THE THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EPISCOPACY IN ECUMENICAL DISCUSSIONS IN THIS CENTURY

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Theology degree in the Department of Theology.

Frank W. Lockhart

Trinity United Church
Bowmanville, Ontario
May, 1997
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author’s permission.

L’auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L’auteur conserve la propriété du droit d’auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.
Preface

Encouraged by a member of my thesis advisory committee in T.S.T. to undertake some study helpful to my denomination, I thought immediately of the need for a theological review of the Canadian 1943-1975 church union discussions, so important to the United Church of Canada throughout those years. Conversations with Dr. John Grant, a prime participant in the later phases of that process, encouraged me in this direction. The committee that reviewed the resulting comprehensive essay encouraged me to add a survey of the role of episcopacy—my central theme—in other seminal talks, hence the nature of the thesis.

The very nature of ecumenical theology has involved, for me, a very long process in the understanding of other Christian traditions—and my own. This has been beneficial for myself and has resulted in a worthwhile study in this thesis. I trust. However, it has also demanded considerable patience on the part of many. I mention first my own family, my wife June Marie and our children, Christine, Barbara and Robert. I think also of the faculty of Emmanuel College and especially my thesis advisor, David Demson, always ready to give me an hour of his time. The staffs of the Emmanuel College library and of the United Church Archives have been unfailing helpful, always ready to help me find elusive sources or to master the latest in computerized library technology. Here I would mention especially Linda Hayes of the Emmanuel library.

Finally, I must acknowledge the financial help given me through a grant by the Division of Ministry, Personnel and Education of the United Church of Canada. My former and present congregations, St. John's United Church, Scarborough and Trinity in Bowmanville have supported me financially and in less tangible but more important ways: They have encouraged their minister to remain a serious student.
CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

PART A
EPISCOPACY IN THE 1943–1975 CANADIAN NEGOTIATIONS

1 BEGINNING THE CANADIAN NEGOTIATIONS: THE 1946 SCHEME 21

2 FROM 1948 TO RENEWED COMMITMENT LEADING TO THE PRINCIPLES: REALISM AND REORIENTATION ............. 40

3 THE PRINCIPLES ................................................................. 60

4 THE PLAN OF UNION .............................................................. 75

5 THE COMMITTEE ON UNION AND JOINT MISSION ............. 103

6 THE TERMINATION OF DISCUSSIONS ............................... 124

PART B
EPISCOPACY IN OTHER CHURCH UNION DISCUSSIONS OF SIGNIFICANCE IN THIS CENTURY

7 EPISCOPACY IN DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN CATHOLIC AND EVANGELICAL CHURCHES ........................................... 142

8 EPISCOPACY IN CATHOLIC-EVANGELICAL NEGOTIATIONS IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA ........................................... 161

9 EPISCOPACY IN CATHOLIC-EVANGELICAL NEGOTIATIONS FROM THE 1950'S TO THE PRESENT ..................... 182

10 EPISCOPACY IN DISCUSSIONS WITHIN WESTERN CATHOLICISM ................................................................. 231

11 THE TREATMENT OF EPISCOPACY IN NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN WESTERN AND EASTERN CATHOLICISM .......... 262

12 EPISCOPACY IN THE B.E.M. PROCESS ............................... 288

PART C

13 FUTURE DIALOGUE ABOUT EPISCOPACY ............................ 336

SOURCES CONSULTED .............................................................. 378
INTRODUCTION

Episcopacy has consistently been the prime focus of difficulty in unity discussions involving the major Christian traditions in the twentieth century. This thesis will involve a study of its role as the issue in the Canadian 1943-1975 discussions (Part A), a study of its treatment in seminal discussions elsewhere in this century (Part B) and concluding observations (Part C).

(A) The Role of the "Classical . . . Conversation"

Our first general assumption is that the Church's disunity must remain a prime concern for Christians and that central to our response must be the kind of sustained theological effort studied here.

There is abroad today a more pragmatic view much less sympathetic toward such conversations. This was expressed in the recent Canberra Assembly of the World Council of Churches. Commenting on the "restlessness" he found there, John Deschner wrote:

. . . . there was a pervasive undercurrent of "restlessness" about what the Council's basic ecumenical theme actually is: the classical church unity theme of

1 "Church" will be capitalized in this thesis when warranted by the theological context, reference to a particular denomination or as quoted.
the 20th century, with its patient multilateral theological "conversation," or the new "JPIC" thematization ("Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation") of the "third" and "first" worlds. More than many realized, "restlessness" here expressed a concern not simply for church unity but for the unity of the ecumenical movement itself.

... Canberra was indeed "restless" about the ecumenical future; and the restlessness focused upon the question of whether the concern for church unity really is the heart and center of the ecumenical movement's agenda. In a word, Canberra wondered: Does church unity count any longer? Or is it best left behind, perhaps simply marginalized, as the ecumenical movement enters the 21st century?

Especially against such a background, as Deschner noted, the Assembly's statement, The Unity of the Church as Koinonia, Gift and Calling, came as a striking reaffirmation of "classical" ecumenical efforts. The statement begins by finding koinonia in the church, as "the foretaste of this communion with God and with one another," to be grounded in "the purpose of God according to Holy Scripture." This "purpose" is "to gather the whole of creation under the Lordship of Christ Jesus in whom, by the power of the Holy Spirit, all are brought into communion with God (Eph. 1)." It is against this theological background that the disunity of the Church is approached:

The calling of the Church is to proclaim reconciliation and provide healing, to overcome divisions based on race, gender, age, culture, color and to bring all people into communion with God. Because of sin and the misunderstanding of the diverse gifts of the Spirit, the churches are painfully divided within themselves and among each other. The scandalous divisions damage the credibility of their witness to the world in worship and service. Moreover, they contradict not only the Church's witness but also its very nature.

---

2 John Deschner, "Canberra's Church Unity In a 'Restless' Ecumenical Movement," Mid-Stream 30 (July 1991), 193.
3 Ibid., 280.
Therefore, the centrality of koinonia to God's will in Christ together with the essential role of the Body of Christ in its expression demand that the Church's disunity remain a prime concern.

The kind of agenda expressed in "the new 'JPIC' thematization" is attractive for many in the more immediate and pragmatic results it offers as compared with the "classical" ecumenical conversations. And it has a valuable history. Cooperative mission programs and the Life And Work movement contributed greatly to modern ecumenicity. This more pragmatic accent has been influential in many ecumenical discussions. However, as is indicated by the unifying of the Faith and Order (F. & O.) and Life And Work movements in the World Council of Churches and the unwillingness or inability in most discussions to devalue doctrinal differences for the sake of unity on a pragmatic basis, such programs have consistently been judged to be limited in their potential to engage the Church fully in the wholeness of mission in Christ.

The Canberra report, The Unity of the Church as Koinonia, Gift and Calling, expresses this wisdom. There is no substitute for the efforts associated with the F. & O. movement. The difficult and often discouraging process of understanding one's own and the "other" tradition in ecumenical theology is requisite for their unification in the light of the Gospel that the Church may enter into a greater, richer wholeness.
Approaching Fundamental Difference(s)

It is with the Canberra "restlessness" much in mind that we state our second major assumption: That the difficulties inherent in the "classical church unity theme" reflect the elusive nature of that which grounds our major differences and the related imperfections inherent in our means of approaching them.

The "restlessness" Deschner observed at Canberra bespeaks a widespread—though by no means universal—questioning regarding the results of so much time and talent given to traditional ecumenical endeavours. Gunther Gassmann (recently retired director of F. & O.) writes of this (1996) as "a time of much uncertainty or loss of interest concerning ecumenism." Our understanding is that this malaise indicates an inadequate and unrealistic appreciation of the challenges and results involved in "classical" discussions.

We are reminded of the fullness of that challenge in Gassmann's comments about the difficulty experienced in understanding "the church":

Early in this century Protestant and Roman Catholic theologians have predicted that this will be a "century of the Church." Indeed, there has never been such a wealth of ecclesiological reflection (and publications) than during the last seven decades. But at the end of this century, after a history of faithfulness and failure of the churches, we still face the challenge of

achieving a basic agreement on a common and relevant understanding of the church in the world.5

Robert Jenson indicates how elusive are the fundamentals being sought in ecumenical dialogue:

Just so, however, the strange frustration has occurred. As the dialogues have worked down the program of controversies, and as each traditional controversy has in the event been mitigated, its divisive power has seemed merely to rise from it and settle elsewhere; nor is the process terminated by completing the program, since the process seemingly proves circular . . . But from each remaining small and apparently tolerable divergence, an urgent reference has emerged to some other topic on the agenda, causing a newly virulent division within that topic. And with that topic it has gone the same way, and so on, finally back to the beginning.6

Subsequent comments emphasize that this "strange frustration" remains true even of recent notable bilateral dialogues in which much growth together has happened.7

Thus does the challenge inherent in ecumenical dialogue affirm the importance of our approach and method in this survey. Without an adequate appreciation of the immensity of the task inherent in ecumenical dialogue, this review of key ecumenical discussions will be seriously flawed as to their more obvious aspects, the significance of their method and their accomplishments.

In recognizing "the elusive nature of that which grounds our major differences and the related imperfections inherent in our means of approaching them" we recognize the

5 Ibid., S.
7 Ibid., 91. cf. also, for example, Henry Chadwick, "Unfinished Business," in Anglicans and Roman Catholics: The Search for Unity (1992), edited by Christopher Hill and E.J. Yarnold (London: SPCK, 1994) 211-221.
reality and primacy of what has been termed "Fundamental Difference." However, it is important to note at this point that: (a) In this, we do not attempt to name any such fundamental. (b) We do not affirm that there is a single root fundamental—or any number. (c) We do not assume any simple relationship between any such ground(s) and our major differences. (d) Our prime concern is with the fundamental, comprehensive and elusive nature of the grounding whatever its character and influence may be.

Thus, we do assume the reality and activity of underlying theological/noetic dynamics which influence, challenge and frustrate ecumenical dialogue. Certainly this must involve the profound and comprehensive core of insight which distinguishes each major Christian tradition. And it clearly pertains to the dominant issues about justification, nature/grace and hermeneutics/sacramentality so important in Catholic/Protestant discussion, the prime area of concern in this thesis.

It is its emphasis on the comprehensive nature of these dynamics that interests us in the statement of the initial Assembly of the World Council of Churches (Amsterdam 1948) about the challenge presented by Catholic/Protestant

9 Whether "Protestant," "Evangelical" or "Free Church" are used to indicate this major tradition, all are considered here to be problematic but useful and seemingly unavoidable.
dialogue. It emphasized "the wholeness in ethos" operative on either side:

It is in the light of that unity that we can face our deepest difference . . .

The essence of our situation is that, from each side of the division we see the Christian faith and life as a self-consistent whole, but our two conceptions of the whole are inconsistent with each other.

. . . Yet even when the conversation is between those who deeply trust and understand each other, there remains a hard core of disagreement between different total ways of apprehending the Church of Christ.10

That on each side is a "self-consistent whole . . . inconsistent with [the] other," these being "different total ways of apprehending the Church," means that understanding the grounding of that "self-consistent whole" which characterizes each great tradition must be a prime concern.

This still remains a long-term challenge because the profound and comprehensive nature of those faith dynamics renders them elusive—difficult to understand, delineate or, indeed, often even to recognize. This is why major differences remain despite the helpful developments in understanding and relationship between the great Christian traditions.

Indicating that "the main difficulty on our way towards full communion is ecclesiological," in 1986 J.M.R. Tillard (Vice Moderator of F. & O.), affirming the serious nature of our major differences, stated that "the basic difference between Roman Catholic ecclesiology and the Protestant conception of the Church on earth . . . may be in

some cases de jure divisive" (and that between East and West to be de facto divisive).11

Some ecumenical theology emphasizes major differences in hermeneutics between the traditions. For example, in 1964 Gerhard Ebeling wrote:

In these Confessions we are faced with comprehensive entities which have to be understood as a whole. That is why it is such a difficult and inexhaustible task to investigate the "essence" of Protestantism or Catholicism: indeed, one might almost conclude that it is a hopeless undertaking to be concerned about reaching an understanding. For even the means of understanding, namely, the languages used on either side, are caught up in the opposition.12

More recently (1986), the "national dialogue between French Catholicism and French Protestantism" expressed this same recognition within their conversations:

How does it happen that common confession of the same symbols of faith . . . including their third articles on the Spirit and the church, and the fundamental agreement now achieved on justification by grace through faith, does not issue in a fundamentally common ecclesiological conception and practice? . . . . . . . . . . . . . . We follow different patterns of thought and comprehension.13

What becomes more explicit in these last quotes is the degree of frustration experienced in serious Catholic/Protestant dialogue because the "different patterns of thought and comprehension" within which each side lives are hardly known to their discussion partners or perhaps even themselves!

13 Robert Jenson, Unbaptized God, 6,7.
Johannes Cardinal Willebrands, President Emeritus of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, indicated a helpful analogy to such fundamental factors in their elusive character. He drew on the insights of Newman and Pascal about the essential principles which constitute a person:

They constitute the mind, the habits, and the moral identity of a person. They are our deepest assumptions. . . Newman describes what he means by them in the following way: "They are the means of proof and are not proved; they rule and are not ruled; they are sovereign on the one hand, irresponsible on the other . . . They are the condition of our mental life; by them we form our view of events . . . of moral qualities, of religion. . . . According to his first principles is his religion, his creed, his worship, his political party, his character; they are in short the man". . . These ideas of Newman reflect the idea of Pascal when he says "Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connait point".14

Willebrands says that "in a theological context these ideas receive a much deeper meaning." We note especially that "they are the means of proof and are not proved" and that "Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connait point." These are very much a fortiori the characteristics of those potent but elusive "deepest assumptions" which characterize and divide the great confessions.

It is, in the final analysis, the elusive character of the grounds of our major differences that renders our means of treating them also problematic. We recall the distance Pascal found between "Le coeur" and "la raison."

Modern studies in epistemology/hermeneutics indicate how complex is the knowing process, including, of course, symbolism and language. This is surely true, a fortiori, of the explication of the Faith, where symbol, word and concept are stretched to, if not beyond, their limits.

In distinguishing between "analytic" and "fiduciary" styles of language, both necessary, Paul Avis writes of the latter:

As Philip Toynbee writes, the only language appropriate to the "near inexpressible area of human experience" is "a ghostly language; a language of hint and suggestion; of echo and paradox; something much closer to the untranslatable communications of music than to the demonstrations of logic." 15

Thus our treatment of the various expressions of the faith in aspects of liturgy, ecclesiology and doctrinal statement constitute, in themselves, a major challenge.

There are many indications, in this survey, of the difficulties inherent in approaching such explications of the faith. For example, reaction to the Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry document of the World Council of Churches illustrates the risk inherent in assumed consensus about key doctrinal expressions.

Thus both the goal of ecumenical understanding and the means at hand to that end provide major cause for the "strange frustration."

(C) Grounds for Hope

Our next assumption is that, fortunately for the "classical church unity theme," that context through which we must approach these areas of difficulty also gives grounds for hope; the understanding of these factors which enables us to view them in the most adequate perspective in our survey also enables us to view the related "restlessness" and "frustration" as positive rather than negative signs. Thus we find three important grounds for optimism about the results of ecumenical dialogue:

(A) Without neglecting the complex and difficult nature of the relationship between the Faith and its various expressions, one must affirm this to be fundamentally positive. This must be true, to return to Pascal, of the complex relationship between "Le coeur" and "la raison"; the core of difficulty is, in the final analysis, not evil or sin (despite the manifold imperfections of the human subject) but the fullness of the Truth and our difficulty in expressing it. So it is because of the immense burden of Truth borne by expressions of the Faith such as the sacraments and doctrinal statements that thorough consensus about them is often elusive. Should we expect otherwise in dealing with matters of God?

Thus Robert Jenson's "strange frustration," echoed so often elsewhere, is to be appreciated as a sign of the grandeur of the undertaking. That the goal is elusive in our pursuit of concensus about some particular major doctrinal position is a reflection of the fullness of the Truth in
Christ which there confronts us and of the great value of
dialogue in dynamic relationship with each other and with
that Truth. To view in this way the complex relationship
between the depths of Faith and our explication of it is to
celebrate the importance of what is happening ecumenically.
Indeed, that our survey will indicate an increasing
te sophistication in ecumenical theology about this
relationship between Faith and our articulation of it is
itself cause for hope.

(B) This positive view of the challenge constituted
by the particular expressions of the Faith rests ultimately
on the understanding that those underlying and elusive
Faith/noetic realities (connoted, to some degree, by Le
Coeur) which ground and distinguish the major traditions are
fundamentally meaningful. It is because they participate in
and express "the way and the truth and the life"16 who is
Jesus Christ that they contribute to the being of the great
traditions. Therefore, as expressions of Truth they separate
us, again not because they are irrational or evil but
because they, and our understanding of them, are incomplete.
This, in the final analysis, is (a) why we can and must
deny an impassible gulf between "Le coeur" and "la raison"
and (b) the ground of our hope.

(C) Without the underlying nature of our differences
as expressions of Truth, and indeed, Truth in which there is
the propensity to bring the Church to a richer and fuller

16 St. John 14:6, RSV.
unity in Christ, the measure of ecumenical achievement in this century would not have been possible. There is now cooperation both locally and more broadly in major ventures of witness and service among most Christian denominations. The phenomenon of the Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry study (BEM) indicates increased understanding of other traditions both accomplished and sought throughout the Christian family. Quite remarkable is the invitation extended in 1995 to "Church leaders and their theologians" by Pope John Paul, in his encyclical on Ecumenism Ut Unum Sint (96), to engage with him in the "immense task"17 of the reformation of the Papacy. The ecumenical developments within the Christian family in the period surveyed in this thesis constitute an important, hopeful sign--which would not be possible without the comprehensive realm of meaning which unites this family.

D. Our Primary Challenge

The primacy for ecumenical theology of the comprehensive faith/noetic factors fundamentally affecting the great traditions is important for this thesis in two ways:

(A) These constitute the major factors to be understood as operative through each discussion series to be considered. Their interaction is therefore the key to our understanding of each such story.

The increasing recognition of the primacy of these major underlying differences constitutes a major theme in the developing history of modern Christian ecumenicity which we survey in part. In the early phases of modern ecumenism the more obvious and particular differences in liturgy or ministry received, as such, the attention in ecumenical discussions; the common belief was that, in view of our supposed commonality in the faith, such specifics were the main challenge and appeared to be quite manageable. Our survey will describe the transition from this relative naivety towards a more developed understanding of the comprehensive nature of our major differences and a growing realism about the difficulties involved.

**Method**

The fore-going insights will govern our basic method. Therefore: We assume that differing assumptions which are both basic, comprehensive and therefore elusive are operative and determinative in the discussions to be surveyed. We assume that, because there is fundamentally a positive relationship between these elusive factors and their expression in the Faith and Order of each tradition, their nature and activity is evident to, at least, some degree in the dialogues to be surveyed. We assume that these factors are central to the ecclesiologies and involve the fundamentals of the faith in each major tradition. We assume also that these assumptions, so essential to the horizon of
meaning of each major tradition, are in the nature of intuitive insight or perspective, not always readily encompassed in concepts and propositions.

Therefore our approach will tend to be more descriptive than deductive. We will observe the character of these underlying noetic/faith dynamics of each discussion in their effects, in the challenges recognized and delineated, in the way proposals are developed and in the consequent results. This careful observation must precede, though be assisted by, our more conceptual conclusions which will be introduced where necessary to our survey and, in our concluding observations, appropriate.

We refer again to the wisdom of Cardinal Willebrands. In his insight into the character of the primary factors dividing us, he suggests a three-fold approach for "theology in ecumenism":

The first task is "discernment":

Indeed, there can be no advance in ecumenical dialogue without a clear distinction, step by step, between id quod requiritur et sufficit (ad unitatem) and what can be left to the diversity of cultural, theological, and liturgical traditions.

The second function of theology in ecumenism can be described as hermeneutical. It is to find the authentic sense of formulations of faith made both in the great Tradition and, especially since the Reformation, in the confessional groups. What did the Augustinian tradition really mean when it spoke of the procession of the spirit a Filio and what does the Orthodox tradition intend when it maintains that the Spirit proceeds from the Father? What is the meaning of the Lutheran "doctrine" of justification a fide sola? On what do those who practice only believers' baptism base themselves? What is the true significance of the Catholic doctrine of Roman primacy as defined by Pastor Aeternus and completed by Lumen Gentium?
The third function is to provide a developing vision for ecumenism:

Theology scrutinizes the mystery of God and His revelation in such a way that new perspectives, new implications, new balances are always emerging to be submitted to the cathedra of the bishops. Only that can authenticate them. If there is a "development of dogma," it only comes about thanks to theology. It is theology that discerns the development, expresses it, before the episcopal body integrates it. Development consists above all in a more precise vision of the Truth.18

Our phenomenological approach will involve these three functions of "theology in ecumenism." Our study of the various discussions must be primarily a discerning/hearing. Our understanding of the sense of the significance of episcopacy for the different traditions in each case will involve a "discerning" of id quod requiritur et sufficit (ad unitatem). And our understanding of the manifold meaning of episcopacy in these talks will involve a "hearing" of the primary concerns being expressed. Thus, in our "discerning/hearing," the meaning of episcopacy will make known the major theological dynamics which underlie the more obvious particulars. Later, in our review of the BEM process and in the concluding chapter, more general discussion about the nature of the differences involved and possible "visioning" will be in order.

How important this process of discernment and "hearing" is may be illustrated in a personal reminiscence. During the last phase of the 1943-1975 Canadian discussions,

the author of this thesis was one of four representatives of Toronto Conference of the United Church in a series of meetings with Archbishop Garnsworthy and some other officers of the Toronto Diocese. At our third meeting the Anglicans suggested that our discussions would be more beneficial if we studied together a major theologian's work and that of Richard Hooker was mentioned. As this thesis is being written, this seems now to have been an excellent suggestion. That we, from the United Church rejected it with little consideration seems now, at best, remarkably insensitive. So were we, theologically trained and ecumenically committed, limited by our own theological and ecumenical agendas! We did reject it, though, and those particular discussions, which could have made at least some small contribution to the larger picture, ended.

(F) Episcopacy

The consistent place of episcopacy at the heart of major Christian ecumenical discussion is remarkable. It is widely recognized that the most difficult area in such discussions is ordered ministry, consistently focused in episcopacy.

This is true of the Canadian discussions to be reviewed in Part A. It was, in fact, the most challenging and contentious issue throughout these talks. It was identified as such in the initial meetings. Interpretation of the Fourth Article of the Anglican Lambeth
Quadrilateral brought its challenges directly into the first phases of the discussions. It remained the most pressing concern and was the key factor in their termination in 1975.

Similarly, episcopacy must be regarded as the prime focus of disagreement in the other seminal discussions and the Faith and Order work, Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, to be considered in our Part B.

There are practical reasons why episcopacy consistently has this role. As the essential Catholic ministry, it presents particular realities which demand decisions. Differences about ordered ministry have a specificity and a pertinence which make it difficult to circumvent or ignore; details about clergy status, ministerial style, liturgical roles, etc. demand decision. Therefore episcopacy brings into focus the more obvious differences in Catholic and Protestant praxis in government and liturgy.

However, there is a less obvious but more important basis for this role: Episcopacy especially, as essential Catholic ministry, consistently raises questions which have to do with the grounds underlying our major differences.

19 Beginning in 1877 and meeting approximately every ten years, the Lambeth Conferences--earlier all Anglican bishops--now involve representative bishops of the whole Anglican communion. The 1920 Conference issued an "Appeal to all Christian People" towards Christian unity based on four essentials, the Quadrilateral: the Holy Scriptures, the Nicene Creed, the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion and "the Historic Episcopate, locally adapted to the needs of various regions and peoples." The 1930 Conference restated item 4 more precisely.
Much of what is most meaningful and valuable about one's Church is bound up with ministry; it is especially expressive of the fundamentals. Although we may not be able readily to articulate the reasons, we know what we do or do not like in styles of ministry, their functions and relationships; "Le coeur a ses raisons..."

As the essential Catholic ministry, episcopacy therefore becomes the focus, in Catholic/Protestant dialogue, of the most persistent and enduring differences. It is bound up with much that is strongly affirmed or distrusted on either side in areas of ecclesiology such as authority, sacramentalism and the status of the historical church! This is reflected in the continuing centrality of episcopal ordination to judgments about the validity of ministries and denominations.

Episcopacy, as ordered ministry, evokes the discussion of those underlying issues. It is through such specifics in their very historical actuality that those dynamics become concretely expressed. Indeed, it proves difficult to sustain fruitful discussion of those underlying faith realities in abstraction from their expression in the particulars of ecclesiology and liturgy. As Paul Tillich expressed this, "Man's ultimate concern must be expressed symbolically..." 20

Therefore, in its special capacity to signify and elicit these, episcopacy constitutes the best historical

\*\*\*\*\*\*

particular for entry into such underlying faith dynamics. And its nature as such means that its practical importance is not diminished in the process. Thus it enables the most adequate approach to these discussions in their wholeness historically as well as theologically.
PART A

CHAPTER 1

BEGINNING THE CANADIAN NEGOTIATIONS: THE 1946 SCHEME

This chapter will include: (A) Introductory comments about the 1943-75 Canadian Discussions. (B) The Initiation of Discussions by the Anglicans and the United Church Response. (C) The Development of a Suitable Strategy. (D) The Strategy Chosen. (E) The Reception Given to the 1946 Scheme. (F) The Place of Episcopacy in this First Phase. (G) Overview.

(A) Introductory comments about the 1943-75 Canadian Discussions

It is remarkable that the 1943-75 Canadian discussions have received so little scholarly attention to date in view of their duration, the resources dedicated to them and the publicity they received. In their most intensive phase hundreds of people were engaged in the planning of a "new manifestation" of the Christian Church in Canada growing out of the denominations involved. At one time it seemed certain that this would become a reality.

Particular questions about these discussions warrant attention: Why, in contrast to the negotiators' singing of the doxology after completion of Plan of Union in 1972, was support
for the proposed union then weakening throughout their constituencies? After the high degree of acceptance of the Principles, why did support for the subsequent Plan deteriorate so rapidly? Why, after such a long and apparently intensive effort towards unity, was there so little disappointment at the break-down of negotiations? Why, after this long process, is there so little interest in church unity now within the United Church of Canada or in other Canadian denominations? How is it that after thirty-two years of involvement with each other, with repeated commitments formally made to eventual unity, these churches today remain almost as distant as when they began discussions?

Although these discussions are not the exclusive focus of this thesis, our approach to them as a case study will yield important insight for the answering of such questions (and analogous questions that arise in relation to other unity discussions).

The Church of England in Canada (after 1953 The Anglican Church in Canada) was the initiating body. This fact gave Anglicans a sense of responsibility for continuing the discussions when they might have decided otherwise.

Noteworthy within Canadian Anglicanism is the diversity within its church family, ranging from the Evangelical to the Anglo-Catholic. The changing involvement of these various expressions of Anglicanism within the discussions greatly complicated them. Thus, Anglicanism's
developing self-understanding, both within Canada and in its broader world family, became a major factor in this story.

That the major respondent to the Anglican overture in 1943 was a United Church (resulting from a union of Methodist and Reformed denominations in 1925) involved both positive and negative factors. The helpful legacy from its being a united church involved a real commitment to unity and a liberal and pragmatic approach to its challenges. Unfortunately the fact that these promising qualities, together with an assumed knowledge about union from within its recent past, were aspects of a limited theological and ecclesiastical context was not often recognized in the United Church. The result was that this supposedly liberal, pragmatic and ecumenically minded body was not necessarily prepared to enter into real dialogue with the Catholic aspects of Anglicanism.

The third discussion partner, entering in the last phases of the talks, The Church of Christ (Disciples), though a large denomination in the United States, involved only several dozen congregations in Canada. And although their approach to baptism and the role of their laity brought special challenges to the negotiators, their role in the discussions could not have the same weight as that of the two larger bodies.

Most of the material for the first phase of this thesis has been drawn from the United Church Archives at
Victoria University in the University of Toronto. The other primary sources for the Canadian discussions are recollections of some key participants and the author's personal involvement. These are noted among the Sources Consulted at the end of the thesis.

(B) The Initiation of Discussions by the Anglicans and the United Church Response

In 1943, the General Synod of the Church of England in Canada, meeting in its Jubilee Year, issued an invitation to ecumenical discussion to other Canadian Christian denominations. It began by rejoicing in the "strengthening and unifying influence" of the General Synod within its own denomination over the fifty years. It continued by calling "our Canadian Church" to continue this process:

First--It calls upon the Church throughout Canada, both clergy and laity, to labour for a continuous growth of mutual understanding and appreciation among all members and sections of the Church, so that "as a city that is at unity with itself" our Canadian Church may bear a clear and steadfast witness to the unchanging truth of the everlasting Gospel in a rapidly changing world, and make its full contribution to the task of preparing the way for a re-united Christendom.

Then the statement addressed other Canadian denominations:

Secondly--It hereby declares this Church's "will to unity" with all others who acknowledge the one God and Father of us all, and in sincerity love and serve the One Lord and

---

1 The section involved, "Interchurch Anglican/United Negotiations," contains 43 boxes, each having up to fifteen files. (This includes the papers of Canon Ralph Latimer, a chief Anglican participant in the dialogue over many of its phases.) Most of this material has been examined for this thesis. Our reference to it will be as follows: UCA, IA/UN, Box ..., File...(name of the document if not in the text), page number (if appropriate).
Saviour Jesus Christ, relying on the guidance and grace of the One Holy and life-giving Spirit.

In token of its good-will and earnestness of purpose the Synod now expresses its hearty desire and readiness to meet, through its own representatives, in conference and prayer with representatives of any Christian communion which shares its hopes and aspirations for a re-united Christendom, and it extends a cordial invitation to the Christian Communions of Canada thus to initiate conversations.

In the spirit of the Divine charity which "never faileth," with penitence for our own sins and shortcomings, yet humbly confident in Him who calls us into fellowship with Himself and with one another, the Synod now sends forth this invitation.2

John Lyon, Bishop of Ontario, later (at the first meeting of the Joint Anglican-United Commission on Reunion February 15, 1944), expressed the spirit underlying that initiative:

He stated that the recently held General Synod of his Church had convened at a solemn moment in human history, mindful of the struggle being waged in battle-fields for human freedom. In this situation the Synod had given very special consideration to the welfare of Christ's Church in Canada. There was a sense of short-coming when one thought of the open spaces here and there across Canada which were not being ministered unto. The same sense of need was felt when one took a view of the world situation. Hence the Synod felt some sense of impotence, due to the unhappy divisions which impeded the spread of the kingdom and determined that something should be done to improve the situation. Consequently in a spirit of charity and faith, an invitation was drawn up and sent to other Christian Commissions to meet in fellowship, prayer and study to explore the possibilities of re-union.3

After consideration, the Anglicans thought it wise to contact the United and Presbyterian Churches, among the major Canadian denominations. Responding a year later, the

3 UCA, I A/U N, Box 2, 1, 2.
Presbyterians held a number of exploratory discussions with the Anglicans.

United Church leadership thought itself sufficiently secure in its Church's commitment to unity to respond immediately and positively. (The next General Council sanctioned this action.) The Sub-Executive of the General Council acted as follows:

Your Sub-Executive, on the receipt of this invitation, realizing its importance, and bearing in mind that the United Church of Canada was pledged by its Basis of Union "to foster the spirit of unity in the hope that this sentiment of unity may in due time, so far as Canada is concerned, take shape in a church which may fittingly be described as national," appointed a Committee of fifteen to meet with a Committee of the same number appointed by the Church of England in Canada.4

The very practical concern about ministry to the "open spaces across Canada" voiced by Bishop Lyon met a responsive chord in the United Church of Canada which came into being largely through such needs. This concern had brought together key leadership of these two denominations on November 16, 1942 and was to remain a dominant note throughout these discussions.

