is in communion around the eucharistic table. In this sense, the eucharistic gathering is seen as a *sacred* (consecrated) community which sets itself apart from 'the (profane) world.'

The approach to the world from the side of the eucharistic community should be from the perspective of the *eschaton*, since the Eucharist represents the actualisation of a life fulfilled in perfection only in the Kingdom. At the same time, a '*kenotic*' attitude needs to be applied here and now, in the daily struggle for the affirmation of this *eschaton*, by living according to a different pattern of life, namely the life of the Kingdom.⁹¹

Every sacramental act of the Church ought to be accompanied by a liturgical⁹² character, because they are acts performed by the community for individual people; and the liturgical character renders to such acts precisely the quality of service. That will

provide it with a power of regeneration which concerns not only the individual (the one who is the direct subject of the sacrament) but the whole Church, which is changed, enriched and fulfilled. Each single sacramental act is an act performed by the Church for the Church, although it is a personal receipt of the gifts of the Holy Spirit by individual persons. This personal involvement does not exclude the participation of the whole community, that is the Church catholic in the context of a 'liturgy' in which the one (person) is 'co-celebrant' with the others and in communion with the others in the community of the Church catholic.⁹³

The entire sacramental life establishes the reality of the Church. The purpose is not an individual sanctification of each of the Church's members, but rather the creation of the 'people of God' as the Body of Christ, the manifestation of the Church as 'new life, in the new time.'⁹⁴

At the same time, the sacramental life of the Church is, in a very practical sense, a way of preparing us for the life of the Kingdom (cf. 1 Pet 1:15-16). The sacraments, as λειτουργία, have the power of the Holy Spirit which shapes one's view as a Christian vis-à-vis the world, that is one's basic attitudes, motivations and decisions. In its missionary character, worship as the centre of Church life should also determine the whole life of every Christian. Therefore it is the task of all members of the eucharistic assembly to "go forth in peace" in implementing "a liturgy after the liturgy", to become witnesses to the Kingdom of God on earth.⁹⁵

The catholic dimension of the sacraments is also obvious by the fact that the grace contained in them extends itself not only inside the visible limits of the Church, but also to the whole of creation. That is in fact the task which they have to fulfill: to direct the whole personality of man in order to create the new man in Christ.⁹⁶

The Sacraments are seen in medieval theology as means whereby a double action is performed upon Christians. On the one hand they bring the possibility of individual salvation, and on the other hand they are incentives for a deeper individual sanctification. Hence, a powerful mark of 'individualism and subjectivism' became a

usual feature of that particular age of Western Christendom. The ultimate function of the sacraments is seen as being concerned 'with the spiritual edification of the individual recipient' and, thus, effecting a positive change of one's behaviour and feelings.⁹⁷ Such a view tends to stress too much the ethical aspect of the sacraments rather than implying an ontological transformation of the believer.

Some of the outstanding Anglican scholars have gone beyond that kind of understanding the sacraments. They would argue that holiness comes first as a prerequisite for sharing the same Christ as fully present in the whole Church's sacramental life.⁹⁸ In this respect, the ultimate purpose of the sacraments is to build up the Body of Christ, His Church. Through them the whole Body of Christ is maintained, extended, vivified and unified by bringing together the Head and the members 'in one organic and coherent pattern of life, to the glory of God the Father.'⁹⁹

On the same line and rehabilitating one of St Augustine's ideas, more recent Anglican theology asserts that in the union of Christ with the members, as best expressed in the Eucharist, there is the sacrificial act in which *the whole Body of Christ*, Head and members, offers *the whole Christ*. By so doing, Christ present in the liturgical congregation gives to that assembly its essential meaning and unity in connection to the whole catholic Church.¹⁰⁰ This fellowship is therefore the result of communicating the same Christ, which brings us into the 'deepest togetherness with one another', fellowship which extends itself to Paradise too. It is, thus, the communion of all Christians, living and departed, which is constituted by coming and sharing together the same loaf, namely Christ, and the benefits of His redemptive acts whereby the whole Church of Christ may obtain remission of its sins.¹⁰¹ It can be said, then, that although celebrated in a particular place, the Eucharist is ultimately the act of the universal Church since the benefits of the actual presence of Christ in the eucharistic sacrifice are directed towards the whole Church.¹⁰²

For Roman Catholic theology, the revelation of God through the Incarnate Logos, although accomplished, is still an ongoing reality, in ecclesial terms, for the Church perpetuates Christ's

sacramental presence in the world in a sort of continued revelation, because Christ is permanently made manifest in and proclaimed to the world through sacraments. That is made possible by the fact that while Christ is the supreme self-revelation of God, at the same time the Church, inasmuch as it is the sacrament of Christ, can prove itself to be a real revelation of the divine.

[Through the Church, Christ] is continuously active in the world, leading men to the Church, and through her joining them more closely to Himself and making them partakers of His glorious life by nourishing them with His own body and blood.¹⁰³

In this sense, the term 'sacrament' has received several qualifications. Thus, the Tridentine definition speaks about the sacrament as a visible form in which an invisible grace is expressed. Furthermore, it is an efficacious sign, which brings about the materialization of the reality signified. However, the sacraments are always to be regarded not as merely individual affairs, but rather as being 'socially constituted' or as 'communal symbols' of the presence of grace. Therefore, Baptism, Anointing, Absolution or Eucharist all ought to have a 'dialogical structure.'¹⁰⁴

The Eucharist expresses at its best this ecclesial character of the sacraments, for there, in the eucharistic meal, Christ who is continuously shared by the community becomes also the permanent reality present in other sacraments as performed in that community. In each 'community existing around an altar' however small and poor, 'Christ is present and by virtue of Him the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church gathers together.'¹⁰⁵ Everyone in the eucharistic community has to take a fully personal, responsible and creative activity, as part of the people of God in order to complete what has been given with what still has to be done; not only an *opus operatum*, but also an *opus operantis*.¹⁰⁶

This fact is based on the concept of the redemptive acts of Christ, who appears as the sign of God's redemptive love which embraces all mankind, and also the sign of the response which the entire mankind gives to that love. At the same time, the Church must reveal itself fully as 'a sign when its members are evidently

united to one another and to God through holiness and mutual love, and when they visibly gather to confess their faith in Christ and to celebrate what God has done for them in Christ.'¹⁰⁷ In so doing, the Church acts as a catholic body in the world.

The Eucharist has also other dimensions in relation to Church's catholicity. The Lord's Supper has a temporal catholic perspective, for it refers back to the past, to the time of the initial event. It refers also to the present, as the fellowship of those here and now gathered around the eucharistic meal. Finally, it anticipates the eschatological meal (cf. 1 Cor 1:26). Therefore, the Eucharist is essentially fellowship, *koinonia*, *communio* in a double sense: vertically, it is a fellowship in Christ (1 Cor 1:9); horizontally, it is a fellowship with other Christians (1 Cor 10:16f.).¹⁰⁸

Alongside God's word, in Luther's view, the sacraments play an important role in Church's life and that is precisely due to the fact that they come from the richness of the Gospel. But, in so far as 'the word, and only the word is the means of God's grace'¹⁰⁹ the sacraments remain just another way, external signs of proclaiming the Gospel. This led Luther to apply the term 'sacrament' not only to those rites labeled as such but also to the word itself and, moreover, to Christ Himself, since Christ and the word are ways of God's revelation and work in the world by means of proclamation of God's will. That would ultimately mean that the sacraments are subordinated to the word of God. They come to reveal the form and order of the Church as long as the sacraments are rooted in Christ, 'the One Sacrament.'¹¹⁰

As to how the Church is related to external and corporeal things, Luther emphasized the fact that this relationship is sacramentally expressed and also that the sacraments will reveal a visible Church only '*sub contraria*', enigmatically. This tone of 'mystery' always accompanies Luther's thought as far as the sacraments are concerned. The *sacramentum* denotes not the sign of a sacred thing but rather the 'sacred, secret, hidden thing itself' and has a history in the sense that it appeared relatively recently in the Church in the shape of a sacramental system.¹¹¹

In the way it operates, the word as sacrament seems to be more

effective than the preached word, since the former is addressed to each individual person, while the latter has a more general area of work, being administered in order to reach out all those who are present. Intimacy and direct approach to the individual are the main advantages of the 'sacramentally' expressed word in relation to the spoken word.¹¹² Hence, the sacraments (Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and occasionally accepted Penance) through the word which they contain and proclaim are the proof of Church's existence as God's people. But the fact that one becomes a member of the Church through baptism is not enough to claim that one is part of the true Church. Only those who are real believers, that is to say those who receive earnestly and freely the content of the sacrament, which is the word, participate in the building up of *communio sanctorum*.¹¹³

More than any other sacrament reckoned as such by Luther, the Lord's Supper remains the essential act of our communion with Christ: 'just as the many grains become one bread so the many become one body in Christ.'¹¹⁴ The Lord's Supper by being a means of grace is also a communion of fellowship with Christ and with each other. Hence, as a 'communion of saints' we have all things in common with Christ and there is a necessity to communicate this common heritage, that is to say to participate into the sacrament.¹¹⁵ At the same time Luther made use of the historical legacy of the old Church in order to enforce the value and the authenticity of the Holy Communion as a sign of the Church's catholicity.¹¹⁶

Alongside Scripture, Reformed theology insisted on the sacramental life of the Church as another element through which the Church lives in historical continuity with Christ. This is due to the fact that sacraments, especially the Eucharist, are means whereby Christ is permanently fully present and revealed to the Church.¹¹⁷ The Christ of the Eucharist shares His life assured by His resurrection and unites us with Himself 'in His self-offering to the Father, the one full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice' in order to bring us in union with one another. It is this eucharistic fellowship gathered in the local congregation that forms 'the basic unit' which expresses 'the fullness of the catholic Church.'¹¹⁸

Sometimes the two sacraments accepted as such in the Reformed

tradition have been conceived somewhat differently from the classical understanding of the 'orthodox' Reformation. Baptism and Eucharist as means of relating us to Christ, draw us 'into the power of his vicarious life, in death and resurrection and uniting us with his self-oblation, and self-presentation before the face of the Father.' In these acts the Church participates 'passively and receptively as the redeemed community.'¹¹⁹

Taking into consideration the above views on how catholicity is conceived of in the light of the Divine Revelation, both written and unwritten, or as expressed in the sacramental life of the Church in various confessional theologies, some general remarks can be drawn.

First of all Tradition is not just transmitted from one generation to another but it is also 're-enacted' and 're-received' through the work of the Holy Spirit. 'The Tradition is the Church itself in its catholic existence'.¹²⁰ Hence, one has to put the whole meaning of Christian tradition today in the direction indicated by Church's eschatological and eucharistic dimensions, because Church 'tradition' and 'traditional' are not just references to a distant past, but refer also and primarily to the realization and the projection into the *eschata* of the identity of a dynamic reality, which is the one catholic and apostolic Church of Christ, the Lamb and the Judge. For those who do not have such an essential understanding of Church's catholicity, the only way forward would be through earnest endeavor towards recovering them and taking them very seriously indeed.

In the same sense, one has to relate Tradition to the Scriptures and put them in the light of the experience of the whole Church as exquisitely expressed into the eschatologically orientated Eucharist, for the Eucharist is the sacramental manifestation of the whole Christ who is at the same time the very content and dynamic presence of both Tradition and Scripture and also the perfect model of what the Church catholic ought to be like. There one can discover an intrinsic relationship which exemplary reveals the idea of Church's catholicity.

[The communion between God and man is a] fellowship where catholicity or consistency in time is possible, where unity in space is desirable, and where the Bible should and can be properly and harmoniously understood both in its divine element and in its human context.¹²¹

Following a certain sacramental direction rather than being preoccupied with elaborating theological concepts, Orthodox theology has never been concerned with considering sterile words, or objective and formal patterns as the ultimate criteria of truth. For the Orthodox the source of the faith is the whole of Scripture as seen in the light of Tradition of the Ecumenical Councils, of the Fathers, and reflected in the faith of the entire people of God and especially as expressly revealed in the sacramental life. This kind of approach might seem hard to accept for those who would like to see in the Orthodox thinking a more sophisticated presentation of theological statements.

As far as Anglican theology is concerned, since the aim of the Reformation was, ultimately, to recover the real image of Christ's Church which had been lost through the sophisticated scholasticism of the Middle Ages, the Anglican Church responded positively to this attempt and developed a theology based on Scripture and on the writings of Church's Fathers as primary sources of the truth. The preeminence that the Anglican tradition gave to Scripture was meant to signify a return to the spring which is the base of our entire knowledge about God and His manifestation in creation. But sometimes the way in which the Bible was used, as the means whereby the foundation of the Church was made manifest, revealed an extreme attitude which was very close to the pure Protestant concept of '*sola Scriptura*' (e.g. the Article XIX adopted by Convocation in 1562-1563). For that matter the catholicity of the Church was in danger of being understood in pure spiritual terms, because the Reformation put the emphasis on spiritual dimension of the Church in order to counterbalance that understanding of medieval theology which has stressed too much on the structure and visible manifestation of the Church. Yet, one must not forget that, at the time, the circumstances were favorable for such extreme positions.

The spirit of the Bible has been enriched, however, in

Anglican theology, with the legacy of the Church's Fathers. The Anglican Church rediscovered the ethos that the Fathers brought about in the Church catholic in their interpretation of the Scriptures by the appeal to them as to an authority which can substantiate its theological understanding.

In regard to the sacramental life of the Church as the expression of its catholicity, Anglican theology promoted a belief which saw the rites in the English churches as 'acts of Christ in His one universal Church in which Englishmen share through its representatives on English soil.'¹²² Moreover, in following the instructions given in the Book of Common Prayer, the Anglican Communion developed in itself a more practically orientated theology, rather than speculating in more theoretical terms. That gave to the Anglican Communion a certain freedom in accepting inside itself a certain variety of sacramental life without breaking up the concept of catholicity.

On its part, the Roman Catholic Church tried to put revelational content (be it scriptural or traditional) under the authority of the Church and thus to substitute for the divine authority of the revealed word a purely ecclesial authority. Revelation is, thus, no longer something of the Church catholic, which alone can interpret it, but the privilege of a certain authority limited to a particular place. Such kind of attitude made Pope Pius IX affirm: 'La traditione son' io.' This provided a freedom for the Roman Church to develop new doctrines in the spirit of a distorted approach to God's revelation, as for instance in the case with the papal infallibility (Vatican Council I, 1870) or the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary (1854). All these do subject the catholic tradition and faith to a narrow, limited perspective, if not an individualistic one.

As far as the Roman Church's sacramental life is concerned, there is still a strong emphasis on the rigid institutional structures of the Church which govern the entire life of the Church, for the Church is seen as a single organic whole and which would 'include in itself all church-units of any kind, especially those headed by bishops'. This is a type of ecclesiology which N. Afanasieff calls 'universal ecclesiology'.¹²³ Hence, although the

sacraments help to build up a community of mutual love and witness, this does not seem to overcome the implicit division which exists in Roman theology between the hierarchical body and the rest of the community, because the hierarchy can act in a way which renders laity almost insignificant into the life of the community. And that is so in spite of the fact that Vatican II granted especially to the Eucharist a preeminent position in the Church as a catholic sacrament which is offered on behalf of the entire community, both living and dead, from East and West. The Eucharist is seen as both a celebration of existing unity and a means of deepening that unity with God and among believers.¹²⁴ Yet, the two sides of the catholic sacramental community - hierarchy and laity - are separated and this cannot reveal the Church in its full catholicity.

In Luther's theology the word comes to each individual and creates a relationship between that individual and God, the giver and the content of the word. To that calling through which the word is addressed to individuals, those who respond in their own way constitute the community, that is to say the catholic Church.

The problem appears when one tries to establish to what extent that type of gathering is a catholic community in the proper sense of the word. That is so because that group of individuals, who relate to God through a response to His preached word, are not interrelated with one another in order to make their relationship with God also effective and thus to affirm themselves as a community with all the required characteristics. Therefore, it can be said that instead of being a community that group of people remains at the level of a collectivity in which individuals remain isolated from one another and relate only to God. The vertical relationship which every one of the individuals establishes with God, by means of a response to God's calling, is not accompanied by a horizontal one among the members of that group which achieves the plenitude of the Church as a catholic body.

At the same time, although Luther acknowledges a certain role for symbolic manifestations, he does not seem to be very concerned to give them a real importance for the Christian's life. As long as the word of God is preached and is given a proper response of faith, any other symbols or rites become superfluous and

insignificant. The way in which Christ finds Himself proclaimed in the word is, for Luther, essentially dependent on the act of receiving and acceptance. Such a receptionist approach to the problem of Christ's presence in the Church ends in presenting a performative catholicity of the Church assured by the quality of the word and sacraments. That would provide conditions in which the performance of these ecclesiastical elements are to work. Therefore, this kind of theology would give credit to the critique that Luther 'cut the root of the whole catholic notion of the sacraments'¹²⁵ and presented a distorted concept of the Church's catholicity.

Other attitudes, more common in the Congregationalist churches today, which allow everyone to take part in the eucharistic meal, irrespective of whether one is member or not in the Church, weaken and damage seriously the concepts of sainthood and catholicity.¹²⁶ For others, the Lord's Supper has to be understood not as a sacrament as such, but as 'the fellowship of those who are bound together by faith in God's act of reconciliation on the Cross, and by hope in the return of the Lord.'¹²⁷ It is only the actual act of faith which can create the true Church (i.e. *Ekklesia*) and not any other external elements as the sacraments for instance.

Taking into consideration the above remarks, one may come to a final conclusion, namely that there is a wide range of concepts as far as the understanding of the scriptural, traditional and sacramental dimension of Church's catholicity. The range is from a view which would be very much concerned with how Scripture, Tradition and sacramental life refer to the catholicity of the Church and go as far as to comprise views which would have little or no preoccupation for such endeavour.

All of the theologies analyzed previously reckon the scriptural element as essential, one without which no Church's foundation and affirmation can ever be conceived. But, if so the other element of God's revelation, namely the Apostolic Tradition, may be overshadowed or even excluded altogether from any definition of the Church. One must not forget that the Apostolic Tradition is the basis on which the written word of Christ has come into being (cf. Jn 21:25, etc.). Therefore an equal place for Tradition

alongside the Scriptures seems to be more appropriate.

On the other hand, the Church as an active body implies our participation in its sacramental life, as a conscious act of acceptance and confession of faith. There is here a free incorporation of new members into the Church, the Body of Christ, a permanent building *here and now* of the catholic Church locally expressed in a particular community.

But the faith of the Church must also be endowed with the power which Church order only can bring along.

IV. Local and Universal. The Catholic Church in Its Locality and Its Relationship with the Universal Catholic Church

One of the most important aspects of ecclesiology is whether the Church in its catholicity is ultimately manifested in a locality or universal through its spreading. The theological approach to this matter is generally divided on three major lines:

- a. one which follows an *universalizing* tendency, and which is represented mainly by Roman Catholic theology;
- b. an opposite one which advocates a pre-eminence for *the local community*, and which is present within the theology of those Churches that arose at the Reformation;
- c. one which defines the Church and its catholicity in terms of *the importance of its local presence*, without dismissing the necessity for those locally expressed catholic communities to remain in close relationship with one another. This view is to be found in Orthodox theology, and to some extent in that of the Anglican Communion.

These three theological directions in the understanding of the catholicity of the Church are of crucial importance since they can determine how other ecclesiological aspects, especially those concerning the structural elements of the Church catholic, are to be conceived. They can also show other fundamental characteristics of a Church, such as how and where the tensions between visible/invisible or concrete/abstract realms are to be resolved.

IV. 1. Local, yet Catholic

IV.1.1. The Local Church and Its Identity

Apart from Roman Catholic theology, the other main Christian Churches, in their specific way and for different reasons, have been quite clear about where one ought to start in order to formulate one's view on the catholicity of the Church.

Thus, Orthodox theology has always focused on the importance of the local Church as the starting point from which one can proceed towards a proper understanding of the Church catholic. The local community has always been regarded in the Orthodox Church as unequivocally the *whole Church*, that is the Church catholic, in a locality (Rom 16:23; cf. also Acts 8:1; 14:22-23; 20:17 *et al.*).¹ That is the result of the fact that the local Church centred around the eucharistic community 'possesses a fullness of grace and divine presence' which makes it 'catholic.' In this respect, the local Church in which the Eucharist is performed is always considered not to be 'part' of a universal entity, but rather the *whole* Body of Christ which is 'manifested sacramentally' and includes the entire "communion of saints", both living or departed.

It is not only that local community of living believers who come together before the altar, but indeed the catholic Church in its entirety and the whole assembly which is present every time during each celebration of the majestic sacrament of unity. For Christ is never separated from His Body.

This geographical localization of the Church helps to achieve an overall view concerning the integration of all the members of the community in a local eucharistic assembly. Only by integrating the entire *laos* together, with its 'local' characteristics within it, can one obtain a full picture of the local gathering where each of its members constitutes 'an indispensable form of local Church structure'.³ This coming together as a corporate reality under the form of a community of all of the members in a locality is the ultimate meaning which the term ἐκκλησία⁴ was meant to signify. The communion established between different members of the same local

community is the only way in which one could be called Christian. And, ultimately, without it there can be no Christian catholic Church.

Nobody could be Christian by himself, as an isolated individual, but only together with 'the brethren', in a 'togetherness' with them. *Unus Christianus - nullus Christianus.*

The 'catholic' character of the local community is at the same time conveyed by the participation of *all* the members of that particular Church in the entire life of that community. Those who, around the bishop as the head of the community, form the catholic assembly in a particular place are co-creators of that community. In early Christian thought there is always an intrinsic relationship which associates the existence of the local community with the act of the coming together of the members who are part of that community.⁶ A right interpretation of the biblical expression κατ' οἶκον ἐκκλησία (household church) eventually leads to the same conclusion, namely that such terminology was employed in order to emphasize the assembly of all Christian members of a city who meet as '*guests of a particular house*' (Rom 16:23, etc.). That view would contravene to a '*sociological* conception of "locality" in which the centre of the community would be a family around which the other members are gathered,⁷ because such an assembly is not based on natural ties, but on spiritual ones, people recognizing one another as members of the same community through the common content of the truth which they possess.

Moreover, in taking into consideration the fact that the Eucharist '*is the fullness of the Kingdom which is anticipated*' and that the Kingdom cannot be more or less catholic, it can be concluded that the local Church does not stand as merely a '*part*' of the Church universal. The local eucharistic community is the whole Church united in Christ, understood in exactly the same terms as the Church catholic. '*Local catholicity belongs to the One Catholicity of the One Catholic Church.*'⁸ It follows that, an '*organic unity of the Church*' properly understood would reveal the fact that '*the (local) churches are not complementary to one another, are not "parts" or "members": each of them and all of them*

together are nothing but the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church' with a sacramental *identity* common to all of them.⁹

A picture of the local eucharistic community can be constructed from the information from the New Testament times.¹⁰ The local Church is the 'whole Church' (Rom 16:23) which 'dwells in a certain city' (1 Cor 1:1-2; 1 Tess 1:1) and in which people would 'come together' (1 Cor. 11:20) usually on a Sunday (Acts 20:7) in order to 'break bread' (Acts 2:46). In this respect, one could say that this sort of gathering (*synaxis*) is *the only* one in that particular place in the sense that it includes the 'whole Church'.

"One plus one is still *one*" in ecclesiology. Every local church manifests all the fullness of the Church of God, because it *is* the Church of God and not just one part of it. There may be a plurality of such manifestations but the Church of God itself remains one and unique always, for it always equals itself.¹¹

The eucharistic gathering therefore represents the basis on which the entire people in the same place come together in order to perform a 'public work' (*leitourgia*) for all Christians who happen to be part of that locality, or even for the people within a wider locality who participate in it. This *leitourgia* refers precisely to the 'catholic character' of the Eucharist which is always to be retained.¹²

The earlier attachment of the term ἐκκλησία to any local eucharistic community later brought the possibility of conceiving the parish as an ἐκκλησία in itself since the eucharistic gathering takes place in that particular form of locality. If that is the case, then a community headed by a presbyter, who eventually, through the spreading of the Christian message, became the head of local community replacing the bishop in smaller ecclesiastical units, may be regarded as a Church as such, '*presbyterium-centred*.' Consequently, at the level of parish the local Church became an entity where some of its orders were no longer present (the bishop or the deacon and later on with the private masses in the Roman Catholic Church even the laity). That undermined to some extent the exclusive role of the bishop as the eucharistic president. In such circumstances the Orthodox Church adopted 'the concept of the local

Church (as) guaranteed *by the bishop* and not by the priest-presbyter: the local Church as an entity with full ecclesiological status is the episcopal diocese and not the parish'.¹³

At the same time, other later developments (metropolitan and patriarchal systems) seem to undermine the paramount role of the local eucharistic gathering and to transfer interest to a wider realm. In fact those larger local ecclesial communities retained the quality of catholicity through the identity in content and characteristics, which exists in them as it does in any local community or episcopal diocese. This is obvious by the fact that none of the supposedly 'higher' hierarchical positions of metropolitans or patriarchs in relation to that of diocesan bishops are *above* or *besides* the position of a particular bishop as the head of the local community.

Thus, a metropolis and archdiocese or a patriarchate cannot be called a *Church* in itself, but only *by extension* that is by virtue of the fact that it is based on one or more episcopal dioceses - local Churches, which are the only ones, on account of the episcopal eucharist, properly called Churches.¹⁴

Another aspect worth of mention here is how the variety (cultural, social etc.) which naturally exists in each local community is to be dealt with. In order to manifest itself as a genuinely local community with all the characteristics that such a community should possess, each local gathering has to adopt and make full use of all features of a locality. Those characteristics do not contravene what is essential for a community to be recognized as catholic. That means that there is a need to overcome all sorts of natural, social etc. divisions if a local church is to retain its catholicity.¹⁵

However, a critical approach towards these local features is required. That is precisely because 'the saving event of Christ' is not purely and simply an affirmation of human culture; it has also a critical attitude towards it. Nevertheless, as already stated, no attempt to impose an universal Christian culture upon the local churches should be made since such sort of culture does not really exist. For 'each local Church realizes the presence of the whole

Christ in a specific way, within a distinctive ethnic and cultural context,'¹⁶ the variety of local expressions of the same Christ being convergent, while not losing their specificity.

IV. 1. 2. Catholic, Reformed and National. The Anglican Case

In the case of the Anglican Communion, in its most clear manifestation as the English Church, one of its main characteristics is that of being a particular, and also a national church. Hence, the question arises as to what place the particular church occupies within a universal Church.

The Church of England is very much affected by being the national Church of the country. It is a Church of the nation and not a church of another place (Rome or somewhere else) and represents the Christian life of the people of England.

At the same time, it is noteworthy the importance which the local parish churches have in English Church, which is seen, at the very smaller level, as the catholic Church of that place.

The Catholicity of the Anglican Church (or Churches) rests upon its continuity of worship, employing ancient forms purged of medieval accretions, and of pastoral care in the parishes and parish churches whose origins go back to time immemorial.¹⁷

What has to be borne always in mind, however, is that being 'national' must not determine a church to act in such a way that its loyalty to the Church universal is undermined. Through the bishop, who is the bridge between the local and the universal dimensions of the Church catholic, each diocese manifests itself as 'the organic local manifestation of the Catholic Church.' In order to make evident this manifestation the diocesan bishop and his 'self-coherent' local community ought to permanently refer themselves to the whole, the Church universal.¹⁸ By so doing, the local congregation manifests itself not just as a part of the Church of God but is 'the Church of God manifested in a particular place.' Thus, the bishop becomes 'the sacramental focus through which the part is constituted as more than a part, as the local

manifestation of the whole'.¹⁹ The place where this manifestation is the most obvious is the local eucharistic gathering where the believer, participating in the profession of the credal faith and sharing the One Christ and Lord, is led into the wider locality which is the Church universal.

The Eucharist is never merely the act of a local community, but always the act of the great Church, wherein the local community is merged.²⁰

This process through which individuals come together in order to form a local community is to be repeated in the same manner at an universal level, where local churches come together in order to manifest the Church catholic in a wider context. It can thus be said that even when very few persons, believing and being baptized, gather in a particular place, they still form *the* Church.²¹

IV. 1. 3. Exclusivist Localism and Partiality in Protestantism

According to Luther, the congregation has its own place in a social and national structure, for the members of the Christian community are, at the same time, citizens of a town or nation. Therefore, the external aspect of a community has a strong accent of a socio-political pattern.²²

The way in which Reformed theology understood the sacramental life, especially the Eucharist, has very much influenced the perception of the local community as seen in the context of the catholic Church and its relationship with that wider community.

Mainly, the Reformed churches have tended to stress the need for membership in a local community as the starting point for the Christian life. This membership is acquired through Baptism and ultimately fulfilled in the local gathering where through the preaching of the Gospel and the celebration of the sacraments the Church finds its identity as a catholic community. The presence of Christ in that particular assembly gives to it the characteristic of catholicity, because Christ constitutes both the centre of each of those local communities and at the same time the centre of the

catholic Church wherever it is manifested.²³

In Reformed theology the local church is seen as the only form in which the Church catholic can exist. 'The Church is local or it does not exist at all' seems to be one of the central principles upon which its ecclesiology is based.²⁴ For that reason, the catholicity of the Church remains a local feature with a certain impact at a wider level, but only as based on local representations of the Church. It appears only as a consequence of the event which happens in the local community with all the characteristics proper to that locality.²⁵

A special look at Congregationalist ecclesiology, as developed within the Reformed tradition, will reveal such a position. In spite of a relationship which seems to exist between various local congregations, nevertheless the Church is conceived either in terms of some autonomy of the local community or by denying the existence of a 'third church' or denomination as intermediary between the local community and the catholic Church.²⁶ For Congregationalism the Church is essentially local; a national or provincial Church are out of question. 'Each community of believers is the catholic Church in essence and it is empowered by Christ to govern its own life under the guidance of His Spirit.'²⁷ The authority in each of these local gatherings rests ultimately with Christ, from whom everyone must seek to learn in obedience to His will.

IV. 1. 4. Vatican Council II: the Rehabilitation of the Local Church?

Official Roman Catholic theology up to Vatican Council II starting with Thomas d'Aquino, the Catechism of the Council of Trent and continuing with Bellarmine, Perrone, Passaglia, Franzelin, as well as more modern ecclesiologists (for instance Billot, d'Herbigny, Cardinal Ch. Journet), all ignore or diminish the local aspect of the Church. This type of ecclesiology is highly universalistic in content and disconcertingly one-sided.²⁸

Vatican II on its part tried to rehabilitate the doctrine of the local church in affirming that the diocese is a particular

church in which the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative.²⁹ For that matter, catholicity is to be seen not only in reference to the universal Church, but also to the local churches as well, though always in connection with the universal one.

The variety of local Churches with one common aspiration is particularly splendid evidence of the catholicity of the undivided Church.³⁰

In those local churches the bishop, who officially represents the universal Church, has a catholic function. He is a sign and instrument of unity in his work of building up consensus among the members of the local Church. At a wider level the bishops of the local communities form the college of bishops which has to have a chief bishop. But, it must be added that by virtue of its place each particular part of the catholic Church contributes through its special charisma 'to the good of the other parts' and, thus, to the good of the whole Church. For within the Church catholic 'particular Churches hold the rightful place' and therefore 'retain their own traditions', sharing nevertheless the same goods (1 Pet 4:10).³¹

Above all, the role of the local community inside the catholic Church is revealed in the congregation as the worshipping community, which is in the full sense of the word God's *ecclesia*, i.e. Christ's Body. That particular community is not simply *the ecclesia*, the Body of Christ, for there is a multitude of communities with the same features which are therefore themselves God's *ecclesia* and Christ's Body. The local community 'is truly God's *ecclesia* and Christ's Body because the Lord is present in each, truly, wholly, and undivided.' Hence, between those communities, through *koinonia*, *communio*, fellowship with Christ, it is not a federation which is established but a *koinonia* of all of them together in the same Spirit, that is to say the one *ecclesia* of God.³²

The local Church gathered around the Eucharist (celebrated as a space-time event) is one of the many 'cells' of the one Body of Christ. In that local church, by celebrating the Eucharist, an

actualisation of the Church of Christ takes place. Moreover, it can be said that, since there is a multitude of celebrations of Christ's catholic presence in each local eucharistic gathering, the catholic Church is conceived not in terms of a communion of individuals, but rather as a 'communion of communions',³³ which are in a relationship of love and sacramental life. However, in the end the local Church is seen as receiving only in a derivative way the quality of being 'church' from that it is a 'local manifestation of the universal Church.' The movement is therefore from the universal to the local and not vice versa.

This means that you are not a member of the universal Church *because* you are a member of the local church (though the latter membership is normally a *sign* of the former). In reality, you are a member of your local church because baptism has made you a member of the universal Church.³⁴

This understanding of the Church and of its catholicity as seen in connection with their expression in the locality is in the Western Churches tackled in an analytical way, namely by examining the parts either separately from one another (the Protestant case) or in their relationship with one another (the Roman Catholic view) but only from the perspective of the universal. That results in using the universal Church as the starting point while the local communities are regarded as parts of the whole.

IV.2. The Local Church and the Local Churches. Elements of Identity Between Different Localities

In the Orthodox ecclesiology, one of the elements of the very structure of the Church - the bishop - is always to be placed in a concrete local context in which he finds himself necessarily related to a community to which he is 'assigned.' Only after assuming that position in the local community can he relate himself to other heads of communities in the Church catholic and, thus, together with his community, become part of the universal Church.

And it is *through* its bishop, or more precisely *in* its bishop that each local or particular church is included in the totality of the Church catholic. By its bishop it is united with the first sources of charismatic life of the Church, linked with the Pentecost.³⁵

It is with such understanding that one can give priority, to a certain extent, to locality over against universality.³⁶

The importance attached to the local eucharistic community becomes clearer in the context of Orthodox ecclesiology, which sees the whole Body of Christ with the bishop as its *imago*. By virtue of his position within the community, the episcopate is 'one' in as far as it keeps and propagates the identity of faith by which all the local Churches are united. Hence, each one of them becomes '*cathedra una*' and also '*cathedra Petri*.'³⁷

At the same time, the communion which should exist between different local communities inside the Church catholic is also based on a common understanding of the Gospel and the upholding of the eschatological nature of the Church. From this follows a constant requirement for the expression of loving care which each local community needs to be manifested towards sister churches in order to prevent them from distorting the truth of Christ's Gospel.

The local eucharistic community, as the expression of the Church catholic, is the centre of Christian witness; and the whole Church is part of the 'catholic' proclamation of the Gospel to the world. In that local community the liturgy remains a unique and permanent response to the need of the people for a real human community.³⁸ The ultimate manifestation of the bond which should exist between different local churches in the present time and also with the churches of the past is reflected in the *identity* of the faith. Besides this identity with the apostolic faith, charismatic manifestation should receive also recognition from all the other churches, so that neither faith nor *charismata* can be proved as genuine apart from a *catholic consensus*.³⁹

On these lines, the principle of autocephaly as found in the Orthodox Church is based on national characteristics; a local autocephalous Church has certain national elements proper only to

it. Yet, that does allow the local Church to retain and manifest those features which do not jeopardise its assignment to the Church catholic. This principle needs also to be observed in a conciliar context in which the bishops of all episcopal dioceses in a particular area come together in order to reflect the catholicity of the Church at a wider level, as heads of particular communities who have the same duties, power and responsibility.⁴⁰

On its part, by the position which it holds in universal Christendom, the national Church of England ought, according to the Anglican theology, to be careful not to place itself in a sectarian position amongst other Churches. On the one hand, there is in this theology and in its practice a notion of comprehensiveness *inside* the Church, whereby an inclusive Church sees the other churches as entities in their relationship with one another. On the other hand, there is also a concept of comprehensiveness *outside* the Church which can be labeled as a 'fundamental catholicism' which represents 'the capacity of the Church to encompass all mankind.'⁴¹ The fact remains that the existence of episcopacy in the English Church shows 'that the Church of England was not a new foundation, a local realization of the invisible Church, but the expression on English soil of the one historical and continuous visible Church of God.'⁴² Thus, the English Church proved itself, through its structural and other features, to be the presence in England of the universal Church.

But, of course, due to the expansion of the English Church outside the boundaries of the country, it tended to become more and more internationalized and to adapt itself to new circumstances. The local connotation which the term 'Anglican' had originally has been changed in more recent times in order to convey ecclesiastical and doctrinal aspects rather than national or ethnic ones. The common doctrinal heritage that the local churches of the Anglican Communion share with each other in their independent self-governing should necessarily contain the catholic faith in full.⁴³ Through the profession of this true faith and worship of God, the Lord would give to a community endorsement as a true, catholic Church. All those communities which have this endorsement will be the One Catholic Church irrespective of the extent of their spatial

spreading.⁴⁴

Therefore, the preservation of this faith requires that no local churches can ever change the Creeds or the early organization of the universal Church, as they reveal the fundamental identity of the early undivided catholic Church. They may, however, only adapt some of the rites, ceremonies or disciplinary matters to the needs and specific circumstances of a local congregation, since those are not of the *esse* of that original Church. A certain degree of diversity among the local churches would only enrich the Church in its entirety as long as the principle of collegiality acts as a safeguard of consensus.⁴⁵

Luther, in his own way, presents the catholicity of the Church in terms of universality in the sense of a wide-spread gathering of baptised people in the whole world. He is not very much concerned to make a clear distinction between universal and local, since both are created through the preaching of God's Word. Alongside the Word, the sacraments are to play an important role only inasmuch as they are rooted in Christ and the Holy Spirit.⁴⁶

For Luther the Church expresses itself not in the form of a well-structured community in a particular place, but always in a mysterious, hidden way attested only by the faith and love which come out of the word and sacrament. The organised congregation might be a *church*, but not necessarily *the true Church*; only God can judge whether it is. The congregation remains at the level of a 'nascent' body which is in 'the stage of becoming.' Therefore, Luther considers that the notion of congregation cannot convey the real meaning which the term 'Church' carries with it, many congregations bearing 'little resemblance to the body of Christ.'⁴⁷ Hence, 'since a true belief in Christ may exist in all Christian denominations', the Church can be wherever 'faith and love dwell richly' in it irrespective of apostolic succession, hierarchy, worship, etc. The goal of becoming the true Church must be a permanent preoccupation of every congregation, and it is the task of that particular community to choose both its external and internal forms whereby it manifests its quality of being the Christian Church.⁴⁸

For Reformed theology, the universal Church cannot be

conceived as the sum of its parts. Every local gathering is the catholic Church at a reduced scale in which the one whole Church is made manifest and actualized in the 'local and cultic Churches.' As a consequence of this radical approach to the issue of locality, Reformed theology as illustrated by one of its pre-eminent theologians Karl Barth, would accept neither the existence, nor consequently the unity of a universal Church. For him, the attributes of the Church are those which characterize the local community as a response to the event which is realized by Christ's action. Thus, universality is nothing but 'the plurality of forms in which its (Church's) unity takes place.'⁴⁹

Such excessive localism contrasts with the Roman Catholic understanding of the Church universal. The way in which the papacy was understood in terms of categories of power and supremacy had an inevitable impact upon both the concept of the local Church and its catholicity and that of the universal Church.

The line of Peter's successors in the See of Rome constitute the basis on which each local Church is affirmed as such.

The Pope is responsible for the catholic unity of the whole Church, and by assuring this unity he performs a service for all the particular churches.⁵⁰

The old Christian principle of seeing the bishop as intrinsically related to his diocese, i.e. the local Church, seems to have been kept in the Roman Catholic Church in the case of the Pope, who is the bishop of Rome. '*Episcopus in ecclesia, ecclesia in episcopo*' refers precisely to that position which the local leader of the Church catholic ought to occupy in relation to his specific community.

At the same time, however, in the Pope's case, the legitimate position which he enjoys as the bishop of the Roman See is accompanied by his place as the centre of catholic unity and the supreme leader of the Church. That puts him and the local Church of Rome over which he presides both at the centre of, and above, the universal Church - and of all the heads of the local communities 'as inheritor, disciple and guardian of the unity and catholicity whose centre and source they (St Peter and St Paul) themselves

fixed here for ever.'⁵¹

IV.3. The Local Church and the Catholicity of the Eucharist

If the image of the eucharistic community as *the same* as the whole Church is borne in mind, then the whole issue of the relationship between the 'one catholic Church in the world' and the 'catholic Churches' as they exist in different local places will be clearly defined. That relationship is to be conceived in terms of the completeness and wholeness of the local Church and also in terms of a catholicity and unity in *identity*. In the eucharistic assembly, a local Church *is* identical with the One Catholic Church of Christ. Therefore, any reference to acatholicity and '*unity in collectivity*' should be replaced by a vision which takes into consideration a catholicity and '*unity in identity*.'

It is not in adding together the local communities that the whole community which constitutes the Church is born,⁵² but each community, however small, represents the whole Church.

In such a view, one can safely affirm that although local, the eucharistic community is at the same time a catholic presence, a '*catholic local Church*.' The paradoxical way in which an eucharistic community is both simultaneously local and catholic will therefore overcome any apparent conflict between local and universal existence. Hence, one can rightly 'apply the term "catholic" both to the local and the universal realms at the same time.'⁵³ It can be therefore said that the eucharistic community is a '*concretization and localisation of the general*' in the sense of being the concrete actualization of the whole.⁵⁴

But what ultimately makes an eucharistic local community the Church catholic is nothing like a superimposed structure. It is the *whole Christ* who gives to the Church catholic that quality. Christ makes the Church catholic truly present in and essentially constituent of each eucharistic community, for the *same Christ* is shared in each Eucharist which is locally offered. Such a fundamental Christological characteristic of the local Church will

very much shift the point of convergence from a 'geographically universal organic entity of which local communities are only parts' to the ultimate presence of Christ within a local community.⁵⁵

In such circumstances, every manifestation of an eucharistic community must always be *local* and should always retain a certain priority over a universalistic understanding of the catholicity of the Church. The priority given to the local community in its connection to the universal Church should be seen primarily in the light of the close relationship which exists between the Christological and the Pneumatological aspects as stated in Orthodox ecclesiology. That eventually brings about an essential dimension into the Church's concrete manifestation as a locality in the perspective of the wider reality of the Church universal, for the *same Christ* and the *same Spirit* dwell both in a locality as well as at the universal level. The two fundamental aspects of Orthodox ecclesiology - Christology and Pneumatology - are to be seen in their '*simultaneity* and mutual *interpenetration*' so that an overall view of the catholicity of the local eucharistic community and of the institutions of the Church will be properly understood.⁵⁶

That is why, in the end, the local Church is, as it were, 'the only form of ecclesial existence', which can be ultimately called Church. Any other structure or form of polity and agency of the Church which aims at manifesting a universal Church is ultimately a way of establishing '*a network of communion of Churches, not a new form of Church.*'⁵⁷

However, the one Church in the world should not be denied. What the emphasis on the local eucharistic community is to show only indicates the right way to arrive at the most suitable conclusion in terms of a universal ecclesial communion. Thus, the concrete local Church is the ultimate basis of any universal ecclesial communion. 'All forms of ministry of universal ecclesial communion should have some local church as its basis.'⁵⁸ And on the account of these, the stress should definitely rest on the locality as far as the catholicity of the Church is concerned, while universality is not to be entirely denied.



IV.4. Local versus Universal: A False Dichotomy

Nevertheless, no local Church should stay by itself. In the Orthodox ecclesiology, the unity or the catholicity of a local community cannot be understood except as it stays in close relationship with other local communities. That would eventually bring about the realization of the one Church for 'communion and oneness coincide in ecclesiology.'⁵⁹

In the same sense, there is no local church which can be conceived as Church without being open to communicate itself to the rest of the churches. Such an understanding firmly rejects any form of schism between two or more local communities. The 'close touch' which exists between various local Churches with one another enables them to keep full communion among themselves 'based essentially on the unity of faith.'⁶⁰

In that respect, for Orthodox, there is a sense in which what concerns a local church must be the object of concern for the rest of the churches. Prayer and concrete action are therefore required from any local church for those in need. By so doing, each local community manifests itself as a real Church catholic through its preoccupation for the well-being of other similar communities, with which it stays in close relationship of mutual *diakonia*.

In order to safeguard the catholic character of the local community, local churches are to find out what is the best way of preserving this character without infringing upon the wider relationship which should exist between each of the local catholic community and the catholic Church which is present in the world. That is precisely because any 'super-local structure', that is to say an external structure which is imposed upon the local community would inevitably result in a distorted understanding of the whole meaning of the catholic local Church.⁶¹

At the same time, the danger of cutting itself off from the rest of the local communities would necessarily effect a breakdown of the state of communion which characterizes the Church catholic as a whole. In order to sort out the dilemma between local and universal, the Church put forward the concept of the *council* which

started in the early Church as a conciliar body and eventually became, for the Orthodox Church, one of the basic principles of the Church catholic both in its local and universal manifestation. In this sense, St Ignatius of Antioch says that by coming together in the councils 'the bishops who are in the extremes of the earth are in the mind of Christ', thus relating through them local communities across geographical extension.⁶²

Orthodox theology understands the Church catholic in the world as a 'conciliar fellowship of local Churches' which are in a close unity. By possessing the fullness of catholicity and witnessing to the same apostolic faith, each of the local Churches 'recognizes the others as belonging to the same Church of Christ and guided by the same Spirit.'⁶³

In spite of possible differences which may exist in certain local forms of the Church, for the Orthodox ultimately to be truly universal in its content, the Church catholic should remain the same in all localities. However, if this essential requirement of the very nature of the Church - which is the *sameness in the faith* - is not fulfilled, then conciliarity could remain nothing but 'a simple attribute of the Church, a kind of weakened catholicity, which tends to give way to pluralism.'⁶⁴

As a consequence of the above considerations, one needs to acknowledge the fact that ultimately no locality is to be seen as having exclusive rights over against universality. Should that happen, it would inevitably lead to a certain type of 'congregationalism' which will fall short of revealing the true meaning which the local community needs to convey in its relationship with other communities within the universal Church.

On the contrary, the eucharistically-orientated community - which is the most local expression of the catholic Church - seems to be able to reveal the existence of both local and universal dimensions *simultaneously*. In the end this would be the result of a properly realized synthesis between Christology and Pneumatology in a genuine ecclesiology. That is so because there is only one Eucharist in which the *One Christ* is present and shared in the 'one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church' through the work of the Holy Spirit in each locality which together form the Church

catholic at the universal level. That kind of understanding would necessarily lead to the rejection of any presupposed dichotomy between local and universal.

Conceived in such terms, Church's catholicity and locality are not overlapping each other, but rather the former is 'an indispensable aspect of the local Church, the ultimate criterion of ecclesiality for any local body.'⁶⁵

At the same time, it is in this context that in the local Church, through the power of the eucharistic communion, varieties and particularities, be they natural, social or whatever, are overcome. That is precisely because the fundamental feature which lies at the very heart of the Eucharist is the necessity to reveal the Church as the Body of the One (Christ) who sums up *all* into Himself. The transcendence of any kind of division is realized only in the eucharistic communal context. Even the transcendence of all divisions which exist among the members of the Church at a universal level may only take place through the mediation of the local Church; no universalistic structure can ever fulfill that task. That is so because before communities can share in the same faith and recognize each other as part of the same catholic Church at a wider level, individuals, in their localities, need to overcome their differences and reciprocally regard one another as part of the same locality in order to come together around the same Table and share the same Christ in the Holy Spirit.

Of course, a locality need not mean only the concrete local church - the congregation or parish. It may also indicate wider units such as a region (e.g. the Church at Philippi) or even a nation (the Church of Greece), which are set in a specific locale. But the ultimate expression of catholicity is that in the local eucharistical gathering - as the epitome of the catholic Church - which in relation with other similar communities can form wider catholic communities, be they regional, national or indeed universal.

As long as the relationship between local and universal is seen in such terms an overall vision of the Church catholic will reveal its complexity and yet its comprehensiveness.

In terms of numerical quantity, Luther conceives of the

Church, as seen in her real perspective, as always being a gathering of a small number of adherents, which survives in the midst of a large mass of nominal Christians or even enemies. Yet, the identity of those 'real members' of the Church remains unrevealed to the rest, being known only to God. This view, although it focuses on a small group of believers, nevertheless does not concern itself with giving any preponderance to the local community as such.