(C) The Development of a Suitable Strategy

The Anglican call was "to meet in fellowship, prayer and study to explore the possibilities of re-union." The place of church unity within the ethos of the United Church noted by the General Council's Sub-Executive ensured that

denomination's commitment to this long-term goal. But where to begin?

Before their first formal meeting some unofficial joint planning took place. It was thought that a sub-committee of ten ("5 and 5") should be formed to explore directions along which to proceed. Dr. J.R.P. Sclater, the United Church Moderator, developed a memorandum which had been shared with Bishop Lyon of Toronto, chairman of the Anglican Commission. According to the minutes of the first meeting of United Church representatives on February 15, 1944, Dr. Sclater's memorandum designated ordered ministry as the prime area of concern. As initial goals he recommended the development of a common educational policy leading to common ordination and, later, common confirmation.

On the evening of that same day the first meeting of the two Commissions took place. Bishop Lyon explained the initiative of the General Synod as quoted earlier. Dr. Sclater responded positively and the Anglican Primate said that "he felt strongly that a new spirit had come to us all since the historic ecumenical Conferences of Oxford and Edinburgh... ." Dr. Sisco, the Secretary of General Council, "outlined certain tentative decisions as to methods of procedure in the joint task of the two bodies as discussed in conference of the United Church representatives."

At this point Dr. Sclater shared the results of the discussion of his memorandum with his United Church colleagues earlier that day:
The Moderator enlarged upon these, stating that the differences between our two churches had to do with Orders that reach into the doctrinal realm. These could be solved best by keeping in mind the needs of Canada and finding some way by which we can realize a common ministry, fastening our attention upon ordinands. Prior to that, we might take up as our immediate task the development of common and cooperating courses of study in our theological colleges. These matters might lead on to consideration of common confirmation of our young people and how some of these matters would affect jurisdiction.5

Following the subsequent expressions of optimism and good will from both sides, a note of caution was sounded by one participant:

Archdeacon Wallace said that he was a bit troubled by the manifestation of complete accord that had been shown. He thought it only fair to call attention to the fact that the Church of England in Canada could not break new ground on matters of ordination, etc., without the support of the entire Anglican family throughout the world.6

According to the prior unofficial agreement, this meeting then authorized the formation of a sub-committee of ten to delineate areas for special study. This group, meeting on May 16, 1944, recommended work regarding theological education and ordination. As a result, one sub-group was formed to explore the possibilities for unity in theological education and another to consider the matter of ordination. It was mainly in the work of the latter that the 1946 proposal was developed.

Dr. Sclater's statement regarding "differences... with Orders that reach into the doctrinal realm" and an attempt to create a "common ministry," with implications for ordination, proved to be the main agenda of subsequent

5 UCA, I A/U N, Box 2, Minutes, Feb. 15, 1944.
6 UCA, I A/U N, Box 2, Minutes, Feb. 15, 1944.
discussions. Alongside the agenda, Archdeacon Wallace's comments had a persistent resonance; the minutes of the various meetings reflect a growing caution as to how these ministries were to be united.

This dawning realism and the consequent overall strategy that gradually developed is expressed in a memorandum by a participant:

While the original purpose of the Conversations was the achievement of corporate unity, the conversations tended to narrow the goal, for the time being, to an effort to find a solution to the problem of giving the ministrations of the Church to the scattered people in our many sparcely settled areas in Canada. Our two communions were duplicating each others' efforts and often appearing as rivals. At the same time each body was conscious that it was in touch with only 40 or 50 percent of the people who reported themselves as Anglicans or United Church when the census is taken. Could a plan be worked out whereby the minister of one communion could also minister to the people of the other communion in places where there was no congregation or minister of the other communion? It was thought that if we could make a start in this smaller way we might grow together. The United Church had come together in just that way. For years prior to Union congregations made up of members of the three bodies that went to make up the United Church had been formed in the newly settled areas of the West.7

We note that according to this developing scheme some unification of ministry would both serve a pragmatic need and constitute a step towards further unity—as in the United Church constituency before 1925.

At this meeting of the ten Fr. Roland F. Palmer of the Society of St. John the Evangelist Order (Bracebridge) presented a memorandum. In it he emphasized both the similarities and differences in the two ministries and argued

for a method by which they could be united. Discussed by the Sub-Committee on Ordination, this was to become the basis for the 1946 proposal.

(D) The Strategy Chosen

On November 21, 1944, the Sub-Committee on Ordination began its work. The following reminiscence, from the anonymous source quoted earlier, refers to the development of understanding at this stage:

. . . there was a desire on both sides to avoid that which had caused the stoppage in practically all previous similar conversations elsewhere, that is, the question of valid or invalid, regular or irregular, ministries. There gradually emerged the following attitude of mind on the part of the conference: that accepting the Lambeth declaration that the Free Church ministries were ministries of grace it would be an advance in discussion to recognize that these ministries were different from the Anglican. This would not involve a debate regarding the superiority in the origin and tradition of the ministries. Again in order that the description of the ministry should not be limited to the word "different," the word "parallel" was introduced as emphasizing not only a question of difference. The word "parallel" seemed to be taken to mean in the mind of the conference that the ultimate objects of the ministries in the edifying of the faithful was the same, although the methods were different.8

The use of the word "parallel" constitutes a major theological decision. "Parallel" here means moving from the same source and in the same direction, as the recent Lambeth recognition of "free Church ministries as ministries of grace" seemed to imply, thus affirming both difference and equality. "Parallel" means that there is no divergence and thus no judgment as to source, effectiveness or validity. This seemed

8 Ibid.
to be a viable theological understanding within which there might be a limited unifying of ministries in view of pressing practical needs and as an interim condition for long-term growing together of the denominations. Moreover, provision for such an arrangement had recently been made by the Episcopal Church, U.S.A.

Within this context the committee was able to arrive at an enabling strategy:

Discussion was confined to the question: Is it possible to have a common ministry for our two Churches apart from their organic unity. After careful consideration of the views of the ministry held in common the following motion was moved by Dr. J.R.P. Sclater and seconded by Fr.R.F. Palmer:

1. We are agreed that the ordination of a minister of the Church of England or the United Church by the proper authorities of the Communion to which he does not at that time belong enables such a minister to execute the functions of a presbyter in both communions, thus securing to him a wider ministry.

2. We, therefore, are of the opinion that it is desirable that the question of such ordination be examined with a view to bringing the matter to accomplishment ... 9

Based on the recognition of the two ministries as "parallel," the transmission of authority to minister then became the focus of attention. Thus the development of appropriate ceremonies in both denominations to enable this without seeming to constitute reordination--and raising the old question of validity--became the prime concern at this stage. Discussion of inter-communion was postponed.

The overall strategy, essentially unchanged from their first meeting, is stated in the Introduction to the final Report, completed in September, 1946:

9 UCA, I A70 N, Box 2, Minutes.
...

we fear that any large proposals for unifying the two Communions in polity would be in advance of the present opinion of our people. Therefore, as a first step, the fashioning of a relation in which our two Communions, while retaining their separate identities and freedoms in Worship, can engage, easily and fully, in combined operations for the Kingdom of God.

The main body of the Report was devoted to the acts of unification of ministries, outlined briefly as follows:

4. The whole Committee considers it desirable, therefore, that in any future union each Communion should contribute the whole of its Ministry each to the other. As a step towards this end, we suggest that once each Communion is satisfied that the formularies of the other teach sufficiently the true Christian Faith, and after sufficient instruction of the Ministers in the practical exercise of the other Ministry, any Minister of the United Church could receive Holy Orders according to the form and manner of the Church of England in Canada, and any clergyman of the Church of England in Canada could be admitted to the Ministry of the United Church by the appropriate Court of that Church, and according to the form used in the United Church Book of Common Order. We recommend that in both cases it should be made clear, by a preface to be read before the Service, that in neither case is any man denying the reality of the Ministry he has already received and exercised, but that he is seeking a commission for a further Ministry, and the necessary grace from God to perform the same.

The place of this stage in the more long-term strategy is outlined as follows:

5. The object of this mutual reception of our respective Ministries is to make it possible for the Ministers of each Communion to minister in the other Communion, under the licence and direction of the Bishop of the Diocese in the one case, and of the proper Church Courts in the other case. The further object of this mutual reception of the Ministry is the removal of an obstacle to unity by the provision of a Ministry in each Communion which is acceptable in the other Communion.

11 Ibid., 185.
12 Ibid.
(E) The Reception Given to the 1946 Scheme

This Report was adopted for study by the governing bodies of the two denominations. According to the Executive of the United Church's Commission:

The action of the eleventh General Council regarding the Report of the Commission on Reunion was to receive the Report and commend it for study throughout the Church in Canada in groups to be arranged for by the Commission on Reunion through its executive.13

The enthusiastic implementation of this action by the Commission's Executive involved even the freeing of Dr. Sisco from his work as Secretary of General Council for this task.

In the Anglican Church the report was commended for study in the dioceses. The action of the Upper House, with the unanimous concurrence of the Lower House and noting the importance of consulting the Lambeth Conference of 1948, included these comments:

This house is of the opinion that the plan is well worthy of study and recommends its acceptance as such. It is, however, to be observed that the question of corporate Church Union is not before either communion. Early in the conversations the question of union was canvassed but it was agreed that it was premature... We are concerned that the cause of the "Reunion of Christendom" throughout the world may not be hindered by any independent action on our part.14

It soon became apparent that the Report would have a difficult future. This is reflected as early as a meeting of The Committee of Ten, representing United Church and Anglican Church, on May 5, 1947:

Reports were then presented of reactions as so far indicated.

14 G.K.A. Bell, Documents on Christian Unity Vol. 3, 202, 203.
(a) In the United Church it seemed that a large percentage of ministers seemed anxious to see the movement go forward, provided the question of "reordination" could be safeguarded. This point offered the greatest difficulty yet met—to be dealt with, possibly, by adjustments in the order of admission as now printed.

(b) In the Church of England interest in the Report was not as great as apparently in the United Church. One Bishop had criticized the Report severely in his Synod. A complicating factor was the variety in views of the ministry within the Anglican Church. It was felt that there were likely to be difficulties ahead both within and beyond Canada.15

Within the constituency of the United Church, which had heard little of the negotiations until the formal presentation of the proposal, there was little opposition, but neither was there a groundswell of enthusiasm for it. This was implied in the Report of the Executive of the Commission on Reunion in 1950:

It is probably no exaggeration to say that the average Church member is not seized with "the tragedy of our unhappy divisions." People left to themselves, or not encouraged in that direction by their ministers and clergy, are not likely to move toward unity. Thus, a plan of union formulated by leaders and official bodies, even if such a plan could be agreed upon after long and involved negotiations, could not meet with success unless it awakened an answering response from the rank and file.16

The same appears to have been true of the Canadian Anglican constituency. And, while somewhat supportive of this scheme, Anglican leadership became increasingly concerned about their relationship with world Anglicanism and the broader "Reunion of Christendom" mentioned in the General Synod treatment of the Report. Thus the action of the Lambeth

15 UCA, IA/U N, Box 2, Minutes.
16 UCA, IA/U N, Box 4, File 40.
Conference of 1948 regarding this scheme became a dominant factor:

The Conference declared in its fifty-eighth resolution that it was not prepared to discourage further explorations along this line, if they are linked with provisions for the growing together of the Churches concerned and with the definite acceptance of organic union as their final goal.

Together with this encouragement, this Conference gave a note of caution, in effect questioning the adequacy of the treatment of ministry in the 1946 scheme: "In this connection it is urged that the integral relation between the Church and the Ministry should be safeguarded in all such proposals." 17

Consistent with the pragmatic accent within their Report, the Commissioners on both sides attempted to deal with these varied responses to their work through encouraging in their Churches a similar experience of the Christian fellowship which had contributed so much to their work and to the formation of the United Church. Illustrative is this resolution in a 1947 meeting of the Joint Executive Bodies on Reunion of the Church of England in Canada and the United Church of Canada:

It was moved by Dr. J.R.P. Sclater, seconded by Canon W.H. Davidson and agreed, That this Joint Committee, knowing how deeply the spirit of mutual good will and understanding has inspired its deliberations and enabled it to reach a common mind in many matters pertaining to the advancement of Christian unity, hereby agrees that a Committee be appointed to draw up a statement of the principles of, and the spirit which should animate, practical relationships and local understanding, together with any suggestions as to how such practical

relationships and local understanding may be developed and report back to this Joint Committee.18

The result was that the major initiatives of the Commissioners for many years were consistent with this practical approach. Educational programs such as one prepared about "Priesthood" and others suggested regarding episcopacy and the Church of South India scheme were of secondary interest.

Although the 1946 scheme was not formally set aside until 1955, recognition of its rejection by most Anglicans is indicated in the minutes of the Executive, the United Church Commission on Re-union, February 4, 1948: "It was agreed to delay the issuance of further printed material until the attitudes of the Church of England toward the whole question had been more clearly defined."19

(F) The Place of Episcopacy in this First Phase

Episcopacy receives little mention in official documentation in this phase. However, the negotiators were very much aware of "that which had caused the stoppage in practically all previous similar conversations elsewhere, that is, the question of valid or invalid, regular or irregular, ministries." The strategem chosen relatively quickly constituted an attempt to enable a limited, practical and interim unifying of ministries without directly confronting the significance of episcopacy. It was therefore a dominant

---

19 UCA, I A/U N, Box 2.
factor in the 1946 scheme as the issue to be avoided. Whether that could happen would govern the results.

(G) Overview

The 1946 scheme was remarkably astute strategically. It would enable, and relatively early, the greater efficiency in shared ministry which especially Northern and Western Canada demanded. The measure of shared experience of ordered ministry made possible would contribute to a more complete union, as had happened for the United Church prior to 1925, through shared experiences and improved relationships. Indeed, the representatives would state that this could eventually contribute to "the removal of an obstacle to unity by the provision of a Ministry in each Communion which is acceptable in the other Communion."

And the 1946 scheme pertained directly to the heart of the difficult issue of "valid or invalid, regular or irregular, ministries." Its effectiveness in this daring strategy would depend on a simplification and an abstraction.

The simplification was in the description of the two styles of ministry as "parallel" rather than "different." Supported by their understanding of the judgment of the prior Lambeth Conference that "the Free Church ministries were ministries of grace," this treatment would regard Anglican and Free Church ministries as similar means of grace with differences of little import; "...the ultimate objects...[were] the same, although the methods were different." But
could the divergences in ministry which were confronted in other such discussions be so easily bypassed?

The abstraction is to be found in the enabling action for such a unified ministry. The crucial assumption underlying this recommendation was expressed in this resolution moved by Dr. Sclater and seconded by Fr. Palmer:

1. We are agreed that the ordination of a minister of the Church of England or the United Church by the proper authorities of the Communion to which he does not at that time belong enables such a minister to execute the functions of a presbyter in both communions, thus securing to him a wider ministry.

The assumption is that ministry, through an individual most likely reared and certainly trained in one tradition, could be made meaningful and effective in another very different milieu through this relatively simple transmission of authority. Could a United Church minister be given the significance of an Anglican priest, or vice versa, through some minimal instruction and this service of authorization?

Thus, in this simplification and abstraction, the strategem would depend on the isolation of ordained ministry from the whole range of understanding which gives it meaning in either tradition.

That the Faith/noetics dynamics underlying each style of ministry would cause the rejection of this isolation of Order most strongly in the Anglican tradition is not surprising. This happened explicitly when the 1948 Lambeth Conference, expressing concern about this aspect of the Canadian scheme, "urged that the integral relation between the Church and the Ministry should be safeguarded in all such
proposals. . . . " Explicitly, Anglicans were concerned about the effects of this treatment of ministry on their relationships within the Catholic tradition.

Explicit concerns about this treatment of ministry were also raised in United Church questions about the nature of the authorization or enabling service.

The criticism, on both sides, of the proposed common ministry as artificial ("hybrid") reflected more broadly a disquiet about that which, though well intended, would diminish the expression, in ordination, of so much of the meaning of one's Church.

The attempt, in 1947, of the Joint Committee on Reunion to bolster the prospects of the 1946 scheme by the affirmation of "mutual good will and understanding" together with "practical relationships and local understanding" would be of little help. Reliance on these emphases, so important in the dynamic which had produced the 1946 scheme, was no longer relevant to the questioning within its reception.

Moreover, the pragmatic decision implicit in the 1946 scheme not to treat directly and theologically the difficult questions about ministry would mean that the Faith/noetic dynamics implicit in the respective ministries would continue to express themselves in various ways little understood and often unrecognized as such.
CHAPTER 2

FROM 1948 TO RENEWED COMMITMENT LEADING TO THE PRINCIPLES: REALISM AND REORIENTATION

The developing response to the 1946 scheme was neither a uniform nor a linear process. Some rejected it early, others continued to affirm it as a basic long-term strategy while most were lukewarm or uncertain. Reaction within the Anglican communion was especially diverse. About 1948 the optimism regarding the 1946 scheme had generally ended and discussions entered a new phase.

This involved a difficult period of about ten years in which the denominational representatives and their support groups, groping for a way forward, experienced times of hope and despair, understandings and misunderstandings. There were periods of little activity and twice (in 1955 and 1958) the discussions almost ceased. This phase ended with a strong and perhaps surprising recommitment to the uniting process which resulted in the development of the Principles of Union.

Our study of this period will include: (A) The Basic Historical Data. (B) The Place of Episcopacy. (C) Overview.

(A) The Basic Historical Data
For some time attempts were made to generate support for the 1946 scheme by clarifying the proposed services of authorization (criticized by some as "re-ordination") and encouraging interchurch cooperation. By 1949, however, the Anglican Committee on Reunion reflected a changed perspective when it expressed to General Synod its interpretation of the judgment of the 1948 Lambeth Conference on the 1946 scheme. Recommending that the conversations be continued, and with the Lambeth concern about "the integral relation between the Church and the Ministry" much in mind, its Report said:

Some of these [problems] will have to be dealt with in the main by the United Church of Canada as for example the form of the Ministry in a United Church. To the solution of other problems we Anglicans must set ourselves as for example the question as to how far the authority of the Bishop, in view of the functions which have been traditionally assigned to him, can be combined with the Conciliar system which is a characteristic of churches like the United Church of Canada.1

Although the particulars of the unification of episcopal and conciliar ecclesiologies were negotiable, the Report made clear Anglican insistence on a ministry ordered about episcopacy.

In what seemed to be an important move forward regarding the crucial issue of ministry, the General Council of 1950 committed the United Church to accepting the episcopate (though not to "any particular doctrine"):

That in view of the fact that the Episcopate was from early times and for many centuries accepted, and by the greater part of Christendom is still accepted, it is our conviction that the continuance of the Episcopate in

some constitutional form should be effectively maintained, both at the inauguration of a union between these respective Churches and thereafter. This would not be considered as committing us to any particular doctrine of the Episcopate. Equally, in view of the place which the Council of Presbyters and the Congregation of the faithful had in the constitution of the early Church, and continued to have in the several traditions we have inherited and now possess in our own Communion, we must insist that those principles also be effectively maintained in any organic union.2

Despite this commitment, the uncertain relationship between the two negotiating groups and between their peoples over the next few years is evident in the minutes of the meeting of the Anglican Committee on Reunion with the United Church Commission on Union on June 21, 1954. Canon Hunt explained that this had been called by the "Two Fives" in order to review the developments in the conversations to date and to determine next steps, "if any."

The pessimism connoted by "if any" was evident also in reports from their constituencies:

Both summaries revealed a fairly discouraging picture which indicated little hope that any further progress toward unity might be made along the present pattern. However, both expressed the conviction that though something of an impasse had been reached, we must not permit the channels of communication at this level to be broken between the two Churches.3

Citing supportive actions by the 1949 General Synod and the 1950 General Council, this joint meeting recommended to their Churches that they instruct their representatives "to devise a plan formulating the ideal of a re-united Church, which may be submitted to our churches for

2 UCA, I A/U N, Box 2, June 21, 1954. Meeting of the Church of England Committee on Reunion and the United Church Commission on Union, Minutes.
consideration and study as the concrete objective to which we strive." Thought inappropriate by some for reasons both theological and "political," the implementation of this proposal was delayed.

By late 1955, when an informal meeting of United Church Re-Unification Commissioners and members of the General Council Executive took place, the full measure of the difficulty in their union with the Anglicans had become more clear.

Under discussion was a letter from the Anglican Primate conveying the action of the 1955 General Synod in reaffirming the Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1920 (as explained in 1930) as necessary to any movement towards union. The element in the restated "Quad" that caused so much difficulty affirmed that:

The Historic Episcopate, as we understand it, goes behind the perversions of history to the original conception of the Apostolic Ministry... For it is not a mere fact, but an institution fulfilling certain purposes. As an institution it was, and is, characterised by succession in two forms: the succession in office and the succession of consecration. And it had generally recognised functions: the general superintendence of the church and more especially of the Clergy; the maintenance of unity in the one Eucharist; the ordination of men to the ministry; the safeguarding of the faith; and the administration of the discipline of the Church... What we uphold is the Episcopate, maintained in successive generations by continuity of succession and consecration, as it has been throughout the history of the Church from the earliest times, and discharging those functions which from the earliest times it has discharged.

... and we hold that the episcopate should be "constitutional" in the sense that provision should be made for the due co-operation of the presbyterate and
the congregations of Christ's faithful people in the ordering of the Church's life.4

It was pointed out that the position on episcopacy implicit in the "Quad" went far beyond any United Church commitment:

President A.B.B. Moore emphasized that it was clear that the Anglicans were interpreting our statement on the episcopacy in terms of the 1930 declaration. This would reduce our status to seeking admission to the Anglican Church. He also declared that, to think that their episcopacy "goes behind the perversions of history to the original conception of the apostolic ministry," is to ask us to accept an intellectual dishonesty.5

Among those present there was little inclination to undertake the more comprehensive discussions on issues of ecclesiology which the Anglican position demanded. One participant commented that "through the years the character of our Commission has been sharpened and the convictions clarified that our business is union, not vague talk." The concluding consensus was that the group had "no authority to enter into purely faith and order discussions" or to "discuss union on the basis of the Lambeth Quadrilateral's interpretation in 1930."

To find a way out of the impasse representatives of the two Commissions met the following month. Bishop Dixon noted developments on the Anglican side, one of which was the meeting in Minneapolis "which had greatly strengthened the feeling of Anglicans as members of a world Anglican body" with major implications for their understanding of Christian unity as "the reunion of Christendom." Such

5 Ibid.
developments would necessarily strengthen also the Catholic aspect of Anglicanism.

These representatives formally recognized . . .

The failure of the proposal for a Mutually Acceptable Ministry to commend itself as widely as had been hoped to our Churches. It seemed clear that there was no purpose to be served in seeking further progress along these lines at the present time. 6

Notwithstanding the clarification of some misunderstandings in this meeting, United Church participants declared the fourth item of the 1920 Lambeth Quadrilateral, as set forth in the Lambeth Statement of 1930, "unacceptable."

However, the meeting ended with some hope, noting "the importance of better understanding on the part of each of our Churches as to the operation of the system of government, (episcopal and conciliar), under which the other works."

Similar in tone was the resolution reactivating the 1954 proposal to formulate "the ideal of a re-united Church," the first step of which would be the creation of a "Brief" setting forth "the essentials of such a re-united Church." This was to be cognisant of "what had been proposed in Britain, South India, Ceylon, and other areas in this matter."

This recommendation was accepted on both sides. Task groups were begun in Toronto and Montreal. Through a number of theological studies the Toronto group achieved

advances in understanding which would be helpful later. The group in Montreal, working intensely through 1956, produced the Montreal Plan early the next year.

It appeared at yet another critical point in the discussions. An "emergency" Special Meeting of Official Representatives of the United and Anglican Churches had been called for February 12, 1957 "to iron out any misunderstandings that may have arisen in recent months, and to work together for possible solutions."7 Difficulties had developed over church extension projects in Northern Quebec and some publicized comments by Anglicans regarding the discussions.

At this meeting support for the continuation of the discussions was found in statements by the General Synod of 1955 and General Council of 1956. There was recognition again of the need for greater mutual understanding. Out of later meetings in this special series came a memorandum on "General Principles of Cooperation."

While formally accepted by the Executive of the United Church Union Commission, which was prepared to recommend it to the General Council Executive, this memorandum was reworded by the Anglican House of Bishops, beginning with the following paragraph:

It should be understood that it is the policy of the Anglican Church to bring its ministrations, as God may enable it, to every group, however small, that may require them. The Anglican Church, under its canons and

7 UCA, I A/U N, Box 2, Special Meeting of Official Representatives of the United Church of Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada, Feb. 12, 1957, Minutes.
constitutions, cannot commend its people to the pastoral care of any but an Anglican priest. The Bishop is their rightful Father-in-God and it is his duty to provide for their pastoral care through the order and ministry of the Prayer Book.8

Not only did this position threaten any cooperation between these two denominations, it forcefully raised again the old question of the validity of non-episcopal ministry.

It was within this difficult climate that the Montreal Plan was made public. It constituted the first attempt in these discussions to outline, with insights drawn from similar talks elsewhere, how episcopal and conciliar ecclesiologies might be brought together—with emphasis on the "concrete" as opposed to the doctrinal. In this Plan's marriage of the two ecclesiologies the role of the episcopate would be "(a) pastoral, (b) constitutional"9 but lacking much of its meaning for the Catholic.

Reaction to this imbalance is reflected in the consternation when the Montreal Plan was made public without prior review by its sponsering denominational committees. This also explains the difference between the relatively minor criticism it received within the United Church and the more radical reaction to it by some Anglicans. It is significant that those planning the important three day Anglican General Synod Conference on Reunion (Feb. 1959) determined that the Montreal Plan would not be discussed.10

10 UCA, I A/U N, Box 6, File 61, Minutes, 5.
Soon after that meeting, the scheme was viewed on both sides as no longer a propos.

United Church representatives, knowing that Bishop Dixon of Montreal, who chaired the Anglican Committee on Reunion, had played a key role in producing the Montreal scheme, had heard the Archbishop of Quebec, the acting Canadian Primate, reject it at one of the special meetings as follows:

Archbishop Carrington requested that his name be recorded in these minutes as being entirely opposed to the outline scheme of union as presented in the document that has been under consideration, and expressed the conviction that he represented the majority of Anglicans in his attitude toward this proposal.11

Thus this negative treatment of the Montreal Plan together with the 1946 scheme and the Memorandum of General Principles of Cooperation constituted for the United Church representatives a rejection of their efforts in response to the 1943 Anglican invitation. That some Anglican leaders radically rejected what others had helped create could only add to United Church frustration.

Therefore, in recommending to General Council that the discussions continue, the United Church Commission, meeting on May 14, 1958 added something of an ultimatum:

Nevertheless, the time has come when, in our judgment, the Anglican Church of Canada should make plain whether it really wishes to continue these conversations, or whether it now desires to terminate them.12

12 UCA, I A/U N, Box 2, Minutes.
Thus does mid-1958 seem to be the low point in this phase of the discussions. The one hopeful sign at this time is a greater awareness of and willingness to confront the major differences between the two denominations.

For example, in setting out seven areas of concern regarding their "Brief," the Montreal group named, as the first two:

1. The nature of the Episcopal office, and especially the relationship between the spiritual and pastoral duties of a Bishop and the administrative tasks committed to him.
2. The structure of Church courts and the relationship between Episcopal and Conciliar elements in the Church.

Moreover, contributing to the process in which the Montreal scheme developed was discussion of a paper on episcopacy by Bishop Dixon.

Indicative also of this increased grappling with denominational differences was the fact that now it was not only the Anglicans who questioned the meaning of the Montreal scheme for their whole communion but also that the United Church Commission expressed concern that "care must be taken to safeguard the essential values in the Presbyterial and Conciliar systems."14

The Anglican response to the United Church "ultimatum" came in a joint three day meeting of the General Synod Plenary Committee on Reunion and the Canadian House of Bishops at the Guild Inn, Scarborough, Ontario. That

14 UCA, I A/U N, Box 2, Executive Ctte on Union, June 19, 1957, Minutes.
meeting, from February 5 to 7, 1959, involved a thorough assessment of the Anglican position and resulted in unanimous support for continuing the discussions. The report of the joint meeting emphasized the complexity of the Anglican position in terms both of theology and polity. The Anglicans' concern about misunderstandings regarding "organic union" and their suggestion that other union discussions involving Anglicanism be considered constituted a request for a more comprehensive approach. Consistent with this was a suggestion about the publication of study materials for members of the two churches and a common League of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Their response was received by the Executive of the United church's Commission on Union on April 15, 1959. While reaffirming their opposition to any "monarchical" conception of episcopacy or any questioning of the validity of United Church ministry, the United Church group responded positively.

(B) The Place of Episcopacy

Episcopacy dominates this phase, as it did the last, but with the difference that here it moved into the foreground. And it dominates (a) as the major explicit

15 The Anglican statement referred to a confusion between "union and uniformity," and said: "It may well be that the union that finally emerges under the guidance of the Holy Spirit will be a unity of faith, order, and sacramental communions, expressing itself in a diversity of polities, liturgies, and traditions." "Statement on Church Union," The Commission on Union of the United Church of Canada, April, 1959. UCA, I A/U N, Box 4, File 43, 2.
divisive issue as well as (b) through its broad and implicit significance.

In terms of (a), its more explicit role, we note first that, in the late 1940's, strengthening Anglican emphasis on the fourth article of the Lambeth "Quad" set the stage for what was to follow. The main response from the United Church was commitment by the 1950 General Council to acceptance of episcopacy. Later, it was the 1955 General Synod's reaffirmation of the 1930 restatement of the "Quad" including the comment that "the Historic Episcopate, as we understand it, goes behind the perversions of history to the original conception of the Apostolic Ministry," that especially angered United Church leadership, as did later similar Anglican claims for episcopacy.