As far as authority within the whole Body of Christ is concerned, it belongs to the universal Church, which only possesses the inerrancy in teaching the Word of God, while the particular, that is to say the local church, can be rebuked by the universal Church for anything which it is not in accordance with its teaching or practice.⁶⁶

According to Reformed theology, in the New Testament teaching (Acts 16:15; Rom 16:4,16; 1 Cor 7:18) '*ecclesia*' is often the name given to the local congregation. However, that does not mean that that particular community is a 'sub-department' of the catholic Church, but 'manifests and represents it.'⁶⁷ The local community has necessarily to be in relation with other local communities for falling short of this relation would mean a separation and a sectarian attitude, and that would have the result of denying its very affiliation to the catholic Church.

As already suggested, in the Roman Catholic theology the bishop and the presbyter as the representative of the former are the 'guardians' of the community. They have the task 'to keep the local communion "open" to the other eucharistic communions the world over; and the bishops in their collegiate unity, of which the bishop of Rome is the centre and head, are the seat of supreme authority in the universal Church.'⁶⁸

This view is the result of the concept of *universalis ante particularis* so common in the Roman Catholic theology ever since St Augustine. According to it, not only is 'the universal organism of the Church, as a whole, ontologically *anterior* to its different parts', but also 'it is only *in* and *through* the "whole" that the "parts" are united to the Church.'⁶⁹ It follows that, in presenting the Church as a universal organism within which the local Churches

are integrated as parts of a *whole*, universalism replaces the catholicity of the Church.

The fatal defect of Roman Catholic ecclesiology, from this point of view, is that this organic character of the Local Church as the basis of unity has been transferred to the Church Universal, which has become in fact *one enormous Local Church*, requiring, consequently and naturally, a single⁷⁰ bishop as a focus and a source of the fullness of the Church.

Vatican II presented the Pope as the supreme possessor of authority both for the episcopal college and for the catholic Church at large. This issue of papal primacy appears in the discussions of Vatican II accompanied by other ecclesiological topics such as: the relative autonomy of the local churches, the *communio* concept of the universal Church, and the collegiality of the bishops as agents of communion. In that context, the pope is seen as 'the *centrum unitatis*'⁷¹ around whom all the local communities with their respective heads gravitate and find their point of convergence.

One might conclude, therefore, that in its case, the Anglican Communion is representative of a sort of thinking which focuses on locality and nationality as the concrete manifestation of the Church catholic. This is favored by its double function as a church for a specific people and also with its task of being part of the universal Church. Its structured presence proves the existence both in England and the world over of the one historical and continuous visible Church of Christ.⁷²

In that respect, the bishop is the one who has responsibility over the issues which concern the community. At a more local level, the parish priest ought to take that responsibility, that is to proclaim the Gospel and order the corporate life of the Church, through the means of the Book of Common Prayer. By doing that, the local community is related to a wider community at a universal level and is an instrument by which catholicity is expressed in a particular place.

In practical terms, the relationship between the Anglican Communion and the Church catholic is best expressed as a unity in

diversity. One locality, even different in its form from another locality, could be recognized as being part of the same Church. In fact, this way of approaching the issue of unity and catholicity at a local level is seen by many as a prototype for a future visible manifestation of Christianity. Yet, it remains to be seen whether this sort of unity and catholicity can be viable and workable at a universal level, where though different in theory those communities can be one in practice.

Luther speaks of the catholicity of the Church only in terms of universality and thereby neglects any particular manifestation of catholicity. The local Church is not, in Luther's view, a community which preserves the true marks and characteristics of the universal Church. For him, both the wide Church as well as the local Church are a group of people hearing and recognizing the word of God. Hence, the concept of the Church's catholicity is transposed into a notion of the universal word of justification. Since the presence of Christ occurs through the proclamation and the acceptance of the word of justification, this word will not be able to form a community, but only to achieve an individual justification. That is the consequence of the way he understands how Christ is present in the local community and how He works for the building up of that community.

As far as the relationship between local and universal is concerned, it implies a notion of likeness between different localities, in which the same word is preached and accepted in a like manner. Thus, Luther presents a *performed* form of the catholicity of the universal Church, rather than a natural one: different localities are linked together in order to constitute a catholic Church by means of the performance of the same acts.

The understanding of the locality and the universality of the Church as professed by the Reformed theology, apart from the extreme 'localism' of the Congregationalists, might seem to be acceptable, being based on the evaluation of the relationship which exists between the two aspects of Church's catholicity: locality and universality. The question remains, however, whether the issue of the exact relationship between local and universal dimensions of the Church is fully addressed. Not all the necessary ecclesiastical

elements are sufficiently developed both in Reformed theology and practice for centralism not to be replaced either by excessive localism or simplistic theological concepts.

Efforts were made lately, however, to put that relationship in a more precise context. That came out of the need for a desired future unity of all national and local Christian communities. The local church is seen to be the key for that unity for by coming together in 'locally recognizable forms of the universal Church' could mean expressing locally 'the wholeness of the catholic Church.'⁷³

On its part, in presenting the papal See as the one which represents the needed and the necessary point of reference for all the local churches, the Roman Catholic theology seems to create great problems with regard to the relationship between the local and universal Church.

The local Church and its bishop cannot express themselves fully and authentically because of a dependence to (and not a interdependence with) another local Church and bishop - Rome - and therefore their role and importance within the catholic Church is very much diminished. By making the Pope responsible for the catholic unity of the whole Church and by asking him to assure this unity by performing a service for all the local churches, a big gap is being created between the Pope and the rest of the bishops.

Moreover, the catholicity of the local churches other than Rome suffers also a major drawback in the way it is conceived, for there can be no full expression of catholicity that which relies essentially on another 'catholic point' of reference.⁷⁴

The concept of collegiality, as it is presented in Vatican II, is in fact a collegial mode of papacy which requires of the Pope to be in a central position in relationship with the whole body of bishops. Such a collegiality 'takes account of the unique position of the Pope as head, and accords to him powers that the other bishops do not have.'⁷⁵ This is a highly questionable kind of collegiality, one in which not all the people share the same privileges.

In fact, even some of the Roman Catholic theologians are cautious when speaking of 'the universal responsibility of the

Pope' which 'does not reduplicate that of the local bishops.' At the same time, however, it is commonly acknowledged that 'there will often be problems about where to draw a line' between the sharing of that responsibility.⁷⁶

This type of a 'centralized locality' based on papal authority has created a lot of problems inside the Roman Catholic Church in more recent times. One of the significant examples in that connection is the 'Liberation Theology' of Latin America. There, the local issues grew in very specific circumstances and had to be analyzed according to those particular conditions;⁷⁷ and they do not always fit into a traditional pattern.

All in all, catholicity as seen from the perspective of the local and the universal dimensions of the Church reflects a wide spectrum of views. It ranges from the extreme localism of Congregationalism and the more moderate vision of the Reformed theology; it follows with the focus on locality as seen in the Anglican Communion and to some extent in the Orthodox Church, a locality which does not lose touch with the wider community; it continues with the Roman Catholicism, where locality finds itself expressed in the universal dimension of the Church catholic as 'guaranteed' by the papal See; and, finally, it finishes with Luther for whom catholicity in its universal dimension is realized through the likeness of those acts performed in different localities. The ecumenical movement has also been preoccupied with having to define what the local Church and the universal Church do mean in the present ecumenical context. The most difficult part seems to have been how to accommodate various understandings of the terms 'local' and 'universal' Church within a framework which would be acceptable to all.⁷⁸

Some of these views contain valuable insights, but because of their one-sidedness they present only partial aspects and not a comprehensive understanding of the locality and the universality of the Church from the perspective of catholicity.

V. Polity, Agency and Church Catholicity.
The Ecclesiastical Structures
and their Significance for the Catholicity of the Church.

In conceiving the Church as a sacramental community of the Spirit which manifests the presence of Christ here and now as a foretaste of the Kingdom, one should not lose sight of the 'institutional' side of ecclesiology. Canon law, ecclesiastical structure, the Apostolic Succession and the concept of conciliarity play important roles in the way the idea of the Church as such and particularly the Church's catholicity are to be understood.

Even when there is a tendency to present a more spiritual perspective of the Church, nevertheless attention should also be given to the concrete visible dimension of the Church's nature and function. However, with the visible, institutionalized structure, a spiritual connotation has to be considered so that, ultimately, the structure is fully understood in the context of the spiritual dimension. And both need to be seen in terms of eschatological fulfilment.

V.1. Canon Law and its Relation to Catholicity.

The Orthodox Church seems to lack the enthusiasm to promulgate an exhaustive canon law, as the Roman Catholic Church did for instance. That attitude was motivated by the fact that, according to the Orthodox view, the fullness of divine truth and life which abides in the Church can never be completely and adequately contained in a juridical system. That living reality is made known to Christians only by experience.¹ Any such attempts were sporadic and isolated (e.g. the Byzantine *Nomocanon*), and were mainly meant

to systematize some rules which were seen as necessary in order to give answers to some of the particular problems which occurred in its history.

Therefore, when such problems did arise, the task and the power to promulgate rules (canons) were given to the Councils as the supreme authority in terms of ecclesiastical matters. In that way, whatever was promulgated was part of an ecclesiastical process and not something new, but responding to 'the need to have all decisions "received" by all the Churches'.² Hence, since the canons were promulgated by Councils (catholic bodies), they played an important role in the way the concept of the Church's catholicity has been construed. Because their role was conceived in such a way, they respond to different historical circumstances remaining however within the limits accepted by the Church as a whole.³ Particular problems and factors created the need for formulations, which nevertheless corresponded to the patterns universally accepted by the Church catholic.

V.1.1. The Relative Importance of the Canon Law.

It has to be stressed that the canons are to be seen as subordinate to a more essential reality, that reality which is the divine nature of the Church as sacramentally and doctrinally expressed. Hence, the role played by canonical law in the life of the Church is a limited one (cf. Gal 2:21). 'In her sacramental, mysterious being the Church surpasses all canonical norms'.⁴ This placing of canon law is very clear from the fact that one can apply the principle of 'economy' to them. In certain circumstances it is possible to infringe the rules 'when this (the principle of economy) serves the common good without modifying the rules themselves'.⁵ In that kind of exemption the rule is only suspended for a limited period and under certain circumstances.

During its long history, Orthodoxy has passed through various changes in the shaping of its ecclesiastical administration. Once again, this is because of the provisional structure of the Church in this world, which only prepares for the fulfilment of the *eschaton*.⁶

Although not with the same features, as for example the Roman *Corpus juris canonici*, canon law is still important in as much as it reflects the identity of the organized community to itself and also to other communities 'which are equally faithful to the apostolic message'.⁷

By comparison, the Roman Catholic Church has always been associated with that type of community which is firmly and primarily a well structured body and which relies on the authority that those structural elements provide.

First of all, it must be stressed that there is an almost omnipresent link, between the visible elements which are part of the Roman Church and the aspect of the authority which the pyramidal hierarchy enjoys, especially in the person of the pope. This power has been institutionalized in the pattern of canon law, which has formulated the type of law proper to the Roman legislation. With Constantine and later with Theodosius, the *ecclesia catholica* was recognized as the only lawful national religion. The imperative for every Roman citizen was to be at the same time a 'catholic' Christian, that is to follow and obey that belief which was presented as the one which accords with the law of the Empire. Heresy and paganism were regarded as political crimes; 'catholicity' was equated with 'orthodoxy' and the imperial law was the safeguard for that.

The same position was maintained in Justinian's *Codex Juris Romani* and on these premises the future *Codex Juris Canonici* was elaborated. The Roman law became the model for the affirmation of the later doctrine and practice of a Roman papacy by divine right. 'This Roman law and practice led, via some stagnation and some reverses, to the establishment of a unified Church, organized strictly along juridical lines and having a monarchical universal episcopate'.⁸ In such circumstances, the Church came to be under the unique direction of the pope's authority. This authority, following the sort of rules which form the law in the secular realm, resulted in a fundamentally legalistic approach to religious matters, understood in purely juridical terms. The move has begun in the 9th century and it continued through the crisis of 1054, up to this day, but the roots are to be found in the ancient Roman

law. Of course, such a centralized power was meant to maintain the unity of the Church and its faith, but at the same time, it had an impact on the socio-political sphere which cannot be underestimated.

In its case, pre-Reformation England was dominated, as one would have expected, by the highly elaborate medieval West-European canon law known as *Corpus Juris Canonici*. It was normal for the people of this country to follow Western Christendom in all such features, and the Church in England likewise.

The break with Rome which occurred with Henry VIII brought about a different approach to the problem of canon law. From a canon law orientated to the pope who was its ultimate source, a new type of canon law replaced the pope with the king. Church law as it had been conceived before, became national law or rather 'the king's ecclesiastical law'.⁹

As far as the Church's legislative authority was concerned, the Anglican Communion tried to keep a pattern proper to the primitive Church. Each diocese was to recognize the bishop's authority, as exercised with both clergy and laity, while, at a wider level, the bishops exercised their authority in the consensus of the national and provincial councils. The content of canon law was also meant to reflect the faith and morals present in the Scriptures and in the teaching of the Fathers¹⁰ thus retaining a definite connection with the Church catholic of all ages.

In the process of exercising whatever the content of the canon law stipulates, however, there is a difference to be drawn between the divine and immutable and the ecclesiastical and mutable one. The only major problem in that respect is in drawing the line between them and thus establishing which law is changeable and which is not.¹¹

Mutable or immutable, the canon law has a 'catholic' dimension as representing a common heritage of the Church throughout history. Thus, while the immutable part of canon law requires that it 'should at all times express the common mind of the Church of any time and place', the mutable part, understood in the same terms, allows certain variations 'from age to age or place to place'.¹²

V.1.2. Canon Law between Minimization and Dismissal.

The Reformation's main goal was that of restoring the Church of the beginnings of Christianity, which it was claimed had been lost through the ages, mainly due to a false 'polity' which had been provided, especially by an over-structured and hierarchical papal church. Luther reacted against this way of conceiving the nature and function of the Church, as understood in terms of the opposition between structure and spirit,¹³ for in Luther's view the two cannot be reconciled with one another, because they express two opposite realms.

First of all, Luther saw the problem of canon law as a means through which Church's order is kept. One is aware, however, of a certain degree of inconsistency in Luther's approach to the problem of canon law. His attitude towards canon law varies from a position which is very critical to a more moderate, thoughtful one.

For Luther, canon law has an evil inspiration, being written in an un-Christian opposition to Christ 'by the inspiration of the evil spirit' and therefore it is against Christ's teaching.¹⁴ Such traditions are un-Christian for they often do not refer to Christ and his calling.¹⁵ A more extreme position taken by the left wing of the Reformation asked for the rejection of both civil law and canon law as illegitimate in comparison to the divine law.¹⁶

Luther asked for the abolition of all human laws (this does not refer to civil law, but to ecclesiastical law) and, at the same time, for the restoration of the 'gospel of liberty' by which everything is to be measured; love remains the only standard, and needs no laws whatsoever.¹⁷ Furthermore, Luther denies to the law as such the capacity to accomplish its ends, though elsewhere he seems to value the canon law and defends himself from the accusation of breaking down the 'good ordinances' and 'Church discipline' instituted by the Fathers of the Church.¹⁸

However, this did not prevent Luther from being critical about the tendency of the Roman Church to equate spirit with structure, for such a mistake would inevitably bring about the identification of Church law with divine law and thus overrate the human element and underestimate the divine one.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the necessity of

a canon law is not to be denied by a misunderstood 'Christian liberty', for it is through these regulations that the Church keeps itself in good order.²⁰ Yet, there are limits where this canon law ceases to function, as for example in the case of justification.

Therefore, Luther considers that he and his fellow men are more faithful to the canons than those who erroneously label them as detractors of Church discipline and ordinances.²¹ In the struggle for the affirmation of a real expression of the Church's nature, which had been lost in the Roman institutionalized type of Church, the Reformation tried to reformulate the Church's inner structure in spiritual terms, and consequently to minimize the manifestation of the Church's catholicity in its institutional and juridical characteristics.

The extrinsic form of the universal Church, with the task of preserving and manifesting its spiritual and catholic nature as a divine institution (*de jure divino*), as defined in an external framework of canon law, was to be replaced by the intrinsic wholeness of the Church in Christ. In facing disunity in the empirical realm, the Church ought to complete its integrity as a perfect society (*societas perfecta*) with a 'powerfully renewed vision of the coming universal community or *oikoumene* as the eschatological and teleological reality of the catholic Church'.²²

The motivation for this extreme attitude goes back to the dualism found in the social and legal structure of the medieval society which was transferred into the religious life, that 'axiomatic dualism between the realm of intelligible (*κόσμος νοητός*) and the realm of the sensible (*κόσμος αἰσθητός*)'.²³ In religious terms the wholeness of the Judeo-Christian tradition was split up into a dualism of visible and invisible, outward and inward spheres of experience 'which then needed to be coordinated through a system of sacramental causal connections', and 'through a system of hierarchical structures and constitutional authorities'.²⁴ Hence, the medieval Church tended to accept the structures of the existing order as a means of expressing its catholicity in an official and public form as a universal religion, 'an organized and juridically structured society endowed with ecumenical authority and supreme jurisdiction'.²⁵

For traditional Reformed theology and some modern theologians, law is to be understood only in terms of Jesus Christ, and ecclesiological principles exist in order to represent the means for keeping order inside the Church. A community which does not take into account law and order is condemned to caprice and confusion, which can be at least as bad as 'juridification and bureaucratisation'.²⁶

For others, since the true Church (*ekklesia*) is never conceived as an institution but merely as a 'fellowship with one another on the basis of fellowship with God',²⁷ there is no serious concern for order and law in the life of the Church. The only external, visible community which needs to be ordered by laws is the 'social' church, which is something different from the *ekklesia* of faith, an '*externum subsidium fidei*' reckoned as being 'the (only) true visible Church'.²⁸

A difficulty arises, however, in trying to establish the limits of this visible Church vis-a-vis the invisible *ekklesia*. This led some to the conclusion that the law is only a feature of the institutional form (the visible Church) while the *ekklesia* (the spiritual brotherhood) remains free from any institutionalized character.²⁹

Still others, such as Karl Barth, consider the law strictly in 'spiritual' terms, although it refers to concrete ecclesiastical forms. The law 'is to be sought and found and established and administered in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ'.³⁰ The features of this type of canon law are therefore as follows: 'character and intention of a law of service', a 'total determination' and finally this law of service is 'universal'.

In the life of the Christian community each individual has his own necessary place, and the service³¹ of each individual is indispensable to that of the whole.

These show that canon law could be the affirmation in concrete terms of the Church's catholicity and thus a necessary characteristic in the building up of the Church as a visible community in the world.³²

V.2. Ordination and Church's Catholicity.

V.2.1. Ordained Ministry, General Priesthood and the Catholicity of the Church.

In the visible structure of the Church, apart from canon law, there are a number of aspects which have to be presented here.

There is, as in the case of the Orthodox theology, an important focus on the eucharistic communion gathered around the bishop. This image of the local Church as concentrated around the office of the bishop is a common feature in the testimonies of the early Church catholic.³³

Although during the first Christian centuries the use of the term ἐπίσκοπος was somehow unclear,³⁴ one can nevertheless define his primary task inside the eucharistic community: he offers the Eucharist, as the head of the community, on behalf of the people co-celebrating, that is to say co-partaking in it (this was the main task of the episcopate in the beginning).³⁵ In this context, the local eucharistic community is seen as identical with the Church catholic, the former being represented by the person of the bishop as surrounded by the rest of the community, clergy or lay people. As Christ is the focus of the entire Church catholic, in the same manner the bishop is at the centre of the local eucharistic community.³⁶

What makes catholicity to be actualized in both cases is therefore the performance of a priestly office, that is to say the offering of the Eucharist; in the beginning of the Christian Church this was the prerogative of the bishop within the gathering of the community.³⁷ Since the offering could not be effected by the bishop in isolation from the rest of the community, and required to be *in communion with* the community, it follows that the community was an integral part of the act of offering. Hence, the term 'priest' as generally applied to the one who offers the Eucharist should be extended also to the community at large which becomes itself priestly (cf. 1 Peter 2:5,9). The quality of being a 'priest' applies therefore at the same time to the bishop, to the presbyter,

to individual members of that community and to the eucharistic community as a whole, each one of them having a certain role and performing a certain task within the eucharistic assembly.³⁸

In the same sacramental context, the bishop's 'charisma of truth' should be seen not as a personal quality but a confirmation of the centrality of the eucharistic sacramental assembly gathered around the president who is the image (*eikon*) of Christ Himself.³⁹ There is, therefore, a very intimate relationship between the head of the local community (the bishop or the priest) and the community itself so that neither one can exist or fulfil its function without the other.

Therefore, any local community centred around the eucharistic meal is in fact a *catholic local Church*, for the whole Christ is represented in it. This representation is both through the bishop as the head of the community and the laity - the 'baptismal ordained ministry' - as bearers of Christ. They condition each other so deeply that one cannot exist without the other.⁴⁰

The bishop is therefore, on the one hand, the one around whom the local community finds its completion by exercising its 'many other ministries'. On the other hand, through him and through the other heads of other communities (with whom he is intimately connected through the sharing of the same *charisma*) the Church catholic is concretely manifested as a visible institution. In this way, by manifesting both a 'local eucharistic catholicity' as well as a 'wider eucharistic catholicity', the bishop and the bishops become the focus in which 'all charismatic manifestations of the Church must pass, so that they may be manifestations not of individualism but of the *koinonia* of the Spirit and of the community created by it'.⁴¹

The catholic character of the entire structure of the Church is also reflected in the fact that ordination is performed only inside the eucharistic gathering and it is limited to the person of the bishop (as the only one who ordain) who acts '*not as an individual but as the head of this eucharistic community*'. He cannot ordain outside this community for his task is 'to make the catholicity of the Church reveal itself in a certain place'.

[In its bishop] every particular or local Church is included in the catholic fullness of the Church, is linked with the past and with all ages. In its bishop every single Church outgrows and transcends its own limits and is organically united with the others.⁴²

At the same time, this system of relations inside the eucharistic community can be applied in a much wider context. Each eucharistic community is, by virtue of being understood as a *koinonia*, an interdependence of ministries, related to other eucharistic communities in the world. Hence, an 'episcopal conciliarity' is established between different eucharistic communities.⁴³ In this collegial system, there is always one who is the head. In him the Church manifests itself as an institutional unity.

At the same time, the 'one' bishop is in close interdependence with the 'many' bishops from various local Churches, in a wider context.⁴⁴ Through the ordained ministry, each ecclesial community is related to other ecclesial communities in the world at large and also, more than that, '*to the other communities that exist or have existed in the world*'. In this respect, the Church is catholic 'not only on the level of "here and now" but also on that of "everywhere and always"'.⁴⁵ Hence, in any recognition of a ministry by another ministry of another community, '*a recognition of communities*' is implied since in fact it is '*the entire structure of the community*' which is ultimately involved in that recognition.⁴⁶

V.2.2 'One' and 'Many' within the Church Catholic.

While the head of the community and the community itself are united in offering the sacrificed Lord on the altar, one should not lose sight of the particularities which each one of them bears and the distinctness which each of them retains. In this sense, although one, the local eucharistic community possesses a multiplicity of elements since the 'one' (the bishop) stays side by side with the 'many' who are the other ministries, including the

laity.⁴⁷

The task of the bishop inside the eucharistic community was in the beginning that of leading that community as its head, and was not too much related to the preservation and the propagation of the truth itself. In the first three Christian centuries those who were entrusted with the teaching of the people were the presbyters. From the middle of the second century onwards, the bishops became more and more involved in the didactic aspect of the ministry. They were seen more as 'spokesmen' of the communities by virtue of being the successors of the Apostles.⁴⁸ By taking up this primatial role, the bishops remained the symbol of the unity and harmony of the eucharistic community, as 'presidents' of that gathering (προιστάμενοι - 1 Thess 5:12; 1 Tim 3:4-5, 5:17).

By comparison, the relationship between the minister as 'the one' and the community as 'the many' is, for Reformed theology, one of representation 'so that the whole Church is *represented* in his (minister) person'. The minister is 'set apart' within the community in order to act as someone who represents it in the context of the one and catholic Body of Christ. At the same time, those who ordain him act on behalf of the catholic Church of Christ.⁴⁹

From the early times of the Church the bishop was seen as the leader of each local community surrounded by a college of presbyters with the task of teaching, preaching and leading the flock. In Reformed view, the later development of the regional bishopric office brought about a change in this kind of ministerial office and significantly affected the meaning of personal and collegial responsibilities inside the community.⁵⁰

As stated before, however, for the Orthodox, the existence of the 'one' is intimately related to that of the 'many'. One cannot exist without the other and this interdependence is ultimately expressed in the manifestation of the Church as a *communion*. So, at the same time, the unity of the Church presupposes the existence of a Church *communion* while also communion implies the oneness of the Church.

In the same sense, one may say that 'the institution which expresses this communion must be accompanied by an indication that

there is a ministry safeguarding the oneness which the communion aims at expressing'.⁵¹ Moreover, by making ordination to bishop (in fact every ordination) part of the eucharistic communion, the 'seal of the Holy Spirit' which is bestowed upon the candidates to ordination can only be received in the context of the receiver's unceasing relationship to the community.⁵²

It is precisely the recognition of each member of the community as an 'ordained' person which makes possible the establishment of a system of relationships which further qualifies the eucharistic community. In this respect, an ordained person to the ministry becomes 'relational (= a place *in* the community)'. However, the *specificity* of this membership of the community is to be retained so that there will be '*no confusion of orders*'.⁵³

As a consequence of this understanding, there can be no ordained person outside the community since isolated from it that person ceases to be ordained. In this respect, the community conditions the ministry by giving its approval in every action in which the minister is involved.⁵⁴ Hence, in the *koinonia* of the Spirit, a certain ministry is 'validated' only inside the community in which that ministry operates, thereby illustrating the sort of interconnectness proper to Church catholicity.

For that matter, it is only the entire Church, that is the Church catholic, which is infallible and not just parts of it, which indeed could err.⁵⁵

There is no notion of the Church catholic other than *in terms of ministry*, that is to say apart from the *χαρίσματα* of the Holy Spirit which give to each one of the members of the Body his or her membership (cf. 1 Cor 12). The ministry conveys a relational connotation by the fact that it operates through the power of the *χαρίσματα* of the Spirit, which are by their very nature ways of realizing communion between various ministries. Otherwise, the ministry fails to manifest both the *koinonia* and the *diakonia* of the Spirit.⁵⁶

The Church as a *relational* reality has to reflect here and now the mystery of love which is the most expressive image of the very life within the Holy Trinity. At the same time, the ministry becomes the milieu through which the Church, mankind and the entire

creation are brought together into the redemptive acts of Christ.⁵⁷ Thus, any hierarchical structure of the Church is to be seen from the perspective of the hierarchy which exists in the Holy Trinity itself, that is precisely by a '*specificity of relationship*'. It is in this perspective that the ministry has in itself various degrees of honor and authority, as illustrated in the Trinitarian model of St Gregory the Theologian.⁵⁸ However, any classification of the ministry should be carefully considered, especially by resisting any attempt to objectify the office and the institution of the ministry.⁵⁹

V.2.3. Ministerial Ordination and Membership in the Catholic Church.

Ordination produces in the ordained person a deep ontological change since that person becomes a *relational entity* beyond his individuality. The individual is transformed into a *person*, 'an *ek-static* being, that can be looked upon not from the angle of his "limits" but of his *overcoming his "selfhood"* and becoming a related being'.⁶⁰ To achieve such status, the newly ordained person acts in terms of love (cf. 1 Cor 13) which activates his need to receive for himself the grace of the ordination since he himself is a member of the community. The whole being of that person is, thus, 'transfigured' (μεταμόρφωσις),⁶¹ and he activates the grace he receives through his participation in the eucharistic community.⁶²

In these terms, in the Orthodox view, the only acceptable approach to the nature of ordination should be that from the point of view of *theosis* which 'implies no "natural" change although it affects man in his being'.⁶³ From this perspective, one may speak of the ordination to the ministry as a particular manifestation of the Christological movement which exists between the Creator and the creation, a movement in terms of a 'cosmic liturgy', as St Maxim the Confessor sees it.⁶⁴

In all that has been said up to now one has always to bear in mind that in the end there is only Christ's ministry to which every other ministry refers. In this sense, no ministry can be seen as being *parallel* to Christ's ministry; it has to be conceived as

identical with it.⁶⁵ This identity between Christ's ministry and, for instance, the ministry of the bishop is fundamentally conceived in terms of offering as mediated by the Holy Spirit. Christ is at the same time the One who is offered, the One who receives and also the One who offers, as the prayer before the 'Great Entrance' from the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom asserts: 'Thou art the offerer and the offered, the acceptor and the distributed, Christ our Lord'. And it is in this respect that Christology has to be substantiated by a relevant Pneumatology,⁶⁶ for it is the Spirit who imparted the *χαρίσματα* to those who accepted and confessed Christ and thereby constituting the Body of Christ *here and now* 'by realizing Christ's ministry as the Church ministry'.⁶⁷

In such a context, once again the inextricable relationship which exists between ministry and community is revealed. The ordained minister acts not on behalf of the community (for that would mean to be outside it, acting in its place). His work in the community should be rather understood as '*representation by participation*'.⁶⁸ The minister therefore exercises his authority, which is Christ's authority, within the Church, and not upon it.

In this sense, one may say that ordained ministers are acting not only '*in persona ecclesiae*' but ultimately '*in persona Christi*', as representatives of Christ Himself and not of the believers.⁶⁹

By its very meaning, ordination creates orders, which are distinctive and specific, and thus indispensable to each other. The order of laity (by virtue of baptismal ordination) is that which 'is gathered from the world to realize in the community of the Church, the eschatological salvation of the world in Christ'.⁷⁰

At the same time, deacons will play a very significant role in creating the 'bridge' between laity and the head of the eucharistic community. If in the New Testament and post-New Testament times they were charged mainly with material duties, starting with the Patristic age, they began performing liturgical functions, including bringing the gifts and petitions of the faithful to the altar. In the end, those gifts will be brought back to the world (as Holy Communion), 'as a sign of the new creation which is realized in the communion with God's life'.⁷¹

In the same terms, the presbyters will signify the '*synedrion* of the community', for as a celebrant of the Eucharist he secures 'the universal and catholic unity of the whole Church in space and time'.⁷² For that matter, the bishop portrays in himself the head of the community, in whom all are united and in whom, at the same time, his community is related to other communities both temporal and spatial.

V.2.4. Catholicity and Sociality.

Roman Catholic theology conceived of the Church as a society, which presents itself as a body having a well organized structure and a leading government. This institutional view of the Church, which is revealed by its visible structures, mainly underlines the rights and powers of its offices. By virtue of those rights and powers, the governing body or hierarchy identifies itself with the Church in its threefold functions: teaching, sanctifying, and governing. Therefore, the Church is by all means under the authority of the hierarchy and receives the characteristics of a highly institutional, hierarchical body. Hence, the Church is not conceived of as a democratic or representative community, but as one in which the entire power is concentrated and administered by some to whom God gave it, and not to all.

The Church of Christ is not a community of equals in which all the faithful have the same rights.

Usually, the polity and the agency of the Church have been regarded as necessary features of a society like the Church, and are to be formally recognized by all who adhere to it. In order to find out where the true 'one, holy, catholic, and Apostolic Church' is, one is to be guided by those manifested attributes definitively given to the Church by Christ. This is only possible through the means of a visible, institutional Church. Hence, the Church's unity and catholicity have been seen in terms of the subordination of all the believers to one and the same spiritual jurisdiction and the

same teaching magisterium,⁷⁴ ultimately to the authority of Peter's successors to the Roman See.

Combined with unity, catholicity has to signify the fact that the one Church, which is spread geographically and statistically over the entire world, possesses the same creed, the same worship, and the same system of canonical law. The enormous extension of the Church in the world and the plurality of its members have been of particular importance in highlighting its internal cohesion and discipline. Hence, the inward dimension needs to be expressed outwardly revealing the nature and the manifestation of the true Church of Christ.

What Vatican II brought about was a new and more influential role for the laity in the Church's affairs alongside the ordained hierarchy. The laity's role inside the Church, through the charismatic gifts which are widely diffused among the faithful, is seen as highly useful for the Church as a whole.⁷⁵ There is here a recognition of the contribution that 'non-ordained' Christians (i.e. those not endowed with 'ministerial' authority) could bring to the affirmation of the Church's catholicity in the most concrete sense.

At the same time, one of the most important aspects which Vatican II emphasized, as far as Church's catholicity is concerned, was that of the Roman primacy as the centre of a structured catholic Church. The Council asserted that the Church of Christ, with its attribute of catholicity, 'subsists in' the Catholic Church which preserves communion with 'the successor of Peter', the bishop of Rome.⁷⁶ Therefore, to be outside this communion is to lack some of the means of grace bequeathed by Christ to His Church.⁷⁷

Yet the separated Churches possess elements of the true Church of Christ, and some of these Churches, such as the Anglican and the Orthodox, retain authentic catholic traditions and institutions.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, Vatican II did not call these other denominations 'catholic Churches', a designation which it claimed exclusively for itself.

V.3. Catholicity between the Church's Spiritual Dimension and its Visible Manifestation.

V.3.1. Spiritual versus Visible Structures.

The Reformation Case.

As far as the Church's structure is concerned, Luther presents the Church as a recognizable 'group' which one can 'join'. The Church was for him a real and important presence, a historical reality, as it was also for the Roman Catholic Church. 'The difference between them lies in their respective understandings of the nature and accordingly the visibility of the Church'.⁷⁹

Luther spoke of an 'invisible Church'; for him, the Church of Christ is 'the community of saints (*communio sanctorum*)'.⁸⁰ Therefore, at a certain point in his theology's development, Luther did not seem to have been very much concerned with the institutional character of the Church. He presents the Church in spiritual terms, making it dependent on an inner recognition of those who belong to it. At the same time, however, there are some external marks by which one can recognize and be acquainted with the presence of this Church.⁸¹ The external marks by which one comes to know where this Church is in the world are the Gospel, Baptism, and the sacrament of the altar.⁸²

In speaking about a visible Church, recognized as such by its marks, one must not forget that, at the same time, for Luther, the Church is also invisible, because it is the community of believers. That implies that the Church cannot be discovered but must be believed. Thus, faith is essential in order to understand properly the spiritual extension of the Church.⁸³ *Ecclesia*, looked upon from the perspective of *politia* and *oeconomia*, is bound to have a structure, historical and visible; nevertheless, the true Church is neither visible, nor temporal. A visible, temporal image of the Church would drive it into a 'worldly' shape and would prevent it from fulfilling the task of transcending time and space in the Kingdom of God.⁸⁴ Therefore, one must be very careful not to disregard the space within the visible realm in which the Church can manifest its essentially spiritual nature as 'determined by

union with Christ'.⁸⁵

This way of presenting the relationship between the visible and invisible aspects of the Church favours a congregationalist polity over against an episcopal one. While congregationalism would seem to be too extreme, a presbyterian polity would be acceptable for Luther. Continuity of the Church's structure relies on the priesthood of all believers, 'anointed through Baptism and not on a special anointing made by a bishop'.⁸⁶

Nonetheless, for Luther, the practice of this priestly office by individuals has to be in accordance with the general consent of the community. Hence, there is a general priestly responsibility of all towards everyone.⁸⁷ Continuity in the Church's structure comes through the priesthood of all believers.

In the Reformed tradition, there is always a concern not to allow a sharp distinction between the members of the community to be drawn. Therefore, the word 'office' which refers to the ordained ministry is either to be replaced by that of 'service' as proper to all Christians or to be understood as applying to all the members of the Church. The task of canon law in this context is exactly to make the necessary provisions for that to happen.⁸⁸ This kind of universality and unity of the Church's ministry thus becomes the 'absolute law' which governs the Church, and which needs to be kept at all expense as the *conditio sine qua non* of its life.⁸⁹

For Reformed theology, the Church as a whole and its ministry (universal or 'special') have 'one source in the action of the Father in sending the Son into the world anointed by the Spirit to announce and embody God's blessed reign over all humankind and all creation'.⁹⁰ In this ministry there are some called 'priests' who act by virtue of their 'priestly ministry', and who always refer their ministry to that of 'the priesthood of the whole body' yet are apart from that.

'In company with the whole body', as leaders and examples for the ministry of the others, these priests participate with the entire community 'in the priestly ministry of the risen Christ' performing a special activity by virtue of 'the special calling and equipment given to them in ordination'. This calling is visibly represented by a 'sacramental sign' which consists in praying and

the laying of the hands. The act of ordination, thus, gives to the one upon whom it is performed 'the authority to act representatively for the universal Church in the ways proper to that particular office'.

The one so ordained is called to be a focus of unity for the whole body [as the one with a] special ministry of representation and leadership within the life of the Church both locally and universally.

Yet there is in the Reformed tradition a view according to which a lay person can be given authority by the Church to preside at the Eucharist in certain circumstances. That is in accordance with the idea that 'the presidency of the ordained person does not depend upon his possessing a priesthood which others lack'. Hence the ordained priesthood is only a matter of the Church's good ordering as essential to Church's life,⁹² and does not belong to its very nature.

V.3.2. A *Via Media* between Spiritual and Visible in the Anglican Communion.

The main preoccupation of Anglican theology was its interest in maintaining comprehensiveness and balance, as two truths which are ultimately one. 'Catholicism' and 'evangelicalism' were seen not as two separate things which one can bring together by means of compromise,⁹³ but as two complementary features of the same way of theological thinking.

Hooker provided criteria for recognizing the catholicity of the Church, which is at the same time spiritual and visible: natural law, scriptural law and traditional law. In doing so, Hooker presented Anglicanism as a sort of *via media* between Puritanism and Roman Catholicism, by which a highly inclusive notion of catholicity was affirmed.⁹⁴ Thus, for the first time, Anglicanism presented itself as a *via media* between two systems accused of betraying traditional catholicity: Puritans by

shortfall, Romans by excess. Anglicanism stands in the middle and, thus tries to preserve the catholic faith from all inconsistencies.

By its particular position in Christendom, the Anglican Communion had to look in two directions at the same time: to the heritage of its past, but also to the new kind of understanding Church's teaching which the Reformation brought about. In such circumstances the most suitable alternative to be chosen seemed to have been that of a 'mediating position', '*via media*' as Hooker had put it.⁹⁵

On the one hand, the supporters of traditional Anglo-Catholic thought would stress the importance of a theology based on the recognition of a visible Church, with such well defined features as hierarchy and a rich ceremonial and sacramental life. The accent in this case would be on preserving a *datum* rather than seeking new forms of expressing the Christian truth.

On the other hand, the Protestant thinkers would like to minimize as much as possible the role and the importance of the authority which bishops hold, or which ceremonies and rites bear, and also to conceive of the Church more in spiritual terms than in physical ones.

For some English clergy and laity, the Anglican Church must keep the historical, traditional orders, together with a sacramental life and a kinship with the pre-Reformation Church and also with catholic elements still to be found in the Roman Church. For some others, the Church has to appeal to kinship with the Reformers with their stress on the preaching of the Gospel and on the conversion of the individual. For the latter, the Church's order remained a matter of indifference, as valuable only inasmuch as it is ancient.

It is difficult to hold together all these views in the theology of the same Church. The constructive synthesis proposed by Hooker through his *via media* was meant to bring about the best formula for the understanding of the nature and the manifestation of the Church.

There are two kinds of ecclesiology which are present side by side in Anglican theology and which have to be accommodated to each other. One relies on a visible succession in the Church, with very

well delimited and determined structures. The other one stands for a spiritual unity, based on a proper response of the people to the preached word of God whereby the Church of Christ comes into being. But there is also a third alternative: a mediated one. It tries to combine the above two types, which present two unilateral positions, into a combination without shortcomings or compromises.

From the old structure of the Church Anglican theology retained the episcopate. Yet it has been acknowledged even by some Anglican theologians that 'the English Church did not always perceive the meaning of its own order in its deepest relation to the Gospel and the universal Church'.⁹⁶ The bishops will have the right and duty to take any decision in matters of faith, order or discipline, though the necessity of their co-operation with the laity is affirmed.⁹⁷

Understood in these terms, the bishop is representative and occupies a central place in the Church as far as doctrinal, traditional and liturgical authority are concerned.⁹⁸ These prerogatives result from the fact that ordination, as seen in the Anglican Communion, is the bestowal of a special *charisma* which enables a person to exercise a particular work; it is a *mysterion*. That vindicates the necessity for the existence of the episcopate as a vital part of the Church catholic.⁹⁹

In the same sense, the three-fold order (bishops, priests and deacons) is seen as compulsory if the entire Body of Christ, His Church, is to survive in the dimensions of time and space. Through this order the Gospel is witnessed to the world; and each fellowship receives the status of being one with Christ as the only One who will be 'all in all'.¹⁰⁰

Christ remains the only High Priest and Apostle as the source of the universal episcopate. He acts in His Church through the agency of 'the universal apostolate of the whole Church'.

The duty of those having a special ministry is, among other things, to nurture the whole people of God for the exercise of the royal priesthood that belongs to all. In this sense, special ministry is for the sake of the general ministry. It follows also that bishops and presbyters are not highly privileged persons within the church, but servants of the whole people, with special responsibilities.¹⁰¹

Seen in these terms, the episcopate *is* a 'system', a 'whole *via vitae*' and not 'one isolable element of the Catholic corpus' but the instrument of Christ's mediation.¹⁰² The bishop is, therefore, part of the universal ministry of the Church catholic by partaking of the same *charisma* with other bishops who are in the same position.

V.4. Apostolic Succession and Church's Catholicity. The Quest for Apostolic Continuity through Church Structures.

In aiming at perceiving the whole picture of the Church's catholicity from the point of view of polity and agency, one has to consider the place and the meaning of Apostolic Succession. In order to do that one has to employ the image of an eucharistic community in which the bishop receives the *charisma veritatis*. Thus, the Apostolic Succession is necessarily related to the community through the milieu of communion. The true catholic Church is the one in which the '*charisma veritatis certum*' has been deposited from the very beginning and preserved in the continuous succession of Apostolic ministry. There is no bishop without a *place* (i.e. without a community) and, therefore, there is no Apostolic Succession outside the community, as the prayer for the ordination of the bishop asserts.¹⁰³ Whatever the bishop receives in terms of his prerogatives within the community is part of a 'chain' of faith and practice which goes back to the Apostles and further back to Christ Himself since there are no Apostles apart from Christ.

V.4.1. Episcopal Apostolic Succession and Succession through Structured Communities.

For the Orthodox, the Apostolic Succession means neither the transmission of a ministerial *potestas*, as part of a linear historical line, nor is it understood as part of a delegative

authority which the community possesses and transmits. The power which the bishop receives through the Apostolic Succession is the power from Christ which enables him in His name 'to bear witness to the catholic experience of the body of the Church', so that he can speak '*ex consensu ecclesiae*' and not '*ex sese, non autem ex consensu ecclesiae*' as Vatican I put it.¹⁰⁴

It seems that the Apostolic Succession in the beginning designated the task of proving the survival of the orthodox teaching by strictly historical means. However, this concern has been connected to the broader reality of the life of the Church as led by the bishop.

In its bishop every single Church outgrows and transcends its own limits and is organically united with the others. The Apostolic Succession is not so much the canonical as the mystical foundation of Church unity. It is something other than a safeguard of historical continuity or of administrative cohesion. It is an ultimate means to keep the mystical identity of the Body through the ages.¹⁰⁵

Each episcopal community is not only 'the whole Church' in a locality, but also manifests '*the whole succession of the Apostles*'. That is the result of the fact that each bishop is the successor of *all* the Apostles and thus his own Church is fully apostolic, while the bishop sits at the *cathedra Petri*. In these terms one may speak about apostolic 'successions' (plural), and not of apostolic 'succession', for each bishop's succession refers to all of the Twelve. In the same way, the catholicity of the Church could be seen in the form of 'catholic Churches' (plural). And that is so because the bishops, as in the case of the Apostles, are 'the personification of the qualitative catholicity, the fullness of truth given only to the whole Church'. Therefore, the 'Apostolic Succession represents a sign of the historical dimension of the catholicity of the Church'.¹⁰⁶ Thus, a note of this historical approach is that which concerns the continuity in true doctrine in a local Church which is *the same* apostolic truth in every local community.

At the moment of his ordination, each bishop, in becoming bishop of *his* Church, manifests her as the Church *one, holy, catholic* and *apostolic*, for he is neither ordained by that Church itself, nor [is he ordained] by another Church, but "by two or three bishops" (the first Apostolic Canon) who witness, even through their plurality and their approval, the unity and the indivisibility of the episcopate and, in it, of the Church itself.¹⁰⁷

The Apostolic Succession as seen through the episcopacy is therefore ultimately a succession of Church structure. Through it the entire community of the Church is conceived as remaining in the apostolic continuity 'understood as a continuity of *structure* and as a succession of *communities*'.¹⁰⁸

V.4.2. Catholicity and Collegiality.

In the same manner, in the Orthodox understanding, a complete picture of the structure of the Church catholic should necessarily include the concept of 'collegial apostolicity' since the Apostles are seen not as individuals but as a *college* who surrounded Christ and who will be with Him in His Kingdom. The eschatological dimension of the apostolic college is obvious in the fact that the Apostolic Succession is based on an eschatological model of the structure existent in the Church of Jerusalem (cf. Rom 15:19). In this sense, it is significant that the lists of succession compiled by Eusebius begin not with a particular apostle but with James, the 'brother of the Lord'.¹⁰⁹ In such terms, the episcopal succession is nothing else but 'a continuity of the Church not with an individual Apostle, but with the apostolic college as a whole and the community of the Church in its eschatological setting'.¹¹⁰ Likewise, the bishop is surrounded by the *college* of presbyters which accompanies him in his 'offering'.

Therefore, the Apostolic Succession is seen once again through the person of the bishop, not as an individual, but rather in the fact that he is surrounded by the college of presbyters together with the entire community which participates ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ in all of the things that episcopacy stands for.

[In the "apostolic succession"] in each local Church, in the unity of the bishop and of the people, the fullness of the gifts is given, the whole truth is, thus, proclaimed, the whole Christ is, thus, mysteriously present, the same Christ "yesterday and today and unto the ages of ages".¹¹¹

At the same time, in a broad acceptance of the Apostolic Succession, ordination applies both to layman as well as to so-called ordained ministry, one being intimately conditioned by the other, for the confession made at the Baptism puts every Christian in a continuation and affirmation of the same apostolic faith. It is in this sense that 'the Church relates to the Apostles not only through ordination but also through Baptism'.¹¹² From this perspective it is therefore obvious that truth is not merely a matter of *delegation* from Christ through the Apostles to the bishops. It rather represents a pentecostal event whereby the content of apostolic faith is permanently revealed within the worshipping community and which transcends linear history into a 'charismatic present-moment'.¹¹³

In as far as episcopal collegiality is concerned, Orthodox theology tends to give priority to the place that the bishop has within the local community. From this locality, the concept of collegiality extends to a wider realm. However, in order to avoid the tension between universal and local, the simultaneity of the two dimensions needs to be seen through their presence in the Eucharist.¹¹⁴ Hence, the Orthodox principle of the ultimate equality of all bishops and of their respective local Churches acts as a safeguard. It is reflected by the eschatological image of the apostolic college as an *indivisible whole* 'which is realized and expressed *in its totality* through each bishop in each Church'.¹¹⁵

Likewise, Roman Catholic theology argues for the necessity of the existence of a ministry with Apostolic Succession and ecclesiastical authority as part of a real expression of the Church as a coherent body, which, without a ministry of hierarchy would be 'a mere sum of individuals'. 'A universal episcopate with no structural principle of coherence would be irremediably centrifugal'.¹¹⁶ Moreover, Church ministry has to be understood in terms of a collegial structure as seen in the theology of the Early

Church and in Vatican II.¹¹⁷

But, in the Roman Church, the college of bishops has no authority of its own if it is not 'simultaneously conceived in relation with its head', who is entrusted with world-wide power. By virtue of his office as 'Vicar of Christ' and pastor of the catholic (whole) Church, the pope has 'full, supreme, and universal power over the Church', exercised always freely;¹¹⁸ and the college of the bishops can never exercise its power without the consent of the pope.

For the Anglican theology, the Holy Order in general and the episcopate in particular need to be seen also in terms of catholicity throughout the whole history of English Christianity since Augustine. However, there were and are differences in the way various aspects of this matter were and are dealt with.¹¹⁹ What has always been stressed by the majority of Anglican theologians is the link that exists between the Church of to-day and that of the first centuries, the Apostolic Church. That guarantees the preservation of a catholic faith throughout the centuries up to this day. Hence, for Anglican theologians such as A.M. Ramsey there is a strong emphasis on the derivation of the actual episcopate from the mission given to the Apostles by Christ Himself.¹²⁰ This continuation is reflected in a visible structured society which has episcopacy as an element accepted throughout catholic Christendom as the apostolic ministry *par excellence*.