Regarding (b), its broad and implicit significance, we note that among Anglicans there was a shifting and increasing emphasis on the Catholic meaning of episcopacy as Order expressing Faith: "The Bishop is their rightful Father-in-God." Acceptance of this ministry by the United Church General Council in 1950 involved the limitation that "this would not be considered as committing us to any particular doctrine of the Episcopate." Thus although the necessity of the episcopate to their unification was, by 1950, acknowledged by both sides, each did so within very different realms of meaning about ministry.

(C) Overview
If these discussions could be likened at all to a pilgrim's progress, then this phase was surely the "slough of despond." Here it was so very hard to find solid ground on which to move forward and, once seemingly gained, it soon dissolved. Robert Jensen's description of ecumenical discussion, quoted earlier, seems apt: "...the strange frustration has occurred ... [the] divisive power [of the traditional controversy] has seemed merely to rise from it and settle elsewhere."

It was the encounter of the two very different approaches to ministry that explains not only the main agenda in this phase but also its special character as "slough." Therefore we shall consider further these two Faith/noetic dynamics.

The unifying influence of the General Synod in Canadian Anglicanism, noted in their overture in 1943, and the developing Anglican self-awareness as a world body continued and were more in evidence in this phase. This process emphasized the importance of the Anglo-Catholic aspects of the Anglican Church and therefore the status of the Church and its essential historical elements as instruments of grace. Thus the relationship between Order and Faith comes more to the fore, brought to a focus in episcopacy.

Eugene Fairweather, an Anglo-Catholic theologian--widely respected within Anglicanism, as his later role in World Anglican/Roman Catholic discussions indicates--gives
insight into the developing concerns. Here he raises the
issue of the intention and, therefore, of the whole meaning
of ministry for each tradition in questioning the treatment
of this subject in the 1946 scheme:

The United Church minister's Ordination, on this
showing, is intended to empower him to perform the same
functions as the Priest; if it does, it and they are
"valid", if it does not, they are not. If we think they
are, we cannot ask him to be ordained to the Priesthood,
if we think they are not, we have to ask this as a
condition of re-union; if we are doubtful, we can ask
him to be ordained sub conditione. In the case of our
own Orders we can only say that, in order to satisfy any
doubts on the part of others, we too are prepared for
re-ordination sub conditione . . . If, however, we
choose the theory of opposition between the two
ministries, there then lies behind the opposition such a
divergence of belief concerning Church, Sacraments,
Ministry and grace as to make re-union impossible. It is
then, greatly to be hoped that further investigation
will support the theory of intended equivalence. 16

We note that the question of the intention of the
minister's ordination leads, for Fairweather, to that broad
realm of belief which ministry expresses "concerning Church,
Sacraments, Ministry and grace . . . ."

His reading of church history inclined him to view
the intention behind these two ministries as very different.
While regarding Methodist ministry as a substitute . . .

. . . for the Three-fold ministry, which failed to
perform its own functions. . . . the Presbyterian and
Congregational ministries were created in deliberate
opposition to the Threelfold ministry, which their
creators rejected along with its sacraments and
doctrine, in the interests of a clearcut and
contradictory conception of the Church, the Sacraments
and Grace. 17

16 UCA, I A/U N, Box 4, File 29, Comments on the "Report
from the Ctte on Reunion", 12.
17 Ibid., 9,10.
The relationship noted between any conception of ministry and the related understanding of "the Church, the Sacraments, and Grace" affirms the importance of ministry as Order rather than merely administration, a distinction which Fairweather found improperly treated in the Report.18 As Order, ministry must be understood within the full ecclesiology of the tradition. He questioned how well this had been done by the Joint Commissions, expressing some particular concerns in this regard, noted above, and treated again as follows:

It is not unreasonable to suggest that apparent disagreement concerning the nature of the Church, the authority of Christian doctrine and the transmission of Grace (to say nothing of the ambiguous position of the doctrinal formularies of the United Church), demands much more careful consideration from the Committee on Re-Union than it has so far received. 19

In citing "the nature of the Church, the authority of Christian doctrine and the transmission of Grace," Fairweather rejects any attempt to unite these "parallel" ministries without an adequate understanding and treatment of their great range of meanings. His approach also bespeaks a concern that no leap forward should wrench ministry away from that rich and manifold tradition within Anglicanism which strengthened it as means of grace.

In contrast to this highly ecclesiologically oriented range of concerns was the more pragmatic and apparently liberal United Church attitude. Methodist and Canadian practicality, in response to the demands of

18 Ibid., 8.
19 Ibid., 6.
mission, brought about the 1925 union and largely governed ensuing United Church ecclesiology.

This characteristic was evident very early in these discussions as was noted by the anonymous source quoted before regarding the initial meetings:

It is an interesting side light on the outlook of the United Church of Canada and the outlook of the Presbyterian Church in Canada that the question which interested the United Church and was the one first asked concerned the practical matter of a mutually acceptable ministry, while the first question proposed for discussion by the Presbyterians was "How we know God."

The Anglicans found the United Church almost too ready to be satisfied with the ministry of the Church of England in Canada.20

This general approach was affirmed in the Report of the Executive of the Commission on Church Union in 1952:

We of the United Church are a practical-minded people. It has not been our experience that unions emerge out of pure academic discussions, which can go on to the crack of doom without anything happening. We believe that unions are motivated out of a sense of need, or where pressure is felt. Our union of 1925 was begun at the time of the opening up of the prairies and the rapid increase in immigration.21

This approach to union was quite understandable in view of the apparent success of the United Church and the high failure rate of attempts to unify episcopal and conciliar ecclesiologies through discussion "to the crack of doom." Out of this kind of approach we note two results:

The first was the United Church's belief in the primacy of practical steps towards unity enabling "the process of growing together" as was expressed also in a meeting of the Joint Commissions on Reunion, June 21, 1954:

21 UCA, I A/U N, Box 4, File 40.
the meeting was reminded by Dr. Cragg of Montreal that the process of growing together would not be achieved as long as our two ecclesiastical systems create difficulties which make such growth impossible. He maintained we must achieve unity and then we would grow together . . .22

The second result was an attitude ranging from lack of interest to wariness regarding the Faith/Order issues increasingly important to Anglicanism. We recall, for example, the minuted comment in the meeting of United Church leadership in 1955 that "our business is union, not vague talk."

Some statements by Gordon Sisco, Executive Secretary of General Council and thus his Church's very knowledgeable and influential chief administrative officer, are quite revealing about this position. In a memorandum written probably just prior to the action of General Council regarding episcopacy in 1950, he outlines his understanding of this matter:

According to Anglo-Catholic doctrine, episcopacy is of the very "esse" of the Church, not of its "bene esse." It is a sacramentally creative power which constitutes the very unity and continuity of the Church. The Anglo-Catholic will not accept the view that episcopacy may be regarded as venerable and desirable apart from a theological basis as to its origin. He insists that non-episcopal communions must accept the Historic Episcopate, not as a type of government or purely as a pastoral office, or as a suggestive symbol of continuity in time and in space, but because "it is a sacramental life-giving organism, safeguarding and reproducing in successive generations the reality of Catholic doctrine, discipline and worship." The Anglo-Catholic is enthusiastic about reunion. His attitude may be comprehensive in its desire to embrace neglected truths and practices which have been recaptured by Protestantism, but on the high and wide-embracing

22 UCA, I A/U N, Box 2, Minutes.
doctrine of the sacramental nature of the Historic Episcopate he will not budge.

After commenting favourably on unity developments in South-East Asia, Sisco continued:

What I should like to see done, as a means of further sharpening this issue, is for some strong Protestant Church of the West, like The United Church of Canada, to demonstrate that it is possible to have an Episcopate in the historic succession entirely separated from administration and confined largely to pastoral functions but capable of giving dynamic and inspirational leadership in every phase of the Church's life as men specially set apart. I am not in favour of a bishop becoming a permanent Moderator, or a permanent President. I am pretty well satisfied with the constitution of our courts as they are; but within the life and boundaries of these courts I visualize bishops set over ministers and pastoral charges exercising spiritual functions and providing a leadership that will be creative, evangelical and apostolic. And secondly (and it is important) I should like to see a bridge built between liberal Anglicans in Canada and ourselves, with ourselves taking full responsibility for the style and structure of the bridge. I am convinced that a large number of Anglicans would in time come to walk back and forth across it.23

Quite remarkable here is the sharpness of the critique involved in Sisco's understanding of the Anglo-Catholic. He knows very well that point of view, a knowledge derived surely from his reading but probably also from personal conversations with Anglo-Catholics. Yet the very real limits to that understanding and empathy are quite evident.

For example, that he was "pretty well satisfied with the constitution of our courts as they are" indicates the lack of perspective conducive to any more thorough assessment of his own ecclesiological and theological

milieu or that of the Anglo-Catholic. That he would deliberately build a bridge to the liberal Anglican in isolation from the Anglo-Catholic indicates that any fuller understanding and empathy with the concerns of the latter were hardly thinkable.

Thus Sisco would generously and creatively welcome the episcopate "exercising spiritual functions and providing a leadership that will be creative, evangelical and apostolic." However, that, according to the 1950 General Council action--for which he would surely have had major responsibility--this "would not be considered as committing us to any particular doctrine of the Episcopate" indicates the limits inherent in that intent.

Thus we find that United Church liberality and generosity, though very real and a major factor enabling the continuing of these discussions through this phase, are very much within the limits of liberal Protestant understanding. Though not surprising in that pre-Vatican II era, the whole realm of meaning which is Catholic understanding of the Church and its structures as specially sanctioned instruments of grace remains wholly strange, if not alien.

Therefore while Anglican expectations about the episcopate were increasingly demanding about its role as Catholic ministry expressing Order-Faith relationships, United Church acceptance of it was governed by a very different and more pragmatic milieu. It was the encounter of this apparent United Church ecumenical generosity in its
limitedness with this very different and strengthening Catholic ecumenism in Anglicanism that characterized this phase. Within this Faith/noetic dynamic, hardly understood on either side, the bewilderment and anger, the uncertain progress that we find in this phase are not at all surprising.

However, there was also major progress, without which the subsequent development of the Principles could not have happened. One finds this in the increasing recognition that these two denominations involve two different realms of meaning which must be respected in their wholeness. If the sharp edges of those realms in their difference from each other caused pain, so did they involve the necessity for a deeper commitment to understanding. Thus in this phase we find both some discernment of what is fundamentally necessary to unity and some "hearing" of the other's description of his denomination's character, elements that would contribute to subsequent developments.
CHAPTER 3
THE PRINCIPLES

The creation of the Principles of Union was arguably the high point of these discussions. This statement alone received and retained the support of all the negotiating denominations. This chapter will include: (A) Basic Historical Data. (B) Episcopacy. (C) Overview.

(A) Basic Historical Data

A major factor in the speed and quality of the accomplishment which was the Principles of Union, completed in March, 1965, was the changed style of the discussions in this phase.

Recognition of the necessity for real growth in understanding brought into the process more theological expertize and demanded longer meetings. The number of persons involved in the actual discussions was increased. Illustrative of this overall approach was the preparation of the study book, Growth in Understanding, containing material on other similar union discussions in the world and on the Faith and Order of each of the two denominations.

Significant of a new approach also were papers prepared on key theological issues such as organic union,
ministry, the nature of the church, worship and sacraments by participants such as Eugene Fairweather, Donald Mathers, Ralph Latimer and Greer Boyce.

Important also were contributions regarding the union discussions in Southeast Asia. For instance, from Bishop Michael Hollis, first moderator of the Church of South India, the United Church Union Committee’s Executive received insight regarding the unification of ministries.1

By May, 1962, the Joint Meeting of the Tens could say:

Throughout these studies, carried forward in a spirit of marked goodwill and growing understanding, there has been repeated recognition that the subject of the ministry holds a crucial position in all conversations on church union, especially between episcopal and non-episcopal churches. Progress in the conversations is dependent upon a mutually satisfactory solution of this pressing problem.2

Here began a highly deliberate focus on the challenge of unifying episcopal and non-episcopal ministries. Within this process we note three contributions:

In that May, 1962 meeting, drawing from Michael Ramsey’s The Gospel And The Catholic Church, Derwyn Owen, Provost of Trinity College in Toronto, affirmed the close relationship between Order and Faith:

The question of church order, episcopacy and apostolicity are the sensitive areas in this connection. In the Anglican view questions of this kind are not to be thought of as institutional, organizational or political, but rather as evangelical. The order of the church is intimately related to the Gospel and church

1 UCA, I A/U N, Executive, United Church Commission on Union, Jan 30, 1961.
2 UCA, I A/U N, Box 5, File 49; Joint Meeting, the Committees of Ten, May 8, 1962, Minutes, 2.
order, including episcopacy, expresses the life of the church, and this life in turn points to, and shares in, the redemptive work of God in Christ.3

At the next meeting of the "Tens" Eugene Fairweather set forth an eleven point program. The first affirmed as the proper goal of ecumenical action the visible union of churches "in the essentials of their life and action as churches." The second affirmed communio in sacris as essential to this. The third affirms the necessity of agreement in faith, the fourth agreement on the sacraments and the fifth on ministry.4

Thus while Provost Owen affirmed the essential unity of Faith and Order, consistent with this Eugene Fairweather laid out something of a theological road map. While this constituted a candid and thorough presentation of the Anglican treatment of order, how was this to be reconciled with the United Church position? United Church orientation around the proclamation of the Word out of the Scriptures together with other emphases such as the parity of ministers and lay involvement did not encourage such close and direct unity between Faith and Order.

It was from overseas that another key contribution came. On February 4, 1963 Ernest Long, Secretary of the General Council, shared with the two "Tens" the insights received by the Executive of the United Church's Union Commission from Dr. William Stewart, Principal of Serampore

3 UCA, I A/U N, Box 5, File 49; Minutes, 3.
4 UCA, I A/U N, Box 5, File 49; Nov.12,1962, Minutes, pp.5,6.
College, India and chair of the Joint Committee on Union in planning for the Church of North India (C.N.I.).

Dr. Stewart emphasized "mutual recognition" and spoke of the determination, in the C.N.I. scheme, publicly and formally to affirm all ministries entering the C.N.I. at its inauguration. Equally important was his emphasis on "comprehension":

... the Plan is a plan of comprehension rather than persuasion. If you adopt the plan of persuasion, you therefore assume that one party is wrong, the other is right, and one party has to admit that he is wrong... The discussions in North India have recognized that there are differences between the churches and has sought to meet them by comprehension. It believes that the unity that God has given in Christ is far more fundamental than any differences that may exist; that all are within the Holy Catholic Church; that therefore they need to be in the one visible Church. It therefore has sought to bring about the common conviction that all such Churches can be in one family by comprehension, bringing with them their different views, even as members of the human family they differ on important matters but still are bound together by family ties.5

The encouraging progress in these Canadian discussions was reflected in the combined action of the House of Bishops and the Executive of the Anglican General Synod, meeting in Banff, October 1963, in asking that a plan for union be prepared by 1965.6 The United Church had renewed the mandate of its Committee on Union in 1962. Preparation for this more intense phase of the discussions involved separate meetings of the negotiating groups on both sides.

5 UCA, I A/U N, Box 5, File 49; The Minutes, 3.
6 UCA, I A/U N, The Executive, The United Church Committee on Union, Oct. 29, 1963, The Minutes,
As suggested by the Banff gathering Provost Owen prepared a "Working Paper" as a basis for these discussions. This paper received tentative approval from both the Anglican "Ten," some of whom helped in its formation, and from some of their United Church counterparts. With this as an accepted basis for discussion, the Committees of Ten undertook to find a way towards a viable plan of union at a three-day meeting in November, 1964.7 Mindful of the weaknesses in the 1946 scheme and drawing on the experience of the Church of South India, Provost Owen proposed a three step approach involving (a) joint affirmation of faith, (b) unification of ministries and then (c) the gradual elaboration of the structure of the developing Church. Six papers had been prepared in response to the Owen work, two—from Anglican and United Church perspectives—on each of the three steps.

The meeting rejected the three-step proposal, opting instead for a two-phased approach, approximating the Church of North India scheme. This would involve (a) the joint affirmation of basic principles of faith and order and (b) the inauguration of the new church based on a full plan of union—which would include the unification of ministries.

7 About this time appeared the London Huron Plan, a scheme developed in United-Anglican discussions in the London, Ontario region. This proposal and the publicity it engendered encouraged, challenged and disturbed the more official negotiators.
This constituted a major strategic decision which came amidst intense discussion. In a later address Dr. E.E. Long spoke of the difficulties experienced in this period:

In November, 1964, we met for three days at Canterbury Hills, and we discussed every one of the questions that divide us so deeply but got nowhere. We came away from this meeting utterly discouraged but resolving that we would ask little groups of our number to work on the four points of difference between us. When we came together again in February in Lawrence Park Church, Toronto, we found that something had happened, for we had made progress. We had come to the point where we could talk in the same terms concerning some of the disputed points. We met again a month later and after two more days of steady work we found we had a document that received the unanimous support of the twenty people on the two 'tens' differing though they were in theological background and in churchmanship. So the document on "Principles" came about.8

Among these developments and reflecting the idea of "comprehension" was the insight that the new church would be a "new embodiment" or "new manifestation" grounded in basic theological understanding rather than the marrying of bits and pieces of the two ecclesiologies. In his report to the Anglican General Synod Committee on Christian Unity and the Church Universal, on May 14, 1965, Provost Owen commented:

One major break-through came in February when members of both Committees came to see that organizational union would not be a matter of merger and compromise, but would involve the building of a Church Order which would reflect and grow out of our theological agreement; and that structure would grow out of the basis in Faith and Order,--not a compromise, nor an amalgam, but a new embodiment in Canada of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.9

8 UCA, I A/U N, Box 5, File 46, Address to the Joint Meeting of the Boards of Men and Women, the U.C.C., Nov. 20, 1965.
According to its Preamble, the Principles would include "(a) the essential elements in the faith and order of the Church, and (b) the main principles that should govern the union of the two churches." Accomplishment of consensus regarding "the essential elements" came through a process of statement, critique and restatement within the principle of comprehension together with some deliberate ambiguity at crucial and difficult points.

The prime challenge regarding the "principles that should govern the union" lay, as one would expect, in the unification of ministries. The appropriate ritual, involving all clergy, would take place after acceptance of a complete plan of union and as part of the initiation of the new church. How could it be arranged so as to be an event of some significance but not reordination? In the minds of many would be questions about the status of a prior ministry and the differences between the two styles of ministry.

The statement on the Unification of Ministries of February 10, 1965, as redrafted by Greer Boyce and Provost Owen, included this comment:

(4) That the Acts of Unification of Ministries be undertaken in the faith that God will act as He wills to establish this reunited Church and its Ministry in Canada. We agree to place our Ministries in His hands without question to overcome what is inadequate in us and to supply what is needed by us through affirmation of faith, prayer and laying on of hands.

(This is the crucial principle for our discussion. Are we prepared to accept it as sufficient for the Act of Unification of Bishops, Ministers and Priests? It involves our willingness to refuse to define precisely
what is happening in the Act of Unification, leaving it to the Grace of God to do what is needed.)

Thus at this key point the Principles rest on a deliberate ambiguity and comprehensiveness regarding the meaning of ministry. This is stated as follows:

(i) We agree that continuity in the apostolic faith and apostolic work is essential to the Church. We agree that the orderly transmission of authority in ordination is a normal part of the means by which the Church is kept from generation to generation in the apostolic faith and work. Some of us believe that an unbroken succession of episcopal ordination from the apostles is a necessary guarantee of valid ministry. Others of us, holding that there is no distinction in scripture between the offices of Bishop and Presbyter, believe that the continuance of a succession of presbyteral ordination is sufficient. Some of us believe that it is the work of the Holy Spirit not only to preserve order in the Church but also to create new forms of order when existing forms have ceased to safeguard the apostolic faith and promote the apostolic work. But we are all agreed that in a united church there must be a ministry accepted and acknowledged by all.

Closer in style to the Church of Northern India scheme than that of the Church of South India, it shared with both the understanding that if the new church could be enabled to function within an accepted framework of Faith and Order, the profound differences regarding the latter, initially passed over, would be overcome with time through the working of the Holy Spirit.

The Principles were strongly affirmed by the Anglican General Synod of 1965. Although received by the Executive of the United Church’s General Council in that year, their treatment by the General Council had to wait until its scheduled meeting in 1966.

In the interim, the document received some discussion throughout the United Church. The criticisms of it in some presbyteries together with its later acceptance by General Council as a "working document" disturbed many Anglicans. As an important instance, Archbishop O'Neil of New Brunswick expressed "concern at the action of General Council at Waterloo, on the grounds that it endangers the position of the Anglican Church of Canada with respect to its full Episcopate and communion with other branches of the 'Catholic' church."11

Although the Principles constitute a very insightful and judicious piece of "bridge-building," it has a much more Evangelical than Catholic tone. Other than acceptance of episcopacy within a constitutional framework and the five secondary "sacramental rites and means of grace," there is little here that would be different for the United Church. Finding relatively less support for their ethos in the Principles, Anglicans were especially sensitive to the United Church reaction to this document.

Drawing on the assurances given by United Church leaders, the Anglican Primate attempted to put all this into an adequate perspective. In addressing the Synod of the Diocese of Rupert's Land, he said:

The General Council of the United Church has met and has approved the "Principles of Union between the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada" as "a working document upon which to proceed in negotiating union with the Anglican Church of Canada." The General

Council said further that, "as a working document, it is subject to such revision and addition as may become necessary during the negotiations."

There can be no doubt that some Anglicans have found this action disturbing and difficult to evaluate. Some have even said publicly that it puts us right back to the beginning of our conversations.

However, when we read the whole series of resolutions passed by the General Council we realize the desire and the determination of the United Church to move forward towards union, steadily and positively. Nor should we refuse to hear men like Dr. A.B.B. Moore and Dr. Lockhart when they tell us that the action of the General Council was substantially the same as the action of General Synod.

It is not yet clear whether or not we have to wait for another General Synod to approve the next steps in this adventure. Yet certain things are clear.

One is that the road to union is a more difficult one than was apparent in August 1965. Some of the difficulties which the Presbyteries of the United Church found in the Principles concern principles which Anglicans believe to be basic. Other suggestions have been put forward which will not be easy for us to accept.12

On the basis of such assurances, the National Executive of the Anglican Church thought it possible to proceed directly to the setting up of the various committees necessary for the development of a Plan of Union. However, this crisis over the United Church treatment of the Principles in 1966 indicates that beneath the positive official responses to them lay a multitude of misgivings and misunderstandings.

(B) The Treatment of Episcopacy

In this phase, episcopacy again dominates. The difference from the earlier period is that the challenge of
ministry is not only recognized as the major impediment to union but is more consistently discussed in depth.

Despite their efforts, negotiators were not able to reach a common theological understanding of ministry as Order grounded in Faith. The strength of the Principles lay both in the measure of their accomplishment in mutual understanding and the recognition that such must continue. The document looks toward a "new embodiment" of the Church in which a new ministry would grow out of a richer understanding of Faith and Order. The Principles received and retained a key status because of the way they kept in focus the relationship between Order and underlying Faith.

Even as this treatment of ministry (and episcopacy) was the strength of the Principles, its deliberate ambiguity regarding ministry would render this document an uncertain foundation upon which to build. Ambiguity at this crucial point would leave much room for misunderstanding. Dr. Owen's assumption that the treatment of ministry in the "new embodiment" would be thoroughly grounded in an adequate Faith/Order relationship and that this would govern the development of the new church may not have been understood in the same way by others among the "Tens." It was even less likely that this rare and hard-won understanding would be shared by many in the small army of participants who would soon begin the creation of the Plan of Union.

It is fair to say, therefore, that the treatment of episcopacy--and of ministry--is the most important
accomplishment in the Principles and that the nature of that
treatment will be the prime factor determining the future
course of the discussions.

(C) Overview

Basic to this phase were four major theological
developments:

The first is the increased recognition among both
"Tens" of the close relationship between Faith and Order.
One gathers that it was this factor that prompted the Banff
meeting of Anglican leadership in 1963 to call for the
preparation of a plan of union.

The second was the rejection of the Owen strategy
regarding the development of the new church. Cognisant of
the distance in Faith and Order between these two
traditions, Derwyn Owen made provision through the three
steps of strategy for a process of growth together in the
fundamentals and, later, for the gradual elaboration of the
"new manifestation" on this basis.

The actual choice of the two-step strategy has about
it the marks of United Church practicality and impatience
with discussion of ecclesiological fundamentals. It
indicates the determination to move ahead much more directly
to the full articulation of the "new manifestation."

Though the decision in favour of the two step
strategy was the result of intense discussion, the benefit
of hindsight causes one to question how adequately the major
factors involved in this decision were weighed. As one follows the implementation of the two-step strategy, one wonders what might have been had the Owen strategy been chosen.

The third development is the failed attempt of the theologians to bridge the gulf between them concerning Evangelical and Catholic ministry. Because the understanding of ministry was now accepted as basic to the new church, this failure was recognized as serious. Speaking in 1972 to the House of Bishops about the state of the discussions at that time, Dr. Owen commented:

The real problem of reunion--i.e. the recovery of Christian unity--has been the problem of the ministry--differences about the nature of the Apostolic ministry. This was the only problem of consequence that was not resolved in the Principles of Union. The section on the Ministry [II.4.(I)] was the only place in the document where we had to use the formula 'Some of us believe . . . others of us hold . . . still others are convinced.'

As was noted above, this was to leave an area of uncertainty at the most crucial point. Because of the manifold significance of ministry, this ambiguity meant that different denominations and persons could affirm the Principles while holding very divergent views about the fundamentals of the church's life.

The fourth development was the idea of the "New Manifestation" or "New Embodiment," considered on both sides to be a "break-through." Important to this was the idea of comprehensiveness, brought by Dr. Stewart of Serampore. Thus

the Principles were worded so as to promise comprehensively the continuance in the new manifestation of the fundamentals of each tradition even though a theological bridge between them had proved temporarily unattainable.

Because this idea of "the new manifestation" or "new embodiment" was to become so important in the next phase, we must note again the danger it involved. We know that for Derwyn Owen and many others it promised the opportunity to develop a fuller ministry, comprehending the genius of both the Catholic and the Evangelical, grounded adequately in Faith and Order. However, its very comprehensiveness would invite all manner of other interpretations as well.

A reader of the Principles and the documentation pertaining to their development may reasonably believe that the unification of these two Churches was "do-able" and that the result could have been quite splendid.

The key was the degree of discernment reached by the "Tens." There was considerable acknowledgement, on both sides, that the denominations must be unified as Churches, as whole living worlds of meaning. Here, unlike the 1946 scheme, ministry, the crucial area of difficulty, was treated within this broad context. The understanding of many was that in subsequent work this process of hearing and discernment would continue.

It is not surprising that this involved, by all accounts, a more thorough "hearing" of the "other." For example, the understanding that their deepest concerns were
being "heard" was surely a major factor enabling Anglicans to support the Principles.

It is not accidental, therefore, that it is in this phase that one finds the beginning of a "vision" of a "new embodiment" or "manifestation" of the Church of Christ in Canada that is exciting and energizing.
CHAPTER 4
THE PLAN OF UNION
As before, this chapter will include: (A) Basic Historical Data, (B) Episcopacy, (C) Overview.

(A) Basic Historical Data
To develop the Plan of Union the two denominations created a large General Commission, served by an executive secretary from each Church, and five sub-commissions: Doctrinal, Constitutional, Liturgical, Legal and The Church in the World. The first four had been agreed upon initially; the last resulted from the United Church's request for special commissions on "Life and Work" and "Church in Society" because "it was felt that the concept of the Church's outreach in the world through mission was not implicit or explicit anywhere in the Principles."¹

organization of the work made difficult the continuation of their earlier relationship. The attempt to make the commissions more broadly representative brought a great mix or personal interests, agendas and abilities. Here, then, was a large number of people who were mostly new to the process and who needed to be involved in an effective, cohesive and energetic way.

The initial work of the General Commission, begun in early 1967, necessarily presented organizational and administrative challenges. Much time thus spent soon bred frustration with the lack of progress on more substantive matters. Remedial measures by the General Commission (together with the related efforts of the two executive commissioners) such as the strengthening of its Executive, both in personnel and in the clarification of tasks, and the lengthening of its meetings helped greatly. Soon the first reports from special commissions indicated work progressing. However, the ongoing difficulty inherent in organizational demands is reflected in the report of the sub-committee appointed to evaluate the December, 1968 meeting. They commented:

... too much time on Wednesday morning was devoted to housekeeping matters ... lack of time to study and react to papers ... Dissatisfaction was expressed on having to abandon meaningful discussion ... 2

Despite its official mandate from the two Churches, the General Commission was troubled very early with recurring signs of uncertain support in their constituencies.

2 UCA, I A/U N, Box 9, Dec. 4-6, 1968, 24.
and with doubts regarding each Church's commitment to and acceptance of the other. Thus, in the early meetings there were intense discussions regarding a possible pre-union covenant between the two denominations and about intercommunion, at least in the meetings of the Commissions. The frustration which had characterized much of the December, 1967 General Commission meeting was voiced towards its close in Principal George Johnston's call for "candour."

The cautious response of the House of Bishops to the General Commission requests regarding a covenant and intercommunion brought about, in its May, 1968 meeting, more intense discussion regarding "climate." The Anglican Primate, Archbishop Clarke, commented:

I don't know whether we Anglicans are really talking straight to the United Church. I speak the truth in love. I do think we have to say things straight to each other. There are a number of Anglicans who welcome the ministry of the United Church as a true ministry. Others do not find in the eucharist of the United Church an adequate sacrament. I must confess that I feel that difference when I have entered into communion at a United Church. It is not a question of the ministry of the United Church. It is a question of the communion service. I must confess that I have a question about the United Church eucharist, and if you have a question about the Anglican Church eucharist, then I would like to hear it. We are two different Churches. Some of us are very far apart--on the outskirts of a circumference. This service is a very serious one. It cannot be treated lightly. 3

Although the matter of a covenant was set aside, Anglican action to grant inter-communion in special situations gave some encouragement. However, the reminder by the Primate that "we are two different churches. Some of us
on the outskirts of a circumference" indicated that the discussions were, as earlier, being effected by underlying issues not so readily treated.

These were much operative in deliberations regarding the most immediate challenge: The overall character and style of their work. Some would emphasize the necessity of authentic theological development together, others the need for more immediate response to the world's practical demands; some were very committed to the preservation in unity of traditional insights and structures while others thought the past to be very much a burden; some were therefore more patient, others impatient to accomplish their goal. Here the significance of the Principles of Union, as the foundation document accepted by the two Churches, was crucial.

Some of the character of the consequent discussions was reflected in the later report (February 12, 1969) of the Executive of the General Commission to the Joint Meeting of the Anglican National Executive Council and its United Church equivalent:

The difficulty becomes apparent when those who have most vociferously claimed the untouchable nature of The Principles of Union, appear to be willing to exorcise the "proceed immediately" instruction from those same Principles. The fact that the GENERAL COMMISSION has dared to advance beyond a leisurely and pietistic consideration of general theological positions, has assumed competence to interpret "immediately" to be 1972 as a reasonable target date for a Plan of Union, has aroused opposition and consternation among us. 4
Struggling with various demands and influences, their Executive attempted to lead the General Commission and sub-Commissions by a commendation of a specific approach and style which necessarily involved an interpretation of the Principles. This was expressed in a paper presented by co-chairman A.B.B. Moore to the General Commission on December 4, 1968. This paper conveyed the general understanding that would govern the creation of the Plan Of Union.

After outlining their official mandate he acknowledged the "frustration" experienced by many present:

The diversity of the General Commission's responsibilities is at once made evident by the above review. It seems to be an invitation to the Commission to mount its horse and ride off in all directions at once. Perhaps this is the source of the frustration so many members are feeling--there is lots of motion but no progress. Yet there is an organizing centre for all those diverse and complex responsibilities. It is to be found in item 5, which reads--"Supplying a general vision of the new manifestation of the church to which we are called in the future."

He continued by commenting on the character of the "organizing centre," the "general vision of the new manifestation":

First of all that church is not a fixed point or a static organization. The calendar date is fixed but the church that will come into being on that date is a changing one. At least it will be a changing one if it is a living one. A static vision will have no excitement or appeal about it. Rather it will be a jigsaw puzzle whose component parts the deft fingers of organizers are fitting into place. Each report of a special commission should change the vision. Each news item from other church union projects in other countries should help us to see the living church of the future. Each study group should in hope reach into the future for a sign of that church. It is moving, changing, living and the guidelines we have so far followed should be subject to that fact. The glimpse of the 'church-to-be' which brought
them into being was a valid one but it must not be an unnecessarily limiting one.

That the "new manifestation" is not "fixed" or "static" but rather "changing" if "living" indicates a quite liberal stance towards the traditional. This is affirmed in what follows:

All of this means that the focus of the Commission is on the future and not on the past. Its concern must not be for the adjustment of present structures or the welding of forms and traditions. Our gaze must not be constantly on even so recent a past as The Principles of Union. That document has played and will continue to play an important part in the negotiations but it will only do so if it opens the way to the future. In other words, our major concern is not to fill in its gaps, dot its i's and cross its t's. Rather it is to carry on the exciting task begun by the Principles as a document pointing the way to a future upon which both Churches are agreed and to which they are committed. Please understand I am not for a moment repudiating The Principles. I am just emphasizing that the Commission should neither give itself nor the Churches the impression that it is reading old minutes. Faithfulness to the Principles means openness to the future. The task of the General Commission is to keep in view the changing church of the future and to keep the Churches moving toward it.5

The degree of emphasis on the future is made clear in the critical attitude to "the adjustment of present structures or the welding of forms and traditions" and the warning that "our gaze must not be constantly on even so recent a past as The Principles of Union."

One assumes that those for whom retention of the traditional in "the adjustment of present structures" and "the welding of forms and traditions" was important would be troubled by Dr. Moore's paper. Recognition within the

Anglican caucus of its potential import was expressed later on the day of the presentation:

At the meeting on the previous evening of the Anglican delegates, it was felt that there should be more time devoted to discussion of President A.B.B. Moore's paper on "The General Commission," in order to open up the subject more thoroughly than is being presently suggested. It was felt imperative that after the material from the Special Commissions was presented, more time be given to the future course of the General Commission and to an in-depth look at where we are on Church Union.6

This kind of discussion did not take place.

The commitment to the "new" found many expressions. Especially important was the thrust and spirit of the The Church in the World Commission. Notable also were the Constitutional Commission's idea of the "pastoral zone" as the basis for local ministry and its concerns expressed about the role of the laity in the church and of women in ordained ministry.

Less specific but more profound was the effect of the intended direction outlined in the Moore paper on the general character of the Plan development. We find this to be treatable under three headings: (A) The general style of the work. (B) The use of the Principles. (C) The influence of theology.

(A) The General Style of the Work

The very open-ended, future oriented and eclectic process suggested in the Moore paper was, in fact, the character of the development of the Plan; it was much more

6 UCA, I A/U N, Box 9, File A1, 3.
like "...a jig-saw puzzle whose component parts the deft fingers of organizers are fitting into place. Each report of a special commission should change the vision..." than the linear, organic development growing from unity in theological fundamentals in the traditions that some had envisaged. For instance, the assumption that enabling and determinative theological insights would come from directions other than the traditional was strongly expressed by the Church in the World Commission in defense of their report:

Hopefully, the Church in the World Commission would not be restrictive but could provide some new theology, new theological ideas and new theological statements.7

The eclectic style is indicated by the role and functioning of the Constitutional Commission. It elaborated the basic structure of the "new manifestation," calling on the resources of the other commissions as needed. Thus it was remarkably the Constitutional Commission that initiated the Consultation on Doctrine when difficulties, primarily about ministry, were encountered in a major report. In the duration of the process, the Anglican caucus came to regard the Constitutional Commission as the primary one, since its major concerns, especially about the episcopate, were deliberated there. Not only was the centrality of this commission's role ad hoc, but also, as its minutes indicate, its delineation of the "new manifestation" structure was

7 UCA, IA/U N, Box 9, File A1, 14.
much more like the assembling of a "jig-saw puzzle" than an elaboration from a unified theological ground.

This ad hoc characteristic was also reflected more broadly in the initial drafting of the Plan. The various commissions made separate contributions, coordinated by the drafting committee. This arrangement produced an initial document much criticized for its lack of unity.

(B) The Use of the Principles

The understanding that some Anglicans had about the significance of the Principles was expressed in the report of their "Ten" through Provost Owen to the General Synod Committee on Christian Unity and the Church Universal in May, 1965:

One major break-through came in February when members of both Committees came to see that organizational union would not be a matter of merger and compromise, but would involve the building of a Church Order which would reflect and grow out of our theological agreement; and that structure would grow out of the basis in Faith and Order,—not a compromise, nor an amalgam, but a new embodiment in Canada of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.8

Rather than being "a matter of merger and compromise," here was a vision of a "new embodiment." However, this would be "One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic" only in so far as it grew out of "our theological agreement" on "the basis in Faith and Order."

The Moore paper suggested a much more liberal attitude to the Principles. It is more in its style as

8 UCA, I A/U N, Box 6, File 62, 9.
"openness to the future" than its content as consensus that the Principles would govern the development of the Plan:

. . . our major concern is not to fill in its gaps, dot its i's, and cross its t's. Rather it is to carry on the exciting task begun by The Principles as a document pointing the way to a future upon which both Churches are agreed and to which they are committed. . . . Faithfulness to The Principles means openness to the future.

(C) The Influence of Theology

The eclectic style espoused by the General Commission Executive had two effects on theological expertise:

(1) It drastically limited the role of the Doctrinal Commission. Rather than having a primary place, as with the Principles, in this phase expert knowledge of theological resources was confined to the discharging of specific tasks such as the development of a statement of faith to be added to the Plan or the treatment of specific problem areas. Here again we note that it was the Constitutional Commission which called for and "hosted" the Consultation on Doctrine.

(2) This eclectic style, together with the emphasis on the future over the past, in effect devalued traditional theology. In clarifying for some Anglicans the directions his paper seemed to imply, Dr. Moore again affirmed the need for "'openness' in theology":

Even in the realm of theology the Statement of Faith should do little more than reassure and guarantee that the essentials of the Christian Gospel are being continued and accepted. There would be acknowledgment and acceptance of the Creeds, but not credal fundamentalism. "Openness" in theology, while seeking to convey the essentials of the Gospel, would leave room
for freedom of theological thought and would not place a straightjacket on the theological thinking of the new church.9

This relative devaluing of the traditional in theology was reflected in the demand of the Church in the World Commission, quoted earlier, for their own "theological basis and framework, which would be of a very different kind from that of the Doctrinal Commission, since that Commission's report is almost bound to be conservative and traditional in its language." Consistent with the future orientation espoused in the Moore paper, here was a call for "some new theology, new theological ideas and new theological statements."

Generally within this overall style and orientation, the work of the General Commission and the sub-Commissions proceeded. With the exception of the Legal Commission, whose main work would come later, by 1970 the special commissions had produced considerable material, much of this readily acceptable to the General Commission. In producing the basic structure of the "new manifestation" and the necessary inaugural ceremonies, the Constitutional and Liturgical Commissions produced most of the content to be included in the actual Plan.

In the February, 1970 General Commission meeting a Prof. Edwards said that "he felt that the General Commission has reached the point at which the series of Reports of the

Special Commissions should be integrated in order to proceed with the preparation of a Plan of Union"10 and therefore moved a resolution (which was carried) calling for a working party to begin the drafting process.

In the continuing reception of material from the sub-Commissions in the General Commission meetings in 1970, there were areas of persistent difficulty. It was after the difficult reception (regarding Ministry) of its report in the General Commission meeting of late 1970 that the Constitutional Commission requested a consultation on doctrine. This event, involving representation from other commissions, took place on September 17-19, 1971, in Toronto. According to the chairman, Archbishop Scott, the focus was to be on the following areas of special concern: Doctrines of the Church, the Ministry (including the Diaconate), Christian Initiation and the Eldership.

Dr. Roy Wilson, in an opening address for the host Constitutional Commission, noted "Order" as a recurring and underlying area of difficulty. His concluding remarks are minuted as follows:

The whole question of the meaning of "Order" was one to which Dr. Wilson believed this Consultation should address itself. He stated that he could be quite wrong—that this was not the basic issue—but it seemed to him that difficulty has been encountered because we have varying interpretations of the meaning of Order; its givenness as against that outward expression of form which is free to respond under the Spirit who is life-giving, gracious and redemptive.11

10 UCA I A/U N, 23.
11 UCA, I A/U N, Box 9, Consultation on Doctrine, 3.
After the report of an ad hoc steering committee Eugene Fairweather articulated the Anglican position regarding episcopal authority with special emphasis on ordination. Within the minute of his remarks are these comments:

He referred to Section III, 3,(c) of the Principles of Union. As far as Anglicans are concerned, the distinction between the general ministry and the ordained ministry conceived in terms of the distinctive authority of the ordained ministry is essential, and that the distinctive authority of the ordained ministry is conceived as an authority which must be exercised within the Church, and only has meaning as a service of the people of God and, through the people of God, to God's world. It is not something which simply emerges from the general body of the priestly people and it is not something which is mediated by the whole body of Christian people. Admission to the ordained ministry comes through incorporation into the existing ordained ministry of the Church rather than by elevation by the action of the undifferentiated to the performance of different functions.12

He went on to argue that this distinctive authority of the ordained ministry must be expressed in the episcopal imposition of hands in consecration and ordination. Because both ordination and consecration also mean acceptance by the communities involved, they, too, may be represented in the imposition of hands though not in such a way as to diminish the primary meaning. The Consultation accepted the Anglican position and arrived at an apparently satisfactory conclusion regarding these rites and recommended them to the General Commission.

Much of the time of the consultation was given to the other areas of concern noted: Christian Initiation, the

12 Ibid., 4.
Diaconate and the Eldership. This, together with the nature of the process involved, seems to have prevented any substantial response to Dr. Wilson's questioning regarding "Order."

It is significant that Prof. H.R.S. Ryan, a member of the General Commission, in the last hours of the Consultation voiced concern about the overall treatment of episcopacy in the developing Plan. Citing the relevant section (8) of the General Principles of the Anglican Church of Canada, he posed questions about the "powers, jurisdiction or authority inherent in the office of Bishop or exercised collectively by the Bishops of the Church," "the doctrinal foundations of their understanding" and their preservation in the Principles of Union and the Plan of Union—First Draft. Together with other material on this subject, reflecting both his own and the concerns of others in the Diocese of Ontario, Prof. Ryan added this comment:

Opinions expressed to the writer in recent months indicate that unless many Anglicans receive satisfactory answers to the fourth and fifth questions in the near future support of union among Anglicans will be considerably endangered.13

By the time of their next and ninth meeting in early December of 1971, the General Commission was receiving the results of church-wide study of the first draft of the Plan. The summary of the responses by Dr. John Grant, chair of the drafting committee indicated no apparently insuperable objection.

13 Ibid., 19.
However, the General Commission also received a communication from the National Executive Council of the Anglican General Synod which, while commending it for its valuable work, recommended that:

. . . in continuing its work towards organic union, it (a) place greater emphasis upon processes which would enable Churches to grow together rather than focusing almost total emphasis upon the preparation of a plan.14

This call for some change in direction signified a concern about opinion within the Anglican constituency. Another indication of major difficulty was the final debate in this General Commission meeting about the laying on of hands in the rites of ordination and consecration. The consensus on this subject apparently reached in the Consultation on Doctrine was not present here. The results finally achieved sufficed to receive majority support but the minutes indicate a difficult debate.

The General Commission attempted a response to the request of the Anglican National Executive regarding "processes which would enable Churches to grow together" by sponsoring special events on interchurch cooperation. At such an event in Kingston in March of 1972 it became apparent that little could be developed in this regard within the time available.

The tenth and the eleventh (the final) meeting of the General Commission seemed much more routine than some earlier ones. Final amending and editing of the Plan was progressing and the Legal Commission was more active,

14 UCA, I A/U N, Box 9, 5.
dealing with matters of property, voting procedures, etc. The conclusion of their last meeting was marked by warmth, thanksgiving and a grand sense of accomplishment expressed in the singing of the Doxology at the unanimous acceptance of the Plan.

(B) The Place of Episcopacy

The debates within the General Commission pertaining to the episcopate signify its continuing role as the locus of major difficulty and hint at the same in later developments. This was despite the widespread acceptance of episcopacy in the "new manifestation" and the determination of many not to become ensnared in the age-old questions about validity. Where lay the difficulty?

The Plan, in #90, introduces the subject with this very full statement:

Bishops in their office and ministry are called to be signs and agents of the Church's continuity with the apostolic fellowship in doctrine, mission and ministry. As such: they give leadership in strategy for the mission of the Church and the fulfilment of its task in the world; they are the chief pastors of the Church, with oversight of the pastors and of the whole people within their sphere of responsibility; they have oversight of the proclamation of the word, of the administration of the sacraments, and of all other aspects of worship; and they are the principal ministers of ordination.

However, this strong affirmation of the episcopate is not really articulated in the details of the Plan. For example, in the introduction to the articles on ordered ministries in Section VI on Ministry, one finds this quite sparse treatment [#67]:

Some members of the Church of Christ in Canada will exercise a ministry as deacons, presbyters or bishops. The Church will seek out those whom God calls to these ministries, provide for their training, and ordain them to their office.

It is true that bishops would have a role in the "selection and supervision of candidates for ordination" [#68] and would be the "principal ministers of ordination" [#69]. The bishop would also chair the committees on appointments and discipline [#165]. From "time to time" bishops could have their own meeting. And a bishop would always be one member, together with a lay member and presbyter, of the triumverate of presidents and vice-presidents of the General Assembly--with an appropriate area of responsibility. However, only a percentage of the bishops would attend any general assembly.

This would seem to be a careful insertion of episcopacy into the conciliar system. However, it may be asked whether, in this insertion of episcopal functions into this structure, much of the meaning of the bishop within Catholic ecclesiology as person symbolizing and actualizing apostolic continuity was lost. This question is reflected in Chancellor Ryan's concern about the retention of the "powers, jurisdiction or authority inherent in the office of Bishop or exercised collectively by the Bishops of the Church" at the Consultation on Doctrine.

The most divisive debate within the General Commission is instructive. Occurring in the November 27-
December 1, 1970 meeting, it was about representation in consecration and ordination. In the treatment of the consecration of bishops, the role of the laity was changed, in amendment, to "appropriate" rather than "essential," the amendment being carried by a vote of 34 to 11. The subsequent motion constituted an attempt in amendment to have the role of the laity in the ordination of presbyters also described as "appropriate" rather than the suggested "essential." This amendment was defeated 27 to 24. The original statement about the ordination of presbyters, incorporating the word "essential" regarding the role of laity, was carried 25 to 17.

These voting patterns, and especially that on the amendment pertaining to ordination, are highly significant. At issue for the Anglicans was the very nature and status of ordered ministry. Here we recall Eugene Fairweather's reference to Section III, 3,(c) of the Principles of Union to the Consultation on Doctrine in affirming that it is essential to Anglicanism that ordained ministry "is not something which simply emerges from the general body of the priestly people and it is not something which is mediated by the whole body of Christian people."

Basic to ordained ministry is therefore the fundamental role of the historic episcopate symbolizing and enabling the continuity of this special ministry with Jesus Christ and

16 In a personal conversation, Dr. John Grant noted that, at this crucial juncture, all the Anglican commissioners were simply outvoted by those of the other denominations.
his calling of the Apostles. At issue, more fundamentally, is the assumed status of the historic Church as instrument of grace in continuity with Christ, the issue so basic for the Catholic.

(C) Overview

In our overview of this phase, we must be cognisant of the fact that, in contrast with the expectation of the last meeting of the General Commission in November of 1972, by mid-1975 the Anglican Church, though still affirming the Principles, declared the Plan of Union unacceptable. The crucial issue throughout was the episcopate. We must consider the broad factors which influenced its role.

As background to Dr. Moore's paper to the General Commission in December of 1968 one can delineate four such factors:

The first was the pragmatic desire of many for a useable plan and within a limited time. Commissioners knew that most other attempts at union among similar constituencies had failed, as had the Canadian 1946 scheme. They knew also that in such discussions theological unity in Faith/Order issues remained very difficult, if attainable. A more practical emphasis seemed a necessary characteristic of the few successful schemes (in South-East Asia) and in the developing C.O.C.U. discussions in the U.S.A. (in liaison with these in Canada). Moreover, Anglican commitment in another direction through the ARCIC discussions with Roman Catholicism added some sense of urgency. Therefore the more
pragmatic stance and the hesitation, even suspicion, regarding "a leisurely and pietistic consideration of general theological positions" seemed to have sufficient cause.

The second factor was the popularity for many in that theological milieu of what may be described as an extreme Protestantism. The then current phrases "the secular Gospel," "the world come of age" and the "death of God" come to mind. The degree of influence of this radical agenda within the United Church (it appealed to many Anglicans also) as the way to the desired renewal of the Church together with its critical implications for ecclesiology were made clear in the comments of the Moderator, Wilfred Lockhart, about the then recent (23rd) General Council:

The Report of the commission on the Ministry in the Twentieth Century raised some serious questions as to exactly where the United Church stands in its concept of the ministry . . . . It was Dr. Lockhart's feeling that many of the statements in the Report grew out of inability to arrive at a conviction of what the ministry is.

During the session of the Council, there was strong emphasis on the laity, on the youth, and on the activists. There appeared to be a growing anti-clerical atmosphere and a strong anti-establishment or anti-tradition feeling.

The influence of this kind of theological agenda on some commissioners was indicated in the first report of the Church in the World Commission to the General Commission.

18 UCA, I A/U N, Box 9, file A1, 11.
(December 5, 1968). The intense discussion it engendered is reflected in these minuted comments:

A full discussion of the Church in the World Report resulted, in which points were made re eschatology and the social gospel as expressed in modern terms.

... It was felt that the theological implications of the Report require clarification.

In response to the question of whether the Commission's deliberations reflected tension between the evolutionary and revolutionary approach, it was stated that these tensions ought to exist and to be fostered in the life of the church. 19

That those in the Church in the World Commission had few reservations about this eschatological/revolutionary stance is made clear in this comment:

Concerning the social gospel, Christianity was put to work to revolutionize and to help to revolutionize the world, which is not different from the eschatological themes of the Gospel. This document is concerned with what helps to make man more fully human. These are the purposes of God in the world and therefore the purposes of the church.

The degree of influence of this theological orientation among some commissioners was evident in the remarkable response, on October 8, 1970, by the committee working on the first draft of the Plan to the recommendation of the two Executive Commissioners that "greater use be made of the actual writing of the Principles of Union, and that there should be a clearly defined Doctrine of the church and Doctrine of the Ministry ...": Its response was that "in the Principles of Union the section on the Church does not take into account the development of the last five years regarding the concept that the whole idea of Church

structure is questioned by a considerable number of Christians."

A third factor was the notion that there was a need for an exciting vision of a more effective and vital church which would, as the "new manifestation," overcome the uncertain support for the whole project within the church constituencies.

A fourth factor was the strength of Catholic concern within the Anglican caucus. Here was the desire for strong continuity between the "new manifestation" and the prior traditions with an emphasis on ministry and especially the historic episcopate.

Due to their interpretation of the meaning of the Principles, this concern was often expressed about the role of that document in this phase. For instance, the minutes of the April, 1969 Anglican caucus stated:

Attention was drawn to the fact that there appears to be an impression that the Anglican members of sundry Commissions seem to be losing sight of "The Principles of Union" in the course of negotiations. . . . Damage might arise also from any raising of this "old question" of adherence or non-adherence to "The Principles of Union."

This Catholic interest had, of course, special foci. We noted earlier the importance to Derwyn Owen and some Anglican colleagues of Michael Ramsey's treatment of Order as "intimately related to the Gospel": "In the Anglican view questions of this kind are not to be thought of as

---

21 UCA, I A/U N, Box 9, The General Commission on Church Union, Anglican Members, 17 April, 1969, 1,2.
institutional, organizational or political, but rather as evangelical." Order, therefore, including ministry, must be treated as a deliberate expression of Faith which necessarily involved judgments about the significance of the historical Church as instrument of grace and the nature of its continuity with Jesus Christ.

This concern was reflected in the need for the Consultation on Doctrine "... because we have varying interpretations of the meaning of Order." This is evident also in the recommendation, in 1970, by the two Executive Commissioners to members of the drafting committee for the Plan, that "greater use be made of the actual writing of the Principles of Union, and that there should be a clearly defined Doctrine of the church and Doctrine of the Ministry."22

The Moore paper of December, 1968, for the General Commission Executive must be understood, therefore, as a careful response to this complex milieu. Its perspective appealed to the more pragmatic who wished relatively rapid movement into unity. That the Plan was intended to be a working document to enable an early beginning for the "new manifestation" was expressed in John Grant's comment about responses to the "first draft":

From his review of the replies, Dr. Grant noted a tendency to judge the First Draft, not as a document that would result in a new manifestation of the Church, but rather as a blueprint of what the new manifestation

is to be like. We should clarify that this is a document that makes it possible for us to begin the new life together and, under God, to reach the new manifestation.

These comments indicate an openness to new developments under the Holy Spirit which would eventually enable a richer unity in renewal. The great sense of adventure, of future orientation and of social concern which was at the heart of this strategy would appeal to those for whom the Gospel was "revolutionary" and would enable an exciting vision capable of gaining popular support.

One may assume that the Plan would not only appeal to the "new age" enthusiasts, but also receive broad support throughout the United Church since it involved very little change for that Church other than the addition of the functions of the episcopacy and the five sacramental rites (as options). Moreover, commitment to unity, flexibility regarding structures and a welcoming of the new seemed characteristic of the United Church.

As the commissioners were reminded again and again, the demands of Anglicanism were more problematic. Joint acceptance of the Principles provided for the comprehension in the Plan of the essentials of the worship and ministry of each tradition. For example, the earlier document states that "we are therefore agreed in accepting the threefold ministry of Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons in some constitutional form and with the same freedom of interpretation that is now permitted within the Anglican

23 UCA. 1 A/0 N, Box 9, 6.
Church." 24 We earlier noted the attempt made to fulfill this commitment. It is clear that many Anglican commissioners, including their new Primate, Ted Scott, found such provisions adequate, were very supportive of their spirit and worked toward the Anglican acceptance of the Plan.

However, there were in this phase substantive criticisms of the overall style of the proposed "new manifestation" by Anglicans. For example, in an address to the House of Bishops in 1972, Provost Owen expressed the "horror" with which he viewed the "gigantic ecclesiastical institution" the Plan promised.25 Later, in retrospect, he would describe it as "entirely pragmatic" and a "political device--not organic."26

Similarly, Canon Hilary Butler, upon reading the early submissions for the Plan, commented on the loss of the myst[ery]rium tremendum:

_Taken as a whole the documents that have been laid before the General Commission for consideration at this Session represent the Christian life and the life of the Church as concerned with the agony and not with the ecstasy of the awareness of God. The dimension of adoration before the myst[ery]rium tremendum is conspicuous by its absence._27

He later made a similar comment about the actual First Draft of the Plan, seeking a stronger emphasis on the

---

24 The Principles of Union, 4 c.
26 In a personal interview with the author in Dr. Owen's Toronto apartment.
27 UCA, I A/U N, Box 9, The General Commission, 27 Nov.-1 Dec. 1970, 12. (was mepterium, in the minutes, a misprint for mysterium?)
Church's "vertical relationship to God and eternal life" as was expressed in *Lumen Gentium* of Vatican II.28

The difficult debates about consecration and ordination also signified, as noted earlier, fundamental Anglican disquiet with the overall character of the *Plan*; this, though focused in particulars about these rites, was really about the general orientation toward ministry, Order and the Church that characterized the proposed "new manifestation."

Although evident in critiques such as those of Owen and Butler, it is especially in these debates that one finds the pragmatic and future-oriented treatment of the Church and its structures inherent in the developing *Plan* confronted by Catholic concern about the Church as sacramental in continuity with Christ. In them the ongoing and unresolved differences in basic understandings on either side about Faith and Order became tangible.

Thus, Chancellor Ryan, in asking about the "powers, jurisdiction or authority inherent" in the episcopacy, was concerned about the retention of the fundamentals of Catholicity: "In brief, will the Church that will result from such implementation be an episcopal Church and a branch of the Catholic Church, as Anglicans understand the terms?"

And this is why Canon Hilary Butler would comment:

> If I were to lay all these papers before a learned Roman Catholic theologian of my acquaintance, he would read them through and say, "This is the declaration of a liberal protestant church." He would not mind the fact

28 UCA, I A/U N, Box 16, File 85.
of its being "liberal," nor take much exception, perhaps, to its being "protestant," but he would add "it is certainly not catholic."29

It is through the subtle and comprehensive character of this division that one can understand the developments surrounding the Plan between 1972 and 1975 in the next phase.

We conclude our overview of this important phase by returning to Cardinal Willebrands' three foci. We have found that the General Commission and the sub-Commissions were much concerned with discernment of the essentials, with hearing their constituencies and with the development of an enabling vision.

The decision which determined the overall direction of the consultations constituted a careful judgment as to what would be essential to the "new manifestation" in view of the complex and varied demands upon the General Commission. That the decision essentially de-emphasized broadly Catholic concerns within Anglicanism imposed upon the Anglicans a struggle to understand how they, as a whole Church, could respond to this future option which did not comprehend much that underlies their Catholic being. These underlying Faith/noetic dynamics, inadequately treated in this phase, would become more articulate in what would follow. (As to whether the "Plan" treated adequately the genius of the Reformed tradition, on the other side, is a worthwhile question in itself.)

The style of operation chosen rendered the process of "hearing" difficult in two ways:

First, the natural venue for this would seem to have been the Doctrinal Commission. Its limited role deprived commissioners of any satisfactory avenue for the expression of fundamental theological concerns about the direction of the process. In its reports to the General Commission, the issue of ministry seems consistently to have been a major concern but this never seems to have been dealt with in depth. Similarly, we noted the failure of the Consultation on Doctrine really to come to grips with the challenge of "Order."

Second, because "hearing" is never merely a passive event, reaction within the constituencies to the general tenor of the Plan could hardly be judged without an adequate theological frame of reference. In fact, requests for evaluation of the First Draft of the Plan produced a scarcely useful array of responses ranging from the comment that all bishops are "bastards" to another that almost everything wrong with the church began with the Reformers.

It is not surprising therefore that whereas the Drafting Committee apparently received no insuperable objections to the First Draft, the special committee of seven that reviewed Anglican responses came to a very different conclusion: "(1) There is a general feeling of rejection of the Plan as presently drafted.30"

CHAPTER 5

THE COMMITTEE ON UNION AND JOINT MISSION

Following the completion of the Plan of Union and on the advice of the General Commission the executive bodies of the three denominations created a structure to present the Plan to their Churches. This was the Committee on Union and Joint Mission (CUJM). Our review of its work, as before, will include: (A) Basic Historical Data. (B) Episcopacy. (C) Overview.

(A) Basic Historical Data

The mandate of CUJM was as follows:

To develop a climate for a true and lasting union, particularly, by the study and discussion of Plan of Union at all levels of the Church's life.

The outline of its duties in nine points dealt primarily with the development of "climate" and cooperation—

with these exceptions:

(2) To further an awareness and understanding of the Plan of Union within the churches including preparation and distribution through the Churches, of materials and guidelines for study while the Plan is before the churches.

(6) To negotiate any necessary revisions to Plan of Union requested by the General Synod, the All Canada Convention and the General Council.1

1 UCA, I A/U N, Box 4, File 4, Where we are 'at' in Church Union and How We got there, 2,3.
The mandate for CUJM seems inadequate in view of the situation into which they were placed. This difficult position, though apparent earlier, became very clear in their first full gathering together on October 3-5, 1973. On the one hand was the weight of the Plan, prepared by a large and authoritative body and apparently receiving the sanction of the three denominations. On the other was declining support for it in the Churches, especially among Anglicans. This is evident in some of the comments minuted from the opening plenary session in that meeting:

... are we beating a "dead horse"?
Is corporate union dead?
The most important thing at the present time is climate rather than the Plan of Union itself.
It is better to face facts even though they may be unpleasant than to live a lie.2

The deterioration of "climate" continued. This is reflected, for example, in the minutes of a plenary session in the fourth CUJM meeting in February, 1974:

The Anglican Church is in the process of receiving reports from former members of the General and Special Commissions and the House of Bishops on where the Anglican "climate on Union" is at the present time. The impression, from answers received thus far, is that of general discouragement.

... ...........................................................................