We may rightly contend that historical Catholicity involved when it existed, and will involve when God gives it to us again, the transmission of the Apostolic Commission through bishops, who were and will be centres, *foci*₁₂₁ *media* of the unity and continuity of the Catholic Church.

Hence Apostolic Succession received an important place in the Anglican theology. The imposition of the hands by a 'lawful bishop' was considered only as an external manifestation of an inward *charisma*, with the prerogatives which accompany it. This was the institutional expression of it.¹²²

The historical continuity of episcopal succession has become

an essential part of Church life. This was universally acknowledged and accepted, at least until the time of the Reformation. Those who were in historical continuity with the Apostles were to be seen as those who perpetuated that type of Church which was called by the Nicene Creed 'holy, catholic and apostolic'.¹²³

But the visible, militant Church is only a part of the Church catholic. To the external structure corresponds an internal dimension, both being part of the same whole and closely related to each other.¹²⁴ On the one hand, continuation expressed in the external part or communion of the Church catholic would necessarily contain common creeds, sacraments, liturgy, with the acceptance of the same authority of episcopacy or of a general council.

On the other hand, the 'internal communion' should imply 'a mutual obligation for all' to seek the realization of the external communion with those who, visibly, are not yet in that communion.¹²⁵ What is finally to be achieved is the Communion of Saints as the ultimate expression of Church catholic in its both visible and invisible kinds.

The continuity of the Church's structure, in Luther's thought, relies essentially on that of the Word and not on the continuous presence of a 'legitimately' ordained priesthood or of any other ecclesiastical structure.¹²⁶ This Word will act as a point of reference and, therefore, it will establish the limits within which the Church exists and manifests itself.¹²⁷

In accordance with this understanding of the priesthood, its succession will be seen by Luther in terms of a hidden, yet unceasing, continuity of believers (*successio fidelium*) and not in episcopal succession (*successio episcoporum*)¹²⁸ since the whole concept of sacerdotal continuity has its origin outside the Church.

Furthermore, since the whole community has a priestly function given through the act of faith, in the Baptism, and everyone in the community bears a responsibility for each other and for the community as a whole, only the entire Church, as a catholic body, possesses the quality of infallibility. Hence, both the question of both conciliar and papal infallibility need to be addressed in the perspective of the essential inerrancy which belongs exclusively to the whole Church.¹²⁹

Likewise, the ordination of a minister continues a practice which in time goes back to the apostolic age. In the Reformed tradition the continuity in history of those who hold the office in the Church with the genuine message of Christ and the Apostles is preserved through ministerial ordination performed by 'the succession of public episcopal ministry'.¹³⁰

Hence, although it has been sometimes a matter of concern in traditional Reformed theology or among some particular parts of the Protestant Churches,¹³¹ the concept of Apostolic Succession as an element in the concept of Church's catholicity remains somewhat peripheral and irrelevant for the Reformation. The only important thing remains 'succession in doctrine' and not one in persons, for the Holy Spirit cannot be transferred, like a 'property', from one to another by ritual and institutional means.¹³²

V.4.3. Ministry and the Church's Catholicity in Eschatological Perspective.

Finally, the relationship between the Church and the Kingdom understood in terms of polity, as seen in Reformed theology, reveals the fact that Calvin insisted on the necessity of a 'fixed form', a 'firm polity', as Christ's work for the well-being of His Church.¹³³ Nevertheless, 'within history the order of the Church is essentially ambiguous' for 'the constitution of the Church...is designedly different from what it will be in the glory of the Kingdom'.¹³⁴

Yet, the two are correlative for the Church 'already participates in the future judgment of the Kingdom'. In this sense, 'the order of the Church is therefore the *rectitude* or *spiritual jurisdiction* of the *Regnum Christi* in actual operation'¹³⁵ as a means whereby a certain discipline necessary in the perspective of the Kingdom is preserved.

In what has been said up to now there is one idea which one can follow through all the argumentation, namely that ecclesial institutions are *reflections of the Kingdom of God*. In their nature these institutions are 'iconic' for they are related to something

which is beyond themselves, that is God or Christ. That is the result of the fact that 'the Holy Spirit points *beyond* history'. Thus ecclesiastical institutions 'become *sacramental* in the sense of being placed in the dialectic between history and eschatology, between the already and not yet'.¹³⁶

The parallel between the Church catholic and the Kingdom of God rests in the fact that both can have a structure. The Kingdom of God through the Holy Spirit is ultimately *communion*, and this implies the existence of a community with a structure centred around Christ surrounded by the Apostles. There is a structure, 'a *specificity of relations*, a situation in which the relations within the community are *definable*, and they are definable not arbitrarily but *in accordance with the eschatological nature of the community*' (cf. Acts 1:12-26 and 2:42).¹³⁷

In the same sense, the Apostolic Succession acquires a *retrospective* dimension through the identity with the apostolic community. This is related to the *existential* aspect of the community here and now, and to a *prospective* dimension (moving towards the 'last days').¹³⁸

In like manner, the apostolicity of the Church is related to the Resurrected Christ as the final and ultimate determination of all which exists. Hence, the ministry of the Church is one which offers a *taste* of the *eschata* here and now.¹³⁹

As a conclusion, we may say that in the Orthodox theology, the Church has a definite, concrete structure. However, this visible structure is not the ultimate goal of the Church in the world since by its very nature it transcends limitation in space and time and finds its fulfilment in the age to come. The only acceptable concept of Church structure for a catholic Church would be as a synthesis of history and eschatology, between here and now and not yet.

As far as the Roman Catholic theology of Vatican II is concerned, a certain distinction between the Church of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church has been accepted. Although 'the Church of Christ is truly present in her essential completeness in the Catholic Church', there is still a long way towards the task of becoming 'more perfectly one, holy and catholic'.¹⁴⁰ Hence, no

Christian community can claim that it represents an 'unsurpassable' actualization of the catholic Church of Christ.

Finally, Vatican II tries to escape from one of the current criticisms made against Roman Catholic theology, namely that it identifies the Kingdom of God with the visible Church. In the Council's view the 'perfect Kingdom' is regarded as the object of Church's eschatological perspective, yet it also asserts that the Kingdom has to be the content of Church's teaching, and its inauguration here and now has to be Church's purpose in its work.

At the same time, the Church itself is 'the germ and beginning' of Christ's and God's reign over the world.¹⁴¹ Here, there is the affirmation of a need for the Church to be ordered, in this world, according to the order which exists in heaven: 'on earth as it is in heaven' (Matt 6:10).

Following the arguments as presented until now, at the end of this chapter some general remarks might be drawn.

From the Orthodox standpoint, the structure of the Church catholic is centred around the ministry of the bishop, surrounded by the college of the presbyters and the entire community in which each one has his or her own type of ministry. Only in this way can the Church manifest itself as a catholic community. It is therefore necessary to understand *each* local Church as possessing the fullness of catholicity and also to see this as a matter of its relationship to the universal Church.

Broadly speaking, the whole concept of the Church's polity and agency in the Roman theology is circumscribed by the position of pre-eminence and authority accorded to the pope within the Roman Catholic Church. His primacy is transferred to the entire Roman Church, outside which the elements of catholic structure (the word of God, the sacraments, the hierarchical ministry) present in non-Roman Churches are seen not to have their full potency. Hans Küng's image of a 'mother Church' (i.e. the Roman Church) and 'daughter Churches' (i.e. the non-Roman Churches) which must reorientate themselves towards 'the only constant point of orientation' in history - the Roman Catholic Church - is symptomatic in that respect.¹⁴²

In the light of such theology, the Church in its entirety is

to be understood to require permanent reference to the pope as the 'catholic centre', and not vice versa. Such a Church is built 'in the likeness' of the Roman Pontiff rather in that of Christ.

Likewise, through the clericalism implicit in this view, the laity tend to be reduced to a passive element in the Church, and the hierarchy to be elevated over the entire Church. And juridicism tends to overemphasize the role of human authority to the prejudice of divine principles, such as love and holiness: 'My kingdom is not of this world' (John 18:36).

It is all too obvious that the Church must manifest itself as a visible community, with well structured features. But, instead of being exclusively orientated and arranged as a hierarchy, the Church has to be considered by reference to the fellowship of believers, with local communities and local bishops. Furthermore, it has to be also orientated not primarily to a legalistic pattern, but rather to sacramental, liturgical and symbolic ones.

To some extent, Vatican II succeeded in recovering a vital awareness of fellowship, *communio*, collegiality, solidarity and service. Yet the position of the pope has remained very strong, though new perspectives have developed which led to a better expression of the nature of the Church and of its catholicity.

Anglican theology, in spite of the variety of theological opinions which it includes, seems to have given more weight to aspects of Church polity and agency (outwardly or inwardly); in the end the solution adopted was to find a 'mediating position', with a more balanced tendency. Hence, depending upon emphasis, its position could be classified as Roman Catholic or Protestant or neither.

Anglican theology has preserved the form of the episcopate from the ancient structure of the Church. The ordination of the clergy was, then, meant to maintain a line of continuity in the Church's life. The bishop as the head of the community must maintain the worship and the practice of the Church catholic. Thus, the catholicity of the Church remains in the realm of practice, and is not primarily concerned with theoretical matters. And, as A.M. Ramsey puts it, Anglican Church has not always detected the meaning of its own order in its deepest relation to the Scriptures and the

universal Church.¹⁴³

The catholicity of the Church's order, as seen in traditional Anglican theology, has tended to be overshadowed in several ways. The 'branch theory' or over-emphasis of a certain national element which treats the bishop as an English institution rather than part of the catholic Church, are but two examples. 'The bishop has often appeared as the English ruler of an English society for English people'.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, sometimes the ministry has been conceived as if it were a channel of grace isolated from the life of the entire Body; this provided a 'clericalist' view rather than a catholic one as far as the position of the ordained inside the Church was concerned. Therefore, a full understanding of Church's catholicity in the light of Church's authority would imply a recovery of an outward unity in order that this ministry would receive the authorization of the whole Church of God.

Luther, for his part, did not reject the Church's polity and hierarchy all together, but tried to hold a more balanced position which, nevertheless, did not go far enough, but which in the end would prove to be of some benefit to the Church. Such a more moderate position concerning the Church's polity (more evident after 1530) was meant to concede that the only way to maintain the well-being of the Church is by having a more balanced attitude towards the Church's structure. That was motivated by his great desire 'to maintain the church polity and various ranks of ecclesiastical hierarchy, although they were created by human authority'.¹⁴⁵

A brief analysis of the concepts of Luther's theology will reveal, first of all, a rather inconsistent attitude. If in the beginning he was very critical towards canon law, later on he tended to accept its necessity for the benefit of the catholic Church. As far as the Church's polity and agency are concerned, Luther relied heavily on the spiritual dimension of the Church and thus, the visible, concrete aspect of a structured community suffered a great deal.

In presenting the Church as the community which had as its decisive mark the Word, Luther remained only at the level of spiritual, abstract definition. The concrete signs of the Church's

life and nature remained peripheral, if not absent, from his concept of the Church. Even when he talked about external marks by which one can know where the Church is (the Gospel, Baptism, and the sacrament of the altar), Luther understood them in such a way that one can get the impression that they do not really and visibly exist at all. In the end, that discontinuity between inward and outward features of the Church creates problems in the way the entire concept of the Church was developed in Luther's theology.

His strong criticisms of what the Church of his time represented do not excuse him from neglecting the ecclesial, concrete aspect of Church's catholicity. The focus which Luther put on the spiritual dimension of the Church represents an extreme position which he took against the visible structure of the Church. The Catholicity of the Church is for him just a matter of belief; it is not reflected in an internal and external organisation of the Church too.

Concerning the authority of the Church and its relationship with catholicity, Luther's view developed from his criticism of the position of the pope in the universal Church. He shifted the exclusive authority of the pope, as head of the *oecumene*, to the entire community which possesses the universal priesthood and which has the power and authority to confess, teach and spread God's Word. Thus, the authority of the Church was presented as a collective authority rather than one which belongs to a certain group of people. Hence, ordained ministry has a special task inside the community only in functional terms.

The way the Church's polity is conceived in Reformed theology reveals its weakness; overstates the spiritual dimension of the Church with a highly eschatological emphasis. These are at the expense of the actual materialization of the Church's presence in the world. Living in a 'proleptic realization of its mystery through intimate union with Christ in His death and resurrection' the Church is to be understood in complete different terms than those of the 'static structures of a canonically prescriptive system' or indeed any 'rigidly and juridically defined succession'. Otherwise, it would betray its essential mystery and distort its unique, transcendental nature.¹⁴⁶

Obviously this one-sided view of the Church which does not take into account the visible, concrete manifestation of the Church as a whole affects the understanding of the Church's catholicity. Instead of having a catholicity of form, which is expressed in Church polity, the Reformed Church prefers to speak of a catholicity of Christ's calling within which a relationship by the individual with each one of the members of the community is established. 'The whole life and being of the Church depends entirely upon the gracious decision of Christ to be our Saviour, to gather us into one Body'.¹⁴⁷

Christ's calling is seen as addressed to each individual, and what is primary is the relationship which is established between Christ and me, and not between Christ and us. Hence, the ecclesiastical structure is understood as collection of individuals, rather than a fellowship of responsible, conscientious and free persons. From this perspective, there is only one dimension of the Church's catholicity, namely that which presents the Church as a congregation made up of individuals in their singular relationship with Christ.

In Reformed theology, the place and the importance of the ministry, and authority in the Church, are also problematic. As we have already pointed out, there is in the Reformed tradition a lack of polity, due to the fact that 'the ministry of the Church is essentially corporate: in it the Church as Christ's Body participates in His whole, prophetic, priestly and kingly ministry by serving Him'.¹⁴⁸ In this view, the community can be seen as standing above ministry, and the community has the power, though unconscious, to recognize the ministry appointed by God. Thus, although the ministry is conceived as 'utterly essential to the building up of the Church' and therefore 'belongs to the esse of the Church in history',¹⁴⁹ it remains an 'external scaffolding' which will eventually be taken away in the fullness of the Church in Christ. Hence the succession of the Church in history - its continuity - is no longer important.

In such an understanding, the minister witnesses Christ, refers to Him as the One who will reveal the Church's transcendental nature in His Kingdom, but he does not manifest Him

in his person. The transference of Christ's agency to the bishop is replaced with a sort of 'amorphous authority' which rests upon the whole community. The authority is that of the community. Therefore the minister loses his authority and his position as the one who, in continuation with Christ's and the Apostles' ministry, gathers around him the whole community and offers with and for the community the unity of faith, witness and love which is that of the catholic Church. This leads easily Reformed theologians like T.F. Torrance in talking about 'sacramental sacerdotalism' or 'psychological sacerdotalism' in which the centre of gravity rests upon man's own self-offering in a 'worshiping of God through the personality and liturgical idiosyncrasies of the officiating minister'.¹⁵⁰

But the catholicity of the Church is also indicative of the way the relationships which exist between different Christian communities are to be conceived. It also refers to the question of how Christians relate themselves to others who are outside Christendom and to whom the Church has to address itself through the means of mission.

VI. The Catholic Church: Missionary and Ecumenical.

Attempts to make the mission of the Church fruitful cannot be understood apart from the appeal to historical trends, primarily to the way the Apostles set up the 'methodology' of mission. As persons with the task of propagating the Word of God, the Apostles were *sent* forth into the world, 'as lambs in the midst of wolves' (Luke 10:3), each individually entrusted with authority and the message of the coming Kingdom.¹ As such, they become the permanent model of the mission of the Church. They saw themselves as a bridge between Christ and the newly established Church (cf. John 16:26-27; Acts 1:8). By doing so they were involved in a historical process which eventually became normative for the Church's missionary life. This is what one may call the 'historical' approach to the concept of Church mission.

The idea of mission and that of historical process go together in the New Testament and lead to a scheme of continuity in a linear movement: God sends Christ - Christ sends the Apostles - the Apostles transmit the message of Christ by establishing churches and ministers.²

In this sense, the type of mission which was set up by the Apostles goes back to Christ Himself. For these reasons, mission is constitutive element in the building up of local catholic Churches and, thus, of the Church catholic in its entirety.

At the same time, one ought to look at the relationship which exists between different Churches within the catholic Church, in the *ecumenical* aspect of the Church Catholic.

VI.1. The Catholic Church in its Missionary Dimension.

VI.1.1. The Mission of the Church Catholic as Mission *ad extra* and as Mission *ad intra*.

The field of the Church's mission is the world seen as the realm to which the Church integrates itself in order to transform and transcend the world from inside. The Church has to relate itself to the world in such a way that it becomes an indispensable part of the world, something that the world needs in the process of its fulfilment. The mission of the Church through its fundamental act of proclaiming the Word of God should also become an intrinsic and indispensable feature of the world without which the world cannot live.³ Proclamation is thus more than transmission of the content of the message; it is to become a necessity of existence.

The proclamation of the Word as revealed primarily through the Incarnation of the Logos of God in our human history and afterwards through the mission of the Church is intended, nevertheless, to point to that ultimate goal, 'New Jerusalem' (Rev 21:2). Through the mission of the Apostles and later of all missionaries, the Church has expanded to become the Church catholic spread all over the world with the task of announcing the coming of the Kingdom of God in glory.

The aim of its [the Church's] missionary activity is not merely to convey to people certain convictions or ideas, not even to impose on them a definite discipline or a rule of life, but first of all to introduce them into the New Reality, to *convert* them, to bring them through their faith and repentance to Christ Himself, that they should be born anew in Him and into Him by water and the Spirit.⁴

By its very position in the world, the Church remains always the 'little flock' which has in its mission to pursue the work of bringing the Good News of salvation to the entire world. In this sense, in the Orthodox view, the Church is missionary in its 'locality', that is to say by being a minority in the entirety of the world within which there are other 'localities' yet to be brought to Christ. While for early Christianity, the field of

mission was a pagan world, for the Church of today the same field has become the secularized societies which have lost their capacity to manifest the one Church catholic. Christianity has become a minority in modern societies. Hence, Christian minorities find themselves in the position of a permanent 'foreign diaspora'.⁵

The way to go beyond this worldly position is by projecting the final goal of the world into the eschatological realm (cf. 1 Pet 2:12; Heb 13:14 etc.). For that matter, Christians themselves always remain in the position of 'aliens and exiles' not in relation to a historical or geographical dispersion, but rather as being separated from the Kingdom of God.⁶ That is why in serving the world, the Church cannot identify itself entirely with 'ethnic diasporas' for that would mean enslaving itself, losing its freedom and eventually abandoning its mission.

By affirming the unity of the Church in every place, the Orthodox have aimed precisely at reminding Christians of their 'alienated' status in relation to all earthly, cultural contexts. It aimed also at reaffirming the orientation towards the creation of that community without 'diasporas' which is the Kingdom of God.⁷ By so doing, Orthodoxy has shown the mission of the Church in the world to have a catholic character which concerns both those inside the Church and those outside it,⁸ ultimately directed to achieving the fullness of the Kingdom. This is the catholic dimension of Church's mission.

At the same time, this mission is intended to establish new local Churches which are no less fully catholic communities and in which 'the power of the Spirit and the presence of Christ' are fully present. When this is accomplished, those local communities have equal status with the rest of the local communities (cf. Matt 18:20).⁹

In the traditional Roman Catholic view, going back as far as St Augustine up to modern theologians, such as Yves Congar or Th. Sartory, the missionary aspect of the Church has been conceived in terms of a monolithic Church, in a manifest unity and uniformity, and also in the pursuit of geographical extension and size. That was the natural consequence of the literal and institutional translation of St Cyprian's '*extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*'.

Yet, a different approach to this conception has been followed in more contemporary Roman Catholic theology. According to this, Christ is also anonymously at work (and the Church too) among non-Christians, although outside of the visible and actual boundaries of the Church. The Church acts as a missionary body by virtue of its diaconal structure. It follows that there is a transcendence of the Church beyond its own visible limits,¹⁰ a presence of the Church into the world at large. This transcendence of the Church has been made possible by the fact that Christ, as the Word of God Incarnate, redeemed the whole world and also asked that His message of redemption should be spread all over the world. That endeavour has been entrusted to the Apostles and through them to the Church, which is therefore 'missionary' in its very essence. Thus, the missionary activity of the Church 'perfects her catholic unity by expanding it'.¹¹

In the case of the Anglican Communion, the expansion of the British Empire to all corners of the inhabited world has inevitably spread the Christian message too. From a national Church restrained to a specific area and people, the Church of England became more and more a missionary Church which set itself the task of bringing the Gospel to the nations with which it came in contact. The propagation of the faith through missions was not meant to bring to the newcomers to Christianity a national Church, but rather to add another national Church to the already existing Church catholic. By so doing, those consecrated to the missionary activity will respond to the necessity that the Church catholic should comprehend 'the fullness of the nations'.¹²

In this view, national identity and characteristics play a very significant role indeed in the way the new Christian communities, set up through missions, come to terms with Christ's Gospel. All the features of this missionary process should be part of a tradition which goes back to 'the great inheritance of Catholic tradition and the glory of the fellowship of the Catholic Church'.¹³ This is the way Christ is made known in the fullness of His Person and activity and His revelation of the Father. The method of propagating the truth of Christ through mission should be one in which not merely individuals are entrusted with it, but

rather entire Churches within particular areas.

Catholicity undergirds the impetus to send forth members of the church into the world about them precisely because it is concerned with the quality of life in Christ. Such life just cannot be self-contained, nor can its fullness and integrity be realized within the closed community.¹⁴

In his turn, Luther takes up the paramount element of his theology - the word of God - and presents it as the real instrument of Church's mission. The Gospel contains in itself a missionary imperative and it has, therefore, to be preached to those outside the Church. It is not the existence of the others who are not part of the Church which primarily urges for Church's mission, but the inner dynamic of the Gospel itself, which is the same for both the Church and the world.¹⁵ In the same sense, the Gospel which is preached by the Church is seen as the 'new ferment' which will become the agent of salvation in the whole mass of humanity.¹⁶ Likewise, Christ is 'ferment' for the world, being incorporated into Christians and becoming one body with them.¹⁷

In spite of this way of understanding the work of the Church as a missionary body in the world, for Luther as for Protestants in general it was quite difficult in the early stages to act efficiently in terms of mission because of a lack of a real structure through which such a task could be carried out. Such a structure had been provided in the Roman Catholic Church by the religious orders with their zeal for propagating the faith.¹⁸ Nevertheless, for Luther, the true Church, by its very nature and mission, was hidden and mixed in with hypocrites and unbelievers. Believers and unbelievers, hypocrites and honest people are all members of the visible Church which is to be involved in humanity as part of its mission, for it is Christ alone who can decide who belongs to the Church and who does not. With such a configuration, in Luther's view, the Church which works in the social hierarchies of the world, family, worship and state is to be preferred to a visible society of saints, a separatist Church built up by pure and faithful people.¹⁹

For Reformed theology, the catholic dimension of the Church, with its eschatological projection, has always been the strongest

missionary motivation (cf. Mark 16:15). From this point of view, in the Reformed tradition, the Church has been regarded as 'a pilgrim people' which, in a dynamic way, seeks for the Kingdom that will comprise all nations and all creation. In this sense the Church is called to become a sign, instrument and foretaste of 'God's purpose "to sum up all things with Christ as head" (Ephes 1:10)'.²⁰

In traditional Reformed theology the missionary aspect of the Church was considered an essential part of the nature of both the Church and Gospel, for the Church is called to expand itself 'throughout the entire world', that is to say to fill all the creation with Christ's presence and 'to extend his grace over all the world'.²¹

A rediscovery of the Church's missionary perspective in more recent times by the Reformed theology has been considered a necessity in order to reshape the Church of today according to the new religious and social context. In this attempt, although the world of today is rather different from that of old times, the Church had to become the same type of missionary Church as the Church of the first Christian centuries. It was proper to that primitive Church to be 'a small evangelizing community in a pagan society', with the leadership of its ministry, with the administration of Baptism as commitment to that mission, and the Eucharist as 'the continual renewal of that commitment'.²²

VI.1.2. Church Mission, Catholicity and Culture.

The Church's mission does not mean total abandonment of local characteristics by superimposing elements foreign to that locality. It rather proceeds through preserving whatever seems to be worth integrating to itself, so that the local community is 'converted' as smoothly as possible. This process is what modern theology calls 'indigenization', which is a 'process of becoming rooted in the culture of the people'.²³

In order to employ local elements suitable to good missionary activity, the Church can set up groups of people with cultural, social or intellectual backgrounds. However, these groups should not be called Churches except through their relationship with *the*

Church. Nevertheless, there will be no differences of class, age, culture etc. since *all* the people of the community constitute locally the one Church catholic. The place where all the differences are ultimately overcome is the eucharistic gathering, where *all* members come and share the same Christ, and which manifests the Kingdom of God here and now.²⁴

Accommodation to particular circumstances, though, does not mean compromising in any way what is essential to be preserved to keep the Church always faithful to itself, as the one catholic Body. While 'the Orthodox catholicity has been always based on the preservation of a certain pluralism and polycentrism',²⁵ which saved the local Church from losing its identity (language, ethnic and cultural elements etc.), nevertheless it remained firmly in the position of retaining whatever constitutes the core of its very existence.

That does not imply, however, that the local community is condemned to be shaped according to a uniform stereotype of the universal Church superimposed upon it. It only aims at preserving the ultimate essence which is 'the Christian faith in its catholicity' while allowing a certain - and for that matter important - freedom of retaining whatever is considered by every locality what is useful and enriching from its own heritage.

While for the West "mission" indicates the space, the territory, the geography, the context, in short, the visible extension of the Church through the creation of new communities in un-Christian areas, in the East "mission" is identified with "tradition" and evokes the history, the continuity of the Church in time, the transmission of the faith from one age to another, from one generation to another generation. The aim of the Orthodox mission is not to conquer at any price new Christian geographical areas, namely external universality, but rather to keep the faithful in an uninterrupted physical and historical continuity of the faith.²⁶

Here, there has to be a variety which should not be divisive, but rather a unity in diversity, following the model of Pentecost, where all the Apostles received the same Spirit of Christ, but in a distinct, individual manner. Otherwise, a 'legitimate pluralism' could be transformed into *division*, and thus the divided Church would lose its capacity to bring its mission to a fruitful end.²⁷

By virtue of its essential catholicity, the Church cannot be alien to any country or people. Following the example of the early Church, whose catholicity was not only inclusive but also expansive, the Church as a whole is called to preach the Gospel 'to the whole creation' (Luke 16:15). That is the task of the Christian mission, which has a profoundly catholic character.

Therefore, the appearance of 'national' Churches which the 'indigenization' mentioned above presupposes should not bring about - as did indeed happen in some unfortunate cases - a sort of 'nationalism' which would damage the sense of Christian catholicity that must exist among different local settings.

According to the Roman Catholic view, the missionary aspect of the Church in its geographical catholicity, requires attention to a variety of cultural forms. The idea of 'inculturation' gained a great deal of support from the new approach begun by Vatican II: 'Let the young Churches...embed her tradition in their own culture'.²⁸ Moreover, certain particular psychological and human elements present in those nations to whom the Gospel is preached must be preserved if they are to contribute in building up the communion with the universal Church.

The Church is asked to make itself as a representative sign, one which brings together without discrimination a diversity of races, a place of reconciliation. Vatican II speaks about the fact that the Church, in its visible existence, has to work for an effective representation and affirmation of Christ as the universal Redeemer of humanity, as the sign of God's love at work in concrete circumstances. Therefore, the Church must be catholic, that is extend itself everywhere, in a variety of concrete social and cultural conditions.²⁹

In regard to the organisation of new Churches, although Anglican theology regarded the territorial episcopate as 'the normal development in the Catholic Church' and practice, yet it allowed for specific circumstances which might demand special treatments and adjustments in the way the episcopate as the centre of unity is seen.

However, 'the ideal of the one Church should never be obscured'.³⁰ In this effort to strengthen the new-born Christian

communities and to make them aware of their new status and duties, the missionary Churches must always remind them that independence and self-management should not mean departure from the One Church. On the contrary, the focus remains on the 'necessity of holding the catholic faith in its integrity, and of maintaining at all times that union with the great body of the Church'.³¹

But to be missionary does not imply simply a geographical extension of the limits to which the Church is extended and becomes more and more *the catholic Church* at a wider level. Following its understanding of the nature of the Church, the Reformed tradition conceives of mission in more Christological and spiritual terms.³²

The catholic character of the Church as a missionary society is obvious by the very fact that the Church as a whole is constituted by the act of bringing people into the Church through Baptism (Matt 28:19). The Church exists in the world in order to bring Christ's message to all people, in all ages and all over the world. But in order to accomplish this task, mission must be bound up with love which will always measure to what extent the missionary activity is loyal to the Church's basic characteristic as the bearer of the Gospel of love: 'On the mission field it is evident that "communication of" must be bound up with "communication with"'.³³

As a conclusion to what has been said so far, the contemporary Church should be aiming at recovering 'an authentic missionary consciousness' so that the '*catholicity of mind*' which goes back to the time of the Apostles and of the Fathers of the Church and is still present in all '*authentic forms of the Orthodox tradition*', will be fully manifested in the Church catholic.³⁴

Likewise, in order to reflect a unity in faith one should complement it with a unity in action, through a sustained limitless *diakonia* in the world. This is the only way in which the Church as such will lead any local catholic community towards a unified goal, which is the Kingdom of God, and thereby manifest its mission as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

VI.2. Catholicity and Ecumenism.

VI.2.1. Catholicity, Communion and Intercommunion.

Apart from a social and cultural pluralism, the present day situation of the Church reveals also a confessional pluralism which exists both at the local level and also at a wider level. The issue of transcending social and cultural variety becomes a painful one when it has to be applied to confessional variety. The answer to that problem lies for some of the Christian denominations in the practice of 'intercommunion'.

The whole concept of intercommunion is based on the assumption, generally acknowledged, that each confessional body *per se* is a Church in itself.³⁵ However, such a community is a necessary part of a locality. Therefore, the relationship between the local community and the Church catholic as a whole is broken when in this relationship the concept of 'confessional Church' is interpolated. Hence, 'the Church is a true Church only if it is a local event incarnating Christ and manifesting the Kingdom in a particular place'.³⁶ To achieve the real unity of the Church is ultimately to abandon confessionalism and to accept more thoroughly the concept of the local Church.

A proper interpretation of the relation between local and universal Church, whereby the two dimensions of the Church are seen as being closely interconnected, would avoid any misunderstanding, such as happens in the simplistic concept of 'intercommunion', for Churches can be in full communion (and it is desirable to be so), but never in 'inter-communion'. The term 'intercommunion' in itself denotes its superficiality, since a relationship between 'members' with a full 'catholic status' is either 'communion' or it does not exist at all. The 'inter' clause is fundamentally a 'non-catholic' addition. In the new ecumenical context, such an understanding created the premises for a model as, for instance, the 'conciliar fellowship' (Nairobi Assembly, 1975) or a 'eucharistic vision' (Vancouver Assembly, 1983), as ways of overcoming any divisive attitude and as concrete steps towards a visible manifestation of the catholicity of the Church.

For the Orthodox, the starting point in any attempt towards

fully ecumenical communion should be *faith* as expressed in the Scriptures and maintained by the Church's Holy Tradition. Hence, the final objective of ecumenism need to be the recovering of that original experience of a common faith.

Since, for the Orthodox, [the]...one Church already exists, they must be definite and frank in proclaiming that the 'union of all' is to be realized in the Orthodox faith and that, for³⁷ them, *this* is the fundamental aim of their ecumenical activity.

At the same time, from the Orthodox point of view, the Church is what Christ and the Holy Spirit make it to be. Consequently 'the Church itself cannot be "more or less" catholic'. Its being is not man-made and even 'historical inadequacy' cannot change its being.³⁸ Hence, the attitude of the Orthodox Church concerning the practice of 'intercommunion', through which catholicity is supposed to be realized, is a very reserved one, for in a divided Christendom 'catholicity' cannot be actually well reflected. The only way forward is an attitude of 'openness' for a better understanding of the true value of every Christian denomination, so that by knowing each other better a common ground might be found.³⁹ However, openness must not imply compromise or irresponsibility. Since no Church can claim *to be* the Church catholic (according to a wide-spread Protestant view), none of those Churches are but 'its partial manifestations'. Hence, the ecumenical involvement is equivalent with the departure from 'doctrinal exclusivity', the embracement of the practice of 'intercommunion' and the acknowledgement that catholicity is a shared reality by different Christian denominations, where the confession of a common faith is no longer required.⁴⁰

The Orthodox Church cannot, therefore, agree with the practice of the eucharistic intercommunion, for before that act can take place, mutual recognition 'of *Churches and their ministries*' would be necessary. Recognition before eucharistic communion is not only a matter of priorities. It is first and foremost an issue of 'mutual commitment to catholic unity'. Otherwise, the result would be 'a peculiar reduction of the sacramental reality, either to a mechanistic act of bestowing grace, or to pietism'. Such a mutual

recognition cannot be found in a vision of catholicity which reduces its sacramental value.⁴¹

What is ultimately needed for the Churches to manifest themselves as genuinely the one Church of Christ is a 'common discovery of the "realized eschatology"', not by means of compromise, but through comprehensive theological discussions and a deep sense of responsibility.⁴² And all those must be underlined by a sense of *repentance*.

VI.2.2 Various Ecclesiological Concepts on the Relationship between Ecumenism and the Church's Catholicity

The Church's ecumenical dimension as seen in Roman Catholic theology, reflects the way in which the Roman Catholic Church tries to sort out its relationship with other Christian denominations and Churches from the perspective of its supposition that it is the actual manifestation of the one, catholic Church of Christ.

In the past this relationship has been presented in rather strong exclusivist terms: anyone outside the Roman Church is to some extent outside the Mystical catholic Body. The post-Tridentine theology represented by Bellarmine, Pius XII's *Humani generis* and others stressed the inadequate labelling of the communities outside the Roman Catholic Church as 'churches' because they are not in communion with Rome.⁴³ That led to its vigorous opposition to the ecumenical movement. The only way in which the unity of Christians could be achieved would be by a return to the one true Church of Christ of those separated from it. That true Church is the Roman Catholic Church, the only catholic Church, built upon Peter's legacy.⁴⁴

A somewhat different approach to the issue has been followed since Vatican II. Although the Council stated that the Roman Church is the unique Church of Christ, that has had to be theologically accommodated to the affirmation that whoever fears God and does what is right is acceptable to God.⁴⁵

Nonetheless, Vatican II retained what Roman Catholic theology has maintained since the Reformation, namely that it has a special place, unique among other Christian denominations. The visible

unity between parts of the Church is of the *esse* of the Church of Christ and is centred in the episcopal 'college' with the successor of Peter (the bishop of Rome) as the head of the entire Church.⁴⁶

Therefore, the primacy of the pope is also transferred to the entire Roman Church, outside which certain elements of the Church (the word of God, the sacraments, the hierarchical ministry) - as present in the non-Roman Churches - do not have their full potency and efficacy.

This way of conceiving of the Roman Catholic Church as the central point of reference in catholicity, with full authority in all Christendom, affects also the Roman Catholic view regarding the ecumenical movement. As long as the decisions in the ecumenical movement are taken by somebody else and not by the Roman Church, namely by the pope, no such court of appeal would be acceptable to Roman Catholicism. The ambiguous status of the Roman Church in its involvement in the ecumenical movement is well known.

The ecumenical dimension of the Church's catholicity, as seen in Anglican theology and practice, shows an Anglican Communion very actively involved in the process of bringing together different traditions and theologies for the achievement of a better understanding of each other. In trying to make catholicity more relevant to the present day situation of the Church and, also, in the attempt to work out to what extent the Church's catholicity is manifested in day-to-day life, some more recent Anglican theology, as represented by bishop Lancelot Andrews, Newman or W. Palmer, has put forward the 'branch theory'⁴⁷ with an emphasis on so-called 'static' (institutional) elements, but without much success. Others, as for instance H. Ed. Manning, proposed a 'moral unity' as a catholic cohesion, a coherence of all in one mind or in one spiritual attitude.⁴⁸

What the Anglican Communion proposes today to other Churches as a viable alternative of a Church catholic, is a unity in diversity, understood in practical terms. The paramount importance of continuity with the primitive Church, i.e. the Church of apostolic and post-apostolic times, and based on scriptural elements, gives the guarantee for a genuine catholic Church. The continuity of the Church expresses itself also in the ongoing life

of the Church, i.e. through worship, law and ministry. Hence, the catholicity of the Church relies on the practice of continuity, which requires the maintenance of the worship and the practice of the whole Church.

The Anglican Communion often regards itself as having a very important place and as occupying a 'strategic' position inside Christendom, which may eventually assign to it a very special role in achieving visible unity for Christendom. Attempting to combine Catholicism and Protestantism, and holding a '*via media*' in its theology and practice, Anglicanism considers itself as being entrusted by God with both 'the Catholic faith' and also 'a special service to render to the whole Church'.⁴⁹ Hence, the Anglican Communion presents is a very active body inside the ecumenical movement, and aims at bringing different Christian denominations together for the sake of the One Church of Christ.

This coming together should be the occasion in which Christians, without denying their own experience, will 'grow more fully into the one experience in all its parts'.⁵⁰ This is the only way in which, by sharing their experiences with the others, the whole Body of Christ will grow and manifest itself more clearly to the outside world as the One, Catholic Church of Christ.

Apart from the accent which he puts on the centrality of the Word, Luther stresses also the fact that the Church exists and fulfils its mission only through 'agony' and 'temptations'. The Church takes form in history in terms of the Cross⁵¹ and only so will the Church grow and increase until the end of the world, and thus express its eschatological and teleological mission.

In the field of ecumenism, the catholicity of the Church is, for Reformed theology, the expression of 'ultimate plenitude and harmony in all its members', who are 'engaged in the work of gathering the Church together on every side'.⁵² Hence, it is imperative for the Church to be engaged in ecumenical activity in order to help others to come to the truth, or at least to come closer to it. Furthermore, the ecumenical aspect of the Church's activity is projected eschatologically, since Christ came 'to collect us all into one body from that dispersion in which we are now wandering'.⁵³

In a such perspective the eagerness with which the Reformed Church sought for a fuller expression of its catholicity by means of missionary and ecumenical activity is understandable. In so doing it could become a more relevant sign and instrument for the affirmation of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ in the midst of other Christian communities and of the world at large.

Nevertheless, there seems in Protestant theology as a whole to be a one-sided understanding of catholicity, ecumenicity and apostolicity. They are seen as 'inner and spiritual realities', which only 'need to be manifest by signs of external unity'. A lack of appreciation for the sacramental and visible elements of the Church makes this kind of theology poor and unilateral, for both sacramental life and visible characteristics of the Church are just as important for a wholistic, comprehensive view of the Church catholic.⁵⁴ In the end, however, as one theologian put it, 'when all possible evidences from the writings of the Reformers have been collected, it all amounts to exceedingly little'⁵⁵ in terms of their understanding of what mission means for the Church's catholicity.

Before coming to some final conclusions, we have to consider one more aspect of the Church's catholicity, namely how catholicity is seen generally in modern theological debates, and especially how it is discussed in the ecumenical context.

VII. The Church's Catholicity in the Context of Modern Ecumenical Debates.

The awareness which drove peoples, Churches and Christian denominations into a movement that aims at gathering together all those who bear the name of Christ is, of course, something always present during the painful times of divisions in the history of the Church. Nonetheless, never in the past was this consciousness of the need to gather to overcome an 'unnatural divisiveness' able to generate such a powerful and compelling sense of urgency as to create a movement of the entire *oikoumene* as it has during this past century.

One extremely significant feature of modern times has been the way in which the concept of history itself has developed. Following that new understanding of history, the ecumenical movement came effectively into being in a very different context from the one before and, thus, its concern for the unity and catholicity of the Church needs to be seen in the perspective of this development. The last century has seen the sunset of a plain historicism (history seen as a succession of events), which is a consequence of the 'loss of *ecclesiastikon phronema*'¹ to a more complex *Geschichte* (history seen as comprehensive contingency in which meaningful events arise through existential decisions).² This new feature of thinking provided a background for understanding the concept of the Church's catholicity and how it can be better employed in fostering closer links between Christians of various denominations. With this development, the catholicity of the Church is seen as being reshaped according to a set of patterns created out of the perspective of the dynamics of history.

This view of history may itself be seen as the dawning of something which is not yet complete. If so, it can be asserted that

the ecumenical movement may have been born out of the increasing awareness of historical contingency and the supposition that there must be a fuller catholicity than the one already achieved. Ecumenism in itself may be seen by some sociologists of religion, such as Brian Wilson, as a manifestation of decline and weakness in the life of Christianity, one similar and somehow parallel to what had happened with the secularization of society and its pluralism and fragmentation.³ Nevertheless, in a perspective which sees historical contingency as anticipating a fuller condition, ecumenism can be reckoned as a sign of health. A divided Christendom can, therefore, reconsider its failure in revealing itself to the world as the *Una Sancta Catholica et Apostolica Ecclesia* as pointing to the task of bringing such a Church back into being.

Thus, two elements which by a superficial analysis could very well appear to be incompatible and in irreconcilable tension, should instead be looked upon as hopeful from the point of view of the dynamic of history. The question which is posed is: To what extent is catholicity a complete achievement and how far an anticipation? A further question is that between an allegedly self-sufficient, exclusivist catholicity which underestimates others because it claims exclusive possession of true catholicity, and a flexible, relative, contingent, yet true, concept of catholicity.

Judged from this perspective, the different ways of understanding the Church's catholicity as seen in ecumenical circles and outside them can be classified in four groups.

VII.1. Exclusive Catholicity.

An *exclusive catholicity* operates through a system of elimination, whereby what qualifies a particular Church as *Ecclesia Catholica* is denied to other similar Churches because that Church is held to possess those *particulae Ecclesiae* exclusively. It claims catholicity for itself while disregarding such claims by other Churches. Here the notion of catholicity is limited to the

view held by one particular Church or denomination which is set up over the views of other Churches. In this, the possibility of the contingency of the catholicity of this Church remains undeveloped, since it is claimed that this Church is the norm which all other Churches or communities must meet if they are to be recognized as genuinely and fully catholic.

This way of understanding catholicity is found in some theologies, especially in the Roman Catholic Church, although others, on a more reduced scale, follow this view also. According to this view, one's catholicity is prized as complete and definitive for the rest of the Christian communities which should properly recognize their defective status and conform to the 'complete' one.

This type of catholicity is mainly the result of the universalistic view of the Church's catholicity as conceived by Roman Catholic theology, a view which draws its principles from Augustine's emphasis on the organic unity of the Church (the Church as an organic *totum*), as meant to counteract the Donatist's particularism, and which is not balanced by a proper evaluation of the importance of the 'particular' dimension of the Church. Such catholicity is equated with ecumenism, and catholic universality taken as normative for the universal Church.⁴ This equation remained an important characteristic of the Roman Church after the Second Vatican Council; even then there was no mention of a *qualitative, in depth* sense of catholicity as complementary to the geographical universal one. Catholicity was still regarded as a consequence of the unity and of the universality of the Church and not as its definite, constitutive expression, as established by the inner qualities of faith and practice of sacramental life proper to local Churches. And that remained true despite some references to the catholicity of the sacramental life in the local Christian community as made later in a new draft of the *De Ecclesia*.⁵

One must realize therefore that this view is quite important as representing a certain type of ecclesiology. On this basis the Roman Catholic Church builds on the supposition of its exclusive catholicity by claiming a universal role and place for the Roman Pontiff in the Church catholic. Hence, the Church's catholicity is

conceived of resting simultaneously on two assumptions:

- (1) the Pope is the head of the Church universal;
- (2) the papal communion constitutes 'the entire Catholic Church Christ'.⁶

VII.1.1. The Pope's Centrality within the Church Catholic.

The Pope is thus seen as the one who, by his position in the Church universal as its 'personal centre'⁷, fundamentally determines the 'catholic' or the 'non-catholic' character of those Christian communities and establishes whether they are or are not directly related to the see of Rome.

The catholicity of the Church is represented particularly through the successor of Peter, that is to say the pope who represents the unity and the catholicity of the universal Church.

That is one of the reasons why such concepts as 'Evangelical Catholicity' or 'Conciliar Catholicity', which were presented in ecumenical circles as possible alternatives to a fully actualized Church catholic would, according to Roman Catholic theology, lack the authority which only the Pope can have.⁹

The assertions made at the First Vatican Council were again present at the Second Vatican Council. There were some qualifications, but the intention remained clearly the same: the affirmation of the necessity of having a centre of authority in the Church catholic in the person of the Pope. Without this, the Church cannot be what it is meant to be: the One, Catholic Church of Christ¹⁰, and communion in time with the Church of yesterday, today and tomorrow would be hindered.¹¹ Even the concept of collegiality as defined in the acts of Second Vatican Council, which was meant to designate a diffused and multi-centred type of authority, was accompanied by the view that the episcopal office of the episcopate throughout the entire Church catholic should be united with the Pope as head and focus of communion.¹²

Under such circumstances the following affirmation made by Pope Paul VI is a clear illustration of the view held by the Roman

Catholic Church concerning the position of the Pope within the Church catholic:

Without the Pope the Catholic Church would no longer be Catholic, and without the supreme, efficacious and decisive pastoral office of ¹³Peter the unity of the Church of Christ would utterly collapse.

VII.1.2. The Papal Church is the Catholic Church.

The second premise on which Roman Catholic theology bases its claim for an exclusive catholicity is its authority as such. The Roman Catholic Church is exclusively *the* Church catholic and anyone who wishes to be part of that catholic Church has to return to it, bringing along into the fold of the One Catholic Church those elements of truth which the separated communities might still possess in various degrees.

The Catholic Church is the Church - simply and without qualification - and consequently reunion must be a "return" to this one existing Church. ¹⁴

Therefore, the unity and the catholicity of the Church is not, according to Roman theology, a goal lying ahead of us, but something which has already been manifest in the Roman Catholic Church itself; this is why it claims exclusively to be the Holy Catholic Church, the Church of Christ. This view seems to be the result of a particular conception of the nature of the Church and its unity ¹⁵, according to which Roman Catholicism is entitled to retain a special place over the rest of Christendom. ¹⁶

The call for return to the Church is always attached to the affirmation of the exclusive possession of catholicity by the Roman Church; the call is part of a 'motherly' care for those separated from it which it is keen to express. To return to the Church catholic is in fact to return to the Church which proclaims itself to possess catholicity in an exclusive manner, that is to the Roman Catholic Church. ¹⁷ Hence, the equation of the One Catholic Church of Christ with the Roman Catholic Church is made plain; membership

in one automatically makes oneself member of the other. The only way to be in the Church catholic is to return to Roman Catholicism.¹⁸

The necessity of such centrality is advocated by many as a 'pragmatic', practical requirement, due to a pre-eminence of the Roman Church as an 'institutional and worldwide' communion in which catholicity in totality (or at least most of it) is present as much as it can possibly be in this relative world of ours. The ecumenical movement should properly set up some sort of point of convergence toward which the Churches should ideally look.¹⁹ The ultimate criterion for a church to be considered catholic itself is therefore - besides the quality of the content of its faith, sacramental life and discipline - to remain in communion with all other churches through union with the See of Rome, the centre of Church catholic. 'Recognition' of such communion is the prerogative only of the Church that possesses catholicity exclusively: the Roman Catholic Church.²⁰

However, on a sociological level, the Roman Church itself has had to accept 'the *de facto* formation of national ecclesiastical entities'; on these lines the whole concept of 'centrality' and indeed 'exclusivity' has to be re-evaluated by allowing to those national Churches more freedom of expression of their respective distinctness.²¹

The refusal of Roman Catholicism to accept that another Church could possess catholicity apart from Rome is evident also from the way the relationship between the Roman Church and the ecumenical movement is conceived. The issue once again is who is the centre of the whole Church and where it is to be located: Rome wants it to be the visible presence of the Pope, as Christ's *vicar*, while in the ecumenical movement the centre is rather a visible multiform one, with Christ as the invisible point of convergence.²² For Roman Catholics, because the Church embodies Christ, the invisible point of convergence is seen as visible in the Roman Catholic Church.²³

There are also occasions when an exclusiveness is also affirmed by other Churches apart from Rome (for example, the Orthodox). Since those are not so plainly exclusivist and are not officially stated by those Churches in their entirety we shall not

concern ourselves with them. The relationship which exists, for instance, between the Orthodox Church, as manifesting the one true Church, and other Churches is not conceived in terms of an exclusiveness based on a 'juridical primacy' which would be the focus of the return of all the other non-Orthodox Christians to it.