It is about time the Committee challenged the Churches to "put up or shut up" or, find themselves a new committee.
At this point, the Chairman summarized the discussion and Archbishop Scott emphasized his personal conviction that it was of the utmost importance to all three negotiating Churches, for their own sakes as well as for the process of organic union, that each deal with the process of decision making from the standpoint of complete information and integrity.3

2 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42.
3 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, 4.
Among the discouraging news shared in their fifth meeting, May, 1974, was the following:

One Anglican Diocese has voted to discontinue negotiations and implement the Lund Principle. Another Diocese ruled such a motion out of order but the negative attitude and atmosphere was most evident.4

A significant note early in the sixth CUJM meeting was this:

Archdeacon Light reported that an informal caucus of Anglican members had taken place the previous night which had considered the unrest in the Anglican Church re Plan of Union in the areas already mentioned as a result of the Anglican/Roman Catholic document on Ministry and Eucharist and the Anglican Consultative Council's Dublin Report, "Partners in Mission."5

The national church publications could be trusted to know the mood of their constituency in such matters. Whereas earlier they had readily featured articles and editorials on the union discussions, a very different attitude is indicated in this item from CUJM minutes:

The secretary reported that in accordance with the instructions of the committee at its fourth meeting, he had discussed the possibility of the three Church papers carrying a Forum on Church Union with the Editors of the Canadian Churchman, and the United Church Observer. Neither had been enthusiastic about such a forum and had made alternative suggestions: e.g. a one column paid advertisement. No further action has been taken.6

The need expressed by the fourth CUJM meeting for a joint gathering of the National Executive bodies of the parent churches for a discussion of "all matters concerning Plan of Union"7 had become even more pressing by their sixth meeting. Among the four alternatives suggested for

4 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, 4.
5 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, 6.
6 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, Minutes, May 5-7, 1974, 8.
7 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, Minutes, Feb. 27-Mar. 1, 1974, 16.
consideration in that meeting, then scheduled for February, 1974, was #4: "in view of irreconcilable differences, cease negotiations."8

Discouraging also were some official responses of the parent denominations towards the work of CUJM. For instance, citing their mandate to "develop a climate for a true and lasting union" as well as the Lund Principle affirming the utmost cooperation, this committee had asked the executive bodies of the three denominations during 1974 to create a unified major publication for the three churches, to unify some national administrative units and to begin cooperative use of space in national headquarters. In their fourth meeting, beginning late February, 1974, the committee learned that while the three executive bodies affirmed the suggested timetable for voting on the Plan of Union, their support for such practical initiatives for cooperation ranged from very qualified to no recommendations.

Despite such discouragement, this committee managed to have a timetable for the official responses to the Plan accepted by the three Churches and worked at developing a comprehensive strategy to effect "climate." The listing of the areas of their concern in a plenary session in their third meeting, December, 1973, indicates the breadth of their intent:

(1) Study Guide, (2) Leadership Development, (3) Bring Churches to Point of Decision, (4) Emphasize "Joint

8 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, Minutes, Oct. 21, 22, 1974, 11.

In this climate the status of the Plan itself became crucial. In view of the various criticisms of it, especially from Anglicans, was it to be revised and, if so, to what degree and by what line of authority? The role of CUJM's Revisions Task Force became important.

In their first report this group noted the following concerns regarding the Plan from the Anglican Consultative Council of 1973:

(1) Initiation (particularly the question of the double laying-on-of-hands); (2) Disposal of communion elements; (3) The Episcopate; (4) The Services of Inauguration; (5) The Ordinal.10

In that report the Revisions Task Force also noted that "a further draft paper is being prepared on the Statement on the Doctrine of the Ministry by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission and how it compares with the Statement on the Ordained Ministry in Plan of Union." Other concerns to be dealt with were: The roles of deacons and deaconesses; the name of the new church; the "pastoral zones"; use of "district" in lieu of "diocese" and inadequate treatment in the "Statement of Faith" of incarnation and redemption.

In this initial report the Revisions Task Force expressed concern about the revision process itself. While recognizing the prime right of the three denominations to

9 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, Minutes, 10f.
10 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, Minutes, Feb. 27-March 1, 1974, 6.
request changes in the Plan, it suggested that it itself might make proposals. That, in response, the CUJM executive would limit their mandate to "interpretation and clarification" while soon thereafter the CUJM would broaden that mandate. This indicates difficulty in dealing with the climate surrounding the Plan.

By the seventh CUJM meeting, January, 1975, the Revisions Task Force was recommending major revisions to the Plan and a consequent postponement of official voting patterns by two years. This involved a difficult debate out of which came majority support for this position but a strong minority report against both revision and postponement.

The increasingly serious tone of the Revisions Task Force reports was present also in the overall tone of CUJM agendas in late 1974. In their sixth meeting in October, 1974 the minutes indicate a thorough discussion of their situation. Then representatives of each church expressed their problems and "hurts" regarding the proposed union. From the Anglican side, Canon Butler, an invited guest, expressed these:

(1) ordination to the priesthood. (2) authority of the bishop. (3) the confused approach to Christian initiation in Plan of Union. (4) matters having to do with the Service of Inauguration.

George Morrison expressed the following from the United Church side:

(1) the necessity of accepting the historic episcopacy.  
(2) inference of United Church theological inadequacy.  
(3) the whole theology of ministry which, at the present time, is being studied by the United Church in detail.  
(4) apparent inability of the bishops of the Anglican Church to act as a college and achieve collegiality in their public utterances. 12

Those expressed from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), other than difficulties regarding baptism, did not present any fundamental obstacles.

However, the "hurts" cited above for the two larger denominations, and especially the Anglicans, were quite challenging. Most of the major issues raised pertained to fundamental differences in ecclesiology, primarily ministry, and usually focused about episcopacy.

This was true also of a conversation of Eugene Fairweather with the Revisions Task Force. 13 His concerns were expressed under these headings: (1) Standards of Doctrine. (2) Sacramental Doctrine. (3) The Authority of Creeds. (4) Sacraments. (5) Ministry. (6) Bishop and Diocese. (7) Services of Inauguration.

The Revisions Task Force's warning to the seventh CUJM meeting in January of 1975 that voting on the Plan must be postponed and that it must be seriously revised came after reflection on the kind of submissions they had received. Their comments included this statement:

It has seemed obvious from reports of Anglican leaders that the Plan would not be likely to win the

commendation necessary by their General Synod in June of 1975 or, as presently evaluated, at any future Synod.14

In early February of 1975 the Canadian House of Bishops gathered to discuss the request of CUJM for postponement of voting procedures and major revisions—within the context of the deteriorating Anglican support for the Plan. Their Statement of Counsel affirmed their "primary and deep commitment to the unity of the Body of Christ" and their intention "to continue with the United Church of Canada and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) our common search for a true and lasting union." They continued:

We find ourselves agreed, too, that Plan of Union in its present form is unacceptable; most of us doubt that there is serious hope for a successful outcome to a further revision process. We base this conclusion in part on our perception that our churches have not yet reached a common mind on Faith and Order.15

The frustration of the CUJM members in this situation was expressed by their chairman, Robert Leland, to the combined meeting of the three national executives in early February, 1975, minuted as follows:

one question which CUJM had not considered was that the process towards union would be questioned. CUJM now feels a little cut adrift since one of the Churches, which called it into being, now seems to question the process [.]
the Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada have questioned the process; they may be right and others wrong [.]
CUJM is sad and disappointed and without clear direction until there is a consensus of this meeting. The Committee, however, remains hopeful.16

16 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, Minutes, Joint Mtg, Feb. 6, 1975, 2.
This Joint Meeting of the three national executives gave CUJM little encouragement. The United Church and Disciples' caucuses did indicate their desire to continue the process towards eventual organic union, still much in favour of the Plan. However, the Anglican caucus gave this response, consistent with the recent actions of their House of Bishops and National Executive Council:

(1) A revision of Plan of Union to be presented to the three churches as a total package would not be effective.
(2) A Referendum of all Anglicans asking for commitment to on-going negotiations on church union with The United Church of Canada and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada seems to be indicated.
(3) Following a positive expression of opinion from Anglican membership, the three Churches should then decide by negotiation, a process which would provide for a stage by stage approval of the steps necessary to complete a true and lasting union.
(4) In the interim period, the Anglican Church of Canada would agree to implement the Lund Principle in every way possible.17

These events of February, 1975 constituted a shock which, in effect, ended the discussions—although that did not happen officially for almost a year.

(H) The Place of Episcopacy

In this phase we find episcopacy the dominant issue in three respects:

(1) In the expression of increasing Anglican disquiet with the Plan in this phase, bishops themselves played a very public role. In this difficult and delicate

17 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, Minutes, Joint Mtg, Feb. 6, 1975, 5.
task they rendered themselves vulnerable to criticism from many quarters.

For example, much quoted in the media was the comment associated with Bishop Garnsworthy of Toronto that in the proposed church bishops would be "emasculated." Actually, the comment came in a report on the Plan prepared for the Toronto Diocese (November 28, 1974) for submission to the House of Bishops. In its last paragraph we read:

For Anglicans, episcopacy is not merely of historical significance. Rather, the Bishop as Father-in-God, as teacher, as symbol of unity and continuity, is called and consecrated by Christ to be Shepherd of His Church. The effectual authority of bishops is thus integral to the full apostolicity of the Church. If, on the contrary, bishops are to be emasculated relics of our former understanding and practice of episcopate, if they are to be without effectual authority, if they are to be surrounded at every turn by committees which can outvote them, then it would be disingenuous to claim that this essential mark of full apostolicity had been preserved, let alone renewed.18

That, within months, it would be the House of Bishops that called for a complete revision of the current process through their Statement of Counsel similarly received much public comment.

(2) That, in actuality, episcopacy itself was the dominant issue in this phase also, is clear from our outline in Part (A). Not only was it present in every statement of "hurts" or concerns quoted from the Anglican side (and the United Church), it dominated by implication as well. As yet another indication of that we cite the part of the report of the Revisions Task Force to CUJM in January of 1975

18 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, Files 11,12.
conveying the conclusions of the Anglican Task Force on Revisions. After commenting that, in Chapter II of the Plan, "Faith" and the paragraphs on Sacraments are severely criticized," the report continued:

Of course, it is the chapter on Ministry which gives them the greatest concern. A number of submissions relate this section to the one on Faith... and, of course, the most serious concern relates to the role and function of the Bishops which certainly must now be clarified. They feel that the role of the Bishop has been greatly limited by the extensive committee structure and that his authority has been greatly weakened in the areas of ordination, appointments, supervision and control of doctrine, discipline and liturgy. They do not see how the pastoral responsibility of the bishop can be carried out effectively unless a greater degree of administrative authority is granted to him... and have expressed the desire to see the Order of Bishops "integrated into the main stream of the Church's structures rather than tacked on as a functionless addendum" and they have made specific recommendations regarding the role and authority of Bishops to make this possible. On the other hand, of course, we have had some submissions from United Church people that declare Bishops "archaic, undemocratic and unnecessary." 19

(3) Moreover, episcopacy here again expressed its power to signify the underlying differences between Evangelical and Catholic ecclesiologies and thus often to frustrate and bewilder.

For example, in the 1973 Dublin Report of the Anglican Consultative Council episcopacy received by far the fullest treatment of all the issues treated regarding "The Canadian Plan of Union." This was as follows:

(iv) Paragraph 146: One of the principal contributions of the Anglican communion to the life of a united Church is the constitutional episcopate. It is noted that the Canadian Plan gives considerable attention to this matter. What follows is intended to underline this.

19 UCA, I A/UN, Box 42, Appendix A, Jan. 19-21, 1975, 5.
For Anglicans the bishop is not primarily an administrator. His role is more like that of a Father speaking for his own family, but acting always in and through the family's constitutional pattern. The bishop is regarded not only as a symbol but as an agent of the Church's unity within and between dioceses. The bishop's sacramental function is the sign of this responsibility. The Council is anxious that the particular pastoral and teaching ministry of the bishop should be preserved. It would hope that this conception of the pastoral and sacramental and teaching functions of the bishops of the Church might be reflected and expressed throughout the structure of a united Church.

There was some uncertainty as to whether this commends or criticizes the Plan. In his paper on this item for the Revisions Task Force John Grant welcomed "this positive appraisal." In a parallel paper Robert Smith noted:

It can be taken either as supportive of the efforts of the Canadian unionists or as critical of those same efforts. Even persons present at the meeting are divided as to the intent of the framers of this particular piece of mugwumpery!

In both these papers the authors indicate how the intent in the Plan was to free the bishop from most of the burden of administration so that the functions affirmed in the Dublin Report could be strengthened. John Grant wrote:

"Our chief concern . . . has been to preserve 'the pastoral and sacramental and teaching functions' of the bishop. . . ."

Robert Smith wrote:

The bishop's role in Plan of Union IS a reduced role. We contend, however, that it IS reduced only so that it may be enhanced, and enhanced precisely in those aspects for which the ACC shows concern. The bishop no longer has primary responsibility for the government of the Church. In that task all members, from every segment of the church's life, share. The reversion of the governmental function to the Body in its totality is as it should be.
The bishop while sharing in that government, is however enabled to concentrate on those aspects of episcope which can best be personally effected, viz., the tasks of shepherding, or oversight.

These two papers remind us of the care with which episcopacy had been inserted into a conciliar system in the Plan. Together with a respect for the Evangelical ecclesiology was an attempt to use most wisely the potential of episcopacy while maintaining its historic continuity.

And yet, the Dublin Report involved more than "mugwumpery." One hears in its treatment of bishop as "father speaking for his own family . . . an agent of the Church's unity" an attempt to express insights present in other Anglican comments on the Plan—and in the ARCIC studies on ministry.

For example the Toronto Diocese study said:

Plan of Union does not specify any particular theology of ministry, yet it appears to leave itself open to a functional understanding of ministry and ordination. While acknowledging individual vocation as a gift of God, Plan does not affirm the historic continuity of ordained ministry as dominically constituted, as the divinely appointed form for conferral of the grace of apostolic orders. Can such reticence be anything other than deliberate? In this respect, Plan suffers markedly by comparison with ARCIC's Agreed Statement on Ministry, in which the distinction is clearly preserved between the priesthood of all believers and that specific ministerial priesthood conferred not by delegation from the laos but by Christ through the apostolic continuity of His Church.22

Being expressed through the criticism of "a functional understanding of ministry" is the Catholic emphasis on "the historic continuity of ordained ministry as dominically constituted" through dedicated persons. The

22 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, Files 11,12.
importance and character of this continuity is at issue in the "distinction . . . clearly preserved" by ARCIC between "that ministerial priesthood conferred . . . by Christ through the apostolic continuity of His Church" and the understanding of ordained ministry as sanctioned "by delegation from the laos," as in the Plan. Of course, episcopacy, as prime avenue of "apostolic continuity" for the Catholic, is central to this affirmation and involves very basic issues about the nature of the Church and its nurture in grace.

There were other notable criticisms of the Plan in this and submissions from other Dioceses. The more serious of them pointed to the issue of ministry, and thence episcopacy.

(C) Overview

Two factors dominate this phase: (1) The developing Anglican understanding of the Plan. (2) The gradual recognition within CUJM of the theological realities confronting them.

(1) The Developing Anglican Understanding of the Plan

Having initiated them, Anglicans had a special commitment to these discussions and had consistently renewed that commitment in some discouraging times after careful consideration. Consistent in their affirmation of the historic episcopate, they had also acknowledged the need for
a renewed, less administrative and more pastoral expression of it. Many were involved in the attempt to enact that renewal in the Plan and remained committed to the Plan despite its shortcomings for them. As we have learned, there were many other Anglicans who thought this document to be quite basically flawed.

The Dublin Report (1973) of the Anglican Consultative Council illustrates the Anglican dilemma about the Plan. On the one hand it commends it because it involves a "constitutional episcopate," "one of the principal contributions of the Anglican communion to the life of a united Church." Noting that "the Canadian Plan gives considerable attention to this matter," the report then goes on "to underline this."

On the other hand, it questions how adequately the Plan thereby comprehends the meaning of the episcopate. Emphasizing that the bishop works "always in and through the family's constitutional pattern," the Report then describes the bishop's role as "more like that of a Father speaking for his own family." Together with the pastoral role, the Report speaks of episcopacy's central role in the unity of the Church. That "the bishop is regarded not only as a symbol but as an agent of the Church's unity within and between dioceses" indicates also an appropriate episcopal authority.

"The bishop's sacramental function is the sign of this responsibility." Thus "the Council . . . would hope that
this conception of the pastoral and sacramental and teaching functions of the bishops of the Church might be reflected and expressed throughout the structure of a united Church." 23

That these "pastoral and sacramental and teaching functions of the bishops" implies a status for the episcopacy in the life of the Church and the economy of grace beyond the overall understanding operative in the Plan is not here made explicit.

It is so stated, however, in the report of the Toronto diocese regarding the Plan. Together with its critique of those particulars of ministry which would leave the episcopate an "emasculated relic," this report argued that "Plan of Union does not specify any particular theology of ministry, yet it appears to leave itself open to a functional understanding of ministry and ordination." Pointing out that "Plan does not affirm the historic continuity of ordained ministry as dominically constituted, as the divinely appointed form for conferral of the grace of apostolic orders" this report asks: "Can such reticence be anything other than deliberate?"

These concerns about episcopacy are, then, also about the nature and dimensions of the continuity, the apostolicity of the Church. We find such fundamentals to be implicit also in the concerns of those Anglicans asked to meet with the Revisions Task Force. For example, we note

again that the kind of concerns expressed to them by Eugene Fairweather24 all pertain to the Church's continuity in apostolicity: (1) Standards of Doctrine. (2) Sacramental Doctrine. (3) The Authority of Creeds. (4) Sacraments. (5) Ministry. (6) Bishop and Diocese. (7) Services of Inauguration.

It is because Anglican disquiet with the Plan thus reached far beyond particularities about ministry or the sacraments that the house of bishops in early 1975 would speak of "our perception that our churches have not yet reached a common mind on Faith and Order." And this is why the Anglican executive body would soon thereafter declare that "a revision of Plan of Union to be presented to the three churches as a total package would not be effective."

In effect, the Catholic orientation within these Anglican concerns meant that there was a major gulf between them and the general orientation of the Plan. The Anglican response to it negated much of the accomplishment of the Plan and led to a return to the Principles, as understood by Derwyn Owen and colleagues.

(2) The Gradual Understanding Within CUJM of the Theological Realities Confronting Them

The second report of the Revisions Task Force to CUJM contains these comments:

The Anglican Consultative Council has recommended that the Inaugural Services used by CNIP be the model for such services wherever Anglicans are to be included and

I am afraid few of we Disciples and United Church people are quite understanding enough of the weight in feeling such a recommendation has among our Anglican brethren while they in turn seem quite insensitive to the depth of the feelings of others on anything that would seem to suggest reordination. One good letter pointed out that there is among Anglicans, a "feeling connotation" towards Bishops out of experience which is difficult for the rest of us to understand--and United Church people could no doubt make the same statement about General Council. Neither Anglicans nor Disciples are accustomed to a structure which places such unlimited powers in a General Assembly such as is proposed in Plan of Union.

Words such as "weight in feeling," "insensitive," "difficult . . . to understand" indicate awareness of the dimensions of the gulf separating the two sides. And yet other minuted comments indicate very limited understanding of the Anglican Catholic concerns.

For example, there seems to be very little appreciation of the importance to the Catholic orientation of the elements of continuity in the historic Church in this minuted comment in the January, 1975 CUJM meeting:

It was also pointed out that there was danger in bringing "the freight of the past" into the consideration of what should be, at all times, a new manifestation of the One Church of Jesus Christ.25

Similarly, the judgment in the January, 1975 Revision Task Force report that there were many contentious matters "that had already been thoroughly debated and upon which agreement was reached in the General Commission on Church Union" seems not to recognize that, for many Anglicans, there had been no real agreement on such matters.

In the difficult discussion engendered by the Revisions Task Force report in the January, 1975 CUJM meeting, one comment was minuted as follows:

It was further noted that extensive changes to Plan of Union could destroy it; that the best time for a discussion of both Plan of Union and Church Union might well be the present and that instead of seeking to make the Plan more acceptable to any of the three churches, we should seek a new manifestation of the Church.26

It is remarkable that, as late as early 1975, one or more members of CUJM would make such a statement in view of developments within Anglicanism. These quotes remind us of the difficulty within CUJM and the Revisions Task Force in recognizing the import of the Anglican disquiet which they had known from their first meetings.

We note these factors which would hinder this recognition:

(1) The mandate of CUJM from the three sponsoring denominations involved commitment to the completed and accepted Plan as the basis for the implementation of union.

(2) At least many members of CUJM thoroughly shared this commitment in spirit, having been much engaged in its preparation and justifiably viewing it as a major accomplishment. They were committed to its essential nature as the optimum possible solution to the demands confronting them. Representatives of the United and Disciples' Churches would surely view it as the maximum compromise regarding ministry acceptable to their constituencies. Serious revision of it in view of Anglican Catholic demands would

25 UCA, A/AN, Box 42, Minutes, Jan. 19-21, 1975, S.
therefore have seemed to threaten all that had been achieved.

(3) As they themselves indicated, CUJM lacked adequate Anglican representation—hence their invitations to Hilary Butler and Eugene Fairweather. Critical correspondence from the constituencies tended to be about details rather than the broader orientation of the Plan. Thus, as in the earlier phase, there were limited avenues for serious dialogue between CUJM and Anglicanism in its diversity and its internal struggle for self-understanding. Members of CUJM would then have had difficulty in assessing the true import in the complexity of the Anglican positions.

(4) One has the impression that the gulf between the Catholic aspects of Anglicanism and Protestants was as great in this CUJM phase as it had been many years earlier for Gordon Sisco. This involved the failure to understand adequately (a) the broad implications of Anglican concerns about ministry and (b) that Anglicanism could not enter into the "new embodiment" without sufficient treatment of its Catholic aspects, despite the consequences for the future of the discussions. Here we recall Fairweather's affirmation, in the development of the Principles, that the denominations must enter the new Church in their wholeness, as Churches.

In the reports of the Revisions Task Force to CUJM we have some indication of its gradual recognition of the serious state of its situation. Its second report in late February, 1974 stated its task as limited to "interpreting
and clarifying the Plan of Union . . . "27; in its third report "'revision' was now to take on a new and almost terrifying . . . significance."28 Its fourth report in January, 1975 indicated to CUJM the necessity of revision serious enough that someone commented: "Is what is envisioned a Plan of Union (revised) or a new Plan?"29

Coming in late 1974 and early 1975, when support for Plan and process was collapsing so quickly within Anglicanism, this tardy and unhappy recognition of the radically uncertain future of both the Plan and the discussions could hardly have enabled CUJM to give the radical and drastic leadership which might have made a fruitful reorientation of the talks possible.

27 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, File 12, CUJM Minutes May 5-7, 1974, Appendix A.
Our treatment of this brief phase will follow our past pattern: (A) Historical Data. (B) Episcopacy. (C) Overview.

(A) Historical Data

Something of the effect the action by the House of Bishops in February of 1975 had on the two Protestant discussion partners is evident in a letter written to Donald Ray, Deputy Secretary of General Council, by a United Church minister, Jim Hillson, on March 17, 1975. One of his six points was as follows:

(3) I celebrate personally that I am not part of a church whose heritage permits a gathering of 30 individuals over three days to reverse the intention and direction of twenty years...1

In the light of our understanding of developments in those "twenty years" that action by the House of Bishops seems a credible response to the deteriorating "climate" regarding the Plan in their denomination.

In their concern about the increasingly negative Anglican reaction to the union discussions the bishops had
held a special meeting as early as May 8, 1972. Provost Owen met with them, at the invitation of the Primate. There he expressed his pessimism regarding Anglican reception of the Plan of Union:

This brings me back to my starting point, which was the suggestion that we should now abandon the project of organizational union. There are two reasons for this proposal: (1) Organizational union is not the only, or even necessarily the best, way to recover Christian unity. (2) The Plan of Union that will be presented to our churches in 1973, if nothing is done to prevent it, will almost certainly be rejected by the Anglican Church, and the case of Christian unity will thereby receive a devastating blow.2

We earlier noted the concerns he expressed in this meeting regarding the nature of the developing vision of the "new manifestation" and his fear of "gigantism." Judging that the Plan "will almost certainly be rejected by the Anglican Church" and that "organizational union" is but one avenue to unity, he recommended that, in lieu of affirming the Plan, the negotiating churches enter into "full communion . . . by way of mutual recognition of ministries and intercommunion on the basis of the Principles of Union."

The House of Bishops passed this resolution:

That a task force be appointed to express strongly the concern of the House of Bishops that the present course of union negotiations reflected in the draft plan will be rejected by the Anglican Church of Canada, and that the alternative direction suggested in the Owen/Short Papers be developed.3

Thus, in their Statement of Counsel on February 4, 1975, the House of Bishops affirmed their "primary and deep

3 Ibid.
commitment to the unity of the body of Christ" and committed themselves to "other approaches to unity" and "the Lund Principle." Their concern about fundamental flaws in the Plan was expressed as follows:

We acknowledge our corporate responsibility to work further and still more seriously at the great questions of Faith and Order; we discern the particular contribution that is required of us in a renewed and deeper understanding of episcopacy in the life of the church.4

It is against that background that we note their recognition that "Plan of Union in its present form is unacceptable" and that "most of us doubt that there is serious hope for a successful outcome to a further revision process."

Three days later, on February 7, 1975, the National Executive Council (NEC) of the Anglican Church made a statement of similar character: In their first point they affirmed "the search for a true and lasting union" with the negotiating partners "as a primary goal." Next they affirmed their view "that Plan of Union in its present form is not acceptable"—"in its present form" giving some encouragement for a revision process. While affirming this commitment to on-going negotiations, they asked that Anglicans "be circularized forthwith to determine their attitude on this question before General Synod 1975." If the response were positive, they recommended "a process of agreement by stages" which would include the revision of major documents.

The union they envisaged would include "one community of Faith and Sacrament, including Ministry, Mission, Decision Making."5

In all these statements by the Anglican leadership these elements are present:

(a) The positions were not easily adopted. In the meetings of the House of Bishop in 1972 and 1975 there is evidence of a struggle to discharge adequately their responsibilities to the broader Church, their own people and their discussion partners. We note that the bishops were not unanimous in their February, 1975 judgment regarding the revision process and that the NEC was not entirely in agreement with them in this regard in its statement several days later.

(b) Each action was in response to the deteriorating climate towards union in their Church. In two statements a census was deemed necessary to find out more accurately what support remained as a foundation for future discussions.

(c) Underlying these "political" struggles were the theological difficulties with the discussion process. The Primate dealt with them briefly in his later statement Why Did It Happen:

The above actions arise from a number of judgments:

(a) That the Anglican Church is, in fact, in the midst of a process of trying to clarify its own nature and come to a deeper understanding both of what it means to be an episcopal church and of the manner in which episcopacy should be exercised.

(b) That Plan of Union gave expression to decisions about vital issues of faith, order and constitution which had not been settled with our own Church and did not provide an open enough context to deal with them.

(c) That matters of "ethos" could not be dealt with adequately within the context of "Plan revisions" as suggested by the Committee on Union and Joint Mission.

(d) That an alternative approach was called for and has been suggested.6

In this maelstrom of events in early 1975 the overall tenor of the reactions to the Anglican statements became crucial. The following comments in the minutes of the CUJM meeting, April 6-8, 1975, indicate its continued difficulty in fathoming current developments:

-CUJM should not seek to placate the Churches but rather challenge them to move forward toward the possibility of a new manifestation of the Church;
-CUJM must consider what can be done in the area of joint mission;
-the Anglican Consultative Council had not found anything deficient in the Faith and Order section of Plan of Union. Why, then, should the Canadian Bishops find such deficiencies?
-the most serious point in the Statement from the Bishops is that the Churches lack a common mind on Faith and Order;
-a common mind in these areas is not possible in any one of the negotiating Churches;
-the House of Bishops is not represented at this meeting except by the Primate. This seems to be a very serious matter.7

The overall strategy CUJM developed in this crucial meeting was to persuade the Anglican Church to remain in the current negotiation process and to use CUJM's report to the Anglican General Synod in June of 1975 as the next step in the continuing process.

The main thrust of this report was to remind the General Synod of their repeated official commitments to the

6 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, File 12.
7 Ibid.
discussion and negotiation process since 1943. Especially emphasized was its acceptance of the Principles in which the Anglican Church in Canada had committed itself to becoming part of a "new embodiment of the One Church of God." The report continued:

It is also evident that such "a new embodiment of the One Church of God" can never be achieved without some individual and ecclesiastical suffering since the concept has inherent within it, the dying, the resurrection and necessary anguish which is central, in the Cross of Christ, to the Christian rebirth unto Eternal Life. Given a "will to union" which will enable each church to go beyond the point of "counting the cost," to the greater rewards that unity can bring, church union can and should move the churches one step nearer to the total "oneness" of the church catholic for which Our Lord himself prayed.8

The CUJM report went on to ask of General Synod a recommitment to the negotiating process and to a range of activities which "will lead to a sharing of a common life and the development of a common mind within which a plan of union could be accepted in its entirety." These included "a stage by stage removal of restrictions in the area of intercommunion, recognition of ministries, common membership, common organization and episcopacy."

The crux of the CUJM recommendations would prove to be its first: That General Synod "reaffirms its commitment to the Principles of Union and to 'the new embodiment of the One Church of God' which the Principles envision."9

At this juncture the different understandings of the Principles and thus of the "the new embodiment" would become

8 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, File 4, 2.  
fundamental factors in the deteriorating climate. Each side, using the same language, but within different horizons of meaning, would talk not to but past the other with increasing frustration.

The request for reaffirmation of the "new embodiment" reflects the concern that Anglicans make some practical commitment towards the union process. One appreciates this concern, a consistent emphasis on the Protestant side, within their more pragmatic attitude to union and in view of what seemed to be increasingly far-ranging Anglican questions about ecclesiology and theology and uncertainty regarding the practicalities involved.

Unfortunately this concern appeared to many Anglicans to reaffirm the whole approach involved in the "new manifestation" scheme in the Plan which they found unacceptable and to deny, by implication, their request for a return to what they believed to be a more adequate grounding of the discussions in their understanding of the Principles.

Moreover, the CUJM emphasis that unity would necessarily involve "the dying, the resurrection and necessary anguish . . . ." seemed to treat lightly both the Anglican concern about historic apostolicity in the Church and the fact that the Anglican ethos was more wholly threatened by the Plan than that of the two other denominations.
By June 1, 1975 General Synod received the results of the nation-wide survey on Attitudes of Canadian Anglicans Towards Union. These were as follows:

- Among both the laity and the clergy the greatest number (though by a narrow margin, especially among the clergy) wished to see the negotiations towards union with the other two Churches continue.
- The membership of the Church generally is in a paradoxical situation, where negative attitudes towards the union predominate, but there is slightly more commitment to continue the negotiations than to withdraw from them.
- There are clear regional differences in attitudes and the preferences.
- There is a marked polarization of opinion on the union issue among the clergy. As a group, the clergy have more negative attitudes towards the proposed union than do the laity.

Most lay people felt that they did not possess sufficient knowledge to form a firm opinion on the union issue.

The results of the survey supported the judgment of the House of Bishops in recommending to General Synod that "our efforts should be concentrated towards deeper understanding between the Churches." They continued:

At all levels of our Church we shall give leadership in encouraging attempts to meet with the United Church of Canada and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and any other churches to think theologically together, to become involved in joint action, to pray together and to try to enter into each other's ethos.

We believe that this is necessary before we begin to consider more definite steps towards union. Although this process will take more time and may produce little immediate tangible results, we consider that in the long run it will be more productive in helping us to discover that unity which Christ wills for His Church.

We recommend that until the next General Synod this process replace the current formal negotiations with the United Church of Canada and the Christian Church.

(Disciples of Christ). . . [and that] the Committee on Union and Joint Mission be discharged.11

Through a process of discussion and the work of its Resolutions Committee, General Synod finally took these actions:

Act 41 That this General Synod reaffirms its commitment to The Principles of Faith and Order set forth in the Principles of Union as a basis for further negotiations with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Canada and with other Christian Communions in Canada.