The exclusiveness of the Orthodox is of another type, built on the faith and the continuity of the one Church by maintaining the fullness of the apostolic faith and respecting tradition as the common gift of the Holy Spirit for all generations.²⁴

VII.2. Inclusive Catholicity.

In opposition to the 'exclusive catholicity', there is also an *inclusive catholicity*, which advocates the necessity of coming together in order to arrive at an agreement accepted by everyone. Here, historical contingency operates, for it accepts the existence of a catholicity, though imperfect, even from this world, as manifested in particular communities, catholicity which will find its fulfilment only in the *eschaton*.

In such a vision there are two ways of achieving that consensus:

- (1) by accepting the presumption that every Christian community, in its own individuality, possesses catholicity in full and therefore there is a plurality of forms of expression. That would imply the existence of complete and final types of catholicity, which could be found in separate Churches. By joining them together, these might achieve some sort of common ground on which they can display a visible wholeness. This is what one may call '*integral participative catholicity*', for it displays an entity in which integral, complete catholicities come together in order to create a whole and to participate in it;
- (2) by accepting the fact that no Christian Church or denomination can claim to possess other than partially the catholicity of the One Church of Christ. This means that the process of achieving the catholicity of this One Church

would be one of bringing together the dispersed elements which exist in each of the Christian communities scattered all over the world as a '*fragmented catholicity*'.

VII.2.1. Integral Participative Catholicity.

The first of the two types of '*inclusive catholicity*', with its accent on the existence of complete and final catholicities in various bodies of Christendom, was a concept which appeared quite early in the ecumenical debates.²⁵ Those who advocate this view argue for their possession of integral catholicity from their claim to live authentically in the wholeness of Christ's truth. Christ in His fullness prevents us from establishing visible marks or signs by which a Church could be judged to be true and catholic other than the Christ's truth followed in faith. Any other attempt to define catholicity in other terms would be considered as an 'uncatholic' one.²⁶ The only 'catholic' way is by recognizing in others the fullness of the presence of Christ and also affirming the freedom which the Spirit granted to individuals. This would be sufficient to attest one's possession of catholicity. And that would help in overcoming existing cultural, linguistic or even doctrinal barriers.²⁷ As a main ecumenical issue this understanding of Church's catholicity appeared in the form of 'conciliar fellowship' as an attempt to step over difficulties in expressing how catholicity should be conceived.

[The 'conciliar fellowship' was meant to signify that] each local church possesses, in communion with the others, the fullness of catholicity, witnesses to the same apostolic faith, and therefore recognizes the others as belonging to the same Church of Christ and guided by the same Spirit.²⁸

Yet, the presentation of the concept of 'inclusive catholicity' and the developed version in its 'conciliar fellowship' form suffer from an essential shortcoming. Both adopt a 'minimalist' approach toward those elements which are commonly acknowledged and held as fundamental in the definition of Church catholic. The Christological *datum*, which they focus on, is, of course, essential for any understanding of Christ's Church. It

needs, nevertheless, to be complemented with other dimensions, such as: Pneumatological, sacramental, etc. ones.

VII.2.2. Fragmented Catholicity.

The other possibility in an 'inclusive catholicity' as stated before is one which can be defined as a '*fragmented catholicity*'. According to it, no Christian community can claim itself to be fully catholic; catholicity exists in each only partially. Therefore, the way towards a full realization of catholicity is by completing in each other what each lacks, each one contributing as a *part* in the context of the whole Body of Christ, the Church catholic.

Generally speaking this concept is reckoned as being a 'Protestant' one, and takes the view that the 'wholeness' of the Gospel - the all-important condition for a true catholicity - will only be possessed in the Kingdom of God.²⁹ Likewise, it is claimed that the 'wholeness' of the Gospel was not fully accomplished even in the primitive Church. Thus the Church of the beginnings was catholic only to some extent, in an incomplete manner.³⁰ The essential requirements for the true catholic Church, i.e. 'the catholic Faith, the Gospel sacraments, the Holy Scripture and the Christian Ministry, and the faith in the One, Holy, Catholic Church' are possessed only partially, in various degrees, by the Christian denominations.³¹ That is precisely because, due to separation from one another, the multitude of Churches are doomed to be defectively and partially catholic, since 'catholicity and schism are mutually exclusive'.³²

Therefore an ecumenical approach to the concept of Church's catholicity should plainly accept both the existence of a fragmented Church and also the recognition of these fragments as fragments of the One Church of Christ. Ecumenicity would bring common sharing of the parts in 'the eschatological unity of the Church which cannot be broken'.³³ The recognition of pertaining to the One Catholic Church would argue for the claim which these Churches make for themselves, namely that they are nothing more

than 'parts of the Holy Catholic Church'.³⁴

This understanding of the Church's catholicity has received a more developed form through the 'branch theory'. According to this, the Church catholic is one by virtue of being Christ's Mystical Body while the fragmented Christian denominations are 'branches' that spring from this main Body. The 'essential mark' necessary for the recognition of each such group as a 'true branch' of the catholic Church is always 'the presence of Christ, through His indwelling Spirit, manifested in holy life and fellowship'.³⁵

Another aspect of this view of the Church's catholicity is one which is based on the understanding of the unity of the Church as being ultimately eschatological. In the end, that is no historical tradition that can conceive of itself as a 'self-consistent whole'.³⁶ This is consistent with the view that catholicity is something which, after all, transcends differences and is not to be seen in terms of possession. It designates a reality which is 'not subject to the polemical disjunction: "either you have it, or you don't"; it rather reflects the realm in which 'fragmentary (concepts) in fragmented churches' are overcome and transcended.³⁷

The Church's catholicity as a fragmented reality seems not to be an exclusively Protestant concept. Expressions which present a particular Church as a 'portion of the universal Church' or the concept of the whole Mystical Body as a corporate 'Body of Churches' may be found even in Roman Catholic theology.³⁸ The same happens in the case of any view which refers unity to transcendent.

One of the main criticisms which can be made against this 'fragmented catholicity' is that it sees catholicity only as a goal to be fulfilled sometime in a undesignated future. A comprehensive understanding of Church's catholicity should imply both the existence of this catholicity as a *given reality* which can be made manifest in the actual life of the Church and *also* as a *goal* to be fully realized in the fullness of Christ's glory, His Kingdom.

One might also wonder whether a synthesis (which, after all, the Church catholic is meant to strive for, as a point of convergence of various 'partial contributions' from the 'fragmented churches') could be seen as a solution. Trying to fit together broken pieces of truth does not suggest that one will have the

whole truth as a result. The outcome could very well be quite the opposite.

We do not arrive at truth by fitting errors together...The true way of synthesis is...to go behind our contemporary systems and strive for recovery of the fullness of tradition.³⁹

As a conclusion to what has been said so far, it seems that the only way to work for the manifestation of that catholicity, which some regard as fragmentarily possessed, some as completely possessed, yet open to perfection, is to be ecumenical. This would imply striving towards a fuller realization of a growing unity and catholicity among all the Churches which by their coming together are a sign of hope for Christians worldwide. That is why the One Church of Christ is to be seen as being not simply catholic (which it is indeed as belonging to Christ), but 'in process of becoming so'.⁴⁰ The tension between the 'already' and the 'not yet' will be resolved when Christ will reveal Himself in His full glory and only then will His Church fully be the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church which He prayed for.

VII.3. Dynamic Contingent Catholicity.

A *dynamic contingent catholicity* is seen through the perspective of the historical dynamics which accepts the fact that individually Churches can have a true notion of catholicity, yet that they might be different from one another in their respective ways of outwardly expressing the content of their catholicity. This predicament is structured around two essential elements: *contingency* and *finality*. Since this approach seems to possess the necessary elements to present a viable and constructive projection in the perspective of the ecumenical debate around the concept of Church's catholicity, a deeper analysis might prove to be of some benefit.

The ecumenical movement is ultimately trying to achieve a concrete expression of the restoration of the One Catholic Church. Faced with the modern development of a global consciousness, Christians became more and more aware of the necessity for the

manifestation of the universality of Christ's message.⁴¹ Symptomatically, the ecumenical movement is meant to represent both the sadness of a divided Church and also the sign of hope in a *prolepsis* of the future, which is already present in this world. Such a future would hold in store that total expression of catholicity in which what is manifested now only as a foretaste will receive full vindication. Till then, since the Church and its catholicity 'is far more than can be seen and experienced',⁴² the perception of that reality in its entirety remains always perfectible.

The basis from which one has to begin the analysis of this aspect of Church catholicity is simultaneously Trinitarian, Christological and Pneumatological.

The Church which has been created out of the world through the Word of God as the epitome of the Church (the Church is the Body of Christ in its divine-human manifestation) is both historically conditioned, yet remains divine due to the Lord's presence in it.⁴³ His presence is constitutive. The Church in its unity and catholicity will 'copy' its Head in whom, in communion with the Holy Spirit, the catholicity of the Church is already given. The Church thus becomes 'an *inaugurated eschatology*'.⁴⁴ In Him, the Church, and at a wider level the whole creation, find their only finality. In this sense, one can say that the Church lives with the expectation for a fuller expression of its catholicity.⁴⁵

In the divine-human person of Christ therefore the Church finds itself both still '*in statu viae*', while yet already '*in statu patriae*', a human historical society as well as the Body of Christ.

On the historical level no *final* goal has yet been attained. But the *ultimate* reality has been disclosed and revealed.⁴⁶

In such a context, the catholicity of the Church is to be seen as both its unquestionable *possession* and a fundamental *task* yet to be fulfilled. This fact reopens the question of how the tension between the 'already' (Matt 28:18; Colos 1:15-20 etc.) and the 'not yet' (1 Cor 15:24; Hebr 2:8 etc.) can be better employed in order to give meaning to what is complete and what is still to be

perfected and deepened.⁴⁷ What seems to matter most is not historical evolution as such, but what lies at the end of history. Thus, 'history receives its unity from its goal'.⁴⁸ And seen from this perspective catholicity, as a gift of the Spirit, is also a task to pursue, 'a call and an engagement'.⁴⁹

Moreover, the Church's catholicity does not even depend ultimately on how successful the mission of the Church is. Rather, it is given from the very beginning.⁵⁰ Nonetheless, in a sense 'the Church as she exists to-day can be said to be not yet *fully* and *explicitly* Catholic'.⁵¹ The Church is catholic by right, *de juro*, in as far as it is the will of Christ that it be so. However, 'the catholicity *de facto* is not yet complete' and therefore catholicity has to be understood 'in a moral sense', namely as a permanent growth through a process of continuous self-rediscovery towards a future perfect state.⁵²

The importance of the local eucharistic community in giving concrete expression to the Church catholic is, according to the present ecumenical debate, also to be emphasized. There, the worshipping community is 'in the very process of becoming what she is in the service and witness to the world',⁵³ and also becoming 'catholic constantly anew'.⁵⁴ This, however, should not imply that catholicity is a 'sheer aspiration', something which does not exist and which ought to arrive sometime in the future. It rather affirms the reality of catholicity both as a gift and as a permanent task.

The Church "becomes" catholic in the sense that being catholic by nature, she needs to make manifest that quality of life and witness which has to become the life and witness of all men, in each and all places, now and at all times.⁵⁵

In the same sense, the validation of what happens in the historical sequence of the preaching of the Word and of the administration of the sacraments in the local community will be the 'unveiling of a new creation which already in Christ is reality'. Hence, *Parousia* should be more than a 'final consummation of the act in term of linear time'; it gives 'to (the world) a new meaning and a new value, "transvaluating" the world'.⁵⁶

The relationship between the continuity of the existing

Church, subjected to the contingency and relativity of history, and the continuity of the Church 'as the new creation in Christ' is also, in the ecumenical debate, significant in the quest for catholicity. This continuity rests upon the 'embodiment' in Christ of the new creation as an already existing fact and through whom this new creation lives in a 'new time' (Barth) with the eternal God.⁵⁷ In this sense, catholicity and the manifestation of the Church as such will have to be conceived of as transcending history, that is belonging to the 'age to come', while only a foretaste of that future age, through the presence of the Resurrected Christ, can be perceived in this present time.

The history of Salvation was fulfilled and "the time of the Church" is eschatological: "the last time". From the point of view of *Heilsgeschichte* the Church *has no history*, it is already *in statu patriae*, and is always the actualization of its fullness of salvation accomplished by Christ *ἄναξ* - once for all.⁵⁸

Therefore, contingency presupposes the existence of a *rationale*, a *raison d'etre* within history: nothing happens just because it happens, but happens because there is a dynamic of history which is open to new events related to the past or to the present ones. Neither is it a concealed determinism. It is rather a set of essential factors which leads to the occurrence of a certain event. Unless these requirements are met, no event could have an ultimate meaning in itself or be of real value in the perspective of the history of humanity.⁵⁹

In such a framework, it is important to understand how personal views on a certain matter can be true, yet different. In the same way, no concept of catholicity can be seen as truly complete, in the full sense of the word, apart from being projected from the perspective of the contingency to which every single understanding of that concept is connected with other interpretations, equally true and contingent. Catholicity requires therefore a sense of inter-dependence between contingent differences which ought, nonetheless, not to be divisive in their content and purpose. The focus should be on the relationship which binds together anticipation and fulfillment: something is true and also catholic in so far as it is an anticipation of something else

which is yet to be fulfilled.⁶⁰

The importance of contingency in terms of finality and fulfillment has been made plain by the dynamics of history which were initiated by the Incarnate Son of God, filled with the Holy Spirit, in and through His redemptive acts. Thus, history ceased to be a succession of events with little if any connection at all to what went before and to what came after, or in which the future has no impact upon the present.

It is because the integral solution to history lies beyond its bounds that only the Church, living in the light of the *parousia*, truly informs all History, and brings it to pass, and fulfills it.⁶¹

Hence, catholicity can be felt as a presence in the actual life of the Church; yet this presence is only a true *πρόληψις*, a foretaste, an anticipation of what is still to come (as opposite to *ἔννοια*, which denotes something already acquired by experience).⁶² This view clearly locates the finality of catholicity in the fulfillment of history⁶³, includes it and dismisses any particular claim for the present and complete possession of catholicity by a certain specific community, but does not disallow the Christian truthfulness it aims at expressing.

Such an accent on contingency ought not to deny the truthfulness which one's own catholicity may bear. Although truth is realized through a relative apprehension, it ought to be considered as of a great value in any attempt to understand the catholicity of the Church. Truth is something that we always strive to arrive at. Yet, due to our inevitable shortcomings in this present existence of ours, 'we are on our way to truth, and every theological truth is one that we have in provisional form and is capable of correction'.⁶⁴ In this respect, the Roman Church might be true in pointing at the importance of catholicity, although it might very well be wrong in saying 'I alone have it'.

Contingency and truthfulness are both important and relevant in the quest for the catholicity of the Church. Rome itself seems to come to understand more and more the necessity for a fuller expression of that 'potential catholicity' which has remained with

it whole and unbroken.⁶⁵ In this context it is reasonable to expect that while a church asserts its continuous preservation of the pattern of the Church catholic, as intended by Christ, it should recognize, in all humility, the necessity for renewal in its empirical form.⁶⁶

In the light of what has been said so far, it is obvious that an ecumenical understanding of Church's catholicity would see it not as 'a state of being' or as 'pattern of sheer existence'. It would rather conceive of it as 'a way of living', a quality of living fully, integrally and totally in Christ, in the anticipation of a superior state of being.⁶⁷ This image of the Church as a living organism, which stresses the unity in a whole would need to be enlarged with the idea of a 'symphony of personalities', whereby co-participation of various persons in a common context, as based on the Trinitarian mystery (cf. John 17:21 and 23) is emphasized, so that we may arrive at the innermost substance of what catholicity really ought to reflect.

The Holy Spirit *historicizes* Christ's *martyria*; in other words, in history and through the Church, it accomplishes and sets in motion this *martyria* accomplished once and for all, by which the personal communion of God and men can be renewed and become a continuing event for all men. In this way the Spirit *catholicizes* Christ's witness, that is, invites all men through the Church to enter fully into this new relationship with God. The Spirit also *personalizes* Christ's witness by choosing certain persons to participate in this event and transforming them into members of the One Body of Christ by the free decision of their faith. He creates in this way the conditions making possible the participation of all men.⁶⁸

This image of a 'living organism' which tries to understand how 'individual' personalities concur in expressing the Church's catholicity comes closer to the concept of 'unity-in-diversity' or 'diversity-in-unity'.⁶⁹ Again, the Trinitarian basis of the Church provides the ground for that Church to be a unity in diversity, 'as something to be not only admitted but actively desired'.⁷⁰ However, not all diversity is legitimate since diversity is not the same as divisiveness. To be diverse is not the same as to be divisive; diversity enriches while divisiveness diminishes a common purpose.⁷¹ This 'plurality in unity' is a reality which God gave to

His Church as something which would receive its final meaning at the end of history. Until then, we perceive it only *proleptically* in our human history, not as a 'mere undifferentiated monism' but as a 'rich union of function and of being'.⁷²

Our entire life, with all its events, is therefore characterized as contingent, though dependent upon something beyond our relative existence. That contingency is plainly expressed in Christ's Resurrection, which not only 'opens to the believer the future beyond death as salvation' but at the same time gives to individual events of our life their ultimate meaning, which would otherwise have remained in the purely provisional state of our existence.⁷³ Nevertheless, the emphasis on the 'Christ event' should not hinder the significance, though relative and limited, which history itself has in its proleptical orientation. Otherwise history will be rendered totally meaningless.⁷⁴

The truth of the matter is that history should not be suppressed or devalued in its relation to the Church as the living Body of Christ. It rather has to be placed in the perspective of eschatology. A limitation of the historical reality of Christ and His Church to a purely 'existential interpretation', according to which they have value only for what we are meant to be 'here and now' and not for what we are called upon to be 'in the likeness' of the Transfigured Christ in His Kingdom, would deny the very 'contingent character' that the Church possesses by virtue of its intimate connection with the Resurrected Christ.

It follows that the reality of the Church catholic ought to be put in the context of a 'continuous and open system of contingent realities and events' which in Christ receive their ultimate meaning.⁷⁵ In this contingent existence of ours, the Son of God became incarnate and through His Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection has re-ordered our relative condition, placing it on a different basis from the dis-ordered one in which our self-proclaimed independence had thrown us.⁷⁶

That is why both the exclusive and the inclusive approaches to the notion of catholicity cannot render a real image to the understanding of Church catholicity. It is only from the point of view of the contingency of history that one can see the scope, the

finality, and the eschatological fulfillment of the Church catholic. Hence, the way out of the deadlock which seems to affect the concept of catholicity as conceived in some ecumenical circles could be a *contingent dynamic catholicity*, which would employ the perspective of the dynamics of history as set in motion by Christ's Incarnation and Resurrection and through the inauguration of the Kingdom, by the descending of the Holy Spirit, at the Pentecost.

That would mean, in the end, that neither historical pragmatism, nor the sort of contentment which a 'complete' notion of catholicity carries with it, though their proponents are perhaps unaware of its implications, can possibly bring about an understanding of Church's catholicity in its comprehensiveness. Moreover, it is the tension between the '*already*' and the '*not yet*' which has to be properly balanced in order to retain that sort of understanding of catholicity which does not stop at the stage of 'here and now', but also looks towards what it is yet to come. Catholicity, looked upon from the perspective of history, understands the present through the eyes of the past so that the future will be the validation and the complete transposition of what both the past and the present have already revealed in their relatively incomplete state.

Thus, one's understanding of catholicity might be *true* but *contingent*. And therefore an enhancement of the quality of this catholicity can only be achieved when one's understanding of this reality joins the other's view of his or her own catholicity. If this is the case, true catholicity will emerge as all Christians join together and face the future.⁷⁷ The ecumenical movement is trying to bring that about by seeking ways and employing strategies through which people can work out the Church's catholicity. Whether it will succeed or not depends essentially on how contingency, partiality, and finality are looked upon and taken more seriously into account whenever one makes an attempt to define his or her position in the quest for catholicity.

The ecumenical endeavour towards a fuller expression of the catholicity of the Church, though it will always be contingent and relative in this world, is something to be cherished and encouraged. Perhaps looking more carefully towards what we have in

common rather than emphasizing what divides us⁷⁸ would bring about new insights into the issue of catholicity of the Church. And the outcome could be a Church which will be closer than ever to the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ.

Notes I

1. 'Catholicus' was the title of the general Procurator of a diocese who collected the Emperor's revenue in several particular provinces which formed the diocese; cf. J. Pearson, 'An Exposition of the Creed', (Article ix), Oxford 1864, in *Anglicanism. The Thought and Practice of the Church of England illustrated from the religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. by P.E. More and F.L. Cross, SPCK, London 1951, p. 34. In philosophy καθολικός has been employed in order to point towards 'a universal clause'; cf. H. de Lubac, S.J., *Catholicisme. Les aspects sociaux du dogme*, Ed. du Cerf, Paris 1947, p. 25.

2 Cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion. Studies in Personhood and the Church*, Darton, Longman and Todd, London 1985, p. 143.

3. *Epistola ad Smyrnaeos*, viii, 2; P.G. 5:713B: 'ὅπου ἂν φανῆ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος, ἐκεῖ τὸ πλῆθος ἔστω, ὡπερ ὅπου ἂν ᾖ ἡ Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς, ἐκεῖ ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία'. Lambert's assertion that St Ignatius uses the term 'catholic' as an equivalent for the pagan 'οἰκουμένη' is groundless (See B. Lambert, *Ecumenism. Theology and History*, trans. L.C. Sheppard, Burns & Oates/Herder and Herder, London 1966, p. 37). It is clear from the context as well as from the way in which it is used in other instances that 'catholic' was meant to signify that quality of the concrete fellowship of the local Church by which it is related to other fellowships constituted on similar principles.

N.B. P.G. stands for *Patrologia Graeca* while P.L. refers to *Patrologia Latina*, both multi-volume series edited by J.-P. Migne in Paris, 1857-. Throughout this work these abbreviations will be employed, as is the usual practice in patristic studies.

4. 'Martyrium Polycarpi', in *The Apostolic Fathers*, ed. J.B. Lightfoot, Macmillan & Co., London 1912, p. 189. Borovoy's understanding of this passage gives the impression that 'catholic' is a quality of the universal Church and does not apply to the local church as well; cf. 'The Meaning of Catholicity', in *The Ecumenical Review*, 16 (1964), pp. 27-28.

5. 'Martyrium Polycarpi' viii, *op.cit.*, p. 192: 'καὶ πάσης τῆς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας'.

6. *Historia Ecclesiastica* v, 16; P.G. 20:468C: 'καθολικὸς κόσμῳ γέγονεν πόλεμος'.

7. 'τῆς καθολικῆς θρησκείας'. Cf. *ibidem* x, 6, 1; P.G. 20:892A. 'Καθολικὴ signified therefore "orthodox" rather than "universal"'; G. Florovsky, 'Le corps du Christ vivant', in *La Sainte Eglise Universelle. Confrontation oecuménique*, Delachaux et Nestlé, Paris 1948, p. 24. This is seen by some of the Protestant theologians as one of the most unfortunate developments. See for instance S.F.

Allison et al., *The Fullness of Christ. The Church's Growth into Catholicity*; Being a Report presented to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, SPCK, London 1950, p. 4.

In fact those who hold that view fail to recognize that that was the meaning of the word in its original usage, as Canon 8 of Nicea (325) and Canon 7 of Constantinople (381), among other references from early Church history, bear witness. See *The Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church, their Canons and Dogmatic Decrees, together with the Canons of all the local Synods which have received Ecumenical Acceptance*, ed. by H.R. Percival, T & T Clark, Edinburgh 1988, pp. 19-20 and 185.

8. Cf. W. Pannenberg, 'The Significance of Eschatology for the Understanding of the Apostolicity and Catholicity of the Church', in *One in Christ*, 6 (1970), p. 424.

9. 'The Church of Christ, in its primary institution, was made to be a diffusive nature, to spread and extend itself from the city of Jerusalem, where it first began, to all the parts and corners of the earth'; cf. J. Pearson, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

10. Cf. G. Thils, 'La notion de catholicité de l'Eglise à l'époque moderne', in *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*, 13 (1936), p. 6.

There is a fundamental difference, however, between the Orthodox view on the original meaning of catholicity as applied to the Church and the Roman Catholic one. This is obvious in views held by such eminent Roman Catholic theologians as Hans Küng: 'While the individual local Church is an entire Church, it is not the entire [catholic] Church. The entire Church is only made up by all the local Churches together.' He concludes: 'Catholicity is essentially a question of totality.' Cf. *The Church*, Search Press, London 1981, p. 300. The Orthodox view accepts this, but adds that the local eucharistic community is important and is, after all, *the local catholic Church*.

11. Cf. G. Florovsky, 'Le Corps du Christ vivant', *op.cit.*, p. 26. In its original meaning the term 'catholicity' was not meant to refer to geography: 'The world-wide extension or the universality of the Church is only an outward sign, one which is not absolutely necessary. The Church was catholic even when Christian communities were but solitary rare islands in a sea of unbelief and paganism. And the Church will remain catholic even unto the end of time when the "falling away" will be revealed, when the Church once more will dwindle to a "small flock".' (cf. Luke 18:8). *Idem, Bible, Church, Tradition: An Eastern Orthodox View*, Nordland Publishing Co., Belmont, Mass. 1972, p. 40. See also J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, St Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York 1983, p. 7.

12. Cf. G. Thils, *op. cit.*, p. 6. Yet outstanding Roman Catholic theologians like Fr. Congar still hold a 'catholicity=universality' view in line with the traditional Roman concept: 'Catholicity means universality': cf. *Divided Christendom. A Catholic Study of the Problem of Reunion*, trans. M.A. Bonsfield, The Centenary Press, London 1939, p. 93. The same is what Th. Sartory affirms in his *The*

Oecumenical Movement and the Unity of the Church, trans. H.C. Graef, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1963, p. 222.

It is worth noticing that part of Western Catholicism, as represented by the Old Catholic Church, tries to distance itself from past usage of 'catholic' in terms of 'universal' or 'general' for in that way "'Catholic" would be made the poorer and be limited'; A. Rinkel, 'The Old Catholic Church' in *The Nature of the Church*. Papers presented to the theological Commission appointed by the Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order, ed. by R.N. Flew, SCM Press Ltd, London 1952, p. 153.

13. '*Martyrium Polycarpi*' xvi, in *ed. cit.*, p. 195. J. Zizioulas uses this text and another one (see note 4 above) to stress the legitimacy of the view that there is no destructive tension between local and universal nor is there a complete identification between 'catholic' and 'universal' (as for some scholars when they interpreted the text from '*Martyrium Polycarpi*' viii, for instance Lightfoot, Bardy etc.). On the other hand, the Protestants could not conceive that a Church which is bound to a specific place on earth could possibly pretend to be geographically catholic; G. Thils, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

On the contrary, 'the local Church is the "dwelling" place (παροικία) of the whole Church' (see the text already mentioned in note 4 above). Cf. J. Zizioulas, 'The Eucharistic Community and the Catholicity of the Church', in *One in Christ*, 6 (1970), pp. 314-315.

14. Tertullian, *De praescriptio haereticorum* xxvi; *P.L.* 2:38.

15. St Cyprian, *Epistola* 49 20; *P.L.* 3:755.

16. Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* vi, 43; *P.G.* 20:636: 'ἕνα ἐπίσκοπον δεῖν εἶναι ἐν καθολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ'. For a more detailed account of the Church Fathers' understanding of the Church's catholicity see the Appendices.

17. Cf. P. Batiffol, *Le Catholicisme de St Augustin*, I, Paris 1920, p. 212. The fact that Donatism has remained a Western problem, leaving the East untouched and also that the consequent Western theology is very much indebted to St Augustine's thinking may explain why until recently this theology (as expressly represented by Roman Catholicism) retained the more 'universalistic' view of catholicity. See also J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 143-144.

18. Cf. St Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 18, 23; *P.G.* 33:1044, as cited by J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 144. In this sense, Vladimir Lossky draws a distinction between *de facto* 'catholicity (= Christian universality)' and 'virtual catholicity', that is 'Christian universalism'; 'Du troisième attribut de l'Eglise', in *Dieu Vivant*, 10 (1948), p. 83.

19. Cf. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 145. "'Universality" has a quite abstract character, while catholicity is concrete'; V. Lossky, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

20. G. Florovsky, 'Sobornost: The Catholicity of the Church', in *The Church of God. An Anglo-Russian Symposium*, ed. by E.L. Mascall, SPCK, London 1934, p. 56. See also J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, Sheed and Ward, New York 1966, p. 4.
21. Through the 'conversion of the Empire' by the Byzantine emperors the universality of the Church became a more visible feature. 'Christian life was now lived in the world which was no longer organized on a basis of localism, but on the Empire as a whole...', G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 95.
22. *Ibidem*, p. 42. Or in Lossky's words: 'Catholicity has nothing to do with "common opinion"'; *op. cit.*, p. 89.
23. H. de Lubac, *Catholicisme*, p. 26. Since it is and has always been catholic by her very nature, (a 'Church is catholic or it is not the Church', cf. Barth as cited by C. O'Grady, M.C.S., *The Church in the Theology of Karl Barth*, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1968, p. 276) 'the Church was no less Catholic when she was a handful of Galileans in an upper room than she is when comprising more than three hundred millions of men of all nations and tongues'; Y. Congar, *Divided Christendom*, p. 253.
24. G. Florovsky, 'Le Corps du Christ vivant', *op. cit.*, p. 27.
25. That is the case with Barth and indeed with the Reformation in general for whom 'there can be no perception of the catholicity of the Church, whether by small numbers or by great'; cf. Barth's *Church Dogmatics*, vol. iv, part 1, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh 1956, p. 709.
26. Cf. W. Elert, *The Structure of Lutheranism*, vol 1, Concordia Publishing House, London 1962, p. 285.
27. Therefore, the Church is conceived as *Christenheit*, 'the universal communion of believers scattered throughout the world, spiritually joined to, and correlative to, the ascended and invisible Christ', and who are baptized and called Christian in name; cf. T.F. Torrance, 'The Eschatology of Faith: Martin Luther', in *Luther: Theologian for Catholics and Protestants*, ed. by G. Yule, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh 1985, p. 187. This definition tends to neutralize the worldly and temporal Roman concept of the Church and to give to the Church a more spiritual outlook.
28. Cf. Luther's *Works* (Weimar edition), 1883ff, 10/3:49, 12:275f and 27:417, as cited by T.F. Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 166.
29. A classification in this sense is to be found in the work of Johannes Wollebius, '*Compendium Theologiae Christianae*' (published in 1626), chap xxv, xx, in *Reformed Dogmatics*, ed. and transl. by J.W. Beardslee III, Oxford University Press, New York 1965, p. 137. Another Reformed understanding of the Church's catholicity speaks about four elements: place, persons, time and parts; cf. H. Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics set out and illustrated from the Sources*, trans.

G.T. Thomson, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London 1950, p. 664.

30. Known as Cyprian's axiom (*De unitate Ecclesiae* VI; *P.L.* 4:519) its roots can be traced back to St Ignatius of Antioch (*Epistola ad Philadelphianos* III; *P.G.* 5:699), Irenaeus (*Adversus Haereses* III, 24, 1; *P.L.* 7:966), Clement of Alexandria (*Paedagogus* I, VI; *P.G.* 8:281); the first complete formulation is that of Origen (*Homilia in Jesu Nave* III, 5; *P.G.* 12:841); cited by H. Küng, *The Church*, p. 313. See also pp. 314-319 where Küng analyses the various aspects of the axiom.

31. H. Küng, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

For other non-Catholics it would be better if a 'positive formulation' were used: 'Salvation inside the Church' because in Christ the whole world receives God's grace; cf. *Ibidem*, or, as Fr. Florovsky puts it, because 'salvation is the Church'; 'Sobornost: The Catholicity of the Church', p. 53.

32. Such an idea is sustained by some theologians like B.C. Butler who sees the position of Roman Catholicism endangered in terms of its authority to define where the Church is and what she stands for; cf. *The Theology of Vatican II*, Darton, Longman & Todd, London 1981, pp. 166-167.

33. M. Thurian, *Visible Unity and Tradition*, trans. W.J. Kerrigan, Darton, Longman and Todd, London 1964, p. 85. 'In making room for the world's diversity, tradition manifests the Church's catholicity in space'; *Ibidem*, p. 95.

There is a danger, though, that in stressing too much this universality of all nations and races one might arrive at a situation when a 'supranational Church' would become less diverse and more an amorphous mass of peoples; thus, the very idea of a 'diverse catholic Church' could be seriously undermined. See for example Pope Pius XII's *Negli Ultimi* (1945), as cited by B. Lambert, *Ecumenism. Theology and History*, p. 442.

34. H. Küng, *The Church*, p. 315; cf. *Lumen Gentium*, ii, 16, in W.M. Abbott, S.J., (ed.), *The Documents of Vatican II*, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1967, pp. 34-35. All subsequent references to the Documents of Vatican II will be to this edition.

35. The visible structural elements of the Church make possible the existence of the Church outside the limits of a 'complete communion' too; cf. B.C. Butler, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-167. 'Grace operates outside communality, but does not save'. Yet, it is right to say that 'there are many bonds, still not broken, whereby the schisms are held together in a certain unity with the Church'; G. Florovsky, 'The Limits of the Church' in *Sourozh*, 26 (1986), pp. 23-24.

36. 'The Church is catholic not only because it is an all-embracing entity, not only because it unites all its members, all local Churches, but because it is catholic all through, in its very smallest part, in every act and event of its life'; G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 41.

37. *Ibidem*, p. 52. In the same sense Fr. Florovsky argues that not even a majority, even an Ecumenical Council, could automatically become a guarantee to the truth: 'Decisive value resides in inner catholicity, not in empirical universality'; *ibidem*, p. 53.

38. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 52. 'Charismatic tradition is truly universal; in its fulness it embraces every kind of *semper* and *ubique* and unites all. But empirically it may not be accepted by all'; *ibidem*. Thus, it seems almost impossible to say 'where the limits can be objectively and finally drawn'; J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 162. The same view can be traced in Fr. Florovsky's thought, for whom no canonical signs or marks can delimit the extremities of the true Church; cf. 'The Limits of the Church', p. 15. Hence, 'in the sects themselves - and even among the heretics- the Church continues to perform her saving and sanctifying work'. *Ibidem*, p. 22.

39. K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. iv, part 1, p. 703. Barth considers that 'catholic' would better replace the narrower term 'ecumenical' in contemporary attempts made towards Christian reunion and visible unity. Moreover, O'Grady sees in Barth a rejection of the tendency to equate the Church's catholicity with 'the universality of its unity' and a stress on sameness as closer to what catholicity really does signify; cf. *The Church in Catholic Theology: Dialogue with Karl Barth*, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1969, p. 305. In this sense, catholicity 'denotes the extension of the unity'; cf. J.H. Heidegger, *Medulla Theologiae Christianae* xxvi, 11, (Zuerich 1696), cited by H. Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, p. 664, or as in Calvin's words: 'The Church is called "catholic", or "universal", because there could not be two or three Churches unless Christ be torn asunder - which cannot happen!'; *Institutes (Christianae Religionis Institutio)* iv, 1, 2, trans. F.L. Battles, ed. J.T. McNeill (Library of Christian Classics, xx-xxi), 1961, p. 87.

The emphasis which the Reformation put on authenticity or sameness (identity) as being the same as catholicity is useful to some extent. (See Luther's substitution of the term 'catholic' in the Creed by 'Christian' and Calvin's nearly consistent view of catholicity as unity; Barth seems to distance himself from this). Cf. C. Welch, 'Catholicity', in *The Ecumenical Review*, 16 (1964), p. 34. Also H. Hartwell, *The Theology of Karl Barth: An Introduction*, G. Duckworth and Co. Ltd., London 1964, p. 146. Nevertheless, like many other aspects of the theology of the Reformation, these efforts bear little fruit because of their unilateral, one-sided and minimalistic approach.

40. Cf. V. Lossky, 'Du troisième attribut de l'Eglise', *op. cit.*, pp. 83-84. Visser't Hooft discerns a secular meaning of 'ecumenical' with two aspects: a) geographical (whole world) and b) political (whole Roman Empire); cf. 'Appendix I. The Word "Ecumenical"- its History and Use', in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, ed. R. Rouse and S.C. Neill, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1968, p. 735.

41. Cf. 'The Statement of the Central Committee of the WCC, at Rolle, Switzerland (August 1951)', art. 2, as cited by P.W. Fuerth, *The Concept of Catholicity in the Documents of the World Council of Churches. 1948-1968: A Historical Study with Systematic-Theological Reflections*, Editrice Anselmiana, Roma 1973, p. 35. In Borovoy's view 'catholic' enlarged the understanding of 'ecumenical' by receiving the meaning of something 'absolutely ubiquitous'; 'The Meaning of Catholicity', *op. cit.*, p. 28.

42. Cf. H. van der Linde and J.L. Witte, *Ecumenism and the Roman Catholic Church*, ed. by A. von Geusau, Sheed and Ward, London 1966, pp. 74-85. Although it appears in the New Testament fifteen times, mainly with the meaning of 'the whole world' (e.g. Acts 17:31; Matt 24:14 etc.), 'oikoumene' was used for the first time in a specific Christian context in Canon 6 of the Council of Constantinople (381) where it refers back to the General Synod of the East held in Nicea (325) as being 'ecumenical'; cf. G. Tavard, 'What Elements Determine the Ecumenicity of a Council', in *Concilium* (Edinburgh), 167 (1983), p. 64. See also Visser't Hooft, *op. cit.*, p. 736. After the Council of Ephesus (431) 'ecumenical' begun to signify the universal extension of the content of the decrees and canons which emerged from these Councils; cf. *ibidem*.

43. Cf. C. O'Grady, *The Church in Catholic Theology*, p. 308, in his analysis of Barth's view on the relation between 'catholic' and 'ecumenical'.

44. See N. Zabolotsky, *Catholicity (Sobornost) of the Church in the Light of the Gospel and the Epistles*, p. 5, cited by P.W. Fuerth, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

45. Cf. B. Lambert, *Ecumenism*, pp. 29-30. Starting with the Oxford Conference of 1937 'the term has been used in both the traditional sense of "concerning the Church as a whole", and in the modern senses of "concerning the relationship of different Churches", and "expressing the consciousness of the wholeness of the Church"; Visser't Hooft, *op. cit.*, p. 740. See also G.H. Tavard, *Two Centuries of Ecumenism*, Notre Dame, Fides, London 1960, p. xi.

46. 'καθ' ὅλου is not the same as καθὰ παντός; it belongs not to the phenomenal and empirical, but to the noumenal and ontological plane; it describes the very essence, not the external manifestations'; G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 40.

This is in consonance with what S. Bulgakoff calls 'ontological catholicity' and which designates a mystical and metaphysical depth; *L'Orthodoxie*, Librairie Félix Alcan, Paris 1932, p. 86.

47. *Ibidem*. Or as St Cyril of Jerusalem puts it, the Church is catholic because 'in the Church the dogmas are taught fully, without any omission, catholically, and completely', *Catechesis* 18, 23; P.G. 33:1044.

48. N. Zabolotsky, *op. cit.*, p. 4, cited by P.W. Fuerth, *op. cit.*, p. 151. 'Catholicity/sobornost, then, is basically God's gift to

man which calls for man's active participation'. *Ibidem*.

49. Cf. V. Borovoy, 'The Meaning of Catholicity', *op. cit.*, p. 31.

Khomiakov's intention seems to have been that of employing *sobornost* in order to point towards a 'fundamental, primordial quality of divine origin, which manifests itself in a milieu comprising numerous cultural, national, social and political forms'; V. Lossky, 'Ecclesiology: Some Dangers and Temptations', in *Sobornost*, vol. 4/1 (1982), p. 24.

50. V. Lossky, 'Du troisième attribut de l'Eglise', *op. cit.*, p. 80.

Zabolotsky's concept of '*synagogia*' (assembly/intimacy) especially seems to support the translation of 'catholicity' by '*sobornost*', in which heaven and earth, divine and human meet; 'Catholicity (*sobornost*) of the Church', p. 6, cited by P. Fuerth, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

51. J. Zizioulas, 'The Eucharistic Community and the Catholicity of the Church', *op. cit.*, p. 107.

52. Cf. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 45. 'All that was said later on, was said from catholic completeness and is of equal value and force with that which was pronounced in the beginning'; *ibidem*, p. 50.

53. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 178.

54. *LW* 41:196-197: 'We are and belong to the ancient, holy, apostolic Church, as its true children and members.' 'Hence we belong to the ancient Church and are one with it'; *ibidem*. *LW* stands for *Luther's Works*, (56 vols.), American edition, ed. J. Pelikan et al., Concordia Publishing House, Philadelphia and Saint Louis 1955-. All the subsequent quotations will be made from this edition unless stated otherwise.

55. *WA* 38:220, cited by P. Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia 1970, p. 333.

56. W. Elert, *The Structure of Lutheranism*, p. 286. 'For it is dangerous and terrible to hear or believe anything against the harmonious testimony, faith and doctrine of the entire Holy Christian Church which has now endured harmoniously in the whole world for more than 1,500 years'; *LW* 38:292.

57. G. Florovsky, 'Le corps du Christ vivant', *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53. 'It is an all-embracing identity which at bottom makes a Church catholic, the fact that despite all the constant and necessary changes of the times and of varying forms, and despite its blemishes and weakness, the Church in every place and in every age remains unchanged in its essence, whatever form it takes: this must be its aim and its desire'; Hans Küng, *The Church*, p. 302. For Küng catholicity equals Vincent of Lerins' definition as given in his *Commonitorium* 1, 2; *P.L.* 50:640, *ibidem*, pp. 298-299.

For others, though, 'the Vincentian Canon is a postulate of

historical simplification, of a harmful primitivism'; G. Florovsky, 'Sobornost: The Catholicity of the Church', *op. cit.*, p. 70.

58. H. Küng, *op. cit.*, p. 310. In Küng's view, historical catholicity is conditioned by the permanent orientation of all Christian communities towards 'the only certain stable and stabilizing factor in the whole', that is the Roman Catholic Church; *ibidem*.

Roman Catholic theologians, even after Vatican II, still advocate the pre-eminence of the requirement of submission to Rome's discipline over the continuity of certain catholic elements which might have survived in those communities that came out of the Reformation; cf. N. Nissiotis, 'Ecclesiology and Ecumenism of the Second Session of the Vatican Council II', in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 10/1 (1964), p. 31.

59. Cf. 'Remains of Alexander Knox', vol. iii, London 1837, p. 292, in G.H. Tavard, *The Quest for Catholicity. A Study in Anglicanism*, Burns & Oates, London 1963, p. 151. The only newness acceptable would be that which rejects the novelties brought into the Church by Roman Catholicism; cf. Simon Patrick, 'The Second Note of the Church Examined, viz. Antiquity', (1687), pp. 55f, cited in *Anglicanism*, p. 141.

60. Cf. G.H. Tavard, *The Quest for Catholicity*, p. 24.

61. Bishop L. Andrews referring to the well known definition of Vincent of Lerins states: 'Let that be reckoned catholic which always obtained everywhere among all, and which always and everywhere and by all was believed', in 'Responsio', p. 25, cited by H.R. McAdoo, *The Spirit of Anglicanism*, Adam & Charles Black, London 1965, p. 334.

62. *Ibidem*, p. 335.

63. Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 345-346.

64. This *consensus fidelium* 'does not depend on mere numbers or on the extension of a belief at any one time, but on continuance through the ages, and the extent to which the consensus is genuinely free'; The Committee Report on 'The Anglican Communion', *The Lambeth Conference 1948*, SPCK, London 1948, p. 85. By virtue of Christ's presence, the Church is '*tota in toto, et tota in aliqua parte*'; E.L. Mascall, *Corpus Christi*, Longmans, Green & Co, London 1960, p. 20.

65. F.W. Dillistone, *The Structure of the Divine Society*, Lutherworth Press, London 1951, p. 242.

66. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 66. 'In the episcopacy Pentecost becomes universal and continuous, in the undivided episcopate of the Church'; *ibidem*.

67. Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* I, 10, 2; P.G. 7:552.

68. '*Dictatus papae*', no. 26; text in *Sanctorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, ed. J.D. Mansi, Florence 1759ff, 20:169; cited by Avery Dulles, S.J., *The Catholicity of the Church*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1985, p. 131.
69. *Gaudium et Spes* iv, 44, in Abbott, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-247.
70. Cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 178.
71. *Ibidem*.
72. This is acceptable only from a historical point of view. In this respect 'the Holy Spirit vivifies pre-existing and self-defined events and relates them to different times and circumstances'; *ibidem*, p. 179.
73. *LW* 23:335-337 and 41:144, 148.
74. T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconciliation*, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1975, p. 61.
75. Cf. 'Commentary on Acts' 2:42; cited by T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh 1956, p. 149.
76. K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. iv, part 1, p. 701.
This Church universal has 'an imperishable continuance' which although invisible and in spite of all difficulties 'will always be preserved on earth'; cf. H. Heppel, *Reformed Dogmatics set out and illustrated from the Sources*, p. 664.
77. K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. iv, part 1, p. 702. The view is also expressed in The Second Helvetic Confession (1566): '...there is but one Church which we call Catholic, for the reason that it is universal and is spread out through all parts of the world, and extends to all times'; cited in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, p. 34.
78. C.W. Williams, *New Directions in Theology Today*, vol. iv, Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1968, p. 53. 'The Church's catholicity is the object of faith because its catholic fullness will be completely realized only in the eschatological fulfilment'; W. Pannenberg, 'The Significance of Eschatology', in *op. cit.*, p. 429.
79. K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. iv, part 1, pp. 704-705. D.T. Jenkins states the same when he asserts that 'only a reformed Church can hope to be the Catholic Church'; *The Nature of Catholicity*, Faber & Faber Ltd, London 1942, p. 51. Jenkins deplores those churches which refuse to reform themselves and, thus, lose all concern about their catholicity falling in the trap of 'denominationalism'; cf. *ibidem*, pp. 128-129.
80. Cf. St Augustine, *In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus CXXIV*, 5; *P.L.* 35:1074. 'Christians are catholics *in via*, in development and growth'; G.D. Dragas, *Ecclesiasticus. Orthodox Church Perspectives*,

Models and Eikons, Darlington Carmel, Darlington 1984, p. 109. See also G. Limouris, 'The Church as Mystery and Sign in Relation with the Holy Trinity - in Ecclesiological Perspective', in *Church, Kingdom, World*, Geneva 1986, pp. 45-46.

81. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 68-69.

82. This is reflected very well by W. Pannenberg in his work 'Katholizität und Apostolizität' (1971), pp. 106f., as cited by J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 245. On these three levels, which refer to the past, as well as to the present and to the future, 'every contemporary claim to catholicity must prove itself'; *ibidem*.

Pannenberg sees catholicity, however, as being only an eschatological concept; cf. 'The Significance of Eschatology', *op. cit.*, pp. 424-425.

For others, as in the case of J. Bosc, catholicity is understood in terms of the 'dialectic of fullness and identity of its mission'; cf. 'The Catholicity of the Church', in *One in Christ*, 6 (1970), pp. 342-347, *passim*.

83. *WA* 49:137-139; cited by T.F. Torrance, 'The Eschatology of Faith', *op. cit.*, p. 153.

84. 'He (the Spirit) confronts the process of history with its consummation, with its transformation and transfiguration'. Thus, He creates a new structure of the Church by changing 'linear historicity into a presence'; cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 180. Therefore, what renders the Church 'catholic' is not only that on the level of 'here and now' but also on that of 'everywhere and always'; cf. St Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 18, 33; *P.G.* 33:1044.

85. The Orthodox liturgy provides us with such a new perspective: 'Commemorating this command of our Saviour...the Cross, the grave, the Resurrection after three days, the Ascension into Heaven, the enthronement at the right hand of the Father, and the second and glorious coming again, Thine own of Thine own we offer to Thee in all and for all'; (*The Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, The Anaphora*).

86. Cf. *Lumen Gentium* vii, 48, *op. cit.*, pp. 78ff. Vatican II recovered this idea present in the biblical, patristic and medieval theology and which has been overshadowed by the High Middle Ages' almost exclusive identification of the term 'Church' with the 'pilgrim' or 'militant Church'; cf. A. Dulles, S.J., *Models of the Church*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin 1976, pp. 99-101.