Act 42 That this General Synod affirms its commitment to the achievement of Union with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada and the United Church of Canada and other Christian Churches.

Act 43 That this General Synod recognizes that Plan of Union is not an acceptable basis of Union, but acknowledges it as one of the available study documents in our quest for unity.

Act 44 That this General Synod requests that resolutions similar to those contained in Acts 41 and 42 be placed on the Agenda of the next meetings of the Provincial Synods and Diocesan Synods of the Anglican Church of Canada.

Act 45 That this General Synod affirms its willingness to enter upon a process which will provide for stage by stage agreements on matters of Faith, Ministry and Sacraments. And further affirms its commitment to give leadership in the understanding and practice of the Lund Principle.

Act 48 That the National Executive Council be requested to consult with the United Church and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada with a view to reconstituting the Committee on Union and Joint Mission, under a new name if desired, to provide for greater theological competence and involvement in the life and programme of Churches in order to facilitate a process of reconciliation between Churches, leading to a sharing of a common life and the development of a common mind in the Body of Christ.12

11 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, File 4, CUJM, 3.
The import of these General Synod actions was quite consistent with those we noted earlier in 1975 and beyond. They include a reaffirmation of what the Synod believed had been accomplished in the "the Principles of Faith and Order" in the Principles (Act 41), a setting aside of the Plan (Act 43), a recommitment to these union negotiations (Acts 42,5) but within a fundamentally reconstituted process (Act 48).

Its action regarding the Principles was the result of much debate in which the Synod affirmed and clarified the significance of the Principles for it, as Robert Craig, Executive Secretary of CUJM (and of the General Commission) notes:

In dealing with the Principles of Union, the 27th Session of the General Synod did not state that the concept of organic union was no longer acceptable to the Anglican Church of Canada. However, in reaffirming its commitment to "the Principles of Faith and Order set forth in the Principles of Union as a basis for further negotiations with the other two Churches and with other Christian communions in Canada," it deliberately, after discussion and amendment, refused to re-affirm the actions of the 22nd Session of the General Synod in 1965 in approving the Principles of Union. 13

As a result of these actions the Anglican Inter-Church Relations Committee, meeting September 24-26, recommended to the NEC the disbanding of CUJM and the creation of a task group representative of the three denominations to begin the rebuilding process.

On September 26-29, the All-Canada Committee of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada passed a
resolution which was a positive response to the General Synod action.

At its ninth meeting on October 19-21 of 1975, with the senior Anglican Archbishop and the Officers of General Synod representing their Church, CUJM passed a long resolution positively responding to the actions of General Synod. However, the crux of its response was in this second section:

That the National Executive Council of the Anglican Church of Canada be asked to confirm that the General Synod Act #42, "That this General Synod affirms its commitment to the achievement of union with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada and the United Church of Canada and other Christian Churches" is a firm commitment to the achievement of a new embodiment of the Church, as stated in Section I, Part III, of the Principles of Union, "To seek a new visible expression, in structure, in worship, in life and witness, for that Oneness of the Church which already exists" and that this new embodiment of the Church would include one community of faith, Sacrament, membership and ministry, mission, and decision-making.14

In the request that the NEC "confirm" that Act #42 constitutes "a firm commitment to the achievement of a new embodiment of the Church" one finds operative, as was noted above, a common, pivotal phrase which yet involved two very different realms of meaning. Throughout the fall of 1975 the positions of the two major denominations were clearly hardening around these different meanings.

In view of the insights gained among some participants, the general support for a unification process in the three denominations and openness on all sides to an improvement of the process, the deterioration in

14 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, File 4, Minutes, 3f.
relationships and in churchmanship in this final hour is disturbing.

The official Anglican response came in a report from the House of Bishops, October 30-31, to the Anglican National Executive Council. It reaffirmed the comprehensive General Synod action and stated quite clearly that "until the next General Synod" the three Churches "[should] continue to meet informally to seek ways of understanding each other and participate as much as possible in each other's life rather than continue a formal process of negotiations towards organic union."15

On November 4-5 the United Church Inter-Church/Inter-Faith Committee's Report was received by the General Council Executive. It began by reaffirming the United Church's faithfulness "to its call as a united and uniting Church to seek at all times the visible Oneness of Christ's Church in the world." It then noted with appreciation the recent action of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada.

Noting CJUM's Message to the Churches in October, it continued:

The recommendations contained in the Report from the Committee on Union and Joint Mission seem to us to point the direction in which the member Churches of the Committee on Union and Joint Mission, and any other Churches, should go in seeking a new embodiment of the One Church of God in Canada.

15 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, File 4, CUJM, Church Union In Canada, Nov. 20th, 75, 6.
Noting that the Anglican Church of Canada "has not been able to establish firmly its continuance in these negotiations in a similar way at the present time," it recommended:

That if the National Executive Council is not in accord with the report of the Committee on Union and Joint Mission, October, 1975, the Executive of General Council offer to the Anglican Church of Canada a moratorium on negotiations towards organic union until such time as that Church expresses a firm desire to resume such negotiations with the goal of a new embodiment of Christ's Church in Canada.16

Meeting on November 5-7, 1975, the Anglican National Executive Council, noting the recent General Synod actions, expressed "regrets that it cannot accept the recommendation attached to the Message to the Churches from the Committee on Union and Joint Mission" and:

... desiring to facilitate a process of reconciliation within the context of the expressed willingness of The United Church of Canada and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to pursue a search for Christian Unity,

Resolves
A 1 That the Anglican Church of Canada withdraw from the committee on Union and Joint Mission, and accepts the suggestion of a moratorium on negotiations toward Organic Union.
A 2 That the United Church of Canada and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be asked to consult with representatives of the Anglican Church of Canada with a view to establishing a Task Force for the purpose of:
(a) giving leadership in the understanding and implementation of the Lund Principle... .
(b) developing a process which will provide for stage-by-stage agreements on matters of Faith, Ministry and Sacraments, having in mind the Faith and Order section of the Principles of Union and the ARCIC statements on the Eucharist and Ministry.17

This Anglican action was accepted by the Executive of General Council, meeting on November 11-13, 1975, "until

16 Ibid., 7.
17 Ibid., 8, 9.
such time as that Church expresses a firm desire to resume such negotiations with the goal of a new embodiment of Christ's Church in Canada." In this United Church action there was no response to the Anglican request for a task force to rebuild the discussions. The United Church and the Church of Christ (Disciples) carried on discussions for several years without tangible results.

(B) Episcopacy

Our documentation shows that, following their Statement of Counsel of February 4, 1975, the Anglican bishops continued to play a leading role in their denomination through this phase.

Because of the nature of this phase, episcopacy was not being discussed as a Faith and Order issue by any group representative of the three denominations. However, it remained central to the differences involved. For example, in the Primate's summary of "Assumptions" behind Why Did It Happen? quoted above, episcopacy is central to point (a) (Anglicanism "trying to clarify its own nature") and basic both to point (b) ("vital issues of faith, order and constitution") and (c) (matters of "ethos"). It is in the treatment of episcopacy in the Plan that we encounter the "wall" between a Protestant ecclesiology and the demands about ministry of the Catholic Anglican.

(C) Overview

18 Ibid., 9, 10.
In our overview of the final months of these discussions we note these factors:

(1) The Complexity of Issues about Ministry

The same difficulty in arriving at a comprehensive understanding of ministry that would satisfy both Catholic and Evangelical concerns, which had deeply effected every phase of the discussions since 1943, remained. The failure to build upon the recognition of this challenge in the Principles left a dangerous void in and a dissatisfaction regarding the Plan which would now become more dangerously destructive of the process.

That this complexity in ministry issues was present in both Anglican and United Churches in themselves must be noted. Here we recall the comment by the Anglican Primate:

That the Anglican Church is, in fact, in the midst of a process of trying to clarify its own nature and come to a deeper understanding both of what it means to be an episcopal church and of the manner in which episcopacy should be exercised.19

And we recall that the preparation of the Plan of Union had been effected by the process underway in which ministry was being reconsidered, often with perplexing results, in the United Church.

Thus the complex process of reconsidering ministry underway in both the major discussion partners hindered the articulation and hearing necessary to any real progress on this issue between the two sides.

(2) Failures in Communication Allowed a Negative Hardening of Positions

19 UCA, I A/U N, Box 42, File 12.
In the pressure of events that developed by early 1975, the earlier failure to "hear" the complex theological dynamics involved on either side led to a destructive hardening of positions among many together with increased misunderstanding.

Thus, that the ideal of a "new embodiment," once cause for so much hope, by now had become the central contentious issue is significant. While, from the Evangelical perspective it symbolized the need for some practical commitment by the Anglicans to unity, from the Anglican side it constituted a much too simple treatment of complex and vital issues. Thus the pivotal role of the "new embodiment" in the deteriorating relationships—as in its use in the various official statements quoted above—indicates both a hardening of attitudes around its meaning and the lack of real communication in the abundance of talk between the two sides throughout 1975.

(3) The Durability and Power of Confessional Ethos

The failure of the discussion process to allow the creative interaction of the underlying theological factors, each with their own complexity on either side, is indicated in the Anglican Primate's comment that "... matters of 'ethos' could not be dealt with adequately within the context of 'Plan revisions' as suggested by the Committee on Union and Joint Mission."

How can differing understandings of the goal of union together with each underlying and complex ethos
function in such close relationship to each other without the communication of what was most essential to the other? Although we cannot apply his insights simply to the latter phases of the Canadian discussions, we are helped in our understanding through a comment about theological style or "method" by Langdon Gilkey in Naming the Whirlwind:

. . . a method in theology is not a neutral tool for theological discovery such that its loss alone spells theological frustration, and its reappearance, whatever the context, augurs success. Rather, a method is itself a part of that wider whole which is expressed in an entire philosophical or theological system, and ultimately, as we have argued, a method is an expression, and only a partial one, of that deeper vision of things which dominates a whole era of cultural experience and thought . . . Philosophical and theological methods, as does all human thinking, exist in the historical dimension and are relative to the Geist of their age. . . .20

The difference between the approaches on the two sides certainly seems like one of "method in theology," the one more interested in Faith/Order relationships, the other more pragmatic and result-oriented.

And beneath each of these outlooks were what might be called a differing "wider whole," "a whole era of cultural experience and thought" or "Geist." On the one hand we have witnessed an on-going Anglican struggle with self-identity which must treat adequately its Catholic component, with broad implications for Faith and Order. On the other we have found a different "Protestant" churchmanship with some very different comprehensive emphases.

It is, more than other factors present, the enduring power of each "Geist" operative in the final months of these discussions which, when misunderstood and often hardly recognized, allowed the sad end of discussions which had promised so much.
PART B

EPISCOPACY IN OTHER CHURCH UNION DISCUSSIONS OF SIGNIFICANCE IN THIS CENTURY

Chapter 7

EPISCOPACY IN DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN CATHOLIC AND EVANGELICAL CHURCHES

This chapter will have these sections: (A) Preliminary Comments. (B) Church of England/Evangelical Free Churches of England Discussions, 1921-1925. (C) The Second Round of English Church of England/Free Church Discussions, 1930-41. (D) Anglican/Church of Scotland discussions, 1932-34. (E) Episcopalian/ Presbyterian Discussions, U.S.A., 1937-47.

(A) Preliminary Comments

That episcopacy played primary roles in the 1943-1975 Canadian discussions should not surprise anyone acquainted with that story. What has been especially interesting—and revealing—in our survey has been the issue of episcopacy actually functioning historically as an ecclesiological/theological dynamic.

Here is a demonstration of episcopacy's continuing potential to assert itself—even when hardly recognized or understood. Its power as a theological phenomenon is in its

This is not intended to be a complete survey of ecumenical dialogues. Those chosen have been selected as seminal and representative for our purposes.
importance not as an administration option but rather in the underlying Faith/Order realities which it signifies for the Catholic and evokes from the Protestant. What has made this especially interesting is the enduring power of those realities, subtle and difficult to discern as they may often be. And it is the contrast between that subtlety and their power as truth about the Church that renders them especially theologically challenging.

In this second area of the thesis we shall have the same interest in the way episcopacy "functions" in other discussions and the degree to which it is understood and treated in its manifold significance for the whole meaning of Church. Again we wish to allow theological insight to come through the historical data.

As we follow the discussions in roughly chronological order we will generally find a progression in understanding. Earlier discussions were marked by an initial naivety about the nature of divergences and the prospects for union. With time came increasing recognition of the complexity of the challenge. In this regard the statement of the Amsterdam World Council of Churches Assembly in 1948 regarding "Our Deepest Difference" may be considered a useful reference mark.

Some organization of our historical material being necessary, we will treat the various discussions according to the most helpful denominational categories.

We turn first to Evangelical-Catholic discussions. Anglicanism's comprehension of both Protestant and Catholic
aspects ensured it both a place and an interest in many of these discussions. Of the exploratory discussions between Rome and a wide variety of Evangelical churches since Vatican II, we shall be able to consider only those which seem to be of more importance theologically.

In this chapter, we begin with the earliest talks involving Catholics and Evangelicals in modern times. Marked initially by the enthusiasm characteristic of ecumenism in that period, these were necessarily exploratory in nature. The two following chapters will deal with those which more knowledgeably tried to bridge the Catholic-Evangelical gulf or which attempted a modus vivendi which would allow a more united church to learn to do so.

(B) Church of England/Evangelical Free Churches of England

Discussions, 1921-1925

The Appeal to All Christian People in the interest of Unity, issued by the Anglican Communion's Lambeth Conference of 1920, was conveyed to the Free Churches of England by the Archishop of Canterbury.

We recall that this Appeal restated, as the basis for dialogue, the "Quad," with special attention to its fourth element, ministry (besides Scriptures, the two primary Creeds and the two "scriptural" sacraments): "A ministry acknowledged by every part of the Church as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also the commission of Christ and the
authority of the whole body." 2 Lambeth further commented: "May we not reasonably claim that the Episcopate is the one means of providing such a ministry?" 3

The Free Church response was channeled through the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches of England. Anglican leadership and this Council created, by September, 1921, a Joint Conference comprising the two Anglican Archbishops and ten Bishops together with twenty-five Free Church leaders. The Joint Conference stated its "primary object . . . to consider together the Appeal of the Lambeth Conference to All Christian People with a view to the elucidation of what it says and what it involves." 4

The Joint Conference functioned until June, 1925 when it suggested "some suspension of its activities in order that full opportunity may be given to the Churches represented on the Conference to study and understand the documents already submitted." 5 In review the Federal Council judged these conversations to "have been carried on for a much longer period and in a far more conciliatory spirit than in many previous meetings between Conformity and Nonconformity in England." 6

In this retrospective report, the Federal Council also declared: "The large measure of agreement between the Churches

3 Ibid.
5 Ibid., 76.
6 Ibid., 101.
concerned on vital and fundamental matters of Faith is to be recognized, valued, and emphasized." 7 Indicative of such agreement was the publishing by the Joint Conference in May, 1922 of:

"... a Joint Report on Church Unity of great importance consisting of a Preliminary Statement and a series of agreed propositions on "The Nature of the Church," "The Ministry" and "The Place of the Creed in a United Church." 8

In response to its work to that time, the Federal Council in September, 1922 "set out five practical difficulties which, in particular, remain to be considered," items 1 and 2 receiving the most attention:

(1) What is meant by a "representative and constitutional" episcopate, and how the elements of presbyteral and congregational order may be combined with it;
(2) The status of the existing Free Church ministry;
(3) The relation of the Free Churches to Communions with which they are in fellowship in other parts of the world.
(4) The problems connected with the union between Church and State;
(5) The safe-guarding of the evangelical principles of the Reformation. 9

Regarding item 1, the degree of success in unifying these ecclesiology within Anglican Churches, especially where there was no Established status, was affirmed by the Joint Conference in detail. Encouraged by the measure of their apparent commonality, the Joint Conference outlined a possible interim federation scheme comprehending these traditions. Assuming a mutually acceptable ministry made, at least, possible for all ordained persons in the denominations involved, this scheme would provide for some denominational

7 Ibid., 99.
8 Ibid., 74.
9 Ibid., 74.
interrelationships, exchange of ministries, some overall government and would enable growth together.

In reviewing this material in September, 1925, the Federal Council welcomed the Joint Conference's recommendation "that an episcopacy, not of its present character, but of a 'constitutional' character, should be an essential element in the order of the United Church, place being 'similarly' given to elements of presbyteral and congregational order as equally essential elements," emphasizing that "this proposal is to be taken not in one part of it only, but in its entirety."10

Item 2, "the status of the existing Free Church ministry," was judged by Free Church members of the Joint Conference to be "the difficult and crucial issue . . . primary and vital."11

Anglican representatives, in their first memorandum on the "Status of the Free Church ministry" (July, 1923), interpreted the Lambeth Appeal as granting recognition to Free Church ministries:

It seems to us to be in accord with the Lambeth Appeal to say, as we are prepared to say, that the ministries which we have in view in this memorandum, ministries which imply a sincere intention to preach Christ's Word and to administer the Sacraments as Christ has ordained, and to which authority so to do has been solemnly given by the Churches concerned, are real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church. 12

However, in a second memorandum (June, 1925), this was severely qualified:

10 Ibid., 99
11 Ibid., 85.
12 Ibid., 111.
Thus in our judgement it does not follow that because certain ministries are admitted to be real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments, they must thereby be considered as in themselves sufficient.

(III) These considerations affect the question of the authority of the ministry. Spiritual efficacy is one thing, due authority is another. The latter is not involved in the former. The full admission which we have most readily made in accordance with the spirit and terms of the Lambeth Appeal to all Christian people, that the ministries we are considering possess spiritual reality and efficacy, does not carry with it the admission that they have due authority. And this matter of due authority is to us one of the highest importance. We rejoice that in the first report of our Conference all its members unanimously agreed that the episcopate should be accepted for the united Church of the future, as the means whereby the authority to the whole body should be given to the ministry. But we regard this bestowal of the authority of the whole body to the Ministry by Episcopal Ordination not merely as something which is desirable for the united Church of the future, but as something which "from the Apostles' time" has always been provided for the Church.13

Free Church acceptance of "Episcopal Ordination" in a unified Church meant that eventually all clergy would have received the "due authority" so important to Anglicans. But what of the status of present Free Church ministers in the interim?14

The scheme favoured in the second Anglican memorandum to enable episcopal authority for these ministries was "ordination sub conditione":

An act of Episcopal Ordination prefaced and governed by a condition expressed in some such words as "If thou art not already Ordained". . . It would recognize, as a matter of fact, that there IS a doubt on one side; it would not require or involve any acknowledgement of the validity of that doubt from the other side.15

"Ordination sub conditione," dubbed by someone "ordination with a wink," was a practical strategy to satisfy

13 Ibid., 79.
14 Ibid., 81.
15 Ibid., 83.
Anglican concern about "due authority" for ministry which "is to us one of the highest importance" without asking a Free Church minister to "repudiate his past ministry."\(^{16}\) This would be through a ritual which would have different meanings for each side on this issue.

Its most obvious fault rests in its acknowledged "ambiguity."\(^{17}\) Together with the question of its doubt among Anglicans, suggested by its proponents, one wonders whether strategems, such as the one proposed, do not undermine the meaning of authority and of ordination for all concerned.

Confronted with the statement that "spiritual efficacy is one thing, due authority is another," after dealing with hurt individual and collective pride the Free Church clergy and laity came to reflect on this distinction between "spiritual efficacy" and "due authority" and thus the very character and ground of their ministerial vocation in grace. Here, brought to a focus in the issue of "recognition," were unavoidable Faith/Order differences which the discussions had not really recognized. These were considered to be of such major importance for many participants that Free Church representatives would later describe these two memoranda as the opening and closing of "a door of hope." Whatever measure of agreement was really present in the 1922 papers was not a sufficient ground to resolve these differences over ministry.

As the documents produced by the Joint Conference were studied in the agreed upon "pause" as of late summer in 1925,

---

\(^{16}\) Ibid., 82.
\(^{17}\) Ibid., 83.
this Second Memorandum received a cordial though very critical reception within the Free Churches involved. For example, the Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in 1926 said:

... neither our Churches nor our ministers will be prepared to accept a form of Church Union which involves any form of reordination which implies, or seems to imply, that our ministers do not exercise real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church, and the Conference joins the Federal Council in saying that it would "deeply regret if the fortunes of the Lambeth Appeal, so far as non-episcopal Christendom is concerned, were finally bound up with a proposal so unconvincing and so unpromising as that of requiring the reordination to the ministry of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Church of men explicitly acknowledged to be in that very ministry."18

(C) The Second Round of English Church of England/Free Church Discussions

The Joint Conferences between Anglicanism and the Free Churches in England resumed at the invitation of the Lambeth Conference of 1930 "with the definite aim of ascertaining whether the proposed scheme of union prepared for the Churches of South India suggests lines on which further advance on questions of order can be made."19 An "Outline of a Reunion Scheme," the most important of four documents, was proposed because "there can be but little valuable discussion of reunion in England until a scheme is suggested."20 As mention of "questions of order" indicates, the issue of ministry again received special attention.

This Scheme proposed a more careful melding of the Episcopal and Free Church ecclesiologies, drawing considerably

18 Ibid., 112.
19 G.K.A. Bell, Documents Vol. 2, 71.
20 Ibid., 73.
on the Church of South India (CSI) proposal. Within a framework enabling effectiveness and growing unity, it affirmed comprehensiveness: For example, "... while the value of the present varieties of emphasis in Christian faith and experience must be preserved, these very varieties should be varieties within the life of one Body."21

The Joint Conference found in the New Testament two points of view on ministry:

In I Cor. XII and Rom. XII the Church, as the Body of Christ, receives the divine gift of the Spirit in its fullness, and within the Body various "members" are specialized to particular functions. ... In Eph. IV the ministries of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher are given by the glorified Lord to the Church. The ministry, therefore, may be rightly described as a gift of God TO the Church. These two views are complementary and not contradictory. In the view of I Cor. and Romans, the Ministry is not created by the Church but by the Spirit, whose divers charismata mark out this man and that for special functions. God appoints ministers (I Cor. 12:28). The Church in Corinth is bidden to recognize, discipline, and correlate the gifts and activities of different kinds of ministers (I Cor. 14:26-33, cf. 16:15). In Ephesians again, no less than in I Cor. and Romans, the one Body is the recipient of the one Spirit, and the charismata of the Ministry are specialized forms of gifts which the Church as a whole possesses through possessing the Spirit.22

Thus there should be no contradiction between Ministry understood as given by God to the Church and as authorized by the Church, more or less the Anglican and Free Church emphases. The Holy Spirit is present both in personal call and in the Church's sanction.

Ordination expresses authorization most adequately through the role of the bishop:

21 Ibid., 74.
22 Ibid., 78, 79.
In view of the fact that the Episcopate was accepted from early times and for many centuries, and by the greater part of Christendom is still accepted, as the means whereby the authority of the whole Church is given, we agree that it ought to be accepted as such for the united Church of England. We think it fitting that presbyters should be associated with the bishop in the ceremony of ordination, and that the laity should have a share in the process by which a candidate is approved for ordination.

The acceptance of episcopal ordination for the future would not imply the disowning of past ministries of Word and Sacrament otherwise received, which have, together with those received by episcopal ordination, been used and blessed by the Spirit of God.23

In this attempt at unifying ministerial styles is a fuller acknowledgment of both, including scriptural warrants, together with provision for the central role of the bishop in ordination "as the means whereby the authority of the whole Church is given," so important to Catholic ecclesiology.

About episcopacy it said:

In an episcopal Church, the position of a bishop is ideally that of the father in a family. The bishop, in addition to the spiritual and administrative functions which are recognized under this constitution as belonging to his office, and those which may be entrusted to him by the Assembly, exercises a representative function in two ways. In the Councils of the Church, whether national or universal, he represents his diocese, and in his diocese he represents the Church as a whole.24

The "spiritual and administrative functions . . . recognized under this constitution" would involve the usual presidency of the Diocesan Synod and responsibilities in the areas of Pastoral Oversight, Teaching, Worship, and Discipline."25

23 Ibid., 79.
24 Ibid., 85.
25 Ibid., 86,87.
This marriage of episcopal and constitutional ecclesiologies was meant to be comprehensive of both without involving a formally declared commitment to basic Faith/Order assumptions about ministry on either side:

It would allow for various theories regarding the origin and character of the Episcopate. It would imply the continuity of the Episcopate of the united Church with the Historic Episcopate in its succession from ancient times. It neither affirms nor excludes the view that Apostolic Succession determines the validity of the Ministry and Sacraments.26

Amidst appreciation for the vision and "climate" involved in these discussions, this scheme met, at best, a lukewarm response.

Anglicans were diplomatic but non-committal. The Convocation's of Canterbury and York commended this work "to the careful attention of the Church," York adding that it "be studied at once sympathetically and critically."27

Many Free Churches were more outspoken regarding the Faith/Order vacuum at the heart of the proposals. Even those most positively disposed said that ". . . there remain differences between the Church of England and the Evangelical Free Churches that have not yet been adequately reconciled. . . ."28 Others stated more strongly the importance of "differences so essential":

They support their contention by appeal to these documents, and the conversations which have led up to them, as disclosing differences so essential that any reunion would involve illegitimate compromise, a sacrifice

26 Ibid., 79, 80.
27 Ibid., 101.
28 Ibid., 105.
of convictions, and would rest on too precarious a basis for the reality of unity.29

In their summary statement the Free Church Federal Council30 identified more explicitly the basis of this dissatisfaction in the Faith/Order differences focused in ministry which these proposals would presumably temporarily bypass:

We gratefully recognize the Providence of God and the guidance of His Spirit in the historical continuity of the Church in the Churches, overruling the sins and the crimes of men: yet we cannot accept the theory of Apostolic Succession, interpreted as "the succession of bishops in the principal sees of Christendom handing down and preserving the Apostles' doctrine, and regarded, as in certain Churches it is regarded, as constituting the true and only guarantee of sacramental grace and right doctrine." . . . This is not the place to offer an adequate demonstration of our convictions that the fetters of the dead past should not be imposed on the living Church.31

As in the first round of these English discussions, there is a remarkable contrast between the optimistic spirit expressed in the proposed comprehensive scheme and the strength of feeling surrounding the nagging issue of "recognition" of ministries where more fundamental divergences, if often unspoken, are brought into focus.

(D) Anglican/Church of Scotland discussions 1932-34

Preoccupied in the 1920's with their own successful reunification work, the Scottish Presbyterians could not respond to the 1920 Lambeth Appeal until 1933. A Joint

29 Ibid.
30 (from the amalgamation of the Federal Council and the National Free Church Council)
31 Ibid., 112,113.
Committee comprising eight representatives each of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and two each from the Episcopal Church in Scotland and the Presbyterian Church of England began work.

In February, 1934 this group outlined "the general procedure which commended itself to us" as follows:

(1) That we should record the measure of agreement which already exists between the Churches;
(2) That we should consider what degree of co-operation is possible and appropriate on the basis of such agreement;
(3) That we should examine the points of difference between us with a view to mutual understanding;
(4) That we should explore some part of the way towards a closer fellowship. 32

This "general procedure" together with the reports of this group indicate a remarkably different approach from that in the English discussions. Instead of proposed interim unification schemes and the temporary circumventing of major difficulties, this methodology would fully recognize "the measure of agreement" and "the points of difference" between these two traditions.

Regarding the former it recommends that the Churches "consider what degree of co-operation is possible and appropriate." In its brief report it found sufficient agreement in the fundamentals to warrant a measure of pulpit exchanges, inter-communion and other cooperative measures.

Regarding the latter it recommends deliberate examination and exploration. About the fundamental differences the Joint Committee commented later in this same report:

32 Ibid., 123.
The main obstacle preventing its fuller realization is familiar to all, and its effect and influence go deep. Both parties are agreed in holding that the Church, conceived as the fellowship of believers, is itself part of the gift of God to mankind in the Gospel, and that membership in it is a necessary element in full Christian discipleship. To both the Church is the Body of Christ informed by His Spirit; One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, and Evangelical; the living organism for the winning of the world and the establishment of His Kingdom. Differences arise in the sphere of order and polity, and in relation to the character and function of its ministry and sacraments as affected thereby. We believe that a fresh handling of these matters by representatives of our scholarship and churchmanship would issue in results affording grounds for further approach towards unity.\textsuperscript{33}

The centrality of this recognition of "differences . . . in the sphere of order and polity, and in relation to the character and function of its ministry and sacraments" together with the determination to have "a fresh handling of these matters by representatives of our scholarship and churchmanship" distinguish these proposals.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland received the Report positively. Referred to the Episcopal Church of Scotland by the Convocations of Canterbury and York, the Report received there a different response.

Noting the "restricting resolution passed by the General Assembly in 1933," they continued: "We cannot hide from ourselves the unhappy conviction that the result of that resolution was to impair the hopefulness with which the discussions began."\textsuperscript{34} That "restricting resolution" had stated that: "any agreement with regard to the Orders and Sacraments of the conferring Churches can only be based on the

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 124.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 134.
recognition of the equal validity of the Orders and Sacraments of both churches, and of the equal standing of the accepted communicants and ordained ministers in each."35

This response of the Scottish bishops reflected the position that "... we maintain the principle of Episcopacy as a matter of sacred trust which we hold for the good of the whole Church."36 Related was their concern that "... there is a real danger of substituting for Union merely a mutual recognition of Episcopal and non-Episcopal bodies as sister Churches enjoying equal validity and continuity of orders and authority."37

Thus this very wise and promising proposal was ended by the significance of the "recognition" issue.

(E) Protestant Episcopal/Presbyterian Church Discussions
U.S.A., 1937-1947

The discussions between the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. warrant our attention because they represent ecumenical development in this early phase in North America and because they illustrate especially the potency of differences surrounding ministry.

These discussions were initiated by the Episcopalians in 1937 as follows:

Resolved, That the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, acting with full realization of the significance of its proposal, hereby invites the Presbyterian Church in the United

35 Ibid., 122.
36 Ibid., 135.
37 Ibid.
States of America to join with it in accepting the following declaration:
"The two Churches one in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word of God, recognizing the Holy Scriptures as the supreme rule of faith, accepting the two Sacraments ordained by Christ, and believing that the visible unity of Christian churches is the will of God, hereby formally declare their purpose to achieve organic union between their respective Churches."38

Comparison of this resolution, made in all sincerity and supposedly "with full realization of the significance," with what was to follow is instructive.

As with other such discussions, the element of the "Quad" that would prove especially difficult was ministry, again focused in episcopacy.

Their Joint Commission recommended the inclusion of episcopacy within a conciliar framework:

Bishops shall have the powers and duties traditionally theirs, and these shall be set forth in the Constitution.

... it is agreed that the continuity of the episcopate which has come down from the undivided Church shall be effectively maintained, both at the inauguration of the union and thereafter.39

The problem of non-episcopally ordained ministers entering the united church from presbyterianism was dealt with through a new stratagem, a formal service of mutual recognition: "At such time as the union is effected, in every diocese and presbytery there shall be formal services of mutual recognition and extension of authority to minister in the united Church."40 Inasmuch as this involved the laying on of hands of representatives of each side on all ministers from

38 Ibid., 159.
39 Ibid., 166,167.
40 Ibid., 167.
the other, "mutual recognition" was more equal and more comprehensive than ordination sub conditione.

Yet this scheme, too, left a theological vacuum in the treatment of Order, specifically ministry. It would go no further than this kind of statement:

There are within the uniting Churches differing views and beliefs regarding episcopacy, which have been recognized throughout the negotiations. Episcopacy is a form of Church government which has persisted through the centuries; and while differing views and beliefs have been held regarding it, and will be permitted in the united church. . . . 41

The impression given is that the bishop in this church would be much like the chairman of a presbytery or synod with some additional roles and a longer term of office. The dissenters, the great majority of the Episcopalian representatives, said as much in their minority report: "It has been said that the Presbyterians have accepted the episcopate. This we deny to be the case save in the most Pickwickian sense." 42

Affirming that "only a bishop can validly ordain," they continued:

This the Presbyterians flatly deny by asserting that their ministry is on precisely the same foundation as an episcopally ordained ministry, and refusing even to accept a supplemental ordination of any kind. . . . . . . Further, they strenuously assert the parity of Orders. 43

Later, by way of conclusion, they added:

. . . . we cannot believe that it is right in the sight of God and in loyalty to His Church to ask the Church to study, with at least the possibility of accepting, what we

41 Ibid., 166.
42 Ibid., 174.
43 Ibid.
are profoundly convinced is repugnant to the mind of Christ. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

It is a patent fact that the present Proposals would move us farther and farther from any of the great historic Catholic Communion and that in fact we should become rather a laughing-stock before the eyes of Christendom in any claim to be a "Bridge Church." We should have become merely one of several hundred other Protestant sects.44

The character of these comments indicates, more powerfully than we saw in the United Kingdom discussions, how potent in the Church's being are the often unspoken Faith/Order issues operative there—underlying explicit demands about ministry and determining the distinctive meaning of that ethos for clergy and laity. Common to all these discussions, though less true of those in Scotland, was the distance between a theological understanding of differences and the realities of Faith and Order signified by their ministries.

44 Ibid., 176.
Chapter 8

EPISCOPACY IN CATHOLIC-EVANGELICAL NEGOTIATIONS IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

In this chapter we shall consider episcopacy in the Church of South India (C.S.I.) with some reference to similar church unions. These were widely influential ecumenical "break-throughs" as the first unions of Catholic and Evangelical ecclesiologies. The C.S.I. is of special interest because of the very explicit hope that episcopacy would develop in its manifold significance for the Indian milieu.

As early as 1919 representatives of Anglicanism and the Free Churches began the discussions that led to the C.S.I., 31 of the 33 representatives being Indian. C.S.I. was inaugurated in 1947. (Not all geographic regions of the Anglican Church of India, Burma and Ceylon entered.)

C.S.I. was envisaged as a pilgrim Church, gradually bringing together the best of its European traditions but with an openness to the Indian milieu. Rajaiah D. Paul, a layman and for many years the Hon. Secretary of the C.S.I. Synod, outlined the vision as follows:

The method by which these results were to be achieved or rather the basic principle of action which would lead to these results was to be, curiously enough, conservation: conservation of the heritage of each of the uniting churches, preservation of all that was distinctive in their lives, but inevitably enriched by
the union; conservation of "all that is of spiritual value in its Indian heritage in an attempt to express under Indian conditions and in Indian forms the spirit, the thought and the life of the Church universal." The denominational heritage of the churches which were coming together, the heritage of the life, experience and thought of the Church Universal and the heritage of India's spiritual past were all to be conserved, used, absorbed and fulfilled in the life of the new united Church. The new Church was not going to supersede or supplant or replace anything. It was going to fulfil, to enrich, to perfect the life of each of its component parts.1

Those planning C.S.I. according to this vision needed to provide an ordained ministry which (1) was functional, (2) conserved the European traditions and (3) was open to India. Therefore this chapter will have these parts: (A) The spirit of C.S.I. (B) Episcopacy as functional ministry in C.S.I. (C) Episcopacy and the Traditions. (D) An Episcopate for India.

(A) The Spirit of C.S.I. 

The length of time between the first meeting of the negotiators and the inauguration of C.S.I. indicates the struggle involved, the crucial factor, of course, being ministry. The following report indicates the negotiators' awareness of the similar discussions in England and something of their own response:

It will be remembered that the "Interim Report" of a Joint Committee in England definitely recommended much of what is in our Basis of Union, especially the historic Episcopate and the acceptance of the creeds. The same was true of Committees in Australia and elsewhere. It was also recognized by the Lausanne

Conference that these must form the basis of union. It will also be remembered that the Committee in England continued its negotiations until it struck the rock of re-ordination, and that only then the negotiations came to an end. Your Committee has been able to advance beyond that point and neither re-ordination nor a commissioning service is now mentioned in the "Scheme."2

The following comment in the report of the Union Committee to the South India United Church in October, 1929 gives insight into the difficulties involved in the actual negotiations:

Different methods of dealing with the ministry had been suggested and rejected by one or more of the bodies negotiating. A dual ministry was suggested in the second meeting of the Joint Committee. A Commissioning service was put forth in another meeting. In the sixth meeting the Committee came very near a deadlock. . . ."3

Basic to the response in C.S.I. to the various demands upon ministry out of both the European traditions and their Indian milieu were these three elements: (1) Freedom to continue in one's tradition. (2) Comprehensiveness. (3) Trust.

(1) Freedom to continue in one's tradition

The following mutual "pledge" was crucial to the life of the C.S.I. and was maintained consistently even when it seemed necessary to impose patterns of worship or ministry on some segments of the new Church:

They therefore pledge themselves and fully trust each other that the united church will at all times be careful not to allow any over-riding of conscience either by Church authorities or by majorities, and that it will not in any of its administrative acts knowingly transgress the long-established traditions of any of the

2 Ibid., 203,204.
3 Ibid., 202.
Churches from which it has been formed. Neither forms of worship or ritual, nor a ministry, to which they have not been accustomed or to which they conscientiously object, will be imposed upon any congregation; and no arrangements with regard to these matters will knowingly be made, either generally or in particular cases, which would either offend the conscientious convictions of persons directly concerned, or which would hinder the development of complete unity within the united church or imperil its progress towards union with other Churches. 4

(2) Comprehensiveness

"Conservation" implied the continuity in C.S.I. of both Free Church and Catholic styles of ministry. Therefore, in presbytery and the episcopate, and within a conciliar structure, Free Church and Episcopal styles would be brought together so as to allow each to function quite completely without the official sanction of either understanding of ministry.

This difficult balancing act would involve also: (a) Recognition of all those currently in the ordered ministries of the three negotiating denominations and wishing to enter the union. (b) Provision for the eventual ordination through episcopal succession of all C.S.I. ministers who had not previously been ordained in the unity churches.

It was clearly acknowledged by all negotiating parties that there could be no meeting of minds on the meaning of Order and especially the historic episcopate. These provisions would allow the united church to begin to function, giving time for progress in such matters while

providing for the support of the various understandings of ministry in the interim.

(3) Trust

These elements of freedom and comprehensiveness did not imply a laxity towards Order but rather that the new Church must begin and must have sufficient freedom regarding traditional patterns of ministry to allow the development of those patterns most appropriate for mission in India. In expressing his own feelings about C.S.I., Bishop Michael Hollis, the first moderator of C.S.I., began by noting "the release from the bondage of the past. It is not that history ceases to matter, but that it ceases to dominate."5

This determination to be free to find new patterns of church life for their time and place necessarily involved a trust in their new church family and in the leading of the Holy Spirit. This was implied in this statement by the C.S.I. to the Lund Faith and Order Conference:

Probably no Church is as static as its fundamental documents suggest, but the Church of South India has the idea of development written into its very constitution. That constitution is explicitly a starting point; it does not pretend to be a final resting place. It was written by three Churches still divided from one another, as a sufficient starting point for the adventure of unity, and in the faith that truth would be more clearly seen in unity than in separation. It confesses its own partial and tentative character by acknowledging that the final aim is "the union in the Universal church of all who acknowledged the Name of Christ" and it claims to be tested by the principle that every such local scheme of union "should express locally the principle of the great catholic unity of the body of Christ" (Const. II: 2). Very obviously in these words the Church of South India confesses that it is not yet

the church in the full sense which the word "Church" ought to have. It confesses itself to be on the road, and it makes a claim to be on the right road, but it does not pretend to have arrived.6

(B) Episcopacy as Functional Ministry in C.S.I.

Within this ethos, the overall approach to ministry was outlined as follows:

[We] believe that the Ministry is a gift of God through Christ to His Church: that God Himself calls men into the Ministry through His Holy Spirit . . . and [we] believe that in ordination God, in answer to the prayer of His Church, bestows on and assures to those whom He has called and His Church has accepted for any particular form of the Ministry a commission for it and the grace appropriate to it, which grace, if humbly used, will enable the ministers to perform the same.7

Here are affirmed the givenness of ministry to the Church, the personal call to ministry by God, the authority of the Church over ministry and the primacy of ordination as means of grace, elements necessary to the respective ecclesiology and stated comprehensively.

Similarly, we find episcopacy affirmed but in a "constitutional form" in relation to "the Councils of the Presbyters and the Congregations of the faithful" and without commitment to "any theory":

The uniting Churches, recognizing that the Episcopate, the Councils of the Presbyters and the Congregation of the faithful must all have their appropriate places in the order of life of the united Church, accept in particular the historic episcopate in a constitutional form as part of their basis of union, without intending

thereby to imply, or to express a judgment on, any theory concerning episcopacy.\textsuperscript{8}

Thus:

(1) the Bishops shall perform their functions in accordance with the customs of the Church, those functions being named and defined in the written constitution of the united Church;
(2) the Bishops shall be elected, . . .
(3) continuity with the historic episcopate shall both initially and thereafter be effectively maintained, it being understood that no particular interpretation of the fact of the historic episcopate is thereby implied or shall be demanded from any minister or member of the united Church: and
(4) every ordination of Presbyters shall be performed by the laying on of hands of the Bishop and Presbyters, and all Consecrations of Bishops shall be performed by Bishops, not less than three taking part in each consecration.\textsuperscript{9}

This "constitutional form" of episcopacy seems to have guaranteed in these provisions the basics of Catholic Order. Moreover, in the episcopal role other than in ordination, the bishop was given more actual authority than in the similar schemes examined in the last chapter. For instance, in the election of bishops the other bishops would have the dominant influence. The bishop would have real authority over ministry. "The bishop of the diocese shall remain such for life. . . ." And, perhaps most significantly:

He shall have the right of suspending the operation of decisions or resolutions of the Diocesan Council which directly concern: (a) the faith and doctrine of the Church, (b) the conditions of membership in the church, (c) the functions of the ordained ministers of the Church, or (d) the worship of the church and any forms of worship proposed for general use in the Church.\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., 146, 147.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., 147.
\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., 161.
Though this action of a bishop was made subject to the conciliar system in a ratification formula, this authority remained in the finally accepted constitution.\textsuperscript{11}

In the inauguration of C.S.I. all ministries were allowed to continue in the new church. The bishops duly elected for the new dioceses were consecrated so as to be within the historic episcopal succession. Yet there remained operative differing understandings of ministry and of its respective validity. There was a similar openness regarding the nature of the sacraments.

Judged in functional terms, this treatment of ministry in C.S.I. seems to have enabled a high quality of leadership through the episcopate in a demanding milieu. Since inauguration in 1947 the C.S.I. has been sorely tried by events in India. Natural disasters have destroyed thousands of churches and homes. Changes in political and social climate have made the Christian mission more difficult—if not well nigh impossible in some areas. Many of the problems in Indian society, e.g. the communalism associated with the caste structure, have made their way into the church's life.

In the survey of the first two decades of the C.S.I. story by the layman, Rajaiah D. Paul, quoted earlier, one notes these challenges to the Church:

(1) The integration into the life of C.S.I. of the many medical and educational institutions founded by various

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 160.
outside churches and mission organizations, in many cases well beyond the financial resources of C.S.I. The school systems alone involved hundreds of thousands of students and remained important to the Christian mission.

(2) The increased independence of C.S.I. (both in terms of economics and personnel) from supporting Christian groups outside India demanded both by social and political factors within India as well as the maturing of their own mission.

(3) The development of a style of ordered ministry less dependent on a highly educated and relatively expensive order of presbyters.

(4) The need for pastoral care for Christians living through troubled times in India.

(5) The rebuilding of commitment to mission in a Church where earlier vitality for mission was being lost.

Mr. Paul's survey of the first two decades of C.S.I.'s history, including his description of each of the ten synods in that period, indicate that the bishops gave sustained leadership of a high quality in response to these functional demands.

(C) Episcopacy and the Traditions

Earlier quotes indicate that the usual Faith/Order dynamics around ministry were powerfully operative in the planning of C.S.I. (uniting Anglican, Reformed, Congregational and Methodist traditions).
Methodist antipathy to the traditional hierarchical episcopate was made very clear in their response to the initial proposal about the role and election of bishops:

That in safeguarding the rights of the individual conscience against the majority . . . no room should be left for the tyranny of the individual over the majority. The Synod is convinced that this provision as it stands is not in the interests of peace and unity and desires that these paragraphs shall be so radically changed as to prevent the possibility of such tyranny.12

Explaining, in part, this Methodist suspicion were (a) the history of Christian relationships in India in which, according to Michael Hollis, "the gap between the Roman Catholic and other forms of Christianity was at times so wide that popular non-Christian speech could refer to them as two distinct religions"13 and (b) colonial conditions in which Anglican prelacy was sometimes carried to extremes.

The affirmation of the basic meaning of ministry as apostolic, sacramental and authoritative, which many Anglicans deem of the essence of the Church, many Anglicans in South India did not find in this treatment of episcopacy. Although the five Anglican bishops entering the new Church in 1947 publicly acknowledged their full acceptance of Free Church ministries, not all their Anglo-Catholic constituents agreed and this has been a source of tension.14 This has been especially important because Anglicanism contributed

12 Ibid., 198.
13 Michael Hollis, The Significance of South India, 50.
14 e.g. cf. Rajaiah D. Paul, Ecumenism in Action, 83.
about one half of the constituency of C.S.I. and included a strong Catholic component.

This Anglican dissatisfaction with the C.S.I. treatment of episcopacy was made apparent very early. The South India United Church (Reformed and Congregationalist) noted: "We understand . . . that the Anglo-Catholics in Great Britain have taken serious objection to certain aspects of the 'Scheme' and that they have practically declared that they cannot accept it."15

The related concern about the validity of ministries is evident in these comments from the regional Anglicans in India:

In view of the misunderstandings that have arisen and the fears that have been expressed from various sides in regard to the provisions in the Scheme for the initial ministry of the united Church, which secure to all existing ministers the continuance in that Church of their ministry of the Word and Sacraments, the Council thinks it wise to state that in heartily approving these provisions it does not intend that the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon should commit itself to the principle of the equally certain validity of all ministries; and it realizes that the Churches uniting with that Church do not demand that it should do so, and similarly it is not demanded that by accepting the limitations contained in these provisions the other uniting churches should be considered to have endorsed any particular theory of the ministry.16

Anglican dissatisfaction regarding the deliberate Faith/Order lacuna about ministry in C.S.I. brought about an attempt by Lambeth 1948 to change this situation. One of the demands voiced in behalf of Lambeth 1948 by "The Committee of Theologians" was that "the Statement of the Faith of the

15 J.K.A. Bell, Documents on Christian Unity Vol. 1, 199, 200.
16 J.K.A. Bell, Documents on Christian Unity Vol. 1, 215.
Church should be so re-drafted as to place the Adherence of the Church of South India to the Historic Faith of the Church Catholic beyond Question." 17

A more specific focus for this dissatisfaction was the provision in the C.S.I. constitution for continued relationships with the denominational families entering C.S.I. 18, this possibly involving the reception of non-episcopally ordained ministers. More final decisions about the nature of ministry were to be made after thirty years.

That this provision could threaten the goal of eventually having all C.S.I. ministers episcopally ordained was the cause of the concern expressed in item six of the Report of the Committee of Theologians: "...there should be a satisfactory Clarification of the Circumstances, if any, in which non-Episcopally Ordained Ministers may continue to exercise Ministry in the church of South India at the Conclusion of the Interim Period." 19 This Report also stated: "There should be a Reconsideration of the Ultimate Relation of the Church of South India to other Churches not Episcopally Ordered."

Because the principle of conservation or comprehensiveness and the recognition of the validity of all ministries that entered C.S.I. was at stake, the demands of Lambeth 1948 were rejected. This is the heart of the C.S.I. response:

18 G.K.A. Bell, Documents on Christian Unity Vol. 1, 144.
19 G.K.A. Bell, Documents on Christian Unity Vol. 3, 188.
The provision that these decisions should be taken at the end of a stated period is basic to the scheme upon which we have united, and we cannot possibly now go back upon this and seek to anticipate these decisions. There are, moreover, very sound reasons for this provision. In the first place these decisions ought to be taken by people who have grown up in the united Church and not in the separated Churches. In the second place we hope that they will be taken by a Church much more Indian in character than the C.S.I. now is. In the third place we hope and pray for changes in the relations between the Churches in the west, and between the C.S.I. and other churches in South India which will profoundly modify the character of the questions to be answered at the end of the 30 year period. . . . . . .

We are united in one Church; our parent Churches are divided. . . . So long as they remain divided our position must remain anomalous from the point of view of any one of the divided Churches. But from the point of view of the historic faith of the Church we must surely judge that the real anomaly, the real scandal, is that the Church should be divided. 20

Michael Hollis reports, as follows, the questioning within C.S.I. of Anglican motives in such a demand:

It has to be recognized that there was—and still is—a deep suspicion about the straightforwardness of Anglicans, and a feeling that any Scheme which Anglicans as a whole are prepared to accept must, hidden somewhere, include an episcopal ordination and therefore involve a refusal genuinely to accept the ministers of non-episcopal Churches as truly ordained. 21

Anglican disquiet with this treatment of ministry sharply limited its adoption in other union schemes. Indeed, Michael Hollis interpreted Lambeth 1948's attitude to the C.S.I. method of unifying ministries as meaning that it "must never be repeated." 22 Although C.S.I. received full recognition as a Church from the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India and was copied in its

20 Ibid., 189.
21 Michael Hollis, The Significance of South India, 66.
22 Michael Hollis, The Significance of South India, 58.
fundamentals in the union of Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches in Nigeria and the Cameroons in 1955. 23 Other such union schemes adopted a much less open approach to unifying ministries.

That difference is expressed in the service of unification of ministries associated with the inauguration of such new churches. For example, in the Church of North India (C.N.I.) documents one reads:

(vii) It is the intention of the uniting Churches to initiate a process of growing together into complete unity in the spiritual life. It is essential therefore that as quickly as possible the unification of the Ministry and complete freedom of communion throughout the united church should be realized.

(viii) This conference accepts the principle of the Unification of the Ministry by the mutual laying on of hands in an act of supplemental ordination to the Ministry of the United Church. This involves the acknowledgement of a common lack in all our Ministries due to our divisions, in that they are limited in authority and have not the seal of the whole Church.

We propose that at the inauguration of Union, the existing presbyters and bishops of each of the uniting Churches should accept through the laying on of hands or the duly authorized persons of the other Churches uniting with them the additional authority and grace that they lack in separation. This should take place at a solemn service, an essential part of which should be prayer for the additional gifts that God alone can bestow. 24

A proposal for the unification of the Presbyterian and Anglican Churches in Iran in 1945 involved all the essentials of the C.N.I. scheme including an act of initial unification of ministries:

The first act of the newly consecrated bishops of the Church of Christ in Iran shall be to commission by the laying on of hands all of the ordained Ministers of both the uniting churches for service in the Church of Christ

23 Ibid., 156, 157.
in Iran. Such a Commission does not imply re-ordination or a repudiation of the validity of the orders of either Church, as real ministries of the Word and Sacraments, but rather an extension of ministerial authority which is conferred on all concerned by the fact of union.25

A proposal submitted to enable intercommunion amongst Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Anglicans in Australia in 1943 adopted much the same approach:

We felt from the first that any variation in our theological views was entirely secondary..... The great obstacle to our meeting together at the Holy Table was found to be our differing conceptions of the authority and function of the Christian ministry, and it was to that particular difficulty that we addressed ourselves. Our task was to find some way to ensure a ministry acceptable to and recognized by all concerned, without doubt or scruple to any.26

The key proposal was as follows:

(3) It is our conviction that such a reunited Fellowship is the Will of God and that it should be initiated by the mutual laying on of hands with prayer, and with the use of such a formula as shall leave no room for scruple or doubtfulness.
(4) It is understood that the acceptance of a wider ministerial commission does not in any sense imply re-ordination, but represents, in the view of those who have taken part in these conferences, the only practical method of securing such an extension of ministerial authority as will accomplish the desired end.27

The proposal in 1955 for the union of Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians in Ceylon also adopted the C.N.I scheme.28

Despite what appears to be a wide-spread critique of its open-ended treatment of ministry, C.S.I. still affirms its own kind of agenda for the most creative unifying of the

25 Ibid., 241.
26 Ibid., 206,207.
27 Ibid., 209.
28 G.K.A. Bell, Documents on Christian Unity III 161, 162.
traditions over the long term. Certainly, in response to Lambeth 1948 the then very young C.S.I. was not hesitant in affirming its place in the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church:

. . . The Church of South India is part of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, confessing the historic faith of the Church and seeking to proclaim that faith throughout South India. We have not departed and, God helping us, we shall not depart from that faith.29

Referring to alternate schemes of unity such as that of C.N.I., Michael Hollis states the opinion that: "A method which has resulted in real and growing unity in south India has been abandoned in favour of another which has yet to work anywhere . . ."30 That the kind of openness which would enable an authentic and creative unifying of ministries is the criterion assumed in this statement is indicated in a subsequent comment:

The essential aim of any viable plan must be to make it possible for life in unity to begin, leaving many decisions to be taken by the united Church. The act of obedience involved in this submitting to God's will, as we experienced in South India, releases fuller resources of understanding for those who enter into union without any deliberate abandonment of what they hold to be true but with deep awareness that everything will look very different when unity has been brought about.31

According to Hollis, early C.S.I. experience with its treatment of the episcopate within this context clearly affirmed its value:

But already, experience within C.S.I. shows that an understanding of episcopacy, which is not the precise repetition of what has been held before and elsewhere but is positive and forward looking, does develop within

29 Ibid., 183, 184.
30 Michael Hollis, The Significance of South India 60.
31 Ibid., 65.
unity as it could not do either through theoretical study of the past or from negotiations between separate Churches, some of which have no bishops.32

(D) An Episcopate for India

C.S.I.'s more open-ended treatment of episcopacy was in response, not only to the need for unity in mission, but also to the need for a symbolic, representative ministry appropriate for India. This second need is articulated by Rajaiah D. Paul at the end of his study of the C.S.I.:

India will not accept a foreign, rather a foreign-looking, religion: India will not accept Jesus Christ, unless he is seen in the lives of his professed followers as the fulfilment of all their spiritual aspirations. We ourselves are convinced that Christ is just that—the Light their Saints and rishis have been groping towards for centuries. But we cannot really articulate this conviction till we cease cramming the minds of our would-be spiritual leaders, while they are in theological colleges, with western theology and give them no chance to learn, understand and appreciate the spiritual traditions and discoveries of ancient Hinduism about God and man.33

This critique of traditional styles of Order, and especially the episcopate, is echoed by Michael Hollis, as follows:

The traditional structure is deeply coloured by the administrative pattern of the Roman Empire, particularly in its later and more bureaucratic form. So far as purely Latin developments are concerned, these are expressed in terms of, and influenced by, that Scholastic philosophy which is neither universal nor inevitable. It is most important to leave to the developing Churches of Asia and Africa the greatest possible freedom to discover their own answers to their own questions, to develop their own ways of expressing the truth of the gospel in their own ordered life, in terms which are meaningful to them and through patterns

32 Ibid., 52.
33 Ibid., 362.
which correspond to their own traditions and their own setting. 34

We recall the hope, expressed in C.S.I.'s response to Lambeth 1948, that the necessary future decisions about ministry "will be taken by a Church much more Indian in character than the C.S.I. now is."

In reading Rajaiah Paul's account of the first ten synods of C.S.I., one notes the desire and hope consistently expressed, often by a bishop, for the indigenization of this Church. That this has remained important to C.S.I. is indicated in this Church's later response to B.E.M. 35 One finds it expressed in detail, for instance, in both criticism and affirmation of planning for new cathedrals in the C.S.I. 36 and in public acknowledgment of the accusation that the C.S.I. was a "a cooly Church." 37

One discerns the C.S.I.'s response to the special needs of India in two developments regarding ministry: A stronger emphasis on the laos and on a more servant and pastoral style, both with major implications for episcopacy.

The need for an ordered ministry that is more of the people reflects more than economic stringency; this is made clear in C.S.I.'s response to BEM as follows:

(6) We are disturbed by the emphasis unduly placed on a professional form of ministry. We are constantly challenged by the experience of our Hindu environment.

34 Ibid., 51.
37 Ibid., 57.
This spiritual emphasis has involved the dividing of dioceses and the reorientation of the bishop's work to enable him to effect a closer relationship in supervision, support and example.38 That this emphasis on the laos has major implications about the locus of the apostolicity of the Church is made clear in another segment of C.S.I.'s response to BEM:

(9) Apostolic Succession: The C.S.I. view on this is slightly different from what we see in the document. In it, the episcopacy is seen as the exclusive guarantee for ensuring apostolic succession. While we agree that episcopacy is an essential element of our heritage, the apostolic succession should be linked with the life and witness of the total church.39

The need for a more servant and pastorally oriented ministry, while important to the laos emphasis, is also demanded of episcopacy in the Indian milieu. It too receives particular treatment in the response of C.S.I. to BEM:

(8) Authority: We feel that the emphasis should be on authority in service and love. The servant image stands out as the model for the authority of the ministry. We agree with the emphasis in the document on reciprocity, that is, to see authority as being accountable to the community.

This choice of direction will have moved the C.S.I. episcopate a long way from the colonial prelacy style which E.J. Palmer of Bombay called "a travesty of episcopacy" and which lasted in some places until 1930. (The retinue of the Bishop of Calcutta in 1860 involved, among a variety of human and animal resources, 10 elephants and 65 camels.)40

38 Ibid., 39.
In contrast, from Mark Gibbard's experience of C.S.I., we read:

As I went about with the bishops I saw the affection they received from all kinds of people. One of the bishops spends twelve days each month visiting his villages, sleeping in churches, in vestries, in the open air or in empty huts—though snakes have a nasty habit of curling up in the roofs of empty huts. Obviously, the bishops do not always succeed in preserving unity, for human nature is a strange thing. But several times I saw groups of Indians arguing on bishops' verandas, as only Indians can argue, but going away an hour or more later no longer at loggerheads. 41

The bishops in their pastoral role have expended much effort towards unifying the various elements of C.S.I. Moreover, they carry out the difficult task of discipline necessitated by the Church's non-Christian environment. Lesslie Newbigin, as one of the first bishops within the CSI, notes the importance of discipline to the church's life in such a milieu. 42

Will such developments in the episcopate suffice for India? There are assumptions in Hindu and Moslem cultures about the place of the individual and person in society, about the reality of history and creation which differ radically not only from the aspects of European culture noted by Michael Hollis, but also from the Old and New Testaments. How does the episcopate, as representative of the Church in such milieu, express the wholeness of Christ?

In response to this challenge, the uniquely conserving yet open stance towards episcopacy which is the

41 Mark Gibbard, Unity is Not Enough, 42.
genius of C.S.I. as pilgrim Church, warrants special attention.
Chapter 9

EPISCOPACY IN CATHOLIC-EVANGELICAL NEGOTIATIONS FROM THE 1950'S TO THE PRESENT

In this chapter we consider episcopacy in the latest phase of Evangelical-Catholic discussions. Unlike those earlier in Great Britain in which the primary divergences were thought to be localized within ministry, the fourth element of the Lambeth "Quad," here they were recognized as leading back to basic differences regarding Faith and Order in the first three. Unlike the C.S.I., (although a source of encouragement), here underlying differences about ecclesiology were understood to demand direct attention. Recognition of the fundamental difficulties involved meant more emphasis was put on method and on insight gained than on possible unification schemes.

This chapter will include: (A) Reformed/Anglican discussions in the United Kingdom 1949-1957. (B) Some post-Vatican II Roman Catholic-Evangelical Bilateral Discussions. (C) The Anglican-Lutheran Niagara Report.

(A) Reformed/Anglican discussions in the United Kingdom, 1949-1957

These discussions involved the Church of England and the Church of Scotland with representation from the
Episcopal Church in Scotland and the Presbyterian Church of England first as observers and later as full participants.

The continuing centrality of ministry issues was recognized early. The first report in 1951 acknowledged that, despite "the large measure of fundamental agreement" between them, "there exist also formidable barriers . . . respecting the form of the Church's government and the ordering of its ministry." 1

However, the nature of those "formidable barriers" was understood to be grounded in more fundamental differences. This was expressed in the 1953 report to the Church of Scotland:

> It seems plain to the Committee that progress is not likely to be made . . . unless the conferring parties penetrate beyond questions of valid ministries and sacraments and discuss together the fundamental theological problems of the nature of the Church itself. 2

This theological desire, to "penetrate . . . [to] the fundamental theological problems of the nature of the Church itself," was becoming common in the ecumenical movement. The above report quotes from the document Christ and His Church of the recent World Conference on Faith and Order (Lund):

> On the ground of the apostolic witness to Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Church, and in obedience to Him, we seek to penetrate behind the divisions of the Church on earth to our common faith in the one Lord. From the unity of Christ we seek to understand the unity of the Church on earth, and from the unity of Christ and His Body we seek a means of realizing that unity in the actual state of our divisions on earth. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 

> In our work we have been led to the conviction that it is of decisive importance for the advance of ecumenical

---

1 G.K.A. Bell, Documents on Christian Unity Vol. 3, 80.
2 Ibid., 88.
work that the doctrine of the Church be treated in close relation both to the doctrine of Christ and to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Encouraged by continuing developments in ecumenical understanding, the negotiators pursued this strategy, arriving at the recognition, according to their 1957 Joint Report, that their differences about Order were of such a nature as to be of broad theological and ecumenical significance:

It was felt . . . that the questions arising between Episcopalians and Presbyterians lay at the heart of the differences evidenced by other divisions in the Body of Christ, and that a notable act of reconciliation between them could not fail to introduce a new and promising element into the whole field of ecumenical relationships.