87. F.W. Dillistone, *The Structure of the Divine Society*, pp. 98-99. The Church catholic is 'confined to no age, time or place, nor knowing any bounds but that faith which was once (for all) delivered to the saints'; W. Laud, 'A Relation to the Conference between William Laud and Mr Fisher the Jesuit', preface, cited by H.R. McAdoo, *The Spirit of Anglicanism*, p. 339.

88. 'They therefore which (*sic!*) depend upon the same God and worship Him all for the same end...having all the same expectation, may well be reputed the same Church'; J. Pearson, 'An Exposition of the Creed', pp. 589f, cited in *Anglicanism*, (ed. More and Cross), p. 29.
89. Calvin, 'Commentary on Jeremiah' 33:16, in *Corpus Reformatorum* 67, p. 68, cited by T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, p. 163.
90. O'Grady, *The Church in Catholic Theology*, p. 331. In this respect the difference between the terms used in the New Testament in order to express the reality of the Kingdom is of much significance. *Καίνός* means 'new in nature', implying an improvement in one's status, 'new in kind' (cf. Matt 13:52; Ephes 2:15; Rev 3:12 etc.); distinct from it, *νέος* denotes 'a new age', though without an eschatological connotation. Cf. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, trans. by G.W. Bromiley, W.M.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., London 1985, pp. 388 & 628. See also T.F. Torrance, *Conflict and Agreement in the Church*, Lutherworth Press, London 1959, p. 120.
91. A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 104. Or as one of the ecumenical gatherings states: 'Catholicity is expectant'; WCC, *The Uppsala Report 1968*, ed. N. Goodall, Geneva 1968, p. 23.
92. *Lumen Gentium* iii, 20, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.
93. C. Butler, *The Theology of Vatican II*, p. 135. In the same sense, many Catholic theologians speak of the 'provisional status' and 'historically advancing elimination' of the Church in the coming Kingdom of God; e.g. K. Rahner, 'The Church and the *Parousia* of Christ', in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 6, Dalton, Longman and Todd, London 1969, p. 298.
94. Even the way in which the building-Church is shaped in the Orthodox tradition (both Byzantine and Romanesque) reflects an essential emphasis on an eschatological perspective: 'the *Pantokrator*, or the image of an empty throne, prepared for the One who is coming'; cf. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 86.
95. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 115-116. 'Thus, the Church is revealed to be in time what she is eschatologically, namely a catholic Church which stands in history as a transcendence of all divisions into the unity of all in Christ, through the Holy Spirit to the glory of God the Father'; *ibidem*, p. 169. In this sense, temporal catholicity should be seen in the perspective of an 'eschatological holiness of the pilgrim Church' in order to avoid presenting the Church as a 'spiritualized' reality; cf. P. Fuerth, *The Concept of Catholicity*, p. 242.
96. *Ibidem*, p. 186. The guarantee, (*ἄραβών*) 'signifies a real presence of the eschatological' based on God's presence 'in the historical and risen Christ'; *ibidem*, p. 187. See also A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, St Vladimir's

Press, New York 1975, p. 57.

97. G. Florovsky, '*Sobornost*', p. 63. In that context, the *eschata* should be seen 'as the beginning of the Church's life; the *arche*, that which brings for the Church, gives her her identity, sustains and inspires her in her existence'; J. Zizioulas, 'The Mystery of the Church in Orthodox Tradition', in *Sourozh*, 37 (1989), p. 3.

98. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 206. 'In the life and existence of the Church time is misteriously overcome and mastered, time, so to speak, stands still'; G. Florovsky, '*Sobornost*', p. 63.

Yet, eschatology proved to be a reality difficult to grasp for it appeals to a different perspective of our ecclesial existence. Hence, one would encounter: an 'apocalyptic eschatology' (with no future for Christianity apart from the *Parousia*, and no consideration for the past either), or a 'humanistic and optimistic understanding of history' (the opposite to the previous one, obvious in its utopianism and the decline of explicitly Christian hope). The only accepted conception of eschatology would be the 'conditional' one, based on the biblical concept of prophecy. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, pp. 86-89.

99. This is precisely why 'the Church needs the Pentecostal scene to be set again and again, each time she wants to affirm her apostolicity' (and indeed also any other basic element of a historical event, which is part of its complex nature and function); cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 185.

100. *WA* 43:3, cited by T.F. Torrance, 'The Eschatology of Faith', *op. cit.*, p. 153.

101. 'On Secular Authority - To what extent it should be obeyed', iv, *WA* 11:251; cited by T.F. Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

102. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 62. After all, the Church 'is what she is by becoming again and again what she will be'; J. Zizioulas, 'The Mystery of the Church in Orthodox Tradition', *op. cit.*, p. 8. Or, as Fr. Florovsky puts it, the Church is an 'anticipated eschatology', an 'inaugurated eschatology', and not a 'realised eschatology'. That is because the Lord is already glorified in His Resurrection and Ascension to the Father; cf. 'Le corps du Christ vivant', *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.

103. 'The Body of Christ held together with the bond of the Spirit, includes both the living and the dead, as symbolized on the paten during the liturgy, where particles of bread, commemorating those who repose in Christ and those who are still parts of the visible Christian community on earth, are all united in a single Eucharistic communion'.[...] Prayer for the departed, as well as intercession by the departed saints for the living, express a single and indivisible "communion of saints"; J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology. Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*, Fordham University Press, NY 1974, p. 222.

As opposed to this view which proposes a concrete image of a 'communion of saints' in the shape of the eucharistic gathering,

Calvin's view stands on different ground. He remains indebted to his principle of the centrality and exclusiveness of faith and, thus, he conceives of the Church - the communion of saints - on 'spiritualist' lines. See *Institutes*, ed. cit., pp. 1014-1016.

104. G. Florovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 46. "'Concord with the past" is only the consequence of loyalty to the whole; it is simply the expression of the constancy of catholic experience in the midst of shifting times'; cf. *ibidem*.

105. Cf. *ibidem*, p. 45. The Church is a 'two-fold mystery of communication and of communion: through the communication of sacraments, of holy things (*sancta*), it is a communion of saints (*sancti*)'; H. de Lubac, *The Splendor of the Church*, London/New York 1956, p. 72.

106. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 88.

'This link maintains the Church in its catholicity'; Draft IV, 12 of the 'Uppsala Report', cited by P. Fuerth, *The Concept of Catholicity*, p. 243. See also *Lumen Gentium* 49, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

However, Fr. Florovsky considers that the term 'communion of saints' is a pleonasm since holiness is only the feature of the 'fellowship of the Holy Spirit' which is denied to individuals as such. 'One can be a "saint" only in the communion'; cf. *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 62. In this context a saint is seen not as someone 'set apart alone', but rather as 'an example of ethical and moral holiness' who belongs to 'the whole holy nation and elect People of God'; cf. N.A. Nissiotis, 'The Main Ecclesiological Problem of the Second Vatican Council', in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, vol. 2 (1965), p. 37.

107. Rev. Fr. D. Staniloae, 'The Prayers for the Others and the Catholicity of the Church', in *Studii Teologice*, 1-2 (1970), p. 32.

Notes II

1. The profound 'personal' character of the Church as reflecting the personal relationship between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is very much present in the Orthodox theology. See for example Fr George Florovsky, 'The Church: her Nature and Task', in *The Universal Church in God Design, passim*; Vladimir Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God*, St Vladimir's Seminary Press, New York 1985, p. 192, where he speaks of the plurality of personal consciousness 'as representing the catholicity'; Nikos Nissiotis, 'The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity for Church Life and Theology', in *The Orthodox Ethos*, ed. by A.J. Philippou, Holywell Press, Oxford 1964, *passim*; John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion, passim*. In this context catholicity is connected with the dynamic mystery of the Holy Trinity and focuses on the personal relationship between each of the members of the Church and of the Church catholic itself with the Three Persons of the Divine Being.

2. N. Nissiotis, 'The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity for Church Life and Theology', p. 52. The same stress on 'personal' and 'personhood' is to be seen also in J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, although the emphasis in his case is mainly on eucharistic and sacramental dimensions.

An excessive emphasis on the 'eucharistic ecclesiology' as professed by some theologians, especially J. Zizioulas could lead, however, to the denial to the Church of the quality of catholicity as found in larger ecclesiastical units (e.g. dioceses, regional or national Churches, etc.).

3. N. Nissiotis, *op. cit.*, p. 58. 'Life springs out of the communion which exists in God and leads to communion between God and men and among men in His Church'. *Ibidem*, pp. 40-41.

4. *Idem*, 'Pneumatological Christology as a Presupposition of Ecclesiology', in *Oecumenica, Jahrbuch für ökumenische Forschung*, Mohn 1967, pp. 242-243.

Being One and Personal, God 'acts in time through a relationship (Christology) and establishes out of it a communion (Pneumatology)'. *Ibidem*, p. 238. Nissiotis actually warns of the danger that, in stressing unevenly on the work of the Father, or that of the Son or indeed on that of the Holy Spirit one might weaken the contribution made towards the affirmation of the Church by the other two Divine Persons. That would amount to either 'unitarian Patromonism', or to 'Christomonism' or indeed to 'Pneumatomonism'. See his article 'The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity for Church Life and Theology', *passim*, as in contrast to D.T. Jenkins who argues for the reckoning of Christ as 'alone the source of the Church's catholicity' (emphasis mine); in his *The Nature of Catholicity*, p. 130.

5. V. Lossky, 'Du Troisième Attribut de l'Eglise', p. 87. 'Founded on two conditions, Christological unity and pneumatological

diversity - inseparable as the Word from the Spirit - the Church faithfully guards its catholicity, which realizes in it the Trinitarian dogma'. *Ibidem*.

6. N. Nissiotis, 'The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity for Church Life and Theology', p. 43. 'The hypostatic union between the Three is revealed by Christ and is experienced in us as a loving communion with the Triune God through the Spirit'. *Ibidem*.

7. *Ibidem*, p. 39. 'One neither confuses nor separates the events of salvation in Christ and at Pentecost. They belong to each other, they are the two hands of the Father's love'. *Ibidem*, p. 62.

In contrast to this understanding, the Churches which came out of the Reformation, as a reaction against the Roman underestimation of the *Paracletos*, opened the path for 'the subjectiveness' of the Holy Spirit which became the 'inner individual force in each of us, an agency of personal salvation'; cf. *idem*, 'Mouvement Oecuménique et Vatican II; un point de vue orthodoxe', in *Istina*, 2-3 (1965-6), p. 322.

8. G. Florovsky, 'Sobornost: the Catholicity of the Church', in *The Church of God*, p. 60. 'In the power of the Holy Spirit it thus maintains the unity of the Body of Christ and does so in the image of the revelation of the Trinity'. *Ibidem*, p. 61.

9. V. Lossky, 'Du Troisième Attribut de l'Eglise', p. 88. By virtue of this balanced view, which takes into account both the unity and the diversity of the Church, catholicity is seen as a characteristic of each of the parts of the Church. That is precisely because 'each part in itself is identified with the whole (one), expresses the whole, deserves whatever the whole deserves, does not exist without the whole'. *Ibidem*. 'Therefore the Church simultaneously displays natural unity and personal diversity, in the image of the Trinity'. *Idem*, *In the Image and Likeness of God*, p. 189.

10. 'This, then, is what we mean by the catholicity of the Church: its possession of the *dynamic fullness in unity* of the divine life, and the means to that life, which it has received from the Father, in the Son, through the Holy Spirit'; Colm O'Grady, M.S.C., *The Church in Catholic Theology: Dialogue with Karl Barth*, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1969, p. 304.

See also Y. Congar, O.P., *Divided Christendom*, pp. 95 and 98, although Congar, as in the case with H. Küng or H. de Lubac, is closer to the view upheld by the Patristic Fathers of the Church concerning the relationship between a Triune God and the catholic Church.

Others, like C. Welch, employ the comparison of catholicity with an 'image' which 'suggests and connotes as much as it denotes' and 'is open, dynamic and fluid rather than closed, static and rigid'; cf. 'Catholicity', p. 35.

11. 'Our aim should be neither collective consciousness, nor solipsism, but the transformation of personal consciousness into a harmonious communion according to the image of the Trinity. Our

consciousness is to be consubstantial and hypostatic at the same time'; Paul Evdokimov, 'The Principal Currents of Orthodox Ecclesiology in the Nineteenth Century', in *Eastern Churches Review*, Oxford, vol. x (1978), pp. 33-34. That is what G. Dejaive calls 'the organic unitotality of the mystical Body, according to the image of the Holy Trinity'; '"Sobornost" ou Papauté?', in *Nouvelle Revue Theologique*, vol. 74 (1952), p. 364.

12. The two views would eventually result in a sort of subordinationism whereby the work of the Holy Spirit is, for instance, reduced at a secondary role. N. Nissiotis advocates the need for a more balanced vision of the Church as seen in the 'mirror' of the Holy Trinity. 'By virtue of the grace of the Holy Trinity, brought by the Holy Spirit, the nature of the *Ecclesia* is seen to lie in its charismatic character and not in its judicial order, whether this is conceived of hierarchically, *de jure divino*, or sociologically, as an association of believers'; 'The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity for Church Life and Theology', *op. cit.*, p. 65.

On the same lines, Khomiakov traces back this misinterpretation of the Church catholic to the misunderstanding of the real relationship which exists inside the Holy Trinity as exemplary represented by the *Filioque* clause and which degrades the 'mutual love', the only constitutive principle of the Church. Cf. *L'Eglise Latine et le Protestantisme au point de vue de l'Eglise d'Orient*, Lausanne et Vevey 1872, pp. 382-383, cited by Patrick O'Leary, O.P., *The Triune Church. A Study in the Ecclesiology of A.S. Xomjakov*, Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz, Freiburg 1982, pp. 89 and 91. See also Nissiotis' view in 'Pneumatological Christology as a Presupposition of Ecclesiology', *op. cit.*, especially pp. 243-251.

13. 'Just as the Father is in communion with his Son, the incarnate Saviour, so too is the Church in communion, through the power of the Holy Spirit, with the Trinity; by reason of this *koinonia*, the Church is catholic, actually and virtually embracing the totality of the New Creation'; P.W. Fuerth, *The Concept of Catholicity in the Documents of the World Council of Churches, 1948-1968*, pp. 217-218.

14. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 114. 'It is Christ's unity and it is His catholicity that the Church reveals in her being catholic'; *Ibidem*, p. 159. For this 'ontologism' of the Church in the light of Christ's person as opposed to any 'ethical' orientation in as far as catholicity is concerned see the argumentation made by J. Zizioulas, 'The Eucharistic Community and the Catholicity of the Church', in *One in Christ*, 6 (1970), pp. 121-125. Or as another theologian puts it: 'Catholicity in the Church is that of Christ: it is the making effective of the nature of Christ which is capable of bringing together simultaneously man with man and man with God'; Father Matta el Meskeen, *One Christ and One Catholic Church*, Monastery of St. Macarius, Scetis 1980, p. 4.

Hence, schism, that is denial of catholicity, is the result of man's inability in grasping the true nature of Christ and the Church. *Ibidem*, p. 5.

15. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 64. It is the 'life in Christ' of which Nicolas Cabasilas speaks or as St Maximus the Confessor puts it: 'the whole man should become God, deified by the grace of God-become-man, becoming whole man, soul and body, by nature, and becoming whole God, soul and body, by grace'; *Ambigua*, P.G. 91:1088C.

16. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 182. 'The raised Christ is unimaginable as an individual; He is the "first-born of many members", establishing His historical identity in and through the communion-event which is the Church'; *Ibidem*, p. 114. This is in consensus with the meaning which the Aramaic term *bar ʾanach* (Son of Man) bears, namely referring to an individual example which manifests also the whole idea of *pars pro toto*; cf. K. Koch, 'Spätisraelisches Geschichtsdenken am Beispiel des Buches Daniel', in *Historische Zeitschrift*, 1961, p. 23, cited by J. Moltmann, 'Man and the Son of Man', p. 215, in *No Man is Alien. Essays on the Unity of Mankind*, ed. by J.R. Nelson, E.J. Brill, Leiden 1971.

The idea of the uniqueness of Christ and that of the Holy Spirit as essentially related to the catholicity of the Church is also affirmed in early ecumenical concerns; see for example *Proceedings of the World Conference Lausanne, August 3-21, 1927*, ed. by H.N. Bate, SPCK, London 1927, p. 464.

17. Cf. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

'The Church is, as it were, the place and the mode of the redeeming presence of the Risen Lord in the redeemed world'; G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 65. From that perspective, 'Christ reveals Himself to us not in our isolation, but in our mutual catholicity, in our union'; *idem*, 'Sobornost: The Catholicity of the Church', *op. cit.*, p. 73.

18. 'The Committee Report on the Anglican Communion', in *Anglicanism*, p. 86.

'It is never true to say that separate persons are united to Christ, and then combine to form the Church; for to believe in Christ is to believe in One whose Body is a part of Himself and whose people are His own humanity, and to be joined to Christ is to be joined to Christ-in-His-Body'; A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 36.

19. 'You are therefore many, and yet you are one; we are many and we are one'; St Augustine, *In Psalmo CXXVII*, 3; P.L. 37:1679.

20. G. Yule, 'Luther's Understanding of Justification by Grace Alone in Terms of Catholic Christology', *op. cit.*, p. 102; cf. *LW* 12:126-7.

21. *LW* 24:105-107: 'Therefore, the attributes of each nature, the human and the divine, are ascribed to the entire Person'. See also H. Bornkamm, *Luther's World of Thought*, Concordia Publishing House, St Louis, Missouri 1965, p. 113.

22. 'Now', in his quality of co-partaker to the sufferings of humankind, Christ 'is not the Son of God, born of the Virgin. But he is a sinner, who has and bears all the sins of all man in his Body'; *LW* 26:277. This is an example of Luther's extreme view concerning Christ's person and the identification of Christ with us.

23. Cf. Basil Hall, '*Hoc est Corpus Meus*', *op. cit.*, p. 117.

24. 'Therefore, catholicity as her (Church's) "own actuality" has its roots in his (Christ's) as Church's Head'; K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. iv, p. 710.

In the 'Geneva Catechism' the Church catholic is conceived in universalistic terms, although on Christological lines; cf. *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, ed. by R. Rouse and S.C. Neill, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1968, p. 32.

25. 'He (Christ) constitutes the community the true Church and as such marks it off from the false'; K. Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 712.

26. Dumitru Staniloae, 'The Prayers for others and the Catholicity of the Church', p. 10.

'By our new birth in Christ, who is the second Adam, we become part of the new creation, members of the restored human race which is the Catholic Church'; E.L. Mascall, *Corpus Christi*, p. 39. See also *idem*, *The Recovery of Unity*, p. 101. For Mascall, in her inner reality 'the Church is the re-created human race, the holy people of God, the divine community in which the Son of God patiently and tenderly draws men and women into his own perfect human nature and offers them to the Father as his members made one with him and clothed with his glory'; *Ibidem*, p. 102.

27. 'It is the recognition by all of the truth about themselves as members of the one people of God, whose origin is the historical life of Jesus and whose completeness will be known only in the building up of the Body'; A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 222. See also *The Uppsala Report, 1968*, pp. 7ff.

28. The idea is present in St Augustine's thought when he speaks of Christ as '*totus homo, ille et nos*'. For example *In Joannis Evangelium Tractatio XXI*, 8; *P.L.* 35:1568. See also St Hilary, *In CXXV Psalmum* 6; *P.L.* 9:688 or St John Chrysostom, *In I Corinthiens homilia XXX*; *P.G.* 61:279-283. etc., cited by G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 64. The difference between now and *Parousia* in terms of the status of this Body of Christ consists in the degree of fulfilment.

29. 'Luther pushes the concept of Christ as *exemplum* beyond the customary *imitatio Christi*, for that *imitatio* could rest content with the works of penance and the works of love'. Basil Hall, '*Hoc est Corpus Meus*', *op. cit.*, p. 118.

30. Christ 'alone and for all by offering himself has taken away the sins of all men and accomplished their sanctification for all eternity'; *LW* 40:14.

31. 'For by faith we are joined together into one flesh and one body'; *LW* 26:168. From that perspective, the fullness of the Church 'rests wholly in Christ...and cannot be produced or secured by our own efforts'. Hence, 'the Church as the fullness of Christ is something transsubjective, it is an objective *datum* independent of any human limitation'; T. Sartory, O.S.B., *The Oecumenical Movement and the Unity of the Church*, pp. 226-227.

32. *LW* 26:168; 'if you divide Christ's Person from your own, your area in the Law, you remain in it and live in yourself which means that you are dead in the sight of God and damned by the Law'. By faith, however, 'you are so cemented to Christ that he and you are as one person, which cannot be separated'; *Ibidem*.

33. T.F. Torrance, *Conflict and Agreement in the Church*, p. 52. Torrance prefers to interpret the doctrine of predestination dynamically 'as the action of the eternal God in Christ in time and through time', although the doctrine remains actual.

34. This is in consonance with the Reformed concept of a Church which 'lives in time essentially as the repentant Church, although in Christ she is already the Church triumphant'; cf. *ibidem*. Hence, the inability of the Protestant theology and of the Western thought in general to see the presence and the work of God through Christ actualized in the life of the Church as a transfiguration of the world from within and not as a remote force which works salvation from outside. See E.S. Abbott (*et al.*), *Catholicity: A Study in the Conflict of Christian Traditions in the West, being a Report presented to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury by a group of Anglo-Catholics*, Dacre Press, Westminster 1947, p.43.

35. E. Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith, and the Consummation*, vol. iii, p. 365. 'Redemption through Christ is on the one side the most personal decision of the individual and on the other the invisible redemption of mankind'; T.F. Torrance, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.

At the same time, the Church bears witness to her mission in the world to the extent to which she 'enters more and more into her universal and catholic inheritance in Christ'; *idem*, 'Concerning Amsterdam. The Nature and Mission of the Church', in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, vol. 2 (1949), p. 265.

36. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 60. Cf. Ephes 1:23. 'The Church is the complement of Christ in the same manner in which the head completes the body and the body is completed by the head'; *ibidem*, p. 64. Hence, the perfection (i.e. catholicity) of the head will be complete only when 'we all are most firmly united and strengthened'. Cf. St John Chrysostom, *Homilia in Ephesios* 3, 2; *P.G.* 52:26.

37. 'The Committee Report on the Anglican Communion', in *Anglicanism*, p. 84.

The union that the Holy Spirit realizes between Christ, the Head and the Body creates the sort of historical reality which will

avoid 'the fusion, confusion or full and direct identification between Christ and His Church'. For that reason, neither the sacred order nor the proclamation of the word are the constitutive elements of the Church. It is rather this union whereby the Spirit effects the sanctification of the entire ecclesiastical Body; N.A. Nissiotis, 'Pneumatological Christology as a Presupposition of Ecclesiology', in *Oecumenica (Jahrbuch für oekumenische Forschung)*, 1967, pp. 244-245.

38. The view is to be found in St Augustine's thought; cf. F.W. Dillistone, *The Structure of the Divine Society*, pp. 92-93. Seen from that perspective, catholicity is a 'gift' which 'cannot ever be generated or possessed by the community, as it were apart from, or in place of or in addition to, the Lord of the community'; C. Welch, 'Catholicity', p. 37.

39. The idea is present in St Augustine: 'The Body of this Head is the Church...of the whole world...from Abel himself down to those who shall to the end be born and shall believe in Christ'. *Sermons* 2, 1, Psalm 90; cited by F.W. Dillistone, *op. cit.*, p. 97. See also A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 42, where the view has an eschatological connotation.

40. A.M. Ramsey, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38. The same theme appears in E.L. Mascall, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 20ff.

41. Cf. 'Catechism of Geneva', in *Corpus Reformatorum* 34, p. 39; cited in T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, p. 148.

42. T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconciliation*, p. 38.

43. *Idem*, *Conflict and Agreement in the Church*, pp. 49-50.

44. *Ibidem*, p. 65. This eschatological projection is the result of Calvin's understanding of the doctrines of election and the last resurrection, two of the key concepts in his theology.

45. *Ibidem*, p. 118.

46. H. Küng, *The Church*, p. 236. There is a multitude of texts which can be used for argumentation in this sense, e.g. Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 12:12 & 27; Col 1:15-18, etc. A comprehensive bibliography on the biblical concept of $\sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha$ is to be found in H.Küng, *op. cit.*, pp. 225-234.

In this context, it seems that the biblical term of $\pi\lambda\acute{\eta}\rho\omega\mu\alpha$ (fullness) might cover that of catholicity. Thus, 'Christ is the Head who Himself fills all in all and at the same time is fulfilled or complemented by the Church'; W. Stählin, 'Catholicity, Protestantism and Catholicism', in *Die Katholizität der Kirche*, cited by T. Sartory, O.S.B., *The Oecumenical Movement and the Unity of the Church*, p. 226.

47. *Ibidem*, pp. 234-237. Küng tries to recover that true meaning of the 'mystical' Body of Christ, which has been misused since the Middle Ages by the Catholic theology.

48. *Ibidem*, p. 238.

49. *Ibidem*, p. 229.

50. A biblical argumentation of these various understandings of the relationship Christ-Church (head-body) is to be found in Küng, *op. cit.*, pp. 231-234.

However, this relationship ought not to reflect a catholicity which has as its primary content a moral presupposition but rather a Christological-ontological one. 'The Church is catholic, not because she is obedient to Christ, i.e. because she does certain things or behaves in a certain way. [...] She is catholic because she is where Christ is'. J. Zizioulas, 'The Eucharistic Community and the Catholicity of the Church', p. 121.

51. Cf. Stanislaus J. Grabowski, *The Church: An Introduction to the Theology of St Augustine*, Herder, St Louis 1957, pp. 3-92, cited by A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 46-47.

52. In this spirit, Aquinas' view of the Church reflects a 'theological' dimension rather than an institutional one. For him, the Body of Christ - the Church - is not essentially visible or societal, yet less hierarchical. For Aquinas' theology of the Church as a communion of grace see Y. Congar, *The Mystery of the Church*, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1960, pp. 97-117.

53. See E. Mersch, S.J., *Le corps mystique du Christ*, 2 vols, Desclée de Brouwer et Cie, Paris 1936, especially vol. 2, pp. 345-368.

54. Cf. A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 48.

55. Cf. *Lumen Gentium* I, 8; in *ed. cit.*, p. 23.

56. Cf. *LW* 37:275; *WA* 2:73 & 273f; 3:169; 4:191; 4:289; in T.F. Torrance, 'The Eschatology of Faith: Martin Luther', *op. cit.*, pp. 186-187.

57. Cf. H. Bornkamm, *Luther's World of Thought*, p. 143.

Luther has tried to solve St Augustine's dilemma who had conceived of the Church both as the communion of the Spirit, dependant to God's election of her members, and also as the catholic Church, visibly structured and the only saving Church. *Ibidem*.

58. N. Nissiotis, 'The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity for Church Life and Theology', p. 43. Or, as St John Chrysostom puts it: 'The head will be complete only when the body is perfect; when we all are most firmly united and strengthened'; *Homilia XXIV in Epistolam ad Ephesios* III, 2; *P.G.* 62:26.

59. 'The Church is catholic in every one of its members, because a catholic whole cannot be built up or composed otherwise than through the catholicity of its members'; G. Florovsky, *Bible*,

Church, Tradition, p. 42.

60. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 159-160. In this sense, 'the relational existence' which we are asked to live in the Body of Christ (cf. 1 Cor 12-13) will be the 'measure' employed by Christ to judge us in the end; cf. *ibidem*, p. 232.

61. *Ibidem*, p. 231. 'Each church is indeed ἐκκλησία Θεοῦ in its fullness, because what gives that fullness is God's presence, is the Body of Christ indivisibly manifested in each Eucharist'; J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 55.

62. N.A. Nissiotis, 'Pneumatological Christology as a Presupposition of Ecclesiology', *op. cit.*, p. 236. 'The presence of the Spirit mediates the presence of the Christ (*sic!*) Himself, so that to be "in the Spirit" is to be "in Christ"'; A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 31.

63. This is indirectly found for instance in the notion of the Church which Aquinas brought about; cf. A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 47.

'The ultimate essence of catholicity lies in the transcendence of all divisions in Christ'; J. Zizioulas, 'The Eucharistic Community and the Catholicity of the Church', p. 124.

64. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 111.

Christ's 'dependence' on the Spirit is a biblical revelation. He (Christ) 'becomes a historical person only in the Spirit (Matt 1:18-20; Luke 1:35)', while the whole process of salvation starts and is substantiated with Christ being anointed as Χριστός (Luke 4:13).

On the same lines, one can say that 'the body of Christ is literally composed of the *charismata* of the Spirit (*charisma* = membership of the body)'; cf. *ibidem*. See also N. Nissiotis, 'La Pneumatologie ecclésiologique au service de l'Unité de l'Eglise', in *Istina*, vol. 12/3-4 (1967), pp. 323-340, *passim*, or O. Clément, 'Orthodox Ecclesiology as an Ecclesiology of Communion', in *One in Christ*, 2 (1970), pp. 101-122.

65. 'The Church is catholic because it is one Body of Christ; it is union in Christ, oneness in the Holy Ghost - and this unity is the highest wholeness and fullness'; G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 41.

In the Liturgy of St Basil the Great this constitutive characteristic of the Holy Spirit in building up the community is illustrated by the prayer of the consecration of the gifts: 'And as for us, partakers of the one Bread and of the Cup, do thou unite all to one another unto communion of the one Holy Spirit'.

For that matter, Vladimir Lossky speaks of the 'personal multiplicity (which) is crowned by the Holy Spirit only in the unity of the Body of Christ' through the bestowal of spiritual gifts upon those who are inside it; *In the Image and Likeness of God*, p. 190.

66. The Church is 'a communion of saints', 'a crowd or an assembly

of people who are Christians and holy', 'a Christian holy assembly', that is '*sancta catolica Christiana*'; 'On the Councils and the Church', in *LW* 41:143.

67. Regin Prenter, *Spiritus Creator*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia 1953, p. 61.

The 'personal' character of the Holy Spirit was reaffirmed by the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Uppsala, 1968; cf. E. Schlink, 'The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church. A Report on Section I of the Uppsala Assembly', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 21 (1968), pp. 103ff.

68. Regin Prenter, *op. cit.*, p. 223. Compare *WA* 3:553, 28ff; in *ibidem*, p. 81.

69. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 112. 'The individualization of human existence which results in division and separation is now transformed into existence in communion where the otherness of persons ("on each of them separately" Acts 2:3) is identical with communion within a body'; *ibidem*.

70. A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, pp. 29-30.

'The Spirit is the Spirit of "communion" and his primary work consists in opening up reality to become relational. The Spirit is incompatible with individualism'; J. Zizioulas, 'The Mystery of the Church in Orthodox Tradition', p. 6.

71. A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 49. Cf. also *Lumen Gentium* II, 13, in *ed. cit.*, p. 31.

For a long period of time the failure of the more recent Catholic theology to give to the Holy Spirit the right place, especially in His relation to the Eucharist, made it almost impossible for other Christian Churches to see the Church of Rome as being really the catholic Church; cf. C. O'Grady, *The Church in Catholic Theology. Dialogue with Karl Barth*, pp. 128-129.

72. A. Dulles, *op. cit.*, p. 52. Here Dulles refers to the new type of union of the members with one another and with Christ, which H. Muhlen described as 'personalogical' in his *Una Persona mystica*, 3rd ed., Paderborn, Schoningh 1968. See also J. Zizioulas, 'The Mystery of the Church in Orthodox Tradition', p. 6: 'The "one" without the "many" is an individual not touched by the Spirit. He cannot be the Christ of our faith'.

73. A. Dulles, *op. cit.*, p. 53. 'But there is one Spirit; and it is possible for there to be in diverse Churches and cultures the same wholeness or integrity of the Christian Tradition. [...] It is this wholeness that has become damaged in our divisions, and re-union means the recovery of it'; E.S. Abbott (*et al.*), *Catholicity: A Study in the Conflict of Christian Traditions in the West*, p. 17.

A closer look at the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church's sacramental life will be taken in the next part of this thesis.

74. *Lumen Gentium*, II, 7; in *ed. cit.*, pp. 21-22.

75. 'The Church is indeed governed by the Holy Spirit' but never separated from the Word. Cf. Calvin, *Opera Selecta*, pp. 464f, cited in T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, p. 99.

76. N.A. Nissiotis, 'Pneumatological Christology as a Presupposition of Ecclesiology', p. 239. 'By the Spirit Christians are united with Christ, are united in Him, are constituted into His Body'; G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 63

77. N.A. Nissiotis, *op. cit.*, p. 241. 'Without the Day of Pentecost there is no Church and therefore no historical reality of the presence of Christ'; *ibidem*, p. 242.

Hence, the 'centrifugal tendency' towards schism as generated by sin is opposed by the 'divinely given reality' of the Holy Spirit who, by being the Spirit of unity and catholicity, realizes the 'link between the ages' and 'makes us participate in the eschatological Body of Christ'. Cf. William Nicholls, *Ecumenism and Catholicity*, SCM Press Ltd, London 1952, p. 105.

78. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 132-133. 'The Church herself cannot be "more or less" one or "more or less" catholic. She is what Christ and the Spirit make her to be'; J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 10.

79. R. Prenter, *Spiritus Creator*, pp. 243-244. The Church is 'the people of God who were assembled by the all-embracing, saving, eschatological act of the Spirit'; *ibidem*.

80. 'By the inseparable union and conjunction Christ and I are made, as it were, one body in Spirit'; WA 40/1:284; cited in Yule, 'Luther's Understanding of Justification by Grace Alone in Terms of Catholic Christology', *op. cit.*, p. 171.

81. As, for instance, T.F. Torrance, *Conflict and Agreement in the Church*, pp. 91f or 293ff. In his argumentation, prof. Torrance uses the image of Israel as God's elect people.

82. See especially his work *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, *passim*.

83. To express this 'personal encounter' between God and man as a personal communion the Fathers of the Church employed the term θεόσις (divinization, immortality); e.g. St Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 54; P.G. 25:192.

84. Cf. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 67. In this understanding of catholicity both Christ and the Holy Spirit should not be isolated within the context of the life of the Holy Trinity. Neither should ecclesiology be drawn on the basis of emotionalism. That would be detrimental to a comprehensive view concerning the Church and her catholicity as a whole; cf. N. Nissiotis, 'The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity for Church Life and Theology', p. 61.

Notes III

1. J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 115. 'The liturgy maintained the Church's identity and continuity in the midst of a changing world'; *ibidem*.
2. *Idem*, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 8. Catholicity and orthodoxy should be seen in their connection with the unity of faith, though this unity leaves indeed room for a diversity of local variations; *idem*, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 97.
3. 'When the faith remains inviolate, the common and catholic decisions are also safe'; Photius, *Epistola 1*; P.G. 102:605D.
4. Cf. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 29.
5. Since 'Scripture is not in the reading but in the understanding' (*Scriptura est non in legendo, sed in intelligendo*; St Hilary, *Ad Constantium Augustum Liber II*, 8; P.L. 10:570), and since its true meaning and message are found only in the Church, as both its legitimated 'addressee' and 'possessor', one has to refer oneself always to a 'catholic interpretation' of the Scriptures. See e.g. Origen, (*Homilia in Leviticum IV,5*; P.G. 12:438) who speaks of 'hearing in the Church the Word of God presented in the catholic manner'.
6. Although different in terms of finality (the Old Testament has ended with the Incarnation of the Son of God, while the New Testament remains *missionar* until its fulfilment at the Parousia), the unity of Scripture as a whole is proclaimed by its very content, from 'the original divine *fiat* (Gen 1:1)' to the end (Rev 22:20 'Come, Lord Jesus!'); cf. G. Florovsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19. And the content is Christ, the *arche* and the *telos*; cf. *ibidem*, p. 23.
7. Cf. *ibidem*, p. 26. 'The truth of the book is revealed and vindicated by the growth of the Body'; *ibidem*.
8. Cf. *ibidem*, p. 76.
For Tertullian (*De Praescriptione haereticorum*) the heretics have no right to appeal to the Scripture so as to substantiate their positions because they are out-siders and, thus, they have no access to the message which can be grasped only *inside* the Church; cf. *ibidem*, p. 19.
9. *Ibidem*, p. 26. In this process 'what is human is not swept away by divine inspiration, it is only *transfigured*'; *ibidem*, p. 27.
10. See especially *Contra Epistiolam Manichaei quam vocant Fundamenti liber unus V,6*; P.L. 42:176-177. 'The Christian truth is preserved in the Church and by the Church in its entirety'; G. Florovsky, 'Le corps du Christ vivant', *op. cit.*, p. 49. For that

matter, 'only what is truly scriptural and traditional can be genuinely catholic and ecumenical'; cf. B. Lambert, *Ecumenism*, p. 39.

See also the viewpoint of the Orthodox theologians at the Faith and Order Conference of 1927: 'The Orthodox Church adheres fixedly to the principle that the limits of individual liberty of belief are determined by the definitions made by the whole Church, which definitions we maintain to be obligatory on each individual'; *Faith and Order, Lausanne 1927*, ed. by H.N. Bate, New York 1928, p. 384.

11. Christ is an 'ontological truth', is the very being of the truth, and, thus, He is a 'communion within community'. Hence, 'the community itself (is) becoming the truth'; J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 115. It follows that '(catholicity) in the full sense of the word, is an active fruition of all Christians in perfect, universal communion of the whole treasure of truth and life brought by Christ'; D. Staniloae, 'The Principles of Ecumenism from an Orthodox Standpoint' (in Romanian), in *Ortodoxia*, 4 (1967), p. 566.

12. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-117.

Since 'Christ is no more in the future only, but also in the past, and therefore in the present also' the relation between the Old and the New Covenant receives different insights and perspectives. By His Incarnation, Christ 'proposes' an 'inaugurated eschatology', which has to be fulfilled in a 'realized eschatology'; hence, "'the ultimate" (or "the new") had already entered history'. 'The Kingdom has been already inaugurated, but not yet fulfilled'. Therefore, the fixed canon of the Scriptures are ultimately related to the perfectness and accomplishment of the Incarnation, namely to the person of Christ Himself; cf. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 35-36.

13. According to J. Zizioulas, the fact that the dogmas are the result of 'episcopal' and not merely theological councils reflects the pre-eminence of Church's communion over any purely academic approach to the matter. The eucharistic communion, presided over by the bishop, is the epitome of that community into which the conceptualisation of the truth comes into being. 'Communion is the only way for truth to exist as life'; *ibidem*, pp. 118-119.

14. Cf. *WA* 57/1:149; in Yule, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

15. According to Luther, while salvation could be achieved even without sacraments, it cannot be made possible without the Gospel; cf. *Sermon on the New Testament*, 6:363,7; cited by Bornkhamm, *Luther's World of Thought*, p. 95.

16. 'The fundamental form of the means of grace was "the spoken word, by which the forgiveness of sin (the peculiar office of the gospel) is preached to the whole world"'; cf. J. Pelikan, *Spirit versus Structure*, Collins, London 1968, p. 116.

Bultmann insists that this preached word is addressed and finds reaction only in individual cases and, thus, denies any corporate implications; cf. T. Rendtorff, 'The Problem of

Revelation in the Concept of the Church', in *Revelation as History*, ed. by W. Pannenberg *et al.*, p. 172.

17. 'To this body (the Church) belong many about whom scarcely another person knows or would believe that they are members and who themselves imagine least of all that they belong'; H. Bornkhamm, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

18. Cf. *A Compend of Luther's Theology*, ed. by Hugh Thomson Kerr jr, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1943, p. 133.

19. *LW* 41:150. 'Wherever you hear and see this word preached, believed, professed, and lived do not doubt that the true *ecclesia sancta catolica* "a Christian holy people" must be there'.

Such an emphasis on the importance of the preached word is not put however in its right relation to worship, especially to Eucharist. Thus, one ends up in subjectivism and emotionalism; cf. E.S. Abbott *et al.*, *Catholicity*, pp. 22 and 25.

20. *LW* 40:37: 'If (the Church) is without the Word it ceases to be a Church'.

However, as H. Küng and C. O'Grady pointed out, 'the Protestant protest on the basis of Scripture against the catholicity of the Church becomes a protest against the catholicity of Scripture and so cancels itself out by undermining the very foundation on which it rests'; cf. H. Küng, *Structures of the Church*, pp. 144-145 and C. O'Grady, *The Church in Catholic Theology: Dialogue with Karl Barth*, p. 189.

21. 'God's word cannot be without God's people, and conversely, God's people cannot be without God's word'; *On the Councils and the Church*, *LW* 41:150.

22. 'The Church is the people of God living from the Word of God'; Cf. H. Bornkhamm, *Luther's World of Thought*, p. 148.

23. K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 4/1, p. 705. See also S.F. Allison *et al.*, *The Fullness of Christ*, p. 40ff. The word is seen as emphasizing more 'the individual aspect of the Christian life while the sacraments emphasize the corporate aspect'; cf. *ibidem*, p. 68.

This view clearly diminishes the value of the word in its 'communitar' work and creates a dichotomy between two parts of a similar sort and importance. Moreover, that attitude would make faith an individual event ignoring the fact that that faith is of the Church and is ultimately meant to incorporate the individual into the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church; cf. N.A. Nissiotis, 'The Main Ecclesiological Problem of the Second Vatican Council', p. 59.

The 'sin of the Reformation' is ultimately the fact that 'in the name of individual freedom the Catholic, ecumenical freedom of the Church is denied and limited'; G. Florovsky, 'Sobornost: The Catholicity of the Church', *op. cit.*, p. 66.

24. 'These men need to be brought together, to be constituted,

established and maintained as a common being - one people capable of unanimous action'; K. Barth, *op. cit.*, vol. 4/2, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh 1967, p. 635.

25. 'The Church, therefore, is not immune from all error...Indeed, a particular church not only may err in details, but also fall into harlotry (apostasy)'; J. Wollebius, '*Compendium Theologiae Christianae*', in *ed. cit.*, p. 138.

26. 'When all Scripture is not taken as referring to Christ as its own aim (*scopum*) it is mistakenly twisted and perverted'; Calvin, *Commentary on 2 Cor. 3:16*; in '*Corpus Reformatorum*' 78, p. 45; cited by T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, p. 128.

27. 'Nor will you find this in the apostolic writings only but whenever the prophets foretell the renewal of the Church or its extension over the whole globe, they always assign the first place to the Word'; cf. Calvin, *Opera Selecta* I, pp. 464f; cited by T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, p. 99.

28. This type of authority is a 'spiritual authority'; cf. Otto Weber, *Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics*, Lutherworth Press, London 1953, pp. 62-63.

29. *Ibidem*, p. 61.

30. Cf. Bishop L. Andrews, *Responsio*, pp. 208-233, cited by H.R. McAadoo, *The Spirit of Anglicanism*, pp. 334 and 339. 'As the Holy Ghost did lead the Apostles *into all truth* so did the Apostles leave all truth unto the Church which, teaching all the same may well be called Catholic, from the universality of necessary and saving truths retained in it'; J. Pearson, *An Exposition of the Creed*, pp. 589ff, in *Anglicanism*, p. 36.

31. The line of scriptural interpretation must 'be directed by the rule of Ecclesiastical and Catholic judgement; that is to have the Primitive Church direct us in interpreting Scripture where it stands in need of it, or there is any controversy about its meaning'; W. Payne, 'The Sixth Note of the Church Examined', p. 115 (1687), cited in *Anglicanism* p. 141.

32. Charles Gore called these elements of the faith the 'permanent Christianity'; cf. *The New Theology and the Old Religion*, London 1908, pp. 162-167 and 228; cited by S.W. Sykes, *The Integrity of Anglicanism*, Mowbrays, London and Oxford 1978, pp. 20-21. Sykes actually granted to the Apostles and the Nicene Creeds an unquestionable authority; *Ibidem*, p.21.

33. A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 167.

34. Cf. the Council of Trent, Fourth Session (1546); cited in A. Dulles, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

35. Cited by A. Dulles, *op. cit.*, pp. 167-168.

That reveals a highly conservative and defensive position,

which compels everybody to obey and fully accept the doctrinal teaching of the Church handed down from the apostles up to this day without alteration or distortions. It is, therefore, understandable that such a climate generated new institutional developments like the concept of papal infallibility.

36. E. Mersch and M.D. Chenu are among the representatives of this new way of dealing with the theme of revelation.

37. Cf. *Dei Verbum* 2; in *ed. cit.*, p. 112.

38. A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 170.

39. The true faith is to be recognized from the errors through two 'witnesses': 'first clearly by the authority of the divine Canon (the Holy Scriptures), then by the Tradition of the catholic Church'. In them both, 'the common mind' of the Church catholic, which acts against any 'private opinion' is recognized; Vincent of Lerins, *Commonitorium* II, XXIX; P.L. 50:640 & 677.

40. Cf. *ibidem*. Once again, the rule of any scriptural interpretation should 'be directed in accordance with the rule of the ecclesiastical and catholic meaning'; *ibidem*.

'There is only one rule of the catholic faith, the *Verbum Dei scriptum et traditum* taught by the apostles and proposed by the ministry'; J.M. Le Guillou, 'Plenitude de catholicité et oecumenisme', *Istina*, 3 (1959), p. 274.

See also G. Florovsky, 'Le corps du Christ vivant', *op. cit.*, p. 44 and Max Thurian, *Visible Unity and Tradition*, especially chapter: 'Tradition, Catholic Understanding of Scripture', pp. 83-96.

41. See W. Chillingworth, *The Religion of Protestants, a safe Way of Salvation*, (1637), p. 290 (cited by H.R. McAdoo, *The Spirit of Anglicanism*, p. 353), or J. Taylor, 'A Dissuasive from Popery', (1667), part II, Book I, 2, pp. 384-386, (in *Anglicanism*, p. 92): 'There being in no Church any one instance of doctrine of faith or life that can pretend to a clear, universal tradition and testimony of the first and of all ages and Churches, but only the doctrine contained in the undoubted Books of the Old and New Testament'.

42. Cf. 'An Appeal to all Christian People', *Lambeth Conference of 1920*, in *The Lambeth Conferences (1867-1948)*, p. 39.

43. This idea is especially present in the seventeenth century theology, as R.P.C. Hanson tries to prove in his *Tradition in the Early Church*, 1962, pp. 108 and 126; cited by H.R. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, pp. 340-341.

44. 'Both are to be relied upon, and both equally; always provided that they be equally known to be so'; J. Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 384-386; cited in *Anglicanism*, p. 93.

45. Cf. W. Laud, *A Relation of the Conference between W. Laud and Mr Fisher the Jesuit*, (1639), pp. 27-28 and 34; cited by H.R.

McAdoo, *op. cit.*, pp. 339-340.

See also J. Bramhall, *Works* in a collected edition, (1676), p. 349, as cited *ibidem*, p. 376 or E.S. Abbott *et al.*, *Catholicity*, pp. 15f.

46. Certain practices as the sacraments, the teaching of the catechism, confirmation, liturgy and preaching, or the appeal to 'the apostolic foundations, tradition and...to the councils universally received' should be observed and given great value; cf. H. Hammond, *Works* in a collected edition (1645), pp. 322 and 406, cited by H.R. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, pp. 365-366.

47. In his *Sermons* (*Sermon LI*, *Works*, vol. II, (1658), p. 435), W. Beveridge speaks about the rejection of anything contradicted by the Liturgy or Articles (of faith) or not grounded on the Apostolic writings as being also against the Holy Scriptures.

On the same lines Francis White in his *Treatise of the Sabbath Day* (London 1635, p. 97) considers the 'genuine Traditions', which are in agreement with 'the Rule of Faith', piety, and Holy Scripture and with continuous roots in the Apostolic times, as to be 'received and honoured' by the catholic Church; both cited in *Anglicanism*, pp. 94 and 132.

48. Cf. S.W. Sykes, *The Integrity of Anglicanism*, p. 11. See also J. Bramhall, *op. cit.*, p. 141, as cited by H.R. McAdoo, *op. cit.*, p. 376.

49. 'One may trifle with papal or imperial laws or other human tradition of the Fathers or councils, but not with articles of faith which have been with us from the beginning and which have been unanimously upheld throughout Christendom'; *WA* 30/3:552,3, cited by Yule, *Luther's Understanding of Justification by Grace Alone in Terms of Catholic Christology*, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

50. In Luther's view, the Councils of the Church are 'the highest judges and greatest bishops under Christ' because they have safeguarded 'the ancient faith and the ancient good works in conformity with Scripture'; *LW* 41:121-122.

51. For Luther, when one comes to establish the criteria of one's justification in Christ, 'numberless fathers, innumerable councils, the custom of ages or a majority of all the world' cannot compete with the word of God; *LW* 40:23. Nevertheless, due to its antiquity, the Creed is one of the traditional elements worth to be kept in the Church; *LW* 40:318.

52. We are this 'right new Church', who together with the whole holy Christian Church are one Body and one communion of saints; *WA* 51:487 and 498, cited in T.F. Torrance, 'The Eschatology of Faith: Martin Luther', *op. cit.*, p. 193.

53. A later development (starting with St Irenaeus from the second century onwards) adds to the initial sense (the act of proclamation of the news) the idea of the interpretation of the content which that news (namely the Gospel - the Good News) brings along. That

was done through doctrine, dogma etc., which were part of a historical process in transmitting the norm of scriptural interpretation; cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 189.

54. Ion Bria, 'Living in the One Tradition. An Orthodox Contribution to the Question of Unity', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. xxvi/2 (1974), p. 231. Cf. also J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 88.

55. G. Florovsky, 'Sobornost: The Catholicity of the Church', *op. cit.*, p. 65. In this sense, St Athanasius urges: 'Let us look at that very tradition, teaching, and faith of the Church catholic from the very beginning, which the Lord gave, the Apostles preached, and the Fathers preserved. Upon this the Church is founded'; *Epistola ad Serapionem* 28; *P.G.* 26:594D-595A.

In the same terms, Fr. G. Florovsky speaks of the appeal to Church's mind (τὸ φρόνημα ἐκκλησιαστικόν) which is the 'unwritten tradition', the '*sensus catholicus*' of the faith; *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 89. See also St Basil the Great, *Epistola CLXXIX*, 3; *P.G.* 32:687.

56. G. Florovsky, 'Patristics and Modern Theology. A Paper read at the Conference of Orthodox Theologians in Athens, in 1937', in *The Christian East*, London 1939, p. 33. See *idem*, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 101.

57. Cf. *idem*, 'Patristics and Modern Theology', p. 53. The teaching of the hierarchy 'finds its limits in the expression of the whole Church'; *ibidem*. This is so because 'the Spirit of God breathes in each of the faithful'; Paulinus of Nola, *Epistola XXIII*, 36; *P.L.* 61:281.

58. This is what St Irenaeus calls '*traditio veritatis*' which is intimately connected with '*charisma veritatis*', and which was faithfully kept and handed down with complete unanimity in all places; *Adversus haeresis* IV, 26, 2; *P.L.* 7:1053.

59. 'For only where the true Christian teaching and faith are evident will the true Scriptures, the true interpretations, and all the true Christian traditions be found'; Tertullian, *De praescriptione* XIX, 3; *P.L.* 2:31.

60. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 106. 'It is the permanent consciousness of the Church which preserves its unity and identity throughout the ages, but which is also enriched by all its experiences'; *idem*, 'Le corps du Christ vivant', *op. cit.*, p. 42.

It follows that all later dogmatic definitions formulated by the Church 'are born out from the same catholic plenitude which has been given (to the Church) from the very beginning, but which had not been perceived'; cf. *ibidem*, p. 45.

61. Cf. *Lumen Gentium* 25; in *ed. cit.*, p. 49.

62. I. Bria, 'Living in the One Tradition', p. 226.

Hence, since 'truth is a μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος' it follows

that it implies a 'unity in multiplicity, the whole in the parts, and vice versa'; cf. G.D. Dragas, 'The Church in St Maximus' Mystagogy', p. 386.

The concept of 'indigenisation' expresses the idea of adapting the content of Tradition in particular, specific forms. We shall talk more about it in the chapter concerned with the notions of 'local' and 'universal'.

63 Al. Schmemmann, "'Unity", "Division", "Reunion" in the Light of Orthodox Ecclesiology', p. 252. See also G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 99.

'The true and authentic *consensus* was that which reflected the mind of the catholic and universal Church'; *ibidem*, p. 103. The idea is to be found also in Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* V, 28, 6; P.G. 20:517.

64. T.F. Torrance, *Conflict and Agreement in the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 50-51.

65. *Ibidem*. The Reformation stressed the interpretation of *paradosis* (preaching) in terms of *kerygma* (tradition) and not vice-versa.

66. 'The Church is apostolic and therefore the true Church where its regard for the direction of Scripture always given to its preaching, doctrine, instruction and theology a strict concentration on the recognition of Jesus Christ as God revealed and speaking and acting'; K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 4/1, pp. 722-723.

67. Cf. H. Hammond, *op. cit.*, p. 403, cited by H.R. McAadoo, *The Spirit of Anglicanism*, p. 366.

W. Temple holds the same view when, in his introduction to the 'Report of the Commission on Christian doctrine' (1925), he says: 'The Anglican Churches have received and hold the faith of Catholic Christendom, but they have exhibited a rich variety in methods both of approach and of interpretation'; cited by S.W. Sykes, *The Integrity of Anglicanism*, p. 28.

68. Emilianos Timiadis, 'Common and Uncommon Faith', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 32/4 (1980), p. 404.

The same is the conclusion of one of the 1968 Lambeth Conferences Reports as quoted by S.W. Sykes, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9. The idea is to be found also in A. Vidler, *Essays in Liberality*, London 1957, pp. 147f and 166f, cited by S.W. Sykes, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19. and 23-24.

69. In this sense, it is important to notice that every particular decision or credal definition which an ecumenical or local council has produced was meant 'to orientate correctly the eucharistic communities' (e.g. canon 5 of Nicea, or the paschal controversies). Those definitions are, in fact, 'doxological acclamations of the worshipping community'; cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 117. The fact that the confessions of faith have become very early part of the Liturgy as baptismal creeds is also significant enough

in that respect.

70. All the decisions which the early Church has taken had, in the end, *anathemas*, that is excommunication from the Eucharist; cf. *ibidem*, p. 241. Moreover, the rule of worship was regarded as the one which establishes the rule of faith (*ut legem credendi statuat lex orandi*); cf. Prosper of Aquitania, *De gratia Dei et libero voluntatis arbitrio*, P.L. 51:205f. See also J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, Longmans, Green and Todd, London 1950, pp. 167ff.

71. Cf. J. Zizoulas, *op. cit.*, p. 157. 'Orthodox ecclesiology is based on the idea that wherever there is the Eucharist there is the Church in its fullness as the Body of Christ'; *ibidem*, p. 247.

This is consistent with what N. Afanassiev calls 'eucharistic ecclesiology' (in *The Primacy of Peter*). Other representatives of this 'eucharistic ecclesiology' are A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*; *Idem*, *Sacraments and Orthodoxy* and J. Meyendorff (*Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*).

72. S. Harakas, 'The Local Church. An Eastern Orthodox Perspective', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 29/2 (1977), p. 142. See also J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 206.

The existence of the Eucharist as a fellowship in which 'all (come) together at the same thing' (to share the same Christ) is attested by scriptural (e.g. Acts 1:15; 2:1 etc.) as well as traditional references (St Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistola ad Ephesios*, V; P.G. 5:649A; cf. N. Afanassiev, *The Last Supper*, pp. 9-19, cited by J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 14.

73. *Idem*, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 91. 'Our opinion is consistent with the Eucharist, and the Eucharist supports our opinion'; St Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* IV, 18, 5; P.G. 7:1028.

74. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 191.

This synthesis of history and *eschata* in terms of continuity of the tradition is reflected in the Orthodox Liturgy by the fact that the readings from the Bible (the Epistle and the Gospel) are sung after the doxological *Trisagion*, which represents the hymn sung by the angels around the divine throne (the bishop being the one who represents Christ in the eucharistic gatherings); cf. *ibidem*.

75. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 85. The same idea is present also in A.S. Xomjakov's theology; cf. P.P. O'Leary, *The Triune Church*, pp. 100ff.

76. Cf. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

77. St Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis XXI*, 1; P.G. 33:1088A-1089A; cf. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 113. See also A. Schmemmann, 'Liturgy and Eschatology', in *Sobornost*, vol. 7/1 (1985), pp. 10ff.

78. The sacraments are 'instruments' through which a relationship is established between us and God and which transcends the temporal

dimension of our personal existence; cf. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

79. 'The conclusion of this is that ordination, as seen in the case of baptism, is the act that *creates the community* which thus becomes understood as *the existential "locus" of the convergence of the charismata* (1 Cor 12)'; cf. *1 Clement* 40-41; *P.G.* 1:290-291, cited in J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, pp. 216-217. In such terms, the existence and the essence of the Church should be understood as simultaneous facts; cf. *ibidem*.

80. J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 117. This is obvious in the Eastern Orthodox Liturgies where the sacrament of communion is the result of the prayers of the entire Church ('We ask Thee'), and not of a minister who acts *in persona Christi* (as in Roman Catholicism).

81. St Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* III, 24, 1; *P.G.* 7:966; cf. Luke 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24-25. The Eucharist represents, precisely, a 'remembrance' both of the past and of the future.

82. The prayer of consecration (as existing in the Eastern Orthodox Liturgies) is simultaneously directed towards the consecration of the gifts and the effectuation of the unity of the community: 'And to unite us all, as many as are partakers in the one bread and cup, one with another, in the communion (κοινωνία) of the one Holy Spirit'.

83. On these lines, 'the Church's existence as the Body of Christ and, therefore, its catholicity constitute a reality which *depends constantly* upon the Holy Spirit'; J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 161. See also J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 207.

'We meet Christ in the Eucharistic communion, but his creative presence extends over the whole cosmos and leads history towards fulfilment'; D. Popescu, 'The Local Church and Conciliar Fellowship', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 29/3 (1977), p. 271.

84. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

Since Adam's sin was 'man's self-affirmation independently of God', the origin of man's fallen state was the lack of communion, his self-sufficiency. Man is no more a relational being, longing for the state of communion with God, the source of love; cf. *ibidem*, p. 219.

85. See for instance St John Chrysostom, (*Homilia XIV in Epistolam ad Hebraeos*; *P.G.* 63:111-112) for whom the eucharistic image of the Church is 'nothing else but heaven', or also St Maxim the Confessor, *Mystagogy* 1; *P.G.* 91:664D-668C.

The same idea is present in the Eastern Liturgies too and expressed in the Byzantine architecture and iconography. 'Again we offer unto Thee this reasonable service for those who have fallen asleep in the faith...for the world, for the holy, catholic and apostolic Church' (the *Anaphora* of St John Chrysostom's Liturgy).

86. 'This strong emphasis on an "already realized" eschatology

explains why Byzantine Christianity lacks a sense of direct responsibility for history as such'. When this has indeed happened, the Eastern Church has had to rely on historical institutions, namely the Christian empire; cf. J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 219.

87. 'The people of God become the Church by being called from their dispersion (*ek-klesia*) to one place (ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό)'; J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 206. This is a 'proleptic experience of the presence of the eschata here and now'.

At the same time, however, the difference between an 'eschatology as orientation' and one 'as a state of existence' has to be retained; cf. *ibidem*, p. 174.

88. Cf. *Didache* 9:4; 10:5 or St Ignatius, *Epistola ad Magnesios* VI; P.G. 5:668B. This is why the Eucharist is *par excellence* the day of the Resurrection, and does not convey a mere historical meaning, as an anamnesis; cf. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, pp. 187-188.

89. A. Schmemmann, *The World as Sacrament*, D L & T, London, 1965, pp. 30-31.

90. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 152.

91. Cf. *ibidem*, p. 161.

92. Λειτουργία = service, in general, for people to each other, e.g. τῆ πρὸς τὸν πλησίον Λειτουργία ; cf. *Epistula ecclesiarum Lugnunesium et Viennensium ad ecclesias Asiae et Phrigiae*, apud Eusebius of Caesarea, *Historiae ecclesiastica* 5,1,9; P.G. 20:412A.

93. 'The whole man is now made the temple of God, and his whole life is from now on a *liturgy*'; A. Schmemmann, *The World as Sacrament*, p. 92. Hence, the sacraments 'are effected and can be effected *only* in the Church, in communion and in communality'; G. Florovsky, 'The Limits of the Church', in *Sourozh* 26 (1986), p. 14.

It is for that matter that in the view of the Orthodox theology 'the Church of God lives not on opinion, but on the experience of the saints, as in the beginning so in our days' mainly through the sacraments. And that is precisely because in the sacramental experience God reveals Himself to be 'true to Himself in His saints'; cf. *Faith and Order, Lusane 1927*, in *ed. cit.*, p. 290.

94. The Orthodox Liturgy begins with the solemn doxology: 'Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages' and the assembly 'accepts' this ultimate destination as something which belongs to it by responding 'Amen'.

See also D. Radu, 'The Church, as a community in the Spirit of Christ and as sacramental presence', in *The Ecclesiological Character of the Holy Sacraments and the Problem of Communion*, (Ph. D. thesis, in Romanian), Bucharest 1978, pp. 92-98 and chapters i, ii, iii of the Second part of the thesis ('The Ecclesiological Character of the Sacraments') who places the Sacraments in the

context of the entire life of the Church catholic.

95. I. Bria, 'Symbolic Values in the contemporary Experience of Orthodoxy', in *International Review of Mission*, vol. LXXV/299 (1986), p. 275.

'In each culture, the eucharistic dynamics leads into a "liturgy after the Liturgy", i.e. a liturgical use of the material world, a transformation of human association in society into *Koinonia*'; cf. *The Ecumenical Nature of Orthodox Witness*, Report of the Consultation of Orthodox Theologians, New Valamo, Finland, in *Eastern Churches Review*, vol. x/1-2 (1978), p. 144.

96. E.L. Mascall, *Corpus Christi*, p. 47. Also J. Pearson, 'An Exposition of the Creed', in *Anglicanism*, p. 37.

97. Cf. E.L. Mascall, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 37-38.

98. A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 119. The holiness of Christians must meet the holiness of the sacraments and, thus, to be constituted 'the communion of saints'. *Ibidem*.

99. E.L. Mascall, *Corpus Christi*, p. 43. It is in this context that one has to understand the corporate characteristic which Christ, 'the Son of Man' (John 6:53) reveals and who 'takes into himself' all those who partake of the Eucharistic meal; cf. J. Zizioulas, 'The Eucharistic Community and the Catholicity of the Church', p. 110.

100. *The Lambeth Conference of 1948*, Committee Report, part ii, pp. 85-86.

J. Macquarrie gives the example of the way in which the *fermentum* (the consecrated bread) in the ancient times was sent to various communities from a central church, where the bishop officiated, in order to emphasize the unity and the continuity of the Eucharistic meal; cf. *Christian Unity and Christian Diversity*, SCM Press, London 1975, pp. 68-69. Cf. St Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, x, 8, in the English translation of H. Bettenson, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex 1986, p. 380.

101. M. Ramsey, *Durham Essays and Addresses*, SPCK, London, 1956, pp. 19-20. *Idem*, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 95. See also *The Lambeth Conference, 1930*, The Report of the Committee for 'The Unity of the Church', p. 236.

102. 'Many persons and Churches, however distinguished by time and place, are considered as one Church because they acknowledge and receive the same sacraments...are united in the same cognizance, and so known to be the same Church'; J. Pearson, 'An Exposition of the Creed', pp. 589-620; cited in *Anglicanism*, pp. 28-29.

103. *Lumen Gentium* 48; in *ed. cit.*, p. 79. See also *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 26; *Ad Gentes* 5; *Gaudium et Spes* 42 etc.

104. A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, pp. 61-62.

Some Roman Catholic theologians condition the actualization of the Eucharist as an expression of Church catholicity by the

existence of a bond between a local church and Peter; see B. Lambert, *Ecumenism*, p. 435. That contrast with what the Eucharist is meant to represent, namely 'understood primarily not as a *thing* and an objectified means of grace but as an *act* and a *synaxis* of the local Church, a '*catholic*' act of a '*catholic*' Church'; J. Zizioulas, 'The Eucharistic Community and the Catholicity of the Church', p. 109.

105. *Lumen Gentium* 26, in *ed. cit.*, p. 50. That is in consonance with what Leo the Great says: 'The partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ transforms us into that which we consume'; *Sermones* 63, 7; P.L. 42:357C.

106. Cf. *Lumen Gentium* 12, in *ed. cit.*, p. 30.

107. A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 63.

108. Cf. H. Küng, *The Church*, pp. 211-224.

109. *Lectures on Galatians* 3:2-3, LW 27:249.

110. The stories of the Gospel are 'sacraments, i.e. holy signs through which God effects in the believers what those stories indicate'; cf. H. Bornkamm, *Luther's World of Thought* p. 96. Or as Luther states: 'What is true in regard to Christ is also true in regard to the sacrament', LW 36:35.

111. WA 36:570f, in T.F. Torrance, *The Eschatology of Faith: Martin Luther*, in *ed. cit.*, p. 195. Also LW 36:93.

Luther refuses the right to the Church and even to the apostles to create or designate sacraments; only Christ has that authority; cf. LW 36:123ff.

112. Cf. B. Hall, *Hoc est Corpus Meus*, *op. cit.*, p.134.

In the same sense, 'the symbol of baptism becomes personal only by the fact that it takes the individual's whole existence and places it in God's historical-eschatological saving action of His people by which He puts them to death and makes them alive again in Christ'. Hence, 'Baptism always is the symbol of the fact that the individual belongs to the people of God, the Church of God'; cf. R. Prenter, *Spiritus Creator*, p. 147.

113. 'Wherever Baptism and the Sacrament (i.e. the Eucharist) are there God's people must be and vice versa'; LW 41:152. From that point of view, 'The Church is made up of those who move forward in the process of sanctification'; *Commentary on Psalm 90:2*; LW 13:89-90.

In this context, Baptism is one of the ways whereby Christ assured the continuity of the catholic (Christian in Luther's words) Church throughout human history and into eternity (cf. Matt 28:19-20). See also J. Pelikan, *Spiritus versus Structure*, p. 90.

114. R. Prenter, *Spiritus Creator*, p. 148. The act of receiving Christ is only possible when believers are really in communion with Him, as God's people.

115. 'The *significance* or the effect of this sacrament is the fellowship of all the saints. From this it derives its common name *synaxis* or *communio* that is fellowship. And the Latin *communicare*...means to take part in this fellowship' (or as the Germans say 'to go to the sacrament'); *LW* 35:50-51.

116. The article on the Lord's Supper 'has been believed and held harmoniously in all the world ever since the beginning of the Christian Church up to this hour, as the books and writings of the dear Fathers, both in Greek and in Latin prove'; *LW* 38:292.

117. Since Christ is 'the matter' of the two Christian Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, they (the Sacraments) 'are the mode in which we are united to Christ in his death, resurrection and ascension, so that...we must speak of a real and substantial union with him as "members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones" (Ephes 5:30)'; Calvin, *Institutiones* 4.14.16; 4.17.9; cited by T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, pp. 129-130.

118. 'The Eucharist...unites us at the same time with one another and with the whole company of Christ's people in every age and place'; cf. *God's Reign and our Unity*, The Report of the Anglican-Reformed International Commission 1981-1984 (Woking, England, January 1984), SPCK, London 1984, pp. 41 and 70.

119. 'Baptism is...a sacrament of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ'; T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconciliation*, pp. 87 and 107. The idea is probably a normal consequence of the Protestant doctrine of the complete corruption of man's nature after the original sin and, thus, his complete passivity in his attitude towards his Creator and Redeemer.

120. G. Florovsky, 'Le corps du Christ vivant', *op. cit.*, p. 43.

121. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 95.

122. A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 207.

123. Cf. 'The Church which presides in Love', in J. Meyendorff *et al.*, *The Primacy of Peter in the Orthodox Church*, The Faith Press, Bedfordshire 1973, pp. 58ff.

124. Cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 48; in *ed. cit.*, p. 154.

125. Cf. Adolf von Harnak, *History of Dogma*, vol vii, Williams & Norgate, London 1899, p. 216. In this sense, 'the Church of Christ is not constituted only by the word of God or through its authentic preaching. It is rather constituted by the presence of the Lord, the sacramental presence, yet veracious'; G. Florovsky, 'Le corps du Christ vivant', *op. cit.*, p. 28.

126. This view that all who love Christ may come to the Lord's Table is the most liberal position among the Congregationalists; cf. Alan P.F. Sell, *Saints: Visible, Orderly and Catholic*,

Whitstable Litho Ltd., Kent 1986, p. 99.

127. E. Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith and the Consummation*, vol iii, p. 153. This is the consequence of the distinction which Brunner draws between *Ekklesia* and the Church. When the *Ekklesia* turns into the Church as an institution which administers the Sacraments then the whole meaning of Church's (*Ekklesia*) life and membership becomes totally distorted; cf. *ibidem*.

Notes IV

1. The local Church has been seen in the Pauline thought as well as in the theological development of the first three centuries as 'the ἐκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ or the "whole Church" or even the καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία' and this in connection with the concrete eucharistic gathering; cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 148.

Before proceeding any further, an exact determination of what we mean by a 'local Church' has to be clearly indicated.

The 'local Church' refers to 'a single community united under the headship of one bishop and possessing, in unity with him, the fullness of sacramental life'. As a consequence of that, the local Church is 'the very Church itself'. This meaning of the 'local Church' is quite different from that assigned to those ecclesiastical groupings 'coterminous with nations or states, which we call autocephalous Churches' and which are part of a changeable *historical* and *organizational* process. They, nevertheless, are also, by extension, reckoned as manifestation of the Church catholic. Cf. Alex. Schmemmann, "'Unity", "Division", "Reunion" in the Light of Orthodox Ecclesiology', in *Θεολογία*, vol. 22/2 (1951), pp. 244-245 or *Idem*, 'The Ecumenical Patriarch and the Orthodox Church' (in Russian), in *Messenger of the Russian Church in Western Europe*, no. 1/28 (1951), pp. 3-12.

J. Zizioulas together with Al. Schmemmann, N. Afanassieff, J. Meyendorff and others represent that group of Orthodox theologians who support an 'eucharistic ecclesiology' within which the catholicity of the Church is seen ultimately based on and centred around the local eucharistic gathering. In the same sense, see also B. Leeming, *The Vatican Council and Christian Unity*, Darton, Longman and Todd, London 1966, pp. 200-201.

2. G. Florovsky, 'Le Corps du Christ vivant', p. 29. Cf. also J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 92 or K. Ware, 'Catholicity and Nationalism: A Recent Debate at Athens', in *Eastern Church Review*, vol. x/1-2 (1978), pp. 10-11 (where he cites prof. John Karmiris' view of 'eucharistic catholicity').

'The plenitude of the local Church is manifest precisely in that it contains in itself whatever each church possesses and whatever they all possess together'; Al. Schmemmann, 'Primauté et autocéphalie dans l'Eglise Orthodoxe', in *Istina*, vol. 1 (1954), p. 37.

3. Cf. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 247. 'Without some form of "congregationality" there is no local catholicity'; *ibidem*.

The idea is also present in the Orthodox reaction to the Calvinistic Confession attributed to Cyril Lukaris (1672): the interdependence of the roles and positions of the head (the bishop) and the other members of the local community is the basis on which 'the catholic plenitude of each local church' is build upon; as cited by J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 13. See also G.D. Dragas, *Ecclesiasticus*, p. 58.

4. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew *qahal* (Deut 9:10) was meant to reflect 'the ultimate unity of the Chosen People conceived as a sacred whole', while in the New Testament the People of God was chosen, singled out from the world irrespectively of any 'natural' pre-determined qualifications.

Later on, the Hellenistic meaning of the *ekklesia* intended to render the image of 'an assembly of the sovereign people, in a city, a general congregation of all regular citizens'; cf. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 58-59.

A historical background of the community in its locality as centred around the bishop of the place is given by J.M.R. Tillard, *The Bishop of Rome*, pp. 72-73. For an extensive comprehensive study of the biblical and early Christian theological understanding of the word *ekklesia* see K.L. Schmidt, *The Church*, Adam and Charles Black, London 1950, *passim*.

5. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 59.

6. Following St Ignatius' usage of the word ἀγάπη (*Epistola ad Romanos*, Salutations, in Lightfoot's edition, p. 150), Afanassieff concludes that it was meant to signify 'the local church in its eucharistic aspect' which 'is the catholic Church and so manifests the Church of God in Christ'; 'The Church which presides in Love', in *The Primacy of Peter in the Orthodox Church*, p. 93.

While in the New Testament language, the term ἐκκλησία is connected to the eucharistic gathering of a *named* place (e.g. Corinth, 1 Cor 1:2; Thessalonika, 1 Thessal 1:1), the same term in the plural refers to a wider area (e.g. Galatia, Gal 1:2). This seems to be the case until the middle of the second century (see St Justin the Martyr, *Apologia I pro Christianis* 65; P.G. 6:427BC, who speaks about the observance of a one single Eucharist under one bishop in each single place). After that, through the appearance of the *chorepiscopoi* (the village-based bishops), this principle remained valid, though it had to be conceived in different terms; cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 247-249.

7. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 249. In this context, the catholic quality of the community would be rendered by the fullness of grace and of Christ's truth which the local community possesses; N.A. Nissiotis, 'La presence dynamique et la mission de l'église locale dans le monde d'aujourd'hui', in *Eglise locale et Eglise universelle*, Les Editions du Centre Orthodoxe, Chambesy 1981, p. 309.

This is what Fr. Al. Schmemmann calls the '*Catholic agreement* of all the Churches' through which 'each Church *knows* the others as it does itself, and in the others it knows the One Catholic Church...(and) the sacraments of another Church are recognized as the sacraments of one's own Church, and ultimately as the sacraments of the Church Universal'; "'Unity", "Diversification", "Reunion" in the Light of Orthodox Ecclesiology', pp. 250-251.

8. Cf. G.D. Dragas, *Ecclesiasticus*, p. 115. "'Partiality" belongs only to the individual appropriation to the given fullness by the members, who are limited by belonging to the "old Adam"; it does

not exist in the Body of Christ, indivisible, divine, and glorious'; J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 209.

9. Cf. Al. Schmemmann, "'Unity", "Division", "Reunion" in the Light of Orthodox Ecclesiology', pp. 244, 247-248.

10. In the early Christian centuries, the term 'catholic' has been employed in order to draw a distinction between what was regarded as the 'standard' type of eucharistic episcopal-centred community (the *cathedral* - the Council of Trullo, canon 59) and the parishes which appeared from the fourth century onwards. The cathedral was defined as *ecclesia major*, *ecclesia senior* or *ecclesia catholica*, while in later Byzantine monasticism καθολικόν stood for the main church in a monastery, where 'all the monks would gather for the celebration of the Eucharist'; cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 148-149. See also J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 8.

11. N. Afanassieff, 'The Church presides in Love', p. 75. Also J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

This local dimension of the Church as a full expression of the whole Church is, to some extent, stated in the Documents of Vatican II (e.g. *Lumen Gentium* 26, in *ed. cit.*, pp. 50-51). Unfortunately, other dispositions of the Council, especially those concerning the relation of a local community with the universal Church and the Pope's position of universal authority within it made this attempt fruitless and inefficient.

12. Cf. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 152. The Roman Catholic ecclesiology of Vatican II asserts also that the liturgical event which the Church manifests and realizes is the whole Church (*Lumen Gentium* 28, in *ed. cit.*, pp. 54-55; cf. also C. O'Grady, *The Church in Catholic Theology*, pp. 254-255). However, for the reasons as stated in the previous note, this view remains a rare and unsuccessful attempt made by the Roman Catholic Church to accommodate its theology with a more appropriate understanding of catholicity in a locality.

13. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-251. In spite of difficulties concerning the application in practice of some of its ecclesiological principles (especially in terms of adjusting to new ethnical developments in the Diaspora) the Orthodox theology remains open to a full expression of the exact meaning and concrete manifestation of the local Church as καθολικῆ ἐκκλησία. That means that it still supports the view of a 'comprehensive' local community with 'a) the laity of all cultural, linguistic, social and other identities living in that place, and b) all the other orders of the Church as parts of the same community'; cf. *ibidem*, p. 251.

J. Zizioulas sees as the practical alternative to the presbyterium-centred parish the emergence of 'small episcopal dioceses'; *ibidem*. How viable this alternative can be is another matter which we are not going to discuss here.

14. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 252-253. See also Al. Schmemmann's view in two of his articles (cf. note 1 above) where he clearly states that 'such categories as "the parts" and "the whole"

are inapplicable to the Church, because the Church is catholic in so far as within it the "part" is not only in agreement with the whole, corresponds to and submits to the whole, but is identical with and embodies the whole: the part, in other words, *is* the whole'; "'Unity", "Division", "Reunion" in the Light of Orthodox Ecclesiology', p. 245.

Thus, since the Church is not the sum of its various parts it follows that 'each local Church with a bishop is in its structure, in its very being, the Catholic *pleroma*. Catholicity is an absolutely fundamental characteristic of ecclesial existence'; P. Evdokimov, 'The Principal Currents of Orthodox Ecclesiology in the Nineteenth Century', p. 35.

15. (The local Church) 'cannot be based on divisions and discriminations either of a natural kind, such as race, nation, language, age, sex, physical handicap, etc., or of a social type, such as class, profession, etc.'; 'The Ecumenical Nature of Orthodox Witness. Report of the Consultation of Orthodox Theologians. New Valamo, Finland', p. 142. See also N.A. Nissiotis, 'La présence dynamique de la mission de l'Eglise locale dans le monde d'aujourd'hui', in *Eglise locale et Eglise Universelle*, p. 326.

From its locality the Church ought to stretch out towards those still untouched by the message of the Gospel and become a missionary community so that its plenitude in witness will be shared by other communities as well; I. Bria, 'La mission des églises locales dans l'Eglise universelle', in *Eglise locale et Eglise universelle*, pp. 332-333. Cf. also *The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order. Montreal 1963*, in ed. cit., p. 80.

16. 'Each local church is the Catholic Church in its plenitude, not just a unit in some greater whole'; K. Ware, 'Catholicity and Nationalism', pp. 11-12. See also Y. Congar, *Divided Christendom*, pp. 111-112 or J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 254 and 259.

17. Paul Avis, 'What is Anglicanism?', in *The Study of Anglicanism*, ed. by S.W. Sykes and J.E. Booty, SPCK, London 1988, p. 416.

18. Cf. E.L. Mascall, *Corpus Christi*, p. 19. This principle is very important and it had been kept in the Eastern Church, while in the West has been recovered by the the Anglican Communion. Whether it actually works efficiently in the Anglican Communion is a different matter.

19. *Idem*, *The Recovery of Unity*, pp. 173-174. On the one hand, the total Church is 'not made up by adding the local churches together'; on the other hand the local Church is a church which represents here and now (as it was, for instance, in Corinth) the total Church. It is 'one Church in many manifestations'. The local Church is 'not a church, but the Church...the totality of all Christians following to a certain spot, and emerging there'; A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, pp. 47-48. See also L. Newbegin, 'What is "a local Church truly united?"', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 29/2 (1977), p. 121.

20. A.M. Ramsay, *op. cit.*, p. 113. Following this understanding, 'Catholicity inheres in the local church as much as in the universal church. Both the local and the universal partake of the gift of catholicity'.

However, according to the Anglican ecclesiology, in spite of that, both the local and the universal Churches are 'susceptible to the defects and insufficiencies which prevent full catholic realization'; cf. J.R. Nelson, 'Oneness must mean Wholeness', in *No Man is Alien*, p. 255.

21. This was the case with the churches in the houses of Aquila and Priscilla, or Philemon, as recorded in the New Testament; cf. J. Pearson, 'An Exposition of the Creed', pp. 589ff, cited in *Anglicanism*, p. 26.

22. H. Bornkhamm, *Luther's World of Thought*, p. 152.

23. 'In the Eucharist Christ is present in his fullness, and the company which shares in it is therefore the catholic Church in that place'; *God's Reign and our Unity*, pp. 51-52.

J.-M. Chappuis sees in Protestantism an 'intrinsic weakness' which consists in not having a universal centre where the local churches would have the opportunity to express themselves in an institutional manner. In spite of that, however, a certain 'universal vision of the Church...(and) a universalistic practice of mission' characterize it; 'La Conception de l'Eglise locale dans l'ecclesiologie Réformée', in *Eglise locale et Eglise universelle*, pp. 267-268.

24. J.-M. Chappuis, *op. cit.*, p. 267. 'The Church lives therefore (it "exists"!) under the form of the local congregation, as the norm of all its forms of existence'; K. Barth's Contribution at the First General Assembly of the WCC, Amsterdam 1948, cited by J.-M. Chappuis, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-275.

25. 'Within history the Church catholic can only exist as locally embodied realities with all sorts of cultural (i.e. social and historical) factors conditioning their shapes, doctrines not excluded'; Daisuke Kitagawa, 'All in each place: Racial and Cultural Issues', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 15/1 (1962), p. 52.

26. A.P.F. Sell, *Saints: Visible, Orderly and Catholic*, p. 67. 'The only organised church Congregationalist owns is a *particular church* or *congregation of believers* statedly meeting in *one place*'; *ibidem*, p. 107.

27. From *Proceedings of the International Congregational Council* vi, p. 2; cited in A.P.F. Sell, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

The emphasis on the Church-event as realized by the preached word is one of the features which Congregationalism preserved from its Reformed background together with a strong individualist tendency; see e.g. Fred H. Kaan, 'The Local Church: Some Congregational Voices', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 29/2 (1977), p. 154.

28. Cf. E. Lanne, 'The Local Church: its Catholicity and its Apostolicity', in *One in Christ*, vol. 6 (1970), pp. 288-297.

For a retrospective, though not always too objective and convincing, view on the concept of papal primacy as laid down in a dogma of the Roman Church by Vatican I, see G. Dejaife, S.J., 'Primauté et collégialité au Premier Concile du Vatican', in *L'Episcopat et l'Eglise Universelle*, pp. 639-660.

An attempt to rehabilitate the local Church in the Roman Catholic thought is obvious in the works of theologians like M.-J. Le Guillou, O.P., 'Plénitude de catholicité et oecuménisme', in *Istina*, 2 (1959), p. 252; *Idem*, 'Mission et unité en perspectives protestante et catholique', in *Istina*, 4 (1959), pp. 450-456; J. Hamer, *The Church is a Communion*, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1964, p. 38f or J.M.L. Tillard, 'L'Eglise de Dieu est une communion', in *Irénikon* 53 (1980), pp. 451-468. However, in the end, they cannot make the decisive break with the excessive limitation of the local expression of the Church in its relation to the universal one as present in the traditional Roman Catholic theology.

29. *Christus Dominus* 11, in *ed. cit.*, p. 403.

Lanne tries to convince us that in some of the articles of Vatican II (*Lumen Gentium* 26, *Christus Dominus* 11, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 41 and 42) the local Church together with its catholicity and apostolicity is given some pre-eminence; *ibidem*, pp. 298-304. In the end it seems that his attempt is deemed to fail since in practice very little has changed in terms of the autonomy of the local churches in their connection with the papal centre. For a fair criticism regarding some of the views of Vatican Council II, see J.R. Nelson, 'Oneness must mean Wholeness', in *No Man is alien*, pp. 255-256.

30. *Lumen Gentium* 23, in *ed. cit.*, p. 46.

In fact the term 'catholic' as seen in the traditional Roman Catholic theology seems to refer to the whole Church as opposed to the particular churches which compose it. See the case with the Donatists, for example, and also when Augustine asserted that the *catholica* was a worldwide communion, while the local Church of the Donatists was not; cf. A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 118. See also H. Legrand, 'A Response to "The Church as a Prophetic Sign"', in *Church, Kingdom, World. The Church as Mystery and Prophetic Sign*, ed. by G. Limouris, pp. 145-146.

31. Cf. *Lumen Gentium* 13, in *ed. cit.*, pp. 31-32. 'The primacy of the bishop of Rome is in no sense equivalent to that of a bishop set over the heads of other bishops. It derives from the privileged position of one local church, that of Rome'; J.M.R. Tillard, *The Bishop of Rome*, p. 118.

32. H. Küng, *The Church*, pp. 235-236. Tillard's view on how the communion operates in terms of the liaisons realized between various local communities betrays him in that he cannot escape the cercle of universal papal centrality. 'You share in ecclesial communion in so far as you are in communion with the bishop of your local church, who is himself in communion with all his brother bishops because he and they are in communion with the bishop of

Rome'; *The Bishop of Rome*, p. 129.

33. Ch. Butler, *The Theology of Vatican II*, p. 177. 'It is at the local level of the eucharistic fellowship that the People of God actually lives and that Christ is made present through that People'; *ibidem*, p. 122.

34. *Idem*, *The Idea of the Church*, p. 90.

35. G. Florovsky, 'Le Corps du Christ vivant', in *ed. cit.*, p. 37.

36. 'All eucharists and all bishops are local in character at least in their primary sense'; J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 258.

37. Cf. St Cyprian, *De Unitate ecclesiae* IV; P.G. 4:515A. See also J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, pp. 9-10.

'In the unity with its bishop and in the unity of the bishop with the Church each church possesses the Church in its fullness - fullness of sanctity, of catholicity, of apostolicity, that is of all the *notae Ecclesiae* which are the signes of the organic unity between Christ and the Church: *Caput et Corpus*'; Al. Schmemmann, 'Primauté et autocéphalie dans l'Eglise Orthodoxe', pp. 35-36.

38. 'The Church, through the liturgy of the resurrection, proclaims and shares what it must be: the manifestation of the Kingdom in the midst of the people'; I. Bria, 'Symbolic Values in the Contemporary Experience of Orthodoxy', p. 276.

39. 'The evidence of an agreement in faith between local churches was the necessary sign of, and the condition for, Church union'; J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 57. See also Al. Schmemmann, 'Primauté et autocéphalie dans l'Eglise Orthodoxe', p. 37 or *Idem*, "'Unity", "Division", "Reunion" in the Light of Orthodox Theology', *passim*.

40. Cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 253.

41. Ch. Gore, *Orders and Unity*, 1909, p. 212; cited by G.H. Tavard, *The Quest for Catholicity*, pp. 185 and 190. Gore prefers in fact the term of 'liberal catholicism' which corresponds to a providential if not messianic vocation of the Church of England among other Churches, having the capacity of uniting the Catholic traditional structure with the Protestant principle of scriptural emphasis.

In his criticism of the Anglican Communion, Newman asserts that *Ecclesia Anglicana* in its entirety 'did not, and in a sense could not, at that time, seek to be historically and ecumenically catholic' and that was precisely so because of the compromise made on the basis of the 'principle of comprehensiveness'; cf. G.D. Dragas, *Ecclesiasticus*, p. 115.

42. A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 206.

43. This catholic faith comprises within itself Christ as presented by the Holy Scriptures and in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, expressed in the Sacraments and the rites of the early Church 'as

set forth in the Book of Common Prayer with its various local adaptations' and, also, 'safeguarded by the historic threefold Order of the Ministry'; cf. *The Lambeth Conference, 1930, The Report of the Committee for 'The Unity of the Church'*, p. 246.

44. The truthfulness and genuineness of the faith should always prevail over universality as a norm of Church's catholicity, cf. W. Sherlock, 'A Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity', (1690), pp. 35f, cited in *Anglicanism*, p. 40.

45. D.W. Allen and A.M. Allchin, 'Primacy and Collegiality. An Anglican View', in *Lambeth Essays on Unity*, ed. by M. Ramsey, SPCK, London 1969, p. 18. In this context, issues as for example the ordination of women to the priesthood could create problems for the whole Anglican Communion because the consensus does not seem to be quite there.

46. 'The Creed...says "the catholic Church" lest we take it to mean an outward government of certain nations. It is, rather, made up of men scattered throughout the world who agree on the gospel and have the same Christ, the same Holy Spirit, and the same sacraments, whether they have the same human traditions or not'; J. Pelikan, *Spiritus versus Structure*, p. 103.

47. 'The Church is never triumphant and perfect quantity; it is always a hidden and struggling power'; H. Bornkhamm, *Luther's World of Thought*, p. 149.

48. *Ibidem*, p. 151-152.

In the more contemporary context, the tendency towards bringing together local communities with certain similarities and affinities in what is commonly known as 'United Churches' seems to be nothing but an attempt towards the affirmation of a catholicity beyond the strictness of localism proper to Protestant ecclesiologies. It seems, though, that such endeavour is ultimately based on minimal agreement on faith and little concern for a more profound understanding of how catholicity relates to Church unity. For the United Churches' view on local and universal see H.P. Keiling, 'The Church: Local and Universal. A Comparative Analysis of the Structure of United Churches', in *Mid-Stream*, vol. 6/3 (1967), pp. 125-186 or P.C. Rodger, 'Towards the Wholeness of the Church', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 17 (1965), p. 156.

49. O'Grady, *The Church in Catholic Theology. A Dialogue with K. Barth*, p. 286. See also 'Baptists and Reformed in Dialogue', in *Studies from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches*, Geneva 1982, p. 28. Cf. also C. Welch 'Catholicity', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 16 (1964), p. 42.

As a reaction to the Roman Catholic universalistic view which ultimately reflects a *unity without freedom*, the Protestant Reformation has brought about a *freedom without unity* in which the individualistic approach is all too obvious; cf. Khomiakov's critique in M.-J. Le Guillou, O.P., 'Kirieievsky et Khomiakov. L'appel à une plénitude de catholicité', in *Istina*, vol. 8 (1961-1962), p. 289.

50. A. Dulles, *The Catholicity of the Church*, p. 137. In the same terms, J.M.R. Tillard in his *The Bishop of Rome* (SPCK, London 1983, p. 153f) explains how communion with Rome assists individual bishops in their task of allowing 'the catholicity of the Church to reveal itself in a particular place'.

51. Pope Paul VI, 'Petrum et Paulum' (apostolic exhortation), in *Documentation Catholique*, 64 (1967), pp. 482 and 488, as cited by J.M.L. Tillard, *The Bishop of Rome*, p. 80. This supreme extension of the Pope's universal jurisdiction goes even beyond the boundaries of Christendom to pagans and Jews and also, in a sense, 'reaches to the Church Triumphant'. It is only the hell and the limbos which he has no power to administrate; cf. J. Rivière, 'Trifono', in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 15, pp. 1858-1859, cited by J.M. Tillard, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

52. Cf. J. Hamer, *L'Eglise est une communion* (1962), p. 38, as cited by J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 157.

In these terms, a 'unity in collectivity' would imply the understanding of the local churches as mere parts which will eventually form a whole Church by coming together. On the contrary, the 'unity in identity' would spell out a picture of local churches which coincide with one another, as they indeed also coincide with the whole Body of Christ, the Church catholic; cf. *ibidem*, p. 158.

53. *Ibidem*, p. 154. Therefore, 'no mutual exclusion between the local and the universal was possible in a eucharistic context, but the one was automatically involved in the other'; *ibidem*, p. 155.

That is made possible through the presence of the whole Christ both in the catholic Church world over and in the divine Eucharist locally celebrated; G. Tsetsis, *La dimension universelle de l'Eglise locale*, Imprimerie Dumas, Saint-Etienne (no year), p. 20.

54. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 154. In order to sustain this view, Zizioulas appeals to the comparison employed by Aristotle between the καθόλου and the καθ' ἕκαστον in which the latter is not part but the concrete expression of the former; cf. *ibidem*, pp. 154-155.

In the same sense, the local Church as seen by the Fathers of the Church is in itself 'a reality in which the "catholic" Church is fully present and real' (e.g. St Ignatius). This reveals a different approach to the matter from the one professed by the Platonic and Philonian view on the relation between 'the intelligible prototype and its concrete sensible antitype: the latter has its existence only as the reflection of the former'; cf. *ibidem*, pp. 232-233.

55. 'The presence of Christ in the (local) church is guaranteed by the very "gathering in His name", in the unity of the true faith, and in conformity with true tradition- and not by an allegiance to some universal centre'; J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, pp. 115-116.

Following the understanding of St Ignatius of Antioch with regard to the relationship between the local and the universal aspects of the Church, we should conclude that since both are

centred around Christ (even in the case of the local Church as united around the bishop who represents Him) there is a sense of *identity* in their nature which makes them so closely bound.

56. This 'dilemma is transcended in the eucharist, and so is any dichotomy between Christology and Pneumatology'; cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 133 and 237; see also N.A. Nissiotis, 'La pneumatologie ecclésiologique au service de l'Unité de l'Eglise', p. 337.

57. Cf. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 258. 'Any structural universalization of the Church to the point of creating an ecclesial entity called "universal Church" as something parallel or above that of the local church would inevitably introduce into the concept of the Church cultural and other dimensions which are foreign to a particular local context'; *ibidem*.

For N. Afanassieff, an eucharistic ecclesiology would exclude any concept of a Universal Church 'for the Universal Church consists of parts, if it exists at all'. That leads Afanassieff to the conclusion of an extreme localism that in the end 'the concept of the Universal Church is itself an abstraction'; 'The Church which presides in Love', in *The Primacy of Peter in the Orthodox Church*, pp. 76 and 97.

58. That is why, according to the Orthodox canon law, the synods are made up *only by diocesan bishops*; cf. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

59. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 135. Oneness and multiplicity are interrelated and, thus, 'the multiplicity is not to be subjected to the oneness; it is constitutive of the oneness'; *ibidem*, p. 136.

60. J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 20. Cf. St Maxim the Confessor, *Ambigua*, P.G. 91:1187-1189, 1192. Thus, one can speak about a 'universal Church' only as a 'communion of local Churches which, in a given place, manifest the catholicity'; I. Bria, 'La mission des Eglises locales dans l'Eglise universelle', p. 330.

From this point of view, any local Church 'has to demonstrate its catholicity to the other Churches not in dialectical and formalistic arguments, but in a real, practical, theological and historical way'; G.D. Dragas, *Ecclesiasticus*, p. 114.

61. Having a theology based on the fullness of each local Church's apostolicity and, indeed, 'Petrinity', the Orthodox Church has avoided the tendency to localize these qualities in a particular episcopal see. This view has brought with it a vision of perfect harmony between what for others looks like an 'irreducible opposition between "local church" and "universal Church"'. The dilemma is, thus, an artificial one; cf. 'The Agreed Statement of the Orthodox - Roman Catholic Bilateral Consultation. Boston, 30th October-1st November, 1986', in *Sobornost*, vol. 9/2 (1987), p. 51.

62. Cf. St Ignatius, *Epistola ad Ephesios* 3,2; P.G. 5:647A.

63. Cf. 'The Consultation of Orthodox theologians, Crete, March 1975', in *Orthodox Contributions to Nairobi*, B, section i, WCC, Geneva 1975, p. 31.

The Consultation in Nairobi, however, did not stress sufficiently the aspect of 'intensive catholicity' which would render to each local Church the quality of being 'the place and presence of the universal Church' and, thus, creating the context within which the universal Church and the local Church would be seen in close interrelationship; D. Popescu, 'The Local Church and Conciliar Fellowship', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 29/3 (1977), p. 268.

64. D. Popescu, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

In Nairobi, the Orthodox pointed out that 'true conciliar fellowship presupposes the unity of the Church' and, thus, any real catholicity is manifest only in the context of an existing common understanding of the faith by all the constituent local communities; cf. 'What Unity requires', in *Breaking Barriers: Nairobi 1975*, ed. by D.M. Paton, SPCK, London 1976, p. 60.

65. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 133.

According to the patristic ecclesiology, neither is 'the individual man...in opposition to the local church community', nor 'are the catholic local churches in opposition to the ecumenical Catholic Church. In the Catholic Church the one and the many are not in a dialectical but in a reciprocal relationship and the principle that governs this relation is that of interpenetration (*enoikesis, emperichoresis, circumincessio*), which is an essential aspect of the image and the similitude of God in man'; G.D. Dragas, *Ecclesiasticus*, p. 116.

66. LW 41:212-219.

67. Cf. 'Baptists and Reformed in Dialogue', *op. cit.*, p. 27.

68. Ch. Butler, *The Theology of Vatican II*, p. 222. This vision of the Church as *one* universal body with *one* universal head is very much in evidence in the writings of such pre-eminent *doctors ecclesiae* as Thomas d'Aquino, *Summa Theolog.* II, ii, 39, 1; 89, 9 or Bonaventura, *De perf. evang.* 2, 2; 4; 3 as cited by Y. Congar, 'De la communion des Eglises á une ecclésiologie de l'Eglise universelle', in *L'episcopate et l'Eglise universelle*, pp. 245-247. This is what Congar calls 'ecclesiology of the universal Church'.

As a direct result of this understanding, namely that the Church ought necessarily to have a universal 'centre', a certain 'subordinationism' in the structure of the Church is introduced. From this, the Roman Catholic ecclesiology ended up in transposing 'the organic character of the local Church, which is fundamental to the ecclesiastical unity, upon the universal Church, and that after practically transforming the latter in a unique and immense local Church'; cf. Al. Schmemmann, 'Primauté et autocéphalies dans l'Eglise Orthodoxe', pp. 32 and 36.

69. Cf. Al. Schmemmann, "'Unity", "Division", "Reunion" in the Light of Orthodox Ecclesiology', p. 244.

Even theologians like K. Rahner could not escape the inclination towards a certain subordination of the local to the universal in spite of making efforts to avoid that; cf. *Episcopatus und Primatus*, (1962), pp. 26 and 34 or 'Quelques reflexions sur les principes constitutionnels de l'Eglise', in *L'episcopat et l'Eglise universelle*, pp. 550f.

70. Al. Schmemmann, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

In the light of what *Lumen Gentium*, 23 states (in *ed. cit.*, p. 44-45), it seems that, in spite of the efforts made towards a less obvious universalism, yet 'the universal Church can be viewed as a single community of particular churches (i.e. dioceses) in union with the centermost Petrine Church and with all other particular churches'; cf. J.J. McDonnell, C.M., *The World Council of Churches and the Catholic Church* (Toronto Studies in Theology, vol. 21), The Edwin Mellen Press, NY/Toronto 1985, p. 212. McDonnell seems to be well aware of the crucial importance which the particular Church has in the context of the ecumenical process; cf. *ibidem*.

71. J.M.R. Tillard, *The Bishop of Rome*, p. 157.

Y. Congar seems to realize the fact that due to a juridical approach to the problems concerning its position within the Church catholic, Rome has seen the Church as 'a reality correlative to its universal authority'.

Following a very different understanding, the Orthodox East has conceived of the Church catholic in sacramental terms. For that matter, since '*from the sacramental point of view the local community is complete*' (italics mine) it seems that, according to Congar, the East is relatively less scandalized and uneasy with regard to the break of communion; 'Conscience ecclésiologique en Orient et en Occident du vi^e au xi^e siècle', in *Istina*, 2 (1959), p. 203.

72. 'On the one hand we claim to be a church possessing catholic tradition and continuity from the ancient church, and our catholic tradition and continuity includes the belief in the real presence of Christ in the blessed sacrament; the order of episcopacy and the priesthood, including the power of a priestly absolution. We possess various institutions belonging to catholic Christendom like monastic orders for men and women...great authority is attached to the authority of the holy Scriptures, and to personal conviction and conversion through the work to the Holy Spirit'; Archbishop Michael Ramsay, writing for a Roman Catholic audience, cited by P. Avis, *op. cit.*, pp. 412-413.

73. *God's Reign and our Unity*, p. 70.

74. Congar traces back this universalistic view of the Church which, in the end, affects also the way catholicity is understood, to the time of Constantine when a symbiosis between Church and state (as represented by the emperor) took place. As a consequence, the Church begun to be seen in the West as a *society*, a proper entity, which exercises a universal or ecumenical authority and

influence. Hence, an ecclesiology in which the Church was conceived as a society was opposed to the one which saw as its primary feature the *sacramental reality*; cf. 'De la communion des Eglises à une ecclésiologie de l'Eglise universelle', in *L'episcopate et l'Eglise universelle*, pp. 254-256.

75. A. Dulles, *The Catholicity of the Church*, p. 143.

76. *Ibidem*, p. 138. Dulles tries to bring forward the principle of subsidiarity as a safeguard against the autonomy of the local Church.

The fact that there has always been a danger that the papacy would overreach its limits of authority, a danger which one would say that it has not very often been avoided, is acknowledged even by some of those Roman Catholic theologians who are far from critical enough concerning the misuse of the papal authority; e.g. J.M.R. Tillard, *Eglise d'églises: l'écclésiologie de communion*, Ed. de Cerf, Paris 1987, *passim* or J. Lecuyer, C.S.Sp., 'Orientations presentes de la theologie de l'épiscopat', in *L'episcopate et l'Eglise universelle*, pp. 809-810.

77. One of the representatives of the Latin American Liberation Theology, Leonardo Boff speaks of a 'universal liberating grace', but he also insists that grace must be understood within history and in terms of the sort of experience we have today. Hence, the approach to the local problems is to be made from the point of view of those living in that locality; see *Liberating Grace*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY 1984, especially pp. 109-124.

J.J. von Alman also seems to give some credit to an 'action of grace and intercession' of all the local churches among themselves which would help in overcoming national, cultural, racial barriers; cf. 'L'Eglise locale parmi les autres Eglises locales', in *Irenikon*, vol. 43 (1970), pp. 525-526.

78. The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order, (Montreal, 1963), especially, undertook that task with some success going as far as to affirm that the catholic character of the Eucharist particularly expresses the Christological source of the Church's catholicity; cf. *The Fourth World Conference of Faith and Order. Montreal 1963*, ed. by P.C. Rodger and L. Vischer, Faith and Order Paper, No. 42, SCM Press, London 1964, pp. 80-83 and 221. See also P.W. Fuerth, *The Concept of Catholicity in the Documents of the World Council of Churches 1948-1968*, pp. 127-138.

Notes V

1. J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, pp. 107-108. See a summary of the standard Orthodox canonical collection in *idem*, *Byzantine Theology*, pp. 80-88.
2. J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 61.
3. 'The canons indicate to us how to apply to the changeable realities of human history these unchangeable and vivifying realities of the redemptive grace of God abiding in the Church'; J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 108.
4. G. Florovsky, 'The Limits of the Church', p. 15.
Since the Church is, ultimately, 'a sacramental communion with God in Christ and the Spirit, whose membership - the entire Body of Christ - is not limited to earthly *oikoumene* ("inhabited earth") where law governs society', it is obvious that such limitations as the canon law lay down 'never exhausted the ultimate reality of the Church of God'; cf. J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 79.
5. J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 46. As defined by the canonists, the principle of 'economy' envisages the common good of the entire body of the Church; *ibidem*, p. 117.
6. Nevertheless, 'these variations are only justified if they conform with the nature of the Church, with the expression of its unity, holiness, apostolicity, and catholicity'; J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 47.
7. J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 48.
In the view of some of the Orthodox canonists (e.g. Balsamon), this identity refers to a Church which is deeply involved in a more extra-ecclesial context, namely (as in the case of the Byzantine period of the Church) 'as centralized in the framework of an ideally universal Christian empire'; cf. *idem*, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 85.
8. Hans Küng, *The Church*, p. 445.
This fact was made clear by Pope Gregory (Hildebrand) who in his *Dictatus Papae* asserts: 'No canonical text exists outside his authority'; *P.L.* 148:407; cited by J.M.R. Tillard, *The Bishop of Rome*, p. 54.
9. R.C. Mortimer, *Western Canon Law*, Adam and Charles Black, London 1953, p. 57. 'The kingly head of this political body (the Kingdom of England) is instituted and furnished with plenary and entire power, prerogative and jurisdiction to render justice and right to every part and member of this body...in all causes ecclesiastical or temporal; otherwise he should not be a head of the whole body'; *ibidem*, pp. 58-59.

10. The idea is to be found for instance in the thought of Augustine or Leo the Great (*Epistola 54; P.L. 33:210*); cited by Mortimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 75 and 85.

11. The dilemma is acknowledged by Mortimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-77.

12. *Ibidem*, p. 89.

13. A very useful introspection into this 'conflict of interests' is made by J. Pelikan in his book *Spirit versus Structure*.

14. *LW 32:83*.

As a consequence of such an extreme attitude, Luther burned the 'Corpus of the Canon Law', though he will refer to it in defending his position, especially as part of the argument in the *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*; cf. J. Pelikan, *Spiritus versus Structure*, p. 102.

15. 'There are huge tomes, even whole libraries, that do not contain a single syllable about Christ or faith in him or the good works to be performed in one's calling, but only the traditions together with interpretations that make them stricter or easier'; *ibidem*.

16. Cf. J. Pelikan, *Spiritus versus Structure*, p. 104.

17. Hope for an improvement in Church's life is impossible 'unless we abolish at one stroke all the laws of all men, and having restored the gospel of liberty we follow it in judging and regulating all things'; *LW 36:103*. See also 'The Babylonian Captivity of the Church', in *LW 36:98*.

18. 'We know that the fathers had good and useful reasons for instituting ecclesiastical discipline in the manner described by the ancient canons'. This explains Luther's and his followers' 'earnest desire' to keep those canons; *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, xvi, 3; cf. J. Pelikan, *Spiritus versus Structure*, p. 105.

19. Here Luther refers to the words of Christ to Peter in Matthew 16:19 and considers that its Roman interpretation according to which the pope has been granted special canonical prerogatives will ultimately be 'taking the whole Church captive and oppressing it to laws'; *LW 36:71*.

20. 'They want to show that they are free men and Christians only by despising and finding fault with ceremonies, traditions, and human laws'; *LW 31:372*. Those regulations are meant 'for the sake of good order and tranquility in the Church'; *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, xxiii, 49, cf. J. Pelikan, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

After all, Luther mentioned together with the Bible and the civil law 'the ancient canons and the best points of the canon law'; cf. 'On Marriage Matters'; *LW 46:268*.

21. 'We can truthfully claim that in our churches the public liturgy is more decent than in theirs, and if you look at it correctly we are more faithful to the canons than our opponents are'; [...] 'we diligently maintain church discipline, pious ceremonies, and the good customs of the Church'; *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, xv, 38-39; xv, 44; cited by J. Pelikan, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

22. T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconciliation*, p. 20.

23. *Ibidem*, p. 29.

24. *Ibidem*, p. 31.

25. *Ibidem*, p. 34.

26. The true Church law 'is that which derives...from the Christologico-ecclesiological concept of community', assertion which is in concordance with Calvin's thought expressed in *Confessio Gallicanum*, art. 29; K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 4/2, p. 681.

27. E. Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith, and the Consummation*, p. 21. 'The *Ekklesia* was a spiritual brotherhood, free from law'; *ibidem*, p. 29.

In the same sense, T.F. Torrance speaks about the Church catholic in terms of faith for 'we discern the Catholic Church, not by historical inspection, not by outward and wordly measurements, not by sight but by faith'; 'The Predicates of the Church. The Foundation of the Church', in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 16 (1963), p. 112.

28. The concept is common in Melancthon's thought, but also implicit in Calvin's *Institutes* iv, i, 5; cf. E. Brunner, *op. cit.*, pp. 77 and 139.

29. E. Brunner, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

30. K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 4/2, p. 683.

31. Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 690-693. In this sense, Church's law receives the qualifications of a liturgical and living law, due to its Christological basis; *ibidem*, pp. 698ff.

32. This is particularly visible in terms of 'temporal catholicity' for Church's growing in history is to be better understood not only in terms of loyalty to the New Testament, but also in terms of the Church of the early Fathers and that of the ancient canons; cf. Calvin, *Opera Selecta* i, p. 479, cited by T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, p. 48.

33. The centre of the whole Church (i.e. the eucharistic *synaxis*) is the 'one bishop' (St Ignatius, *Epistola ad Philadelphenses* IV; P.G. 5:699B) who sits on the throne in the 'one altar' (St Ignatius, *Epistola ad Magnesios* VII; P.G. 5:667C), typifying God

the Father (St Ignatius, *Epistola ad Magnesios* VI; P.G. 5:667B), or being 'deputy of Christ', occupying 'Χριστοῦ καθέδρα' (Clement of Rome, *Homilia* III, LX; P.G. 2:149C). Around the bishop were the presbyters (Rev 4:4) (St Ignatius, *Epistola ad Smyrnaeos* VIII; P.G. 5:714B) and by him were the deacons as helpers in the eucharistic celebration, while in front of them was 'the people of God' (St Justin the Martir, *Apologia I pro Christianis* 65; P.G. 6:427AB) seen as an 'ordained' category of people (through the rite of initiation: baptism-chrismation) (cf. Clement of Rome, *Epistola I ad Corinthios*, XL and XLI; P.G. 1:290A and 291B).

Hence, a relationship is established between the 'one eucharist' with the 'one Church' and with both the 'one bishop' and the 'one altar'. This whole system of relations is, eventually, applied to the oneness of the eucharistic community as such spiritually united with the Father (e.g. St Ignatius, *Epistola ad Smyrnaeos*, III; P.G. 5:710B; St Cyprian, *De unitate ecclesiae*, XVII; P.L. 4:529A-C; etc).

For a comprehensive view on the understanding of one of the early Fathers of the Church regarding the place and the role of the bishop and of the other members of the local communities, see J. Romanides, 'The Ecclesiology of St Ignatius of Antioch', in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, vol. 7 (1960-1961), especially pp. 66-73.

34. The reality of bishop's office is witnessed by many early references (see n. 7). He is the one who 'brings up, through the eucharist offered to God in the name of the Church *the whole Body of Christ*. He is "the one" in whom the "many" united would become "one"; J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 153.

35. 'This "anaphoric" quality of the Church, expressed *par excellence* in the Eucharist, is the main manifestation of the priestly character of the Church and her ministry'; J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

36. Cf. St Ignatius, *Epistola ad Smyrnaeos* VIII (see above); *idem*, *Epistola ad Ephesios* V: P.G. 5:647C etc.

37. Drawing a parallel between the ordination prayer of the bishop and that of the presbyter, the latter does not mention the duty of the offering of the Eucharist by the presbyter; see *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St Hyppolytus of Rome*, chapters 3 and 7, in the edition of G. Dix, SPCK, London 1937.

One can talk of the presbyter's 'priestly' task only from the fourth century onwards when the parish (with a presbyter in its centre) appears; cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 231.

38. This has to be understood in terms of 'the togetherness and simultaneous gathering ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ of *all the orders* of the community'; J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

39. Cf. St Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses*, IV, XL, 2; P.G. 7:1112D-1113AB.

40. In the Orthodox tradition, the ordination of a minister

(bishop, priest or deacon) is for a *named* community.

41. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 199. The other ministries become, through the ministry of the bishop, parts of a unique system of relations.

42. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 66. 'There is no ministry in the catholic Church that can exist *in absoluto*' (cf. Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita, *De ecclesiastica hierarchia* V, V: P.G. 3:513A). See also J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 154 and 166.

43. According to Hippolytus, *Apostolic Tradition 2*, in *ed. cit.*, or canons 4 and 6 of Nicaea (325) there should be at least two or three bishops from other communities at a new ordination into episcopacy. Thus, the new bishop and his community is 'linked simultaneously with the apostolic college as it is expressed in his own Church and in other Churches'; J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 202. See also J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 19.

This way of understanding sacramentally the act of the bishop's ordination as effected through *equally* ordained bishops is, in the case of Roman Catholic theology and practice, denied by the fact that the pope is elected by bishops who are essentially *inferior* to him. Thus, a basic principle according to which 'the sacrament is given by one who has the fullness of orders to one who has not yet that fullness' is contradicted since papacy appears as a sort of 'super-sacrament of orders'; cf. Khomiakov, 'L'Eglise Latine et le Protestantisme au point de vue de l'Eglise d'Orient' (1872), p. 152, cited by P.P. O'Leary, *The Triune Church*, p. 102.

44. Cf. canon 34 of the 'Apostolic Canons'. 'The two, oneness and multiplicity, must coincide in an institution which possesses a twofold ministry: the ministry of the *πρῶτος* (the first one) and the ministry of the "many" (the heads of the local Churches)'; J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

45. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 236.

46. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 244. See also Khomiakov's view concerning the necessity for the recognition which the Church as a whole has to exert with regard to any decision taken by any bishop or Ecumenical Council; cited by J. Romanides, 'Orthodox Ecclesiology according to Alexis Khomiakov (1804-1860)', in *The Greek Theological Review*, vol. 2 (1956), p. 63.

The same idea is to be found in Y. Congar, 'La "Réception" comme réalité ecclésiologique', *passim* where he tries to distance himself from a certain Roman Catholic theology which followed the view of pope Nicholas I who saw the Roman Church as the "*epitome*" of the Church catholic and therefore departed from the principle of the Early Church '*Ecclesia universalis non potest errare*' by making *one single* local Church the exclusive bearer of the truth.

In this context, in case individual hierarchs err they may be corrected by 'the conscious will of the Church in its local or universal expression'; V. Lossky, 'Ecclesiology: some Dangers and

Temptations', p. 26.

47. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 65-66. Also J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

'Thus the bishop is the *sine qua non* of salvation, not as an individual as such, being some sort of magical means between God and man [cf. St John Chrysostom; *P.G.* 62:31], but as the necessary center of corporate life in Christ ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό, to whom, together with the presbytery and diaconate, has been entrusted the faithful and correct administration of and teaching the corporate Mysteries'; J. Romanides, 'The Ecclesiology of St Ignatius of Antioch', pp. 68-69.

48. Cf. St Ignatius, *Epistola ad Philadelphenses* I and II; *P.G.* 5:698BC. See also *Martyrium Polycarpi* 16, 2. However, the 'catholic Church' had never been seen as a mere 'school' (Hippolytus, *Philos.*, 9, 12, 21; *P.L.* 15:3386); cited by J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 167.

In their function, the Orthodox presbyters are, in fact, what the *χωρεπίσκοποι* used to be in the Early Church once they were deprived of the right to ordain; cf. J. Romanides, 'The Ecclesiology of St Ignatius of Antioch', pp. 72-73.

49. *God's Reign and our Unity*, p. 54.

50. *Ibidem*, pp. 59-60.

51. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 135. That is the result of the fact that ordination, as 'ontologically constitutive of episcopacy', is conditioned 'by the presence of the community' which is 'constitutive of the Church'; *ibidem*, p. 137.

52. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

The *koinonia* of the Spirit is, ultimately, the one which relates the ministry and the concrete community to each other; *ibidem*, p. 212. In the eucharistic context, the community, through the conceded 'axios', manifests itself as 'a condition' for 'the very charismatic nature of the ministry'; *ibidem*, pp. 218-219.

53. *Ibidem*, p. 232.

Thus, the way the eucharistic concelebration is performed, namely having a fundamental common 'ground' and, yet, with particular, special assigned acts to each of the members of the community, according to their 'type' of ordination, is particularly relevant.

54. A bishop is a member of a synod only in as much as he is head of a community. At a wider level, a council of bishops becomes authoritative through the process of 'reception' by the communities which those bishops represent; cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 241. Thus, 'a true council becomes such only a *posteriori*; it is not an institution but an event in which the entire community participates and which shows whether or not its bishop has acted according to his *charisma veritatis*'; *ibidem*, p. 242.

Or, as Fr. Florovsky puts it, the value of the decisions taken by a council does not rest with their 'ecumenical' character, but precisely in their *catholicity*: 'The *Numerus episcoporum* does not decide. And it can be said that "antiquity without truth is nothing but sustained error": *antiquitas sine veritate vetustas erroris est*'; cf. 'Le corps du Christ vivant', *op. cit.*, pp. 51-52. And that is so because the bishops are 'equal by grace' (Leo the Great) in the fact that 'the *forma Petri* is present in each local Church'; O. Clement, 'Orthodox Ecclesiology as an Ecclesiology of Communion', p. 114.

55. For the Orthodox, only the ecumenical Council has the supreme authority in matters of dogma. 'This does away with any division into "teaching Church" and "taught Church", still more into "teaching Church" and "believing Church". The whole Church is teaching and taught at the same time. The charism of infallibility belongs to the holiness of the Church'; P. Evdokimov, 'The Principal Currents of Orthodox Ecclesiology in the Nineteenth Century', pp. 34-35. Also G. Florovsky, '*Sobornost: The Catholicity of the Church*', pp. 70-72.

56. Cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 220. 'If ordination is understood as constitutive of the community and if the community being the *koinonia* of the Spirit is by its nature a *relational entity*, ministry as a whole can be describable as a complexity of relationships within the Church and in its relation to the world'; *ibidem*.

57. The ministry unites the community by rendering *different* charismata to each one of the members of the Church catholic (cf. St Maxim's *συνδιαιρουμένη* = co-divided; *Mystagogia*, II; P.G. 91:668D-669A). At the same time, it is seen as *προσβεία* (ambassadorship) (cf. St John Chrysostom, *Homilia XI in Epistolam secundam ad Corinthios* 3; P.G. 61:477), cited by J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 220.

58. *Oratio XXXIV, X*; P.G. 36:252A.

59. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, pp. 222-223. This is precisely because 'Church structure and the ministry are not simply matters of convenient and efficient arrangements, but "models of being", ways of relating between God, the Church and the world'; *ibidem*, p. 244.

60. J. Zizoulas, *op. cit.*, p. 226. In the state of ordination 'existence is determined by *communion* which qualifies and defines both "ontology" and "function"'; *ibidem*.

It is in this perspective that, according to canon 5 of Nicaea 'a lawful sentence of excommunication, though fuminated by a particular bishop, expels its victim from the communion of the Church at large'; cf. B.C. Butler, *The Idea of the Church*, p. 67.

61. Cf. St Gregory of Nyssa, *In Baptismum Christi*; P.G. 46:581D-584A. St Cyril of Alexandria speaks of a *μεταστοιχείωσις* (transmutation) of the one who is ordained (*Commentarium in Joannem* 12, 1; P.G. 73-74); cited by Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

62. The ordained person is called to become part of his community, as its leader or president (προεστώς) in a fundamental relationship to the entire community (cf. St Justin the Martyr, *Apologia I pro Christianis*, 67; P.G. 6:430C).

63. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 229. In the Alexandrian theology, *theosis* (deification) of the human nature does not imply a 'natural' change but rather 'an elevation of human nature to the glory and life of God by "participation" in the Holy Spirit'; *ibidem*.

64. Cf. *Mystagogia*, II; P.G. 91:669A.

65. 'In her being the Body of Christ, the Church exists as a manifestation of Christ's own ministry and as a reflexion of this very ministry in the world'; J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 163. It is in these terms that the bishop is seen by the Fathers as an '*alter Christus*' and '*alter apostolus*', an image of Christ (cf. e.g. St Ignatius, *Epistola ad Magnesios* VI; P.G. 5:668B).

66. Cf. St John Chrysostom, *Homiliae XII-XIV in Epistolam ad Hebraeos*; P.G. 63:95-116; St Gregory of Nazianzos, *Oratio XL in Sanctam Baptisma*, XXVI; P.G. 36:396AC.

See also two excellent articles of N.A. Nissiotis where Pneumatology is placed in a pre-eminent position next to Christology: 'La Pneumatologie ecclésiologique au service de l'Unité de l'Eglise', in *Istina*, vol. 12 (1967), pp. 323-340 and 'Pneumatological Christology as a Presupposition of Ecclesiology', in *Oecumenica* (1967), pp. 235-251.

67. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 211. The term 'priest', firstly applied only to Christ (cf. Heb 5:6; 8:4 etc), later on referred to the bishop as well, until the fourth century when it appears attached to the person of the presbyter; cf. *ibidem*, p. 230. See also the analogy of the eucharistic community presided by the bishop with 'the same community' in the upper room, with Christ as the centre, as put forward by J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 18.

68. 'Thus the ordained person becomes a "mediator" between man and God, not by presupposing or establishing a distance between these two but by relating himself to both in the context of the community of which he himself is part'; J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

Hence, no 'vicarial' concept can be accepted, since it would imply a representation of someone who is not present.

69. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 65.

70. *Ibidem*, p. 66. See also J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 222.

71. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 222. For a concise overview of the development of the diaconate institution see *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, pp. 379-380.

72. G. Florovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 66. Cf. also J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 222-223. See also 'The Ecumenical Nature of Orthodox Witness. Report of the Consultation of Orthodox Theologians. New Valamo, Finland', p. 142: 'The specific ministry of the bishop is to transcend in his person all the divisions that may exist within a particular area and also to relate a local Church to the rest of the local Churches both in space and in time'.

Even later developments (the replacement of the episcopal eucharistic community with a 'parochial' one) will not prevent the community from being a fully constituted body.

73. Cf. Vatican I as cited by A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 35. Therefore, it looks normal for Y. Congar to affirm: 'Catholicity is, like unity, apostolic, social and hierarchical'; *Divided Christendom*, p. 100.

74. Yves de la Brière, 'Eglise', in *Dictionnaire apologetique de la foi catholique*, vol 1, Beauchesne, Paris 1925, col. 1284.

This concept is proper to an ecclesiology which sees the Church 'as a sacred institution' in which the charismatic life of the Church catholic in the Holy Spirit is substituted by her main characteristic of being 'the sociological structure of a divine institution'; N.A. Nissiotis, 'Ecclesiology and Ecumenism of Vatican Council II', p. 29.

75. *Lumen Gentium*, 12; in *ed. cit.*, pp. 29-30.

Fr Congar acknowledges the fact that prior to Vatican II the notion of reception and, therefore, the role of laity as a constituent part of the catholic Body of Christ, has been reduced to almost total extinction. It has been replaced either by a 'pyramidal concept of the Church as a mass entirely determined by its head, or, (through a spiritual intimacy brought to extreme) one can talk of the Holy Spirit as only the mere guarantor of the infallibility of the hierarchical structures'; 'La "Réception" comme réalité ecclésiologique', p. 392.

76. *Lumen Gentium*, 8; in *ed. cit.*, p. 23.

Roman Catholicism sees this relationship quite differently from the Orthodox, for example. Thus, 'Catholicism tends to define the ecclesial quality of a bishop and his community in terms of being in communion with the first bishop [while] Orthodoxy would rather make the ecclesial quality of the first bishop, in his very function (*diakonia*) of *protos*, depend upon his being in communion with all the others, in the unity of the people of God, which is the only sign of the presence of infallible Truth'; O. Clement, 'Orthodox Ecclesiology as an Ecclesiology of Communion', p. 115.

77. Cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 3; in *ed. cit.*, pp. 345-346.

By that kind of understanding, which asks for the absolute necessity of appertaining to a community which is in communion with Rome, the Church catholic looks very much like what Fr Congar calls 'a society subordinated to a monarchic authority', 'a unique and immense diocese', and not what she ought to be: a communion of local Churches; 'La "Réception" comme réalité ecclésiologique', p.

394. See also *idem*, 'De la communion des Eglises à une ecclésiologie de l'Eglise universelle', in *L'Episcopat et l'Eglise universelle*, pp. 227-240.

78. *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 13 and 17; in *ed. cit.*, pp. 356 and 360: '...this sacred Synod declares that this entire heritage of spirituality and liturgy, of discipline and theology, in their various traditions, belongs to the full catholic and apostolic character of the Church'.

79. P. Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, p. 288.

Similar to what the Lutherans affirm, the Reformed theology sees the Church's structure as the real issue which keeps Christians divided 'in the search for the catholicity and for the essence of the Church in general' and not her message or her essence; cf. H. Berkhof, 'The Catholicity of the Church. Dutch Theologians in Debate', in *Bulletin of the Department of Theology of the WARC and WPA*, vol. 6/1 (1965), p. 6.

80. *LW* 41:143. Here, Luther translated 'Church' with 'communion (*Gemeinde*) of saints'.

On these lines, some evangelical theologians draw a distinction between the qualities of the Church (*Eigenschaften*), that is *una, sancta, catholica, apostolica* and which pertain of the invisible Church (*ecclesia proprie dicta*) and the characteristics of the Church (*Kennzeichen*), namely 'the right preaching of the word and the proper administration of the sacraments' (cf. *Confessio Augustana* vii) which reveal the visible Church; cited by Th. Sartory, *The Oecumenical Movement and the Unity of the Church*, p. 103.

81. Luther insisted that the Church, although understood primarily in spiritual terms, comes under orderly and constitutional forms of human life; *LW* 45:89.

82. 'For in it (the Christian Church) are found the gospel, baptism, and the sacrament of the altar, in which the forgiveness of sins is offered, obtained, and received'; *LW* 37:368.

83. 'No earthly power can draw the boundaries of the Church and decide who belongs to it and who does not. Only Christ who gives faith to the heart knows this; and only he sees this faith'; P. Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, p. 292.

84. Such an idea is in consonance with what Luther stated elsewhere and with his whole concept of original sin, namely that *politia* was put forward as a necessary 'remedy required by our corrupt nature'; *LW* 1:104.

85. Cf. T.F. Torrance, 'The Eschatology of Faith: Martin Luther', in *Luther: Theologian for Catholics and Protestants*, p. 189.

86. The term 'priest', as seen by Luther, could refer either to Christ as priest or to all Christians as priests, but not restricted to the clergy; *LW* 40:18-20.

87. This responsibility is evident, for instance, in the act of confession to each other; 'the keys (of priesthood) belong to the whole Church and to each of its members, both as regards their authority and their various uses'; 'Concerning the Ministry', *LW* 40:27.

88. The true canon law has to act as a safeguard against 'practical clericalism' and 'every distinction between the active and the inactive (or passive) Church; against every separation into the ruling and the ruled, the teaching and the hearing'; cf. K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 4/2, p. 694.

89. 'With all the respect for particular gifts and tasks and their limits the responsibility of all and for the whole is maintained and asserted' by the regulations of the canon law; cf. *ibidem*, p. 695.

90. *God's Reign and our Unity*, p. 46.

91. *God's Reign and our Unity*, p. 51.

It follows that the visible Church which depends 'on the extent of its faith, possesses an inner dynamism towards the fullness of catholic visibility, sacramentality and unity'; C. O'Grady, *The Church in Catholic Theology. Dialogue with Karl Barth*, p. 102.

92. *God's Reign and our Unity*, p. 53.

93. '(Anglicanism) possesses a full catholicity, only if it is faithful to the Gospel of God; and it is fully Evangelical in so far as it upholds the Church order wherein an important aspect of the Gospel is set forth'; A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 208.

94. 'The catholic Church is divided into a number of distinct societies, every of which is termed a Church in itself. In this sense, the Church is always a visible society of men; not an assembly, but a society'; R. Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, vol. 1, book iii, ch. 1, n. 14, J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., London 1954, p. 296.

95. Cf. R. Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, *passim*.

96. A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 205.

97. The idea has been stressed by The Lambeth Conference, 1930, in the Report of the Committee for 'The Unity of the Church', pp. 232 and 249. See also the Committee Report on the 'Anglican Communion', p. 85.

98. R.P.C. Hanson, 'The Nature of the Anglican Episcopate', in 'Lambeth Essays on Ministry', SPCK, London 1969, pp. 85-86.

99. 'The Episcopate is of the *esse* of the universal Church;...the

growth of all Christians into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ means their growth with all the saints in the unity of the one Body, and of this unity the Episcopate is the expression'; A.M. Ramsey, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-85.

100. *Ibidem*, p. 226. Dr K.E. Kirk in his *The Apostolic Ministry*, (London 1946, p. 40) is very categorical in this sense: 'Should (the) ministry fail the apostolic Church, which is the body of Christ in space and time, would disappear with it'; cited by E.L. Mascall, *The Recovery of Unity*, p. 182.

101. J. Macquarrie, *Christian Unity and Christian Diversity*, p. 59. See also E.L. Mascall, *The Recovery of Unity*, p. 187.

102. *Ibidem*, p. 193.

103. '...ordains the God-loving priest *N* into Bishop to be the leader and first amongst the people of the God-defended citadel of *N*'; cf. The Orthodox Service for the Ordination of a Bishop.

104. G. Florovsky, 'Sobornost: The Catholicity of the Church', p. 72.

Since the catholic Church was not a 'school' (see above note 16), the teaching was only a part of what the apostolic succession was meant to signify. It was seen 'neither as a chain of individual acts of ordination nor as a transmission of truths but as a sign and an expression of the *continuity of the Church historical life in its entirety*, as it was realized in each community'; J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 167-168. Similar idea in G. Florovsky, ('Le corps du Christ vivant', *op. cit.*, pp. 37-39) who sees this authority which is transmitted through the apostolic succession as representing and assuring 'the entire catholicity of the Church, one and holy'; *ibidem*, p. 52.

105. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, pp. 66-67.

106. N.A. Nissiotis, 'Pneumatological Christology as a Presupposition of Ecclesiology', p. 242.

Cf. also St Cyprian, *Epistola LXIX*, V; P.L. 4:416A or Hegesippus as cited by Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica*, I, XIII; P.G. 20:121A.

107. Al. Schmemmann, 'Primauté et autocéphalies', p. 38.

See also J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, pp. 20-21 or J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 169. For a historical approach to the topic see also Clement, *Epistola I ad Corinthios*, XLII; P.G. 1:291A; *ibidem*, XLIV; P.G. 1:298A.

Other Fathers of the Church stressed the charismatic aspect of the apostolic succession at the expense of the 'institutional' continuity of the Church (e.g. Origen, *De principiis*, I, 21; P.G. 11:301f etc).

108. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 198. 'Apostolic "succession" has no reality outside of "tradition", and the guardian of apostolic tradition is the whole Church'; J.

Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 59.

109. Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* iv, v; P.G. 20:309B.

That would result in 'a structure emerging from the eschatological state of the Church's convocation'; J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 175.

110. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, pp. 194-195.

Developments in the later Christian centuries (after St Cyprian), although would preserve the concept of 'the indivisibility of the apostolic college in its eschatological nature' (each episcopal throne is a *cathedra Petri*), will favour the appearance of alterations of this theology. Thus, the bishop becomes *alter apostolus* (Peter) but not *alter Christus*, whereas 'the structure of the local Church ceases to reflect the Kingdom of God with Christ surrounded by the Apostles'; *ibidem*, pp. 200-201.

111. Al. Schmemmann, 'Primauté et autocéphalies', p. 36. Cf. also J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 196.

112. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 193. This view will protect us from the sacramentalism of the ordination, as seen in the historical or institutional continuity of the ministry.

The same idea should apply also in the way the power to 'bind and loose' is integrated into the context of the *convoked* Church; cf. *ibidem*, p. 184. See also N.A. Nissiotis, 'La pneumatologie ecclésiastique au service de l'Unité de l'Eglise', p. 340.

113. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 116. In fact, 'historical existence' (i.e. succession) and 'charismatic event', 'coincide with each other'; *ibidem*, p. 217.

114. The Roman Catholic theology tends usually to give priority to the universal college in its relationship to the local, though this idea is sometimes replaced by a more synthetic view, especially in the more modern theology.

115. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 204.

'One local manifestation of the body of Christ could not be more body of Christ or less than another. Likewise the living image of Christ, the bishop, could not be more image or less image than another image, because Christ, whose image the bishops are, is identically One and Equal with Himself'; J. Romanides, 'The Ecclesiology of St Ignatius of Antioch', pp. 71-72.

116. Ch. Butler, *The Theology of Vatican II*, p. 85.

In relation to this, Tillard sees 'the communion with the *centrum unitatis*, the bishop of the see of Peter and Paul' as being essentially connected to the horizontal dimension of catholicity, inseparably united with the identity of the Church as such, in the same way in which the apostolic succession is to 'historical vertical dimension of catholicity'; *The Bishop of Rome*, p. 153. See also R. Murray, 'Collegiality, Infallibility and Sobernost', *passim*.

117. Cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 22; in *ed. cit.*, pp. 42-43. Cf. also St Cyprian, *De unitate ecclesiae*, V; P.L. 4:516: '*episcopatus unus est cujus a singulis in solidum pars tenetur*'.

However, in spite of seeing the bishop of a particular place as the bishop of the catholic Church, who, through the episcopal communion, participates together with other bishops in the governing of the universal Church, the Roman theology, even after Vatican II could not do away with the claim of an 'absolute dependence [of each bishop] on the successor of Peter [the pope]'; cf. B. -D. Dupuy, 'Vers une theologie de l'episcopat', p. 24; Y. Congar, 'De la communion des Eglises a une ecclésiologie de l'Eglise universelle', p. 234; K. Rahner, 'Quelques reflexions sur les principes constitutionnels de l'Eglise', p. 558; G. Dejaifve, 'Primauté et collegialité au premier concile du Vatican', p. 655 or J. Lecuyer, 'Orientations presentes de la theologie de l'episcopat', pp. 791, 799-800; all quoted from *L'Episcopat et l'Eglise universelle*.

At least Congar warns of the danger of making the pope 'some sort of super-bishop or super-priest'; *ibidem*, pp. 248-249 as Lecuyer does also; *ibidem*, pp. 806-807.

118. *Lumen Gentium*, 22; in *ed. cit.*, p. 43.

For that matter, it is not at all surprising to find such statements as this one: 'The episcopate, the bishops are successors of the apostles by divine institution; but in effect both the note of catholicity and that of apostolicity refer to Peter and the essential communion with Peter's successor'; E. Lanne, 'The Local Church: its Catholicity and Apostolicity', p. 297. This view is contrary to what St Augustine himself (*Cresc.* ii, 46; iv, 32) clearly demonstrated when he spoke about the Donatists' lack of communion, therefore cut off from the Church catholic, not only regarding Rome but also other apostolic sees; cf. J.N.D. Kelly, '"Catholic" and "Apostolic" in the Early Centuries', in *One in Christ*, vol. 6 (1970), p. 287.

119. Cf. G. Dix in his article in 'The Apostolic Ministry', p. 187, as cited by E.L. Mascall, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

120. 'The training and sending of the Twelve by Christ was not for a temporary mission, nor yet for a general discipleship, but for a unique office, to order and unite the Christians in one fellowship, in union with the historic events of which the Apostles are witnesses'; A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 71.

121. W. Nicholls, *Ecumenism and Catholicity*, p. 104. See also E.R. Fairweather and R.F. Hettlinger, *Episcopacy and Reunion*, Mowbray, London 1953, p. 8.

122. Cf. *The Lambeth Conference, 1930*, The Report of the Committee for 'The Unity of the Church', p. 219.

123. W. Beveridge, *Sermons*, pp. 10ff; cited in *Anglicanism*, p. 373.

124. 'The inward and the outward are inseparable and the Church's inward meaning is expressed in the Church's outward shape and

structure, as the *ecclesia* wherein the parts depend upon the whole'; A.M. Ramsay, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 50.

125. J. Bramhall, *Works*, (1676), pp. 57-61; cited by H.R. McAdoo, *The Spirit of Anglicanism*, p. 377f.

126. If this continuity on Church's structure is without the word, '(the Church) ceases to be a church'; *LW* 40:37.

127. '*Ubi verbum dei est, ordinatio dei et deus vult bonam politiam*'; *WA* 31/2 614, in Yule, 'Luther's Understanding of Justification by Grace Alone in Terms of Catholic Christology', in *Luther: Theologian for Catholics and Protestants*, p. 191.

128. H. Bornkhamm, *Luther's World of Thought*, p. 143.

129. H. McSorley, 'Luther: Model or Teacher for Church Reformation', in *Luther: Theologian for Catholics and Protestants*, pp. 34-35.

130. Yet, in the Reformed churchmanship, the bishop remains the one who, only in strictly functional sense, 'stands as a personal symbol of the catholicity and apostolicity of the Church'; cf. *God's Reign and our Unity*, p. 6. See also *ibidem*, pp. 56-57.

In the same context, the minister is seen as 'an organ which gives expression to the personal existence in responsibility of every member of Christ's body [and which] is essential mark of catholicity'; D.T. Jenkins, *The Nature of Catholicity*, p. 118.

131. Calvin, *Corpus Reformatorum*, 43, p. 335, cited by T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, p. 99.

Barth mentions a peculiar interest of some of the Protestant churches (e.g. the Lutheran Germans) which might seek the acquiring of an apostolic succession from the Lutheran Church of Sweden which claims that its apostolic succession had never ceased to exist; *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 4/1, p. 716.

132. Johannes Wollebius, '*Compendium Theologiae Christianae*', *op. cit.*, p. 140. See also K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 4/1, p. 717 or T.F. Torrance, 'Concerning Amsterdam', p. 253: 'the essential historical continuity [is] in the whole Body (πᾶν τὸ ὅμα συναρμολογούμενον) and not in a hierarchical line of priests' and again '[Apostolic Succession] is the continuing wholeness of Christ's Body into which from age to age we are sacramentally incorporated, and which can no more be a phenomenon within the time-series than the *Parousia* itself'; *ibidem*, p. 262.

In such a context, the apostolicity of the Early Church as kept throughout the centuries in the form of the true doctrine becomes 'the fundamental key to fullness and to the Church's identity in its catholicity'; J. Bosc, 'The Catholicity of the Church', p. 347. See also D.T. Jenkins, *The Nature of Catholicity*, pp. 28 and 101.

133. Calvin, *Institutes*, iv, i, 11; iv, ii, 12; iv, x, 27: 'Christ has so ordered the ministry in his Church that if it is removed the

whole edifice must fall', cited by T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, p. 134.

134. Calvin, *Institutes*, ii, xv, 15; cited *ibidem*, p. 136.

135. T.F. Torrance, *op. cit.*, pp. 139 and 153.

136. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 138. Hence, they exist only 'epiclestically', namely 'they depend for their efficacy constantly on prayer, the prayer of community' and, thus, are able to overcome their self-sufficiency and 'individualistic ontology'; *ibidem*.

137. *Ibidem*, p. 205.

138. Cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 240.

The Byzantine thought has implied a form of 'realized eschatology' as it is manifested in the empire; J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 214.

139. J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

The term 'perfection' (τελείωσις) as applied to ordination reflects the 'eschatological decisiveness' of it. See also the entire dynamic 'movement of creation towards its eschatological end' as seen in the context of the eucharistic communion; cf. St Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogia II*; P.G. 91:669A-D; cited by J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

140. A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 118.

141. *Lumen Gentium*, 5-6; in *ed. cit.*, pp. 17-19.

142. Hans Küng, *The Church*, pp. 308-310.

143. Cf. *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 205.

144. *Ibidem*, p. 218.

145. It is encouraging to see that modern Lutheran theologians, as for example Gustav Aulén, are very much aware of the dangers of stressing almost exclusively either a certain 'spiritualism' or 'institutionalism' which both are detrimental to a right understanding of catholicity, for 'catholicity becomes petrified in institutionalism, in spiritualism it vanishes'; cf. *Reformation and Catholicity*, Edinburgh and London 1962, p. 188.

145. Such a moderate position towards Church's polity (more evident after 1530) was meant to concede that the only way to maintain the well-being of the Church is by having a more balanced attitude towards Church's structure and polity. That was motivated by his 'deep desire to maintain the church polity and various ranks of ecclesiastical hierarchy, although they were created by human authority'; cf. *Apology of Augsburg Confession*, xvi, 3, in J. Pelikan, *Spiritus versus Structure*, p. 105.

146. T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconciliation*, p. 65.

On his part, K. Barth seems to effect 'an illegitimate Nestorian separation of the visible and invisible Church on the basis of a functional monophysitism' which is bound to create a tension between the two aspects of the same entity: the catholic Church of Christ; cf. C. O'Grady, *The Church in Catholic Theology. Dialogue with Karl Barth*, p. 265.

147. T.F. Torrance, *Conflict and Agreement in the Church*, p. 110.

For a pertinent view on how the Church of Scotland understands its position within the Church catholic see G.D. Henderson, *Church and Ministry. A Study in Scottish Experience*, Hodder and Stoughton, London 1951, especially chapters iv and v.

148. T.F. Torrance, *Conflict and Agreement in the Church*, p. 101.

149. *Ibidem*, p. 102.

The Orthodox Church tries to avoid both the excesses of centralizing in a single person the sacred power (as in Roman Catholicism) or the 'anonyme and confuse polyarchie' (multiple heads) proper to Protestantism, as based on the 'collectivization' of the personal and distinct *charisma* of the Apostles. Thus, she puts forward the conciliary system as expressed and realized by the first presbyter or '*episcopos*' who presides over the Eucharist in each local Church, from which he receives his personal *charisms* and his pastoral authority; cf. N.A. Nissiotis, 'La pneumatologie ecclésiologique au service de l'Unité de l'Eglise', p. 338.

150. T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconciliation*, p. 206.

Notes VI

1. Cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 172.
2. Cf. John 20:21; Luke 10:16 etc.; *ibidem*, p. 173.
3. This is precisely because of the 'incarnational' character of the Word ('And the Word became flesh'; John 1:14), which completes its 'prophetic' feature as in the case of the Old Testament.
It follows therefore that 'the nature of mission is not to be found in the Church's *addressing* the world but in its being fully in *com-passion* with it'; J. Zizioulas, *op.cit.*, p. 224.
4. G. Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition*, p. 69.
In the same sense see also the Report of Section I at the Fourth Assembly of the WCC, Uppsala, p. 29, para. I, 5, as cited by E.C. Blake, 'Uppsala and Afterwards', in *History of the Ecumenical Movement*, (vol. 2), p. 425.
5. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, pp. 103-104.
6. 'All Christians, whether they find themselves in Jerusalem or in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, are in diaspora, and...they reach the promised land only within the eschatological anticipation of the Eucharist and of prayer'; *ibidem*, p. 105.
The term 'diaspora' is understood in the New Testament (John 7:35; 1 Peter 1:1) only in the sense presented in the Old Testament in connection to the people of Israel, but it does not appear, for instance, in the canon law of the Orthodox Church; cf. *ibidem*.
7. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, pp. 105-106.
That is why 'true mission is always directed not only to those who are formally outside of the Church, but to insiders also'; *ibidem*, p. 108. See also H. D'Espine, *History of the Ecumenical Movement*, (vol. 2), (Introduction), p. xvi. Cf. also 'The Uppsala Report', *op. cit.*, p. 23.
8. The idea is present in Cardinal Newman's thought, who sees catholicity mainly as 'an existential, historical, theological reality which embraces the whole man, individually and socially, and has world-wide ecumenical dimensions' as exemplarily embodied by the Fathers of the Church who were 'catholic persons' in any sense of the word; cf. G.D. Dragas, *Ecclesiasticus*, pp. 105-106.
9. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 105.
For that matter, it seems that the ultimate reason for today's ecumenism is precisely the 'concern that the Church become truly catholic (out of all the nations on the earth) and truly missionary (sent to all the nations of the earth).' And that is due primarily to the very catholic nature of the Church which makes her 'missionary and leads to the establishment of particular Churches

in the different regions of the world'; cf. H.-R. Weber, 'Out of All Continents and Nations', in *History of the Ecumenical Movement*, (vol. 2), p. 67.

10. Cf. Ch. Butler, *The Theology of Vatican II*, p. 113.

11. *Ad Gentes*, 19; in *ed. cit.*, p. 592. 'The ultimate reason for the necessity of missionary activity in favour of non-Christian peoples is the universality and comprehensiveness of God's plan for mankind salvation and elevation'; *ibidem*, note 23; in *ed. cit.*, p. 593.

12. *The Lambeth Conference, 1920*, The Encyclical Letter, p. 32. 'The aim of missions is not only to make Christians, but to make Christian nations'; *ibidem*.

In this sense, an Orthodox theologian, in speaking about 'ethnicity' as 'one of the conditions under which the Church on earth is localized', stresses the need for the Church 'not to suppress or ignore the ethnic, but to transfigure it into the catholic'; Bishop Antonie Ploiesteanul, cited by K. Ware, 'Catholicity and Nationalism', p. 12.

13. 'They (missionars) must long to see national life putting on Christ, and national thought interpreting His truth'; *ibidem*.

14. J.R. Nelson, 'Oneness must mean Wholeness', in *No Man is Alien*, p. 258. Cf. also *The Lambeth Conference, 1920*, p. 44 or I. Bria, 'Christian Witness in the Orthodox Church', in *Glazul Bisericii*, vol. 41/1-2 (1982), pp. 10-11: 'All the members of the Church are called to take upon themselves the responsibility of their Christian identity (cf. 1 Peter 3:15).'

15. J. Pelikan, *Spiritus versus Structure*, pp. 55-56.

16. *Rationis Latomianae Confutatio*, WA 8:107, cited by G.Yule, *Luther: Theologian for Catholics and Protestants*, p. 197.

17. T.F. Torrance, *The Eschatology of Faith: Martin Luther*, p. 197.

18. Cf. J. Pelikan, *Spiritus versus Structure*, p. 56.

Luther was primarily, if not exclusively, preoccupied with the mission among two monotheistic communities: Judaism and Islam.

19. LW 45 and 80.

20. 'It is only in this missionary and eschatological perspective that the question of unity is rightly seen'; *God's Reign and our Unity*, pp. 9-10.

21. Calvin, 'Commentary on Isaiah', 12:4; in *Corpus Reformatorum* 64, pp. 253f.; cf. also *idem*, 'Sermon on Isaiah', 52:13f.; in *Corpus Reformatorum* 63, pp. 603f. both cited by T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, pp. 161-162.

22. T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, p. 24.

The quality of the Church as a missionary or apostolic entity which is therefore 'sent' makes her 'essentially apostolic, ec-centric, ec-static'; cf. K. Barth as cited by O'Grady, *The Church in the Theology of Karl Barth*, pp. 122f and 315f.

23. 'Just as faith finds its own ways of expression in worship, so the Church's mission involves indigenization [...]. Indigenization, we believe, is more nearly conversion than accommodation'; cf. *The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order, Montreal 1963*, Report of the Section iv, in *ed. cit.*, p. 76. See also J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 218.

24. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 255. (Other gatherings and groups than the eucharistic eschatologically orientated community) 'lack the element of catholicity which is suggested by the eschatological nature of both Church and eucharist and could not be called churches'; *ibidem*, p. 256.

25. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 140.

The attempt made by the Orthodox to construct a vision of the Church catholic in terms of a political system (the Byzantine Empire) or through the identification between nation and Church (a contemporary development) is seen by some as an 'unconscious spiritual mistake' which is most unfortunate and which affects the very being of Church's mission; cf. *ibidem*, p. 106. See also *idem*, *Byzantine Theology*, pp. 216-217.

26. I. Bria, 'Christian Witness in the Orthodox Church', p. 8. See also J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, pp. 140.

The Orthodox view on this matter is that 'while the essence of the Church is not to be viewed in terms of nationalism, it is also unwise to go to the opposite extreme, and to turn catholicity into a kind of rootless cosmopolitanism, abstract, shallow and anaemic'; K. Ware, 'Catholicity and Nationalism', p. 15.

27. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, pp. 108-109.

28. *Ad Gentes*, 19; in *ed. cit.*, p. 608.

29. 'In virtue of this catholicity each individual part of the Church contributes through its special gifts to the good of the other parts of the whole Church'; *Lumen Gentium*, 13; in *ed. cit.*, p. 31. Cf. also P. Fuerth, *The Concept of Catholicity in the Documents of the WCC 1948-1968*, p. 215.

30. *The Lambeth Conference, 1920*, pp. 44-45.

The diocese ought to be, thus, 'the centre of unity' in spite of possible variety of languages or races, which 'form but one Church'; *ibidem*, p. 293.

31. This kind of attitude towards the new Churches would be intended to 'prevent any departure from catholic and Apostolic unity, whether through heresy or through schism'; *ibidem*, pp. 292-293.

32. 'Mission is the sovereign action of the Holy Spirit who, through the faithful words and deeds of the Church, bears witness to Jesus (John 15:26) and does His own work of convincing the world (John 16:8-11) and of leading the Church into a fuller understanding of the Father's will (John 16:12-15)'; T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and the Church*, p. 24. See also A.J. van der Bent, *Vital Ecumenical Concerns. Sixteen documentary Surveys*, WCC, Geneva 1986, p. 40.

33. 'On the mission field it is evident that "communication of" must be bound up with "communication with"'; E. Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith, and the Consummation*, p. 124.

34. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 106.

35. Cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 259-260.

36. The 'ecclesial status of *confessional* churches as such' becomes problematic and the only way out of this dilemma is the return to the basic element which is the local Church; J. Zizioulas, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

37. J. Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity*, p. 102. See *idem*, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 61.

38. *Idem*, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 10.

Seen from this perspective, one can conceive of catholicity as being 'that quality of the Church which engages the divided Churches in the search for the unity of the whole Church'; P. Fuerth, *The Concept of Catholicity in the Documents of the WCC 1948-1968*, p. 244.

39. The best way for a *rapprochement* between various Christian denominations would be through *repentance* (*exomologesis*), both individually and collectively and not through Intercommunion. That would enable us to transform time (*chronos*) into 'being timely' (*kairos*) and thus to be able to accede 'into a passage to eternity - the communion in the Kingdom of God'; G.D. Dragas, *Ecclesiasticus*, pp. 64-66.

40. Cf. J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 10.

41. Looked upon from the perspective of such 'mechanistic or pietistic reductionism', the 'authentic concern for true catholic unity and a reluctance to accept substitutes for it' becomes very clear and prevents the Orthodox Church from opting for the practice of intercommunion; J. Meyendorff, *Catholicity and the Church*, p. 60.

42. J. Meyendorff, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

'An authentique ecumenical perspective reveals, thus, the exigency of purity, fullness, authenticity and catholicity of a veritable theology'; M.-J. le Guillou, 'Plenitude de catholicité et oecumenisme', p. 271.

43. A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 132.

44. Cf. a letter of the Holy Office to the English bishops (1864) and Pius XII's Encyclical *Mortalium animos* (1928); cited by A. Dulles, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-133.

This is also obvious in Vatican II's *Unitatis Redintegratio* which seems to give the impression that 'the real ecumenism begins only if it has a centre clothed with juridical authority, and this is, of course, Rome'; cf. N.A. Nissiotis, 'Ecclesiology and Ecumenism of the Second Session of the Vatican Council II', p. 24.

45. Cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 17; *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 3; in *ed.cit.*, pp. 36 respectively 345.

46. Ch. Butler, *The Theology of Vatican II*, p. 108.

47. The theory seems to be found in the prayer of bishop Lancelot Andrews ('the Catholic Church - Eastern, Western, British') or as Newman put it: 'We are the English Catholics; abroad are the Roman Catholics...elsewhere are the Greek Catholics' (cf. Sermon on 'Submission to Church Authority', 29 November 1829); both cited by G. Florovsky, 'The Orthodox Churches and the Ecumenical Movement prior to 1910', in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, p. 196.

This is expressed clearly also by W. Palmer (Tractarian) in his *Treatise on the Christian Church*, where he states that the Church is one, yet represented by three great 'branches': Greek, Roman and Anglican 'which constitute the Church in different areas, of which each branch is the rightful possessor'; cited by A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, pp. 217-218.

48. Cf. H.Ed. Manning, *The Unity of the Church*, London 1842, p. 156; cited by G.H. Tavard, *The Quest for Catholicity*, p. 165.

49. *The Lambeth Conference, 1948*, The Encyclical Letter, p. 22.

50. A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 223.

51. *LW* 41:165: 'The only reason they (the Christians) must suffer is that they steadfastly adhere to Christ and God's word, enduring this for the sake of Christ (cf. Matt 5:11).'

52. Calvin's thought in this matter is summed up in several places of *Corpus Reformatorum* as, for instance: 77, p. 497; 38, pp. 68f; 42, pp. 313f; cited by T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, pp. 163-164.

53. 'We ought to labour that the scattered may be assembled and united together, that may be one fold and one shepherd'; Calvin, 'Commentary on Hebrews', 10:25; in *Corpus Reformatorum* 83, p. 133; cited by T.F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church*, p. 164.

54. According to Bernard Lambert, the three fundamental elements which differentiate the Protestants from the Roman Catholics in

terms of their respective understanding of what ecumenism means are: 'the historical continuity of the Catholic *oikumene*, the sacramentality and visibility of the Church'; cf. *Ecumenism*, p. 39.

55. H.W. Gensichen, *Missionsgeschichte der neueren Zeit* (1961), pp. 5-7; cited by Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, Penguin Books, Reading 1986, p. 189.

Notes VII

1. Cf. G.D. Dragas, *Ecclesiasticus*, p. 103.

2. The term 'contingency' hereafter refers to something 'which might have been other than it actually is, or alternatively what is incidental in contrast to what is necessary'; *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. by F.L. Cross, Oxford University Press, London 1974, p. 341.

'Contingent' and 'contingency' define, therefore, not only 'what things happen to be'; but also 'the kind of order or pattern they happen to have'; T.F. Torrance, *Divine and Contingent Order*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1981, p. vii. Moreover, contingent things or events 'can be and not be, but once they are, they are what they are in dependence of something else which is not itself contingent', therefore free from any necessity or constraint; *Ibidem*, p. 85.

3. *Religion in Secular Society. A Sociological Comment*, Penguin, Harmondsworth 1969, *passim*.

4. Cf. B. Lambert, *Ecumenism*, p. 32.

This is consistent with other Roman Catholic theologians' views, e.g. Y. Congar: 'Catholicity means universality'; *Divided Christendom*, p. 93, or B. Leeming, *The Vatican Council and Christian Unity*, p. 302: 'For "catholic" means "universal".'

5. See the pertinent analysis made by Nikos A. Nissiotis in 'The Main Ecclesiological Problem of the Second Vatican Council and the Position of the non-Roman Churches facing it'; in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, vol. 2/1 (1965), pp. 36 and 40; cf. also 'Ecclesiology and Ecumenism of Vatican Council II', pp. 19-20 and 23.

6. E.S. Abbott, et al., *Catholicity. A Study in the Conflict of Christian Traditions in the West*, p. 40.

7. B. Lambert, *Ecumenism*, p. 386.

8. This view has been 'legalised' by the Council Vatican I in the whole complex of issues related to the paramount place and role that the Roman Pontiff have been given in the Church catholic. 'Hence communion with the pope is *necessary* for true catholicity' (emphasis mine); T. Sartory, *The Oecumenical Movement and the Unity of the Church*, pp. 230, 232-233.

Likewise, Vatican I states that the pope represents a 'public person', the person who carries within himself the Church; cf. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, tom lii, 762D, cited by G. Dejaifve, *Pope et Eveque au premier Concile Vatican*, Desclée de Brouwer, Bruges 1961, p. 113.

9. Cf. B. Lambert, *op. cit.*, p. 389.

10. There are very many occasions when this issue comes up over and over again. It would be almost impossible to look at them one by one. One or two examples will be sufficient to illustrate convincingly enough what is the Council's position with regard to the 'intrinsic' relationship between the pope and the Church catholic.

'The Roman Pontiff, as the successor of Peter, is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity of the bishops and of the multitude of the faithful' (*De Ecclesia*, 23, in *ed. cit.*, p. 44) or 'if you are to give shape and substance to the true Catholicity of the Church, you have a need of a *centre*, a principle of unity in faith and communion, a unifying power, such as, in fact, you find in this chair of Peter' (Pope Paul VI, 'Opening Address. Third Session of Vatican II', p. 9 [emphasis mine], cited by J.J. McDonnell, *The WCC and the Catholic Church*, p. 172).

11. 'To be in communion with the bishop of Rome is to give visible evidence that one is in communion with all who confess that same faith, with those who have confessed it since Pentecost and with those who will confess it until the day of the Lord shall come'; *Address to WCC by Pope John Paul II* (Geneva, June 12, 1984), cited by J.J. McDonnell, *op. cit.*, p. 386.

12. Cf. R. Murray, 'Collegiality, Infallibility and *Sobornost*', *passim*.

13. The 'Encyclical on the Church' (6th August, 1964), cited by B. Leeming, *The Vatican Council and Christian Unity*, p. 290.

14. Y. Congar, *Divided Christendom*, p. 258. 'We want...to draw out that catholicity which is already in them'; *ibidem*, p. 262.

15. K.E. Skydsgaard, 'The Roman Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Movement', *op. cit.*, p. 157.

16. Whatever Christ has wished for His Church 'the (Roman) Catholic Church has it in a degree incomparably superior to what which you (i.e. the rest of the Churches) discover in your Church'; M. Jugie, *Où se trouve le Christianisme integral?*, (Paris 1947), pp. 256-257.

17. 'those who do not belong to the visible Body of the Catholic Church...may...enter into Catholic unity...with us in the one, organic Body of Christ'; Pius XII, *Mistici Corporis*, Vatican transl., Washington, D.C. 1943, p. 39 (emphasis added), cited by McDonnell, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

18. The fact that the rest of the Churches are seen as 'departed' through their fault from the One undivided Church of the beginning is obvious if one looks at how, for instance, M.J. Le Guillou in his article 'Eglise et Communion' classifies the different ecclesiologies. He considers the Roman ecclesiology as 'the traditional one' (although he does not say it explicitly) while the

others are either 'Orthodox' or 'Protestant', 'Anglican' or 'ecumenical non-catholic' (i.e. confessional); in *Istina*, 1 (1959), *passim*.

19. The view is to be found, among others, in J. Macquarrie's *Christian Unity and Christian Diversity*, pp. 51, 54, 99.

20. J.J. McDonnell, *The WCC and the Catholic Church*, p. 189. See also the comment made in Chapter IV, note 59.

21. Cf. R. Mehl, *The Sociology of Protestantism*, SCM Press, London 1970, p. 196.

22. 'There may be, and there is, a non-Roman "ecumenism" - there can indeed be no other. But there cannot be a "non-Roman Catholicity"'; Y. Congar, *Divided Christendom*, p. 101.

One can suspect Congar that in presenting the relationship between catholicity and unity in the way he does he would make catholicity dependent to a unique position of the pope inside Christendom as being alone 'historically the organ of unity'; *ibidem*.

23. 'The (Roman) Catholic Church is not one church among others, she is the *single* source from which they have come, the point of convergence of all the churches which have split off from her' (emphasis mine); Hans Urs von Balthasar, *In the Fullness of Faith. On the Centrality of the Distinctively Catholic*, trans. G. Harrison, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 1988, p. 123.

24. N.A. Nissiotis, 'Ecclesiology and Ecumenism of the Second Session of the Vatican Council II', p. 30. See also for example H. Alivisatos' statement that the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestants 'have ceased to belong to the One Catholic Church', in *The Nature of the Church*, ed. by R. Newton Flew, p. 50; or I. Karmiris, 'The Orthodox Catholic Church and Her Relations with other Churches and with the WCC', cited in *Our Oneness in Christ and our Disunity as Churches*, pp. 21-22.

Even in the Anglican Communion a certain sense of exclusivism can be detected, as pointed out by Ed. Every when he refers to the Canons of the Church of England (1603) according to which those Christian communities which are out of communion with the Church of England are indeed outside the visible catholic Church; 'The Catholicity of the Church', in *Sobornost*, 3 (1949), p. 238.

25. 'During the first fifteen years (in the existence of the WCC) a strong emphasis was placed on the shame of the churches for not recognizing each other as part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church'; A.J. Van der Brent, *Vital Ecumenical Concerns. Sixteen documentary Surveys*, p. 91.

See also the three studies which were published at the suggestion of Archbishop Fisher by several Anglican theologians and which all agree that catholicity, as the major concern of today's theology, ought no longer to be the exclusive claim of Rome, but of all the churches including those that they represent. These studies are: *Catholicity. A Study in the Conflict of Christian Traditions*

in the West, ed. by E.S. Abbott et al.; *The Fullness of Christ, the Church's Growth into Catholicity*, ed. by S.F. Allison et al.; *The Catholicity of Protestantism*, ed. by R. Newton Flew and R.E. Davies.

26. Cf. Claude Welch, 'Catholicity', pp. 40-41.

27. 'With this consciousness of being an integral part of the Church catholic, each denomination claims to be the Church catholic with certain ethnocultural, doctrinal, linguistic or other characteristic that distinguish it from others'; D. Kitagawa, 'All in each Place: Racial and cultural Issues', pp. 50-51.

28. *Breaking the Barriers. Nairobi 1975*, p. 60. The idea, however, is to be found earlier in L. Newbegin, *The Household of God*, SCM Press, London 1964, pp. 59-60.

This concept has been put forward at the Fifth Assembly of the WCC in Nairobi, 1975 as a development from New Delhi formula 'all in each place' (WCC, *The New Delhi Report 1961*, ed. by W.A. Visser't Hooft, SCM Press, London 1962, p. 116) and from Uppsala formula 'all...in all places'; WCC, *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 17.

29. Thus, 'there is no communion on earth which is *fully catholic*, for no communion possesses, in the full and absolute sense, the "wholeness" of the Gospel. For according to the New Testament, this "wholeness" is eschatological, fully realized not in this world, but in the world to come'; *The Catholicity of Protestantism*, being a report presented to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury by a group of Free Churchmen, ed. by R. Newton Flew and Rupert E. Davies, Lutherworth Press, London 1950, p. 23.

30. For 'neither the early Church nor any other church can lay claim to catholicity in the full and absolute sense. Yet we may certainly call the early Church catholic, in the relative sense which is the only possible one for the Church in this world'; *ibidem*, p. 27.

31. Hence, 'no one body to-day gives an integral presentation of Catholicity. [...] No one of our separated churches is the One Holy Catholic Church of the Creeds. No one church is therefore fully Catholic and many churches are partly Catholic. Catholicity is distributed in *larger and smaller fragments* over a variety of churches' (emphasis mine); William Nicholls, *Ecumenism and Catholicity*, p. 96.

32. *Ibidem*, p. 104. 'If I am in schism, I am not a Catholic'; *ibidem*.

33. *Ibidem*, p. 95; 'any claim to-day to be a full or true Church is in the light of the ecumenical movement to be seen as illegitimate'; *ibidem*, p. 96.

34. See for instance how one after the other, the Churches (especially those who came out of the Reformation) took their stand on the pertaining to the Church catholic as legitimate parts. 'The

Church of Scotland is part of the Holy Catholic or universal Church'; 'The Church of England believes itself to be a constituent member of this universal Church of Christ'; cited by R. Newton Flew, (ed.), *The Nature of the Church*, pp. 92-93, 108, 145. Cf. also *Lambeth Conference 1948*, p. 83.

35. Cf. 'An Evangelical Free Church Catechism of the National Free Church Council' as cited by R. Newton Flew and R.E. Davies, *The Catholicity of Protestantism*, p. 101. Also 'The Doctrinal Basis of the Free Church Federal Council of England and Wales' (1917 and 1941) which states: 'Of this visible church and every branch thereof, the only head is the Lord Jesus Christ'; cited by R. Newton Flew, *The Nature of the Church*, p. 36.

The theory is rejected both by the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. See for instance H. Alivisatos' contribution in volume *The Nature of the Church*, p. 47.

36. T.F. Torrance, 'Concerning Amsterdam. The Nature and the Mission of the Church', p. 245.

37. Paul Minear, 'Catholicity in Practice', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 15/1 (1962-1963), p. 41.

38. See for instance *Lumen Gentium*, 23, in *ed. cit.*, p. 45.

Nevertheless, the intention here is to strengthen the central position of the pope in his relationship with the local churches rather than making the Roman Church one of the many fragments of the Church catholic.

39. E.S. Abbott *et al.*, *Catholicity: A Study in the Conflict of Christian Traditions in the West*, pp. 44-45. See also H. van der Linde, 'The Nature and Significance of the WCC', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 4/3 (1951), p. 243.

40. Lukas Vischer, 'The Meaning of Catholicity', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 16/1 (1964), p. 25.

41. 'Ecumenism is a typical manifestation of the Church in a secularized world'; R. Mehl, *The Sociology of Protestantism*, p. 200.

42. Th. Sartory, *The Oecumenical Movement and the Unity of the Church*, p. 220.

43. Cf. T.F. Torrance, 'Concerning Amsterdam', pp. 252-253.

'The theocentric anthropology and the unity in Christ are precisely those by which the traditional term of catholicity...expresses best the "globalism" of Christ's salvation'; J. Meyendorff, 'Unité de l'Eglise - Unité de l'humanité', in *Istina*, vol. 16/3 (1971), p. 303.

44. G. Florovsky, 'Le Corps du Christ vivant', *op. cit.*, p. 31.

Thus, 'it is precisely the unity (and the catholicity) of the Church of Christ Jesus conceived as an eschatological reality that both interpenetrates history and transcends it, as a given unity

even in the midst of disorder and as a *promised* unity beyond it' (emphasis mine); T.F. Torrance, 'Concerning Amsterdam', p. 242.

45. N.A. Nissiotis, 'The Pneumatological Aspect of the Catholicity of the Church', in *What Unity Implies. Six Essays after Uppsala*, ed. by R. Groscurth, WCC, Geneva 1969, p. 9. Also *The Uppsala Report*, p. 18.

46. G. Florovsky, 'The Church: Her Nature and Task', p. 54.

47. V. Borovoy, 'The Meaning of Catholicity', p. 32. See also *The Fourth World Conference of Faith and Order. Montreal 1963*, p. 43.

'The Kingdom is still to come, and yet the Kingdom that is to come is already in the midst of us. The Kingdom is not only something promised, it is something of which we can taste here and now'; Al. Schmemmann, 'Liturgy and Eschatology', pp. 9-10.

48. W. Pannenberg, 'Dogmatic Thesis on the Doctrine of Revelation', in *Revelation as History*, p. 133.

49. Cf. *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 13.

Catholicity 'is always...understood not only as a (static) gift, but also as a (dynamic) task'; H. Stirnimann, "'Catholic" and "Ecumenical"', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 18/3 (1966), p. 308.

50. Cf. G. Florovsky, 'Le Corps du Christ vivant', p. 27. 'The Church of Christ is catholic or it is not the Church of Christ'; *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 9.

51. Y. Congar, *Divided Christendom*, p. 253.

52. H. Dieckmann, *De Ecclesia* (1925), vol. 1, pp. 160 and 502, cited by R. Newton Flew, 'The Church of Rome', in *The Nature of the Church*, p. 23.

53. *The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order*, p. 46.

54. *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 7.

55. *Ibidem*, p. 8.

56. T.F. Torrance, 'Concerning Amsterdam', p. 255.

'To eschaton does not mean primarily *final*, in the temporal series of events; it means rather *ultimate* (decisive)'; G. Florovsky, 'The Church: Her Nature and Task', *op. cit.*, p. 54. That is why 'what eschatology does is to hold together things which otherwise are broken up and treated as separate events occurring at different points in a time sequence'; Al. Schmemmann, 'Liturgy and Eschatology', p. 10.

57. T.F. Torrance, *op. cit.*, pp. 257-258.

Nevertheless, Prof. Torrance remains indebted to his Reformed background by placing 'the eternal election of God' at the 'inner core of history'; *ibidem*, p. 257.

58. Al. Schmemmann, "'Unity", "Division", "Reunion" in the Light of Orthodox Ecclesiology', p. 248. Also G. Florovsky, 'The Church: Her Nature and Task', *op. cit.*, p. 57.

'Thus, the contingent character of the church is grounded in just this connection with Christ'; Trutz Rendtorff, 'The Problem of Revelation in the Concept of the Church', in *Revelation as History*, p. 177.

59. 'Every human belongs both to the past and to the future.[...] History is a dramatic movement towards the ultimate communion of men in God'; Bishop Anastasios (Yannoulatos) of Androussa, 'Towards World Community. Resources and Responsibilities for living together. A Christian View', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 26/4 (1974), p. 631.

60. 'Catholicity reaches its completion when what God has already begun in history is finally disclosed and fulfilled'; *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 13.

61. P. Evdokimov, 'The Evangelistical Situation', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 2/1 (1949), p. 25.

62. Only through this πρόληψις 'does the "objective qualification of history" become possible in the light of the *eschaton* as from the resurrection of Christ'; W. Pannenberg, 'Postscript to the Second Edition', in *Revelation as History*, p. 195.

63. 'The dimension of the future is the eschatological reality which is not yet fully realized, but hoped for in the Spirit, that is surely to be realized at the end of history'; N.A. Nissiotis, 'The Importance of the Faith and Order Commission for Restoring Ecclesial Fellowship', in *Sharing in One Hope*, Commission on Faith and Order, Paper no. 92, Bangalore 1978, p. 15. See also *idem*, 'The Theology of the Church and its Accomplishment', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 29/1 (1977), p. 74: 'By the *arrabon* of the Spirit, this end of history becomes the creative element in our life here at this moment and at all moments.'

64. J. Macquarrie, *Christian Unity and Christian Diversity*, p. 34.

Therefore, 'the truth as (one) sees it is the nearest to be absolute truth of which (one) is yet capable, and only by holding to that can he hope to progress further'; S.F. Allison *et al.*, *The Fullness of Christ, the Church's Growth into Catholicity*, p. 50.

65. Cf. H. van der Linde, 'The Nature and Significance of the WCC', p. 242. See also Y. Congar, *Divided Christendom*, p. 254: 'The capacity is unlimited, but its (catholicity) realization must always be limited...The Church of to-day is not now fully catholic, and doubtless the Church here on earth never will be.' Also *ibidem*, pp. 256-257.

66. Cf. H. van der Linde, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

However, Linde's view that that church could be 'the only one' which has preserved this pattern of the Church catholic ought to be questioned.

67. *The Uppsala Report 1968*, pp. 7, 8 and 13.

'(The Church) is catholic in all its elements, in all its acts and in all the moments of its life. The entire structure, the living texture of its body is catholic'; G. Florovsky, 'Le Corps du Christ vivant', *op. cit.*, p. 27.

68. N.A. Nissiotis, 'The Theology of the Church and its Accomplishment', pp. 72-73. See also G. Florovsky, 'Sobornost. The Catholicity of the Church', *op. cit.*, *passim*. In his 'Christologically orientated theology' Fr. Florovsky tries to avoid the sort of 'impersonalism' which an unbalanced Pneumatically orientated theology (e.g. Khomiakov) might produce.

69. J. Macquarrie, *Christian Unity and Christian Diversity*, p. 39.

70. *Breaking Barriers. Nairobi 1975*, The Official Report, p. 61.

'This is the distinctive mystery of the perfect unity which is also Catholicity, which can embrace diversity without division and bind it in a unity which is not mere uniformity'; Y. Congar, *Divided Christendom*, pp. 252-253. Cf. also J. Macquarrie, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

71. 'While diversity is to be maintained, division it to be overcome'; J. Macquarrie, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

72. J. Marsh, 'The Finality of Jesus Christ in the Age of Universal History', in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol. 15/1 (1962), p. 10.

73. See W. Pannenberg, *Basic Questions in Theology*, vol. 1, p. 205 or *idem*, *Revelation as History*, pp. 195 and 203.

74. This mistake is made by the 'dialectic theology' through the stress on the 'uniqueness of revelation'; cf. T. Rendtorff, 'The Problem of Revelation', p. 169. The danger of '*hyper-historism*' or that of '*hyper-eschatologism*' should be avoided by giving both to history and eschatology the right place and importance; cf. G. Florovsky, 'Le Corps du Christ vivant.' *op. cit.*, p. 40.

75. This view would challenge the pre-Christian Greek view which looks at the world as having unchangeable structures of orders and does not understand 'the totality of reality as a history always open to the new contingency'; cf. W. Pannenberg, 'Dogmatic Theses on the Doctrine of Revelation', in *Revelation as History*, p. 141.

76. T.F. Torrance, *Divine and Contingent Order*, pp. 11 and 79. 'Hence through Jesus Christ there takes place a restoration of man's proper interaction both with the Creator and with the creation'; *ibidem*, pp. 135-136.

77. Hence, 'one of the sociological roots of ecumenism is surely the collective awareness that a church cannot claim universality by remaining provincialized in the age of planetary perspective'; R. Mehl, *The Sociology of Protestantism*, p. 219.

78. 'But the clearest obstacle to manifestation of the churches' universality is their inability to understand the measure in which they already belong together in one body'; *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p. 17.

Conclusions

Following the argument as put forward in the chapters of the thesis, some conclusions can be drawn concerning the way in which particular Churches have construed their understandings of the catholicity of the Church in the perspective of those dimensions and aspects which we have tried to uncover throughout this dissertation.

The Orthodox Church has always tried to keep the balance between the two fundamental elements which contribute in the building up of the Church: the divine and the human, the transcendent and the immanent, the invisible and the visible, the purely spiritual and the material. In Orthodox thought, the two are brought together in a 'hypostatic union', a synthesis which leads neither to identification nor to separation of the two distinct realms.

The Orthodox approach to Church catholicity is based on the understanding of *the 'catholic' character of the local community in its connection with the universal Church*. From the Orthodox point of view, every local Church has a 'catholic' status since in that particular community one can find all the constitutive elements which are, ultimately, the essentials of the universal Church:

- the preservation of the revealed and saving faith in Jesus Christ, the God-Man, as Lord and Head of the Church;
- the maintenance of the corporate life of worship and charity as proof of faith;
- the retention of the unbroken apostolic succession of the "divinely-constituted hierarchy";
- the right interpretation of Holy Tradition and the canons of the Seven Ecumenical Councils;
- the unfailing and worthy administration of the seven Sacraments.

In such a theology, the Church is fundamentally based upon the *oikonomia* of the Holy Trinity and a *Pneumatologically conceived Christology*. That would bring about the divinely-human wholeness and one-ness which any Christian community is to manifest.

At the same time, the entire activity of the Church, as seen in Orthodox theology, should be guided by humility and *diakonia* and perhaps most of all enriched by permanent prayer and worship. The ultimate expression of Church catholicity is to be found in the *eucharistic communion*, in which, through the full presence of Christ, all diversity is transcended and transfigured. In such a eucharistic context, pluralism and variety receive a different meaning. They are not a reflection of disunity and lack of catholicity, but rather, in the spirit of Pentecost, a diversity which prove to be an enriching experience of catholicity, which transcends the divided world of the tower of Babel.

The Eucharist, however, is not only the concrete local expression of the Church catholic; it reflects also *the Church as the eschatological community of Christ*, the Messiah and the *Pantokrator*. Hence, simultaneously, the Eucharist has several temporal meanings. There is in the Eucharist an *anamnetic* character of the past, for Christ 'committed His saving passion to memory' and asked His disciples - us included - to do this 'in remembrance of Me' (The *Anamnesis*, The Liturgy of St Basil the Great; cf. Luke 22:19). The Eucharist is also an act which happens *here and now*, in the present. Moreover, it nevertheless refers to the *eschaton* as an *anamnesis of the future*, as the symbol of the paradoxical 'already' and 'not yet': '(Thou) didst not cease to do all things until Thou hadst brought us back to heaven, and hadst endowed us with Thy kingdom which is to come' (The first part of the Eucharistic Prayer, The Liturgy of St John Chrysostom).

Nevertheless, such an optimistic vision of the understanding of the Church catholicity, as professed by Orthodox theology, should not diminish our awareness that there is always a possibility of failing to manifest one's orthodoxy and catholicity. That shortcoming can be overcome only through a *continuous preservation of the apostolic truth* and the un-distorted norms by which catholicity is ultimately manifested. One must not forget

that the richness of the Orthodox liturgy as well as that of the Orthodox canonical tradition and theology will receive their proper evaluation only in as far as consistent attitudes adopted in practice go hand in hand with the theoretical principles.

In terms of ecumenical involvement, the Orthodox Church should avoid any form of congregationalism. That would be possible if it were to employ its comprehensive view on catholicity, one which implies unity with the past (*apostolicity*) and with the future (*common eschatological* $\Upsilon\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$), and also unity in faith and life with all Churches with which it shares the same view of catholicity. The contemporary ecumenical movement, especially, represents an opportunity for the Orthodox Church to present to the others the rich content of its faith and Tradition and also to manifest in humbleness its love for those with whom it shares the name of Christian. By these means, it will learn how to express its catholicity more fully and more thoroughly.

A joint common commitment to the one catholic Church of all Christians is therefore needed so that true Christian unity can be achieved by making full use of both *historic* and, more important, *eschatological* elements. That is the only way forward through which the Church can prove itself to be in time what it is eschatologically, namely a catholic body, standing in history as a transcendence of all divisions, bringing about the unity of all in Christ (John 17) through the Holy Spirit to the glory of God the Father.

Taking into consideration the remarks made in the previous chapters, the attitude of some of the theologians (even some non-Catholic but sympathizing with Rome's position) who affirm *the primacy of Rome in the realm of the Church's catholicity* is not surprising. The acceptance in the West of the pope's primacy as a sheer manifestation of catholicity is mainly due to an ecclesiology which finds its roots in St Augustine's theology, whereby unity around a unique centre of authority in all matters is the ultimate expression of the Church.

The Roman Catholic Church is, in a unique way, the guardian of catholicity...I think...the others would be ready to acknowledge that their catholicity would be deepened and enhanced through a closer relation to Rome, considered as the centre.

Therefore, if other Christian Churches cease to measure themselves in relation to this centre, then, in the Roman Catholic view, the catholicity of those Christian communities is jeopardized. Everyone is to be judged in terms of his/her acceptance and attachment to *the line of Petrine see*.

In its case, the Anglican theology presents a very large span of ideas as far as the understanding of the Church's catholicity is concerned. The variety of the aspects held together by the Anglican concept of catholicity and which is to be found more or less in all major Christian Churches gives to the Anglican Communion the ability to find itself always on the way towards the full expression of its catholicity. A proper balance between the two dimensions - the Roman one and the Protestant one - could provide a real starting point for a future visible Church of Christ, united and catholic.

The main characteristic of this theology remains its focus on the expression of *the concept of catholicity in the practical life of the Church*. There is inside the Anglican Communion more a practice of catholicity than a theoretical encounter of the Church's catholicity. As one Anglican theologian points out, Anglicanism stresses what is practically effective, as distinct from what is said to be theoretically true; there is, therefore, 'an Anglican practice, but not a specifically Anglican theory'.³ This means that the practice of catholicity, and not necessarily the theory of catholicity, is the way by which the Anglican Communion maintains its unity. Thus, the authority of the Church, although reliant on the local bishop, always refers to the entire body of the episcopate. That makes possible the existence of a balanced relationship between local and universal: one locality can be very different from another locality, yet be recognized as part of the same Church.

Those are the characteristics which make up the *via media* followed in Anglican theology and which is proposed as the way for the final achievement of the fullness of Christ's Church, one and catholic in a visible way.

In Luther's case, he never gave up the idea of *universality as*

a mark of the Church. Moreover, while he did not use the term 'catholic' very often (because of his desire to express the reality of the Church as simply as possible for the 'simple folk') he defended himself, at critical moments, with the affirmation that he had never attacked the 'pure and catholic faith'. Luther saw *the Church as catholic in the sense of universal*. There is only one true faith and, hence, only one Church in which that faith was believed, confessed, and practiced.

Secondly, his understanding of the Church in regard to its earthly form, in relation to Christ's human nature, was more *functional*. The Church was seen in terms of its marks and activities, rather than in terms of its essence as the risen Body of Christ within history.⁴

Thirdly, *Word and sacraments* are the only ways through which Christ is made present and reveals Himself. Consequently, the community of the Church has as its basis, and lives entirely by, the Word and faith. As G. Ebeling noticed, there is a major tendency in Luther's theology to speak in terms of a '*particula exclusiva*': 'God alone', 'Christ alone', 'the Scripture alone', 'the Word alone', 'the faith alone'. That resulted in a preoccupation for Luther with 'a *religious individualism* which is concerned only with the blessedness of the individual'.⁵

Fourthly, there is a permanent *tension* in Luther's thought between *spirit* and *structure* in his attempt to avoid the identification of Church's historical existence with the Kingdom of God. Thus, he stresses *the spiritual aspect of the Church*, although the Church is bound to retain a certain agency and polity in order to work in this world in the permanent perspective of the Kingdom.

Nevertheless, there are not in Luther's theology two Churches - one visible and one invisible - but one and the same Church of Christ both invisible and visible, hidden and at the same time revealed in different dimensions.

Fifthly, the relationship between local and universal remains at a strict *functional* level. Hence, through *performative acts* localities 'correspond' with each other in order to become a catholic Church, but they do not reflect, ontologically, each in its place, *the one catholic Church*, for individuals are isolated

entities, who are not intrinsically related with each other.

Finally, the missionary and ecumenical motivation of the Word proves to be of a certain value, but again, at least theoretically, Luther failed to bring forward all the elements which make up a proper Church, missionary and ecumenical, because, in his view, it is the individual to whom the Word is addressed, who is not necessarily concerned with being creator of catholic communities.

One may say, then, that in his treatment of the dogmatic, conciliar and liturgical tradition of catholic Christianity, Luther proved to be an 'obedient rebel' who tried to keep in proper balance 'the Catholic substance and the Protestant principle'⁶ in order to solve the problems which the Church of his time faced. In this sense, it might be said, in Luther's spirit, that the various denominations are all members in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church because and in so far as the constitutive factors are active in each one of them.

The Reformed position concerning the relationship between God and us, which remains at the level of a *personal encounter with Christ*, has influenced also its understanding of the Church's catholicity. That encounter is conceived in *individualistic* terms, in a relation between the human subject and Christ, and this is the way in which each Christian relates himself to Christ and to others within the Church catholic.

Secondly, the structures of the Church are overshadowed by a strong emphasis put upon *the metaphysical reality of the Church*, in which the visible part of the Church remains peripheral, if not non-existent, the Church being placed somewhere, in a distant, indefinite condition.

Thirdly, as a consequence of *the shift of Church's authority* from the magisterium to the community, the latter recognizing the ministry appointed by God, the minister cannot manifest Christ in his person, but rather can only *witness* to Him (Christ).

Finally, the entire involvement of man in the Church's life and, thus, his contribution towards the manifestation of the Church's catholicity is restricted by a kind of *passivity* and 'unconscious' acceptance of Christ's redemptive acts; it is not a fully participative activity, whereby human faith and good works

play important roles.

As distinct from these views, our view of the Church, with its sacraments, form and attributes, must be orientated towards the affirmation of an experience, in which there are no limits to the freedom of each Christian, seen as a *person*, in following Christ. In the new reality expressed in the Church's life, all 'individualism' is overcome and human beings become persons only because and inasmuch as they are united to God and, in Him, to one another and to the whole of creation.

Our entire life is marked by events which are characterized by contingency, and at the same time dependent upon the reality of Christ's presence, through whom our existence in its wholeness receives a new, ultimate meaning. History understood from the perspective of the Risen Christ stays in a special relationship with the Church - the living Body of Christ, which is both temporal and eternal - because, through Christ's Church, history and events are projected into *eschatological fulfilment*, in which past, present and future are united in Him; thus, history is transfigured.

One-sided views of the Church's catholicity, as represented by the *exclusive* (i.e. a catholicity limited only to a certain Church and denied to others) and the *inclusive* (i.e. a catholicity which is possessed by each Church in full or a fragmented one, which is possessed only partially) catholicity are faulty because both of them do not take into account the contingency of history, which has its final goal in the eschatological fulfillment of the Kingdom of God. The former is guilty of elitism; the latter of minimalism.

A concept which could help in formulating a more balanced view on the Church's catholicity, in the context of modern and ecumenical debate, is that of a *contingent dynamic catholicity*, which would understand the Church from the perspective of the dynamics of history, as generated by the Christ-event. The tension between the 'already' and the 'not yet' is then to be resolved in the fulfilment which only the coming of the Kingdom of God, at the end of history as we know it, and at the beginning of eternity, will bring about. The incomplete state of our existence, with its characteristics of relativity, will find its perfect validation in

the *eschaton*. What we live 'here and now', as members of this earthly militant Church, is to be infinitely more profoundly experienced in the life of the Kingdom. Until then, our life as disciples of Christ and as members of His Church - perfect in its divine *datum* - yet living in this imperfect world of ours, is marked by the contingency and the relativity of this unfulfilled existence.

The actual ecumenical movement strives for the unity of the Church of Christ and for a full expression of the Church's catholicity. All the major Churches have had to deal with the dilemma created by the theological necessity of oneness and the factual givenness of division. The separation between Christians diminishes the effectiveness of the catholicity of the Church and makes it more difficult for the Church to affirm here and now its full catholicity in all its aspects.

This present work seeks, therefore, to bring together some of the aspects of the Church's catholicity, in order to provide, in the context of modern ecumenical debate, a common ground for witness and sharing. That might help all of us in perceiving more clearly both our common heritage, which we have received from our past forerunners and also our future, which we need to build together. Thus, the Church's catholicity is to be always seen in the perspective of the *eschaton*, when God will be 'all in all' (1 Cor 15:28) and everything will be perfectly reestablished in Christ.

Conclusions Notes

1. *The Church, the Churches, and the World Council of Churches*, Faith and Order Papers, Geneva 1950, p. 23.
2. John Macquarrie, *Christian Unity and Christian Diversity*, pp. 51-53.
3. S.W. Sykes, *The Integrity of Anglicanism*, p. 18.
4. T.F. Torrance, *The Eschatology of Faith: Martin Luther*, p. 192.
5. Gerhard Ebeling, *Luther. An Introduction to his Thought*, Collins, London 1975, pp. 246 and 265-266.
That attitude of using exclusivist language as professed by Luther runs against the very concept of catholicity which is meant to be comprehensive, wide-ranging.
6. J. Pelikan, *Obedient Rebels; Catholic Substance and Protestant Principle in Luther's Reformation*, *passim*.

A P P E N D I X *

St Cyril of Jerusalem gives a comprehensive definition of the Catholic Church (*Catechesa* xviii, 23; *P.G.* 33:1044), speaking about its as extending throughout the world, teaching the fullness of Christian doctrine, curing all kinds of sin and possessing every virtue.

I. References concerning temporal and spatial universality in relation to the catholicity of the Church could be found in many patristic writings or in works of ecclesiastic history.

Clement of Alexandria asserts the superiority of the gatherings of 'the catholic Church' which are anterior to the 'human gatherings' (*Stromata* vii, xvii; *P.G.* 9:548A). In the same sense, he gives only to 'the old and catholic Church' the quality of being 'the only (true) one in her being and in her beginning and in her superiority' (*ibidem*; *P.G.* 9:552B).

In Eusebius of Caesarea's view, the Church catholic is universal in scope (*Contra Marcellus* 1, 1; *P.G.* 24:728C).

St Augustine speaks of the '*Catholicae multitudo*', as the number of Church members, with an universal mission of preaching the message of Christ (*De moribus Ecclesiae catholicae* 1, 2, n. 74; *P.L.* 32:1378).

For Optatus of Milevis (*Adversus Parmenianus* ii, 1; cited in J.N.D. Kelly, "'Catholic" and "Apostolic" in the Early Centuries', p. 279), in contrast to the Donatists, the catholic Church is *ubique diffusa*. In the same sense, St Augustine's classic text referring to *Catholica* (*Epistola* xciii, 23; cited in Kelly, *op. cit.*, p. 279) have the meaning of *totius orbis communio*.

* There are so many Patristic references to various aspects of the Church's catholicity that it would be impossible to deal with all of them in this work. We had to limit ourselves to a selection which would, hopefully, prove to be helpful in our argumentation.

St Athanasius speaks about the faith which spreads 'across the whole catholic Church' (*Exp. in Ps. xl, 6; P.G. 27:197B*).

St Niceta of Remesiana explains that 'catholic' indicates 'the one catholic Church established throughout the whole world, to whose communion you ought to hold fast' (*De symbolo x; cited in Kelly, op. cit., p. 279*), while Eusebius speaks of 'the whole catholic Church which gathers together all nations from one end of the world to another' (*Commentaria in Psalmos 35; P.G. 23:401*). See also St John Chrysostom, *In sanctum Eustathium Antiochenum 30; P.G. 50:602* or *idem, De Pseudoprophetis 8; P.G. 59:565*.

II. Didymus employs the term *katholicos* when refers to God, in the sense of general, universal: 'τῆς... ὑπερουσίου καὶ... καθολικός... πατρικῆς ὑποστάσεως' (*De Trinitate 2, 4; P.G. 39:484A*). In the same sense, Clement of Alexandria speaks of 'God's catholic (i.e. universal) providence' (*Stromata vi, xvi; P.G. 9:380B*).

In *Martyrium Policarpi* (xix; *P.G. 5:1044B*), Christ is referred to as 'ποιμένα τῆς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας' ('the shepherd of the catholic Church throughout the world').

III. The true faith as found both in the Scriptures and in the Tradition and as professed by the catholic Church is also very much present in the Patristic theology.

Vincent of Lerins proposes two ways to affirm the faith: '*primum scilicet divinae legis auctoritate, tum deinde ecclesiae catholicae traditione*' (*Commonitorium 1, 2; P.L. 50:640*).

St Athanasius the Great puts in parallel the 'teacher who belongs to the catholic Church' with the heretic one (*De sententia Dionys. 12, 3; cited by L. Berkowitz and K.A. Squitier, Thesaurus Linguae Graeca. Canon of Greek Authors and Works, second ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford 1986, p. 181*). See also Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica x, vi; P.G. 20:892A*.

St Athanasius speaks also about the 'catholic and apostolic faith' (*Apologia contra Arianos iii, 39; cited in A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, vol. iv, ed. by Philip Schaff et al., Grand Rapids, Michigan 1980, p. 121*).

He also uses as the ultimate criterion in one's belief 'the very tradition, teaching and faith of the catholic Church from the beginning, which the Lord gave, the apostles preached, and the fathers have kept' (*Epistola i ad Serapionem* 28; *P.G.* 26:593D). Cf. *idem*, *Apologia contra Arianos* iii, 37, cited in Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

Canon 19 of Nicaea refers also to the term 'catholic' implying the orthodoxy of faith. See also St Athanasius, *Apologia contra Arianos* i, 4; *P.G.* 26:20A or Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* vii, xxx; *P.G.* 20:716B.

St Augustine speaks of 'the faith which the Council has confessed in writing, that is the faith of the Catholic Church' (*De Decretis* vi, 27; cited in Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 169). See also St Athanasius, *Epistola Alexandri Alexandrini* 34, 2; 35, 1 etc; cited in *De decretis Nicaenae Synodi*, ed. by H.G. Opitz, *Athanasius Werke*, vol. 2, De Gruyter, Berlin 1940, pp. 34 and 36.

About the infallibility of the *Catholica* in interpreting the Scriptures speaks St Augustine (*Contra Cresconium* 33, 39; *P.L.* 43:466).

In St John Damascenos' view the 'faith which is received and confessed in the Creed' 'comes from the Tradition of the catholic Church' (*De fide orthodoxa* vi, 10; *P.G.* 94:1128).

St Cyprian speaks of 'the undivided sacrament of the Catholic Church' (*Epistola LV*, 21; cited by Butler, *The Idea of the Church*, p. 91).

IV. When it comes to exemplifying the local and universal expressions of the catholic Church, the Patristic literature provides us with many references.

Thus, St Athanasius the Great speaks of 'the whole Catholic Church which is in every place' (*Festal Letters. Letter XI*, 11; in Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 537). In the same sense, he refers to 'the bishops and fellow ministers of the catholic Church everywhere' (*Apologia contra Arianos* iii, 43, cited in Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 123). Cf. also *Martyrium Policarpi* viii, 1; H. Musurillo's edition, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1972, p. 2).

The same St Athanasius addresses his greetings to 'the people of the Catholic Church in Alexandria', (*Arian History. The Second Protest* 81; in *ed. cit.*, p. 301; cf. also *Apologia contra Arianos*, in *ed. cit.*, p. 129).

In another place, St Athanasius speaks of 'the people of the catholic Churches' (emphasis mine) (*Epistola encyclica* 6; cited in Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 95).

St Cyril of Jerusalem describes the size of the Church beyond geographical restrictions: 'If you are in a town, do not ask only where is this particular church, but where is the Catholic Church' (*Catechesa* xviii, 26; *P.G.* 33:1048).

In *Martyrium Policarpi* (xvi, 2) the saint is saluted as 'an apostolic and prophetic teacher, bishop of the catholic Church at Smyrna' (cited in Kelly, *op. cit.*, p. 278), while St Gregory of Nazianz (*Testimonia*; *P.G.* 37:389A) speaks of 'the catholic Church of Nazianz'.

The same *Martyrium Policarpi* is addressed 'to the Church of God which is in Smyrna...and to all communities of the catholic Church which are in every place' (i, 2; in *ed. cit.*, p. 2).

Canon 59 of the Council of Trullo uses the term 'catholic' in reference to the principal church of a diocese, province, etc: ταῖς καθολικαῖς προσερχέσθωσαν ἐκκλησίαις (cited in *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ed. by G.W.H. Lampe, The Clarendon Press, Oxford 1978, p. 690).

V. The polity and the agency of the catholic Church are also present in the theology of the Fathers.

St Basil the Great speaks of the 'κανόνα καθολικῶς' (*De baptismo libri duo* 52; *P.G.* 31:1600).

In the case with the arian Pistus, he was anathematized and excommunicated by 'the bishops of the Catholic Church' (St Athanasius, *Encyclical Letter* 6, cited in Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 95), while St Athanasius was elected bishop by 'the whole multitude and all the people of the catholic Church assembled together' (*Apologia contra Arianos*, cited in Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 103).

Thus, the gathering of all the bishops representing the whole Church in a region is referred to as 'the catholic Council' (St

Athanasius, *De synodis Arimini in Italia et Seleucia in Isauria* 2; P.G. 26:684A), as indeed was the case with the Nicene Council (*idem*, *Apol. sec.* 25; P.G. 25:289B).

The administration of the cup (Holy Eucharist) 'belongs only to those who preside over the catholic Church', i.e. duly elected bishops or presbyters (St Athanasius, *Apologia contra Arianos* 11, 7; cited in Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 106; cf. also *ibidem* ii, 28, cited in Schaff, *op. cit.*, p. 115).

About Novatian one hears that he is ignorant that 'there ought to be only one bishop in a catholic Church' (Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 6, 43; cited in Kelly, *op. cit.*, p. 278).

All in all, if one takes only into account the above-mentioned Patristic references to the term 'catholic Church', one can definitely notice the importance which the Fathers of the early Catholic Church attached to that concept in their theological insight.

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