The operative question was:

. . . are there conceivable modifications and mutual adaptations of the two Church systems whereby they may be reconciled in such a plenitude of faith and order as will conserve the fullness of their traditions?

Indispensable was a process of growth in understanding:

All the parties to these proposals recognize that there are many truths which we shall only appreciate after we have taken together the steps of faith which will set us free to enjoy gifts of God to His Church which we had previously undervalued or of which we had even been unaware."

Contributing to this would be interrelated short and long term policies. The former were to enable "such closer relations between the two churches as may be immediately

3 Ibid., 92-93.
4 Ibid., 80.
5 Ibid., 90.
6 Ibid., 95.
7 Ibid., 105.
practicable" and would involve the implementation of recommendations from the discussions in the early 1930's such as limited intercommunion and exchange of pulpits. And:

The longer term policy would have as its presupposition the conviction that Our Lord's will for His Church is full unity, and that such unity must involve in the end not only agreement as to the truth in Christ, but also a ministry or ministries universally recognized, freedom to interchange ministries, and fullness of sacramental communion throughout Christendom.8

Central to both short and longer term policies, as outlined in the final Joint Report (1957), was the proposal of a "bishop-in-presbytery." This proposal would play a twofold role in the developing process of understanding: (a) It would contribute to a much richer early relationship between the participating Churches by effecting the mutually acceptable ministry demanded by any ministerial exchange and intercommunion. (b) It would contribute to the longer term strategy of uniting Episcopal and Presbyterian Orders "in such a plenitude of faith and order as will conserve the fullness of their traditions." Thus this strategy was intended "both to make room for full intercommunion and to provide a way in which its implications can be worked out in reconciliation between the life and polities of the Churches concerned."9

This "bishop-in-presbytery" proposal differs from earlier schemes in its attention to the "plenitude of faith and order" in the realm of meaning about the nature of the

8 Ibid., 81.
9 Ibid., 101.
Church and of ministry. We note especially these four emphases:

(1) The fuller Church envisaged could not be created anew but must grow out of the best of the two negotiating traditions:

It is beyond doubt that God in His overruling providence and grace has been pleased to use and bless the witness of these Churches in and through the separate structures of their life, their divided ministries and their distinctive worship. The full substance of this experience is to be preserved and brought into the church of the future. It is towards the greater fullness of the Church that is to be that our eyes have now been turned.10

Indeed the two prior traditions should be recognized as gifts, used by God, rather than sources of dissension. Thus the changes recommended to meld them together are not "to be regarded as accommodations" but positively as the way "forward into fuller participation in the true wholeness of the one Church of Christ."11

(2) The importance of continuity in ministry, so essential to Catholicism, is affirmed as follows, but within the context of the transmission of the Apostolic Faith and the life of the whole Church, elements important also to the Protestant:

The orderly transmission of ministerial responsibility and authority from one generation to the next duly attests, in reliance upon the promised power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, the transmission of the Apostolic Faith according to Holy Scripture, and of sound doctrine so based, together with the continuity of worship, mission, and corporate obedience in the life of the Church.12

10 Ibid., 94.
11 Ibid., 100, 101.
12 Ibid., 98.
This means that the "healing of schism" will involve "the reconciliation of diverse forms of stewardship"13 rather than re-ordination within any required ministerial succession.

This proposal provides, then, a context for the fruitful reconsideration on both sides of the nature of continuity in ministry and Church.

(3) The proposal also articulates the meaning of apostolicity, the overarching theme essential to both traditions, as stated here:

The ministry was originally instituted by Christ in His appointment of the Twelve, before His Crucifixion, and re-established by Himself after His Resurrection in the empowering of the disciples and St. Paul to act in His Name. The Apostles were given a unique place in the inauguration of the New Covenant and had a unique function in giving authoritative testimony to Jesus Christ. They were the master-builders, who gave form and order to the Church and exercised a pastoral stewardship over the Lord's household. That which was unique in the Apostles' function of testimony could not be handed on, yet the testimony itself as embodied in the New Testament continues to be the authentic guide of the Church and the substance of the Gospel which it proclaims. The Apostles' pastoral stewardship and missionary ministry of the Word and Sacraments are continued in the Church's Ministry, subject to the Apostolic witness and within the Apostolic tradition.14

The clause which declares "that which was unique in the Apostles' function of testimony could not be handed on" denies any direct linear succession from the Apostles to an ecclesiastical hierarchy. However, the affirmation of continuity in other respects with the Apostles--"subject to the Apostolic witness and within the Apostolic tradition"--

13 Ibid.
14 Ibid., 97.
lays the groundwork for reconsideration of apostolicity allowing for both Catholic and Evangelical emphases.

(4) That ordered ministry must be understood within the context of the ordering of the whole Church is the dominant theme in the first four of a five-point summary of the negotiators' understanding of ministry.

(1) The whole Church as the Body of Christ participates in His threefold ministry as Prophet, Priest, and King, by serving Him as Lord. Sent from God it is rightly described as apostolic not only in its faith, doctrine, and mission but also in its order.

(2) a. All ministry in the Church is to be interpreted as a ministry of Christ to the Church, that is from the Head to the body as a whole.
b. All ministry in the Church is to be exercised within the corporate priesthood of the whole Church.

(3) Within this wider context of ministry there is a specific Ministry of the Word and Sacraments to which by ordination some are set apart.

(4) The unity and continuity of the Church includes the following points:

a. The unity and continuity of the whole Body as baptismally incorporated into the royal priesthood of Christ.
b. The unity and continuity therein of the ministration of the Word and Sacraments as means of grace in the Church.15

Within this comprehensive theological and ecclesiological context, how was the unifying of these Orders to be approached more particularly?

With the possibility of more balanced emphases on both sides, the ordained ministry of Word and Sacraments was apparently not thought to be too problematic. Episcopo, though the more difficult area of ministry, involving "pastoral care, the continuance of the ordained ministry through ordination, and the guardianship of truth and

15 Ibid., 96.
The elements of Episcopacy were outlined, as follows, in the statement of agreement about ministry:

(5) Among the functions of the ordained ministry is that of exercising Episcopacy or oversight in the Church. Such Episcopacy, far from being exclusively concerned with administration, can be considered under five aspects:

a. Apostolic mission and authority.

b. The pastoral office.

c. The continuance of the ministry of Word and Sacraments through ordination.

d. Guardianship of truth and exclusion of error.

e. Representation of the Church in its unity and universality.

These were affirmed to be discharged in each tradition in different ways, either through the role of the bishop or presbytery. Therefore, the discharge of these functions through the "bishop-in-presbytery" scheme would involve the judicious re-allocation of these functions between bishop and presbytery in their interrelationship.

Thus this proposal, governing a strategic interim stage, would comprehend the elements of Order thought necessary by both traditions. And it would be understood that "any special form of ordination . . . should not be
interpreted to imply the acceptance of any one particular
theory of the origin, character, or function of any office
in the Church . . . "19

The "bishop-in-presbytery," would involve the
following "appropriate" changes in the Presbyterian
Churches:

Bishops, chosen by each Presbytery, from its own
membership or otherwise, would initially be consecrated
by prayer with the laying on of hands by Bishops from
one or more of the Episcopal Churches and by the
Presbytery acting through appointed representatives.
Thus consecrated, each Bishop would be within the
Apostolic succession as acknowledged by Anglicans on the
one hand and as required by Presbyterians on the other.
He would be the President of the Presbytery and would
act as its principal minister in every ordination, and
in the consecration of other Bishops. He would exercise
pastoral oversight over his fellow-ministers in the
Presbytery, and act as its spokesman to the community.
He might well have a particular charge of his own
besides exercising this wider pastoral function.20

These are some "appropriate" changes suggested for
the Episcopal Churches:

Lay persons would be solemnly "set apart" for some
measure of pastoral responsibility towards their fellow-
Christians, in an office akin to the Presbyterian
eldership. Lay people would be given appropriate
participation in the Government of the Church at all
levels . . . The integration of such lay persons with
the Bishop and presbyters in diocesan synods would
greatly strengthen their authority and importance, by
fulfilling the doctrinal requirement that decisions of
the Church must be made by the whole Church, by the Body
of Christ in its entirety.21

This "bishop-in-presbytery" scheme, designed carefully
within the more comprehensive theological context, was an
interim measure and quite spare in detail.

19 Ibid., 100 (Faith and Order Lausanne Conference 1927).
20 Ibid. 102,103.
21 Ibid., 104
Though recommended for study by all denominations concerned, there was no further action.

Overview

The following comment by the Episcopalian representatives in the discussion is of interest:

Such Bishops-in-Presbytery would undoubtedly, in many respects, be different from the English pattern of Episcopacy. The diversity of form taken by the Historic Episcopate down the centuries was, however, recalled, and few Anglicans would insist that every aspect of the Anglican Episcopate under the Establishment was essential to the order. As long as Episcopalian were sure, however, that such Bishops-in-Presbytery had proper authority and functions in spiritual and doctrinal matters they would be ready to recognize them as Bishops in the Church of God.22

Although there is an openness to this proposal there are also reservations implied in the concern about "proper authority and functions in spiritual and doctrinal matters." How well does this proposal retain the essential meaning of either Order "in such a plenitude . . . as will conserve the fullness of their traditions"?

The adequacy of the description of those Orders is important. The 1957 Joint Report describes the work of the bishop as follows:

In the Anglican Churches there is the distinctive office of the Bishop. The essence of this lies in the coalescence of certain functions in a single person. These functions are: to be the chief minister of the Word and Sacraments; to be the proper minister for the ordination of men to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments; to be the chief pastor of clergy and laity alike; to represent the whole Church to the diocese and the diocese to the whole Church; to have authority in matters of doctrine—vested in the collective Episcopate, but exercised in connection with the church as a whole. These functions together make up the Office of a Bishop,

22 Ibid., 103.
as Father-in-God, with succession in his see and succession of consecration, within the continuity of the body of the whole Church.23

The role of the presbytery as episcope was similarly considered in terms of the discharge of such functions.

Is there, in "the essence" of "the distinctive office of the Bishop" within Anglicanism, more than "the coalescence of certain functions in a single person"? Do many Anglicans not judge episcopacy to be of the very esse of the Church precisely because there are expressed in the bishop in the unity of his/her very person dimensions of Faith and Order essential to Catholicism of a kind not delineable into negotiable functions! Similarly Presbyterians find in their Order realms of meaning which pertain to the divine sovereignty and to human dignity which are not comprehended in a list of functions.

Thus the enduring demands of episcope on both sides indicate that, at this crucial juncture, the bishop-in-presbytery proposal failed to comprehend enough of the fullness of meaning of each Faith and Order.

It is instructive that this methodology, which constituted an advance in wisdom and insight and was intended to be more theologically comprehensive, necessarily allowed a theological void in its actual treatment of ministry as one finds in the C.S.I. Any further accomplishment must be sought in advancing upon the affirmative and inclusive statements noted above. As in

23 Ibid., 99.
other such discussions, here the process of "hearing" and discernment was crucial.

(B) Some post-Vatican II Roman Catholic-Evangelical Bilateral Discussions


These being the first major ecumenical discussions between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism following Vatican II, the Churches' representatives in each case had a formidable challenge, growth in understanding being the prime goal. The overall strategy adopted in each discussion became crucial and is therefore of special interest to us. We shall consider those between Roman Catholicism and the Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed traditions, the representatives being appointed by their international federations.

(1) The Roman Catholic-Lutheran Discussions

These were the first to be initiated of the three Roman Catholic-Evangelical discussions here considered, this

happening through unofficial meetings at the Vatican II sessions in Rome.

After appointment by the Vatican and the Lutheran World Federation, representatives held their first session in November of 1967 and the fifth, in Malta, in February of 1971, this series producing the Malta Report. Following its publication a new Roman Catholic-Lutheran Commission was appointed to evaluate its reception and to explore these thematic areas: "Eucharist," "The Ministry in the Church," and "Ways to Community." The results were published as follows: Malta Report (1972), The Eucharist (1978), Ways to Community (1980), All Under One Christ (1980), The Ministry in the Church (1981) and Facing Unity (1984). (In view of our special interest in method, the Malta Report is our major source in this early phase because of its pioneering and exploratory nature.)

Here ministry, as a challenge, is often mentioned in the context of particular issues. For example:

(67) The question . . . which remains controversial between Catholics and Lutherans is whether the primacy of the pope is necessary for the church, or whether it represents only a fundamentally possible function.25

For Lutherans and Catholics it is an open theological problem as to how one theologially defines more exactly the relationship of the one special ministry to the various other ministries and services in the church . . .26

However, ministry is understood to be problematic also in a more comprehensive way:

25 Ibid., 184 (Malta 67).
26 Ibid., 253 (The Ministry In The Church 17).
The question of the office of the ministry in the church, its origin, its position and correct understanding represents one of the most important open questions between Lutherans and Catholics. It is here that the question of the position of the gospel in and over the church becomes concrete. What, in other words, are the consequences of the doctrine of justification for the understanding of the ministerial office?27

It is the attempt to penetrate beyond the particularities to the more comprehensive differences affecting ministry that makes these discussions most valuable. In the initial meeting this overall approach was expressed as follows:

They agreed that it is not of primary importance to look for quick solutions to practical problems but rather to enter into a comprehensive dialog about the basic problems which both separate and unite the two Churches.28

In the overall approach to its challenges and the resulting insight, the Malta Report is a remarkable document. We note two major characteristics:

The first is the determination to ground these discussions in "The Gospel," benefitting from advances made in historical and scriptural studies. The Introduction to the Malta Report says:

The reason for choosing to start with this biblical-theological question of the gospel and its transmission in the New Testament was that it could be anticipated, on the basis of general experience in interconfessional encounters, especially between Protestant and Catholic theologians, that the chances of agreement would be particularly great in biblical-exegetical discussions.29

... the commission was to examine once again the confessional differences in the light of contemporary biblical theology and church history as well as of

27 Ibid., 179 (Malta 47).
28 Ibid., 169 (Malta 2).
29 Ibid., 169 (Malta 4).
perspectives opened up by the Second Vatican Council. For such purposes the concept "gospel" has become a key concept in ecumenical dialog.30

This latter remark is reflected in the theme chosen for the first series, "The Gospel and the Church" and the Sub-themes: "Gospel and Tradition"; "World and Church under the Gospel"; "The Structures of the Church"; "Gospel and Law-Gospel and Christian Freedom."

Agreement on these themes still proved problematic:

The point of departure for our deliberations was the question of the relationship of the primitive kerygma to Jesus' proclamation. Here there was agreement that the life and proclamation of Jesus are accessible only through the primitive Christian tradition. Yet the participants differed in their evaluation of the possibility of reconstructing the life and proclamation of Jesus as well as on the question of continuity in the preaching of the gospel. However, there was consensus that the gospel rests fundamentally on the witness to the Easter event... The gospel as proclamation of God's saving action is therefore itself a salvation event.31

The second major characteristic of the Malta Report we note is a core of insight around which cluster the terms "event," "eschatological," "historicity." These bespeak the primacy of act over essence, of the redemptive over the natural. One finds this core implicit in the consensus, noted in the last quote, about the gospel as "witness to the Easter event," "saving action" and "salvation event."

One finds the core again in the treatment of the "criteria for the church's proclamation" in terms of "saving action":

30 Ibid., 170 (Malta 7).
31 Ibid., 172 (Malta 16).
Neither the sola scriptura nor formal references to the authoritativeness of the magisterial office are sufficient. The primary criterion is the Holy Spirit making the Christ event into a saving action.32

It is because of the eschatological character of the gospel event as "saving action" that the Church remains "on the way," short of the "eschatological goal":

Since the church as the pilgrim people of God has not yet reached its eschatological goal, it depends during the present interval of time--between the "already" and the "not-yet" on ministries, structures and orders which should serve the realization of the saving act of God in Christ.33

And it is because we are "the pilgrim people of God" that "historicity" is of the Church's nature:

The concrete shape of orders is presented in the New Testament in various forms. In subsequent history it has undergone many further changes. Greater awareness of the historicity of the church in conjunction with a new understanding of its eschatological nature, requires that in our day the concepts of ius divinum and ius humanum be thought through anew... We have the ius divinum always only as mediated through particular historical forms.34

These interrelated emphases have major consequences in the treatment of ecclesiastical "structures" as "transitory and anticipatory":

From this it also follows that the structures and formulations in which the gospel is concretized share in the historical conditionedness of the world in its social and cultural transformations. Since the gospel is directed toward the eschatological fulfilment, these structures and formulations are simultaneously transitory and anticipatory. Their role is to open up the future and not be closed to it. Thus the continuity of the gospel--a gift of the Holy Spirit--is to be seen, not only in fixed structures and formulations, but also in its ability to make itself known in ever new forms by constant reflections on Holy Scripture and on its

32 Ibid., 173 (Malta 18).
33 Ibid., 180 (Malta 49).
34 Ibid., 175 (Malta 31).
interpretation in the church's history. This insight also freed ecumenical dialog from an unquestioning attachment to the fixed positions and dominant problems of the past.35

These "event"/eschatological/historicity emphases enabled a creative reconsideration of some major themes about ministry.

For example, though different understandings of the Church's teaching authority are acknowledged, both are founded upon the on-going enabling of the Holy Spirit. Lutherans affirm that "the living word of preaching is the normal form of authoritative interpretation of the gospel"; Roman Catholics affirm that "the Lord authenticates his word through the reciprocal interaction of official and unofficial charisma."36 "Living" and "charisma" indicate the dependence in both ecclesiologies on the on-going reception of truth through the Holy Spirit, despite their different treatments of authority. The primacy of the "living" word was emphasized also in the agreement that "the authority of the church can only be service of the word and that it is not master of the word of the Lord."37

Regarding apostolicity: The primacy of the living gospel determines that apostolicity be regarded as transmission of "witness" rather than an hierarchical succession:

According to the New Testament witnesses the apostles were sent by the Lord himself as witnesses of his resurrection. The apostolate in the strict sense is not

35 Ibid., 178 (Malta 44).
36 Ibid., 173 (Malta 19,20).
37 Ibid. (Malta 21).
transferable... The church's ministry, doctrine and order are apostolic insofar as they pass on and actualize the apostolic witness.38

Similarly, appreciation of the active and on-going maintenance of the whole Church in truth by the Holy Spirit enables reconsideration by both sides of the divisive doctrines of "indefectibility and infallibility."39

It is only as witness to the gospel which it must receive continually anew that the Church lives as the "priestly people of God." And this is the context for ordained ministry:

As creatura et ministra verbi, however, it stands under the gospel and has the gospel as its superordinate criterion. Its gospel ministry is to be carried out through the proclamation of the word, through the administration of the sacraments, and, indeed, through its total life.40

The primacy of the gospel must govern the relationships between ordained ministry and the community of faith.41

The initial commission apparently believed that a sufficient unity had been found within this theological context regarding fundamentals underlying ministry for the Catholic participants to recommend "that the traditional rejection of the validity of the Lutheran ministerial office must be rethought."42 The commission also asked that "church authorities... make possible occasional acts of intercommunion."43

38 Ibid., 180 (Malta 52).
39 Ibid., 173 (Malta 22).
40 Ibid., 179 (Malta 48).
41 Ibid., 180 (Malta 50).
42 Ibid., 183 (Malta 63).
43 Ibid., 186 (Malta 73).
These strong "event"/eschatological/historicity emphases have a remarkably Protestant feel about them. For example, the following emphasis on the "hidden" sounds much like Calvin:

God's redemptive act in Christ takes place on and through the cross. There is here no room for the triumphalism and theocratic tendencies to which Christians have so often fallen victim. The church must ever remember that Christ's victory in and over the world continues to be a hidden one and that it must witness to Christ's work of reconciliation in such a way as to share in his suffering by struggling against the powers of evil in this age which is passing away.44

Again, one finds in these emphases a critique of structures much like that which many find to be implied in the doctrine of justification:45

According to the Lutheran understanding, and on the basis of the confession of justification, all traditions and institutions of the church are subject to the criterion which asks whether they are enablers of the proper proclamation of the gospel and do not obscure the unconditional character of the gift of salvation. It follows that the rites and orders of the church are not to be imposed as conditions for salvation, but are valid only as the free unfolding of the obedience of faith. Lutherans and Catholics alike are convinced that the gospel is the foundation of Christian freedom . . . Since . . . Christian freedom is linked to the witness of the gospel, it needs institutional forms for its mediation. The church must therefore understand and actualize itself as institution of freedom.46

Such strong emphases on the "hidden" character of "Christ's victory in and over the world" and of the transitory nature of the Church's structures seem to radically question Catholic affirmations about the

---

44 Ibid., 177 (Malta 40).
46 Harding Meyer and Lukas Vischer, eds., Growth in Agreement, 175 (Malta 29,30).
continuity of the institutional and historical Church with the Incarnation. One must regard the relating of these two perspectives as important unfinished business.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the recommendations about recognition of Lutheran ministries and limited intercommunion were judged premature by a considerable number of the participants, mostly Roman Catholic, as indicated in their dissenting statements at the end of the Malta Report. And it is not surprising that the almost wholly different commission which produced the subsequent reports seems more reserved in tone. It was more forthright in stating major differences. For example, in The Ministry in the Church (1981):

(77) In the light of post-conciliar discussion—as also reflected in the preceding chapters—it seems possible to speak of a defectus ordinis in the sense of a lack of the fullness of the church's ministry. In fact it is the Catholic conviction that standing in the historic succession belongs to the fullness of the episcopal ministry.

(79) ... According to the Lutheran Confessions, the church exists wherever the gospel is preached in its purity and the sacraments are rightly administered. Thus, Lutherans do not claim that the office of the ministry is found only in their own churches' ministry.

Similarly The Eucharist (1978) affirms the essential relationship between validity in ministry and episcopal ordination for Roman Catholics:

(66) According to Catholic doctrine every licit eucharistic celebration is "regulated by the bishop, to whom is committed the office of offering the worship of
Catholic religion to the divine Majesty and of administering it in accordance with the Lord's commandments and with the Church's laws. "Only those Eucharists are lawful which are performed by the bishop or a person charged by him." The ordination of a bishop or priest is accordingly the essential prerequisite to his presiding at the Lord's Supper: even in exceptional cases there can be no eucharistic celebration without an ordained priest. In so far as the sacrament of ordination is lacking, the Roman Catholic Church sees even separated Christians as not having "preserved the genuine and total reality (substantia) of the Eucharistic mystery."

Why is there a difference between the tone of these later documents and the apparent consensus achieved in the Malta Report? These factors seem relevant:

First, that earlier consensus still allowed room for major difference regarding Order. We recall that, as "the pilgrim people of God," in "the present interval" the church "depends . . . on ministries, structures and orders;" the "church in freedom . . . needs institutional forms for its mediation." While these forms are "transitory and anticipatory," yet they are necessary and the earlier document left unanswered many questions about the character of that necessity.

Second, the complexity of the Faith issues underlying ministry meant that major areas of difference were hardly explored:

Mutual recognition must not be regarded as an isolated act or carried out as such. It must occur in the confession of the one faith in the context of the unity of the church and in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, the sacrament of unity. Lutherans and Catholics, therefore, share the conviction that ordination by bishops, apart from reference to specific church communities, does not represent a solution. The only

50 Ibid., 209 (The Eucharist 66).
theologically meaningful way of solving this question is through a process in which the churches reciprocally accept each other. . . . The precondition for such acceptance of full church communion is agreement in the confession of faith—which must also include a common understanding of the church's ministry—a common understanding of the sacraments, and fraternal fellowship in Christian and church life.51

Third, there is the difficulty in communicating crucial insight between the major traditions:

Interconfessional conversations have their own peculiar problems. This became apparent in our conversations also. Often the problems were stated in a way derived from the manner of inquiry characteristic of the tradition of only one of the two churches. . . . there often arises the difficulty of finding a verbal formulation acceptable to both sides. Often the dogmatic conceptualizations customary to a tradition must be avoided, even when treating those matters with which these conceptualizations were intended to deal.52

The Malta Report acknowledges underlying differences regarding the nature of theological truth:

While Lutherans emphasize more the "event" character of God's saving acts, Catholic tradition is more concerned about the metaphysical implications of statements about salvation. These two ways of thinking are not mutually exclusive insofar as they do not become self-contained and orientate themselves in terms of the critical norm of the gospel.53

Finally, the discussion process involved was necessarily limited in its range. For example, Justification was recognized as both crucial and problematic. Its importance was recognized consistently throughout the Malta Report. And the commission believed that significant consensus had been achieved on this subject:

(26) . . . a far-reaching consensus is developing in the interpretation of justification. Catholic theologians

51 Ibid., 273 (All Under One Christ 82).
52 Ibid., 171 (Malta II).
53 Ibid., 183 (Malta 62).
also emphasize in reference to justification that God's gift of salvation for the believer is unconditional as far as human accomplishments are concerned. Lutheran theologians emphasize that the event of justification is not limited to individual forgiveness of sins, and they do not see in it a purely external declaration of the justification of the sinner. Rather the righteousness of God actualized in the Christ event is conveyed to the sinner through the message of justification as an encompassing reality basic to the new life of the believer.

(27) In this sense justification can be understood as expressing the totality of the event of salvation.54

And yet, after such an optimistic statement, the Malta Report acknowledged that "other questions arise here":

What is the theological importance of this doctrine? Do both sides similarly evaluate its implications for the life and teaching of the church?55

Both the "far-reaching consensus" outlined above and the related "other questions" about Justification, together with the nature of episcopacy, are basic to the latest developments in the Lutheran-Roman Catholic relationship.

Central to these discussions—and we think especially of those sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican—has been the continuing search for a satisfactory theological comprehensiveness, building upon what was accomplished in the Malta Report, (paras. 21, 26—quoted above—and para. 27—quoted in part)56, that treats adequately the concerns on both sides about Justification.

While Catholics are concerned that the wholeness of the human response to the Gospel in responsibility and

54 Ibid. (Malta 26.27).
55 Ibid., 175 (Malta 28).
56 Growth in Agreement, 174,5.
freedom, both individually and collectively, be adequately respected, Lutherans are concerned about the retention of the characteristics of the Gospel associated with Justification. Or, as Church and Justification, the work of the third phase (1986-1993) of the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue succinctly states:

The concerns are: "Catholics ask whether the Lutheran understanding of justification does not diminish the reality of the church; Lutherans ask whether the Catholic understanding of church does not obscure the gospel as the doctrine of justification explicates it." (para. 166) 57

Many have been able to view the process enthusiastically as the further development of the "far-reaching consensus" affirmed in the Malta Report (para. 26). However, as the following quote from a review of these discussions in 1990 indicates, together with enthusiasm there have been some serious questioning:

This dialogue on justification [the seventh series] was concluded with rave press reports that Lutherans and Catholics had reached "a fundamental consensus on the gospel," though they still admitted that even after five years of dialogue they had differences and that "some of the consequences of the different outlooks seem irreconcilable, especially in reference to particular applications of justification by faith as a criterion of all church proclamation and practice." 58

Writing in 1992, Robert Jenson quotes the comment of the Catholic ecumenist O.H. Pesch who asks whether, in this supposedly "most hopeful phase" of the conversations

about justification, this had become "a . . . Sisyphean labor."

Because it was thought that ecclesiology was the optimum testing ground for this developing consensus, this was to be the prime focus of the third phase (1986-1993), reflected in the name of its report Church and Justification. Gunther Gassmann could write enthusiastically in 1996 of the results as follows:

We have reached a point in Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue where our "deepest difference"--an often treated topic in ecumenical history--is in process of being overcome.60

However, one notes that Church and Justification acknowledges remaining disagreements about major ecclesiological issues (institutional continuity, doctrinal and ministerial authority). And here, as elsewhere, the meaning of episcopacy constitutes a special challenge:

. . . both churches can affirm the historic episcopate in historic (apostolic) succession while they continue to disagree on its theological and ecclesiological evaluation: in the Catholic view the episcopate in apostolic succession is essential, necessary and indispensable for the church; in Lutheran understanding such a ministry can be seen as important, meaningful and thus desirable. (paras. 191-201) 61

J.M.R. Tillard (former vice-chair, F. & O. Commission), while affirming Justification to be "a divisive issue for Catholic and Protestant groups," adds:

59 Robert Jenson, Unbaptized God, 91.
61 Gunther Gassmann, "Lutheran-Catholic Agreement on Justification (II), 5.
I do not think, however, that it has been, and remains here and now, the basic one. It is related to a more fundamental issue. The problem lies in the relation between Christ, Church and the Word of God.62

One notes that the "theological and ecclesiological evaluation" of the episcopate, together with other major unresolved ecclesiological issues, pertain directly to "the relation between Christ, Church and the Word of God." Failure to resolve such issues at a deeper level surely indicates a remarkable limiting of the consensus achieved about Justification, certainly in its criteriological role, and accounts for the frustration experienced in these conversations about it.

It would seem that the unresolved relationship between the "Event/eschatological/historicity" emphasis and Catholic concern about continuity through the Church, which we found in the Malta Report, remains to hinder these discussions.

Thus, one must qualify Robert Jenson's judgment about these discussions (in 1992), that, despite the frustration involved, "we will not at the end find in this area anything deserving to be called a basic difference."63 Whether or not it is describable in these terms, there remains an area of fundamental difference (or differences) pertaining to the kind of factors alluded to by Tillard which underlie Faith and Order in these ecclesiologies and the major traditions involved.

63 Robert Jenson, Unbaptized God, 91.
(2) Roman Catholic-Methodist

The special character and value of these 1967-81 discussions lay in the determination to affirm that which was most essential to their commonality in religious experience and, through the exploration of this avenue, to grow in mutual understanding. (The results of these discussions, conducted in three stages, were stated in three lengthy reports: Denver (1971); Dublin (1976) and Honolulu (1981).)

The primary place "sanctification" held in that commonality is expressed as follows:

"... it was made clear, without any glossing over difficulties, that there were yet more solid grounds for affinity.

First among these was the central place held in both traditions by the ideal of personal sanctification, growth in holiness through daily life in Christ... For both, holiness is rooted in theology and in disciplined life. 64

That "personal sanctification, growth in holiness" constituted the basis for their joint explorations was indicated, as follows, in their Honolulu Report (itself devoted, significantly, to a study of the Holy Spirit):

(30) Catholics and Methodists agree that progress in purification from sin and its effects as well as growth in holiness, namely love of God and neighbor, requires the development of our God-given powers of spiritual discernment in individual and social experience... We are convinced that as we recover and reclaim this rich mutual heritage for ourselves, we might grow closer to each other on a deeper level.65

64 Harding Meyer and Lukas Vischer, eds., Growth in Agreement, 308 (Denver 6,7).
65 Ibid., 375 (Honolulu 30).
Areas of difficulty, some relatively specific and others more comprehensive, were acknowledged:

From the beginning of our discussions it was recognized that problems of authority were implicit in some of the deep "crevasses" between us, and notably in the Mariological dogmas and the doctrines of the Infallibility or Indefectibility of the Church on the one hand; while on the other hand the whole question of the origin and development of Methodism as a work of the Spirit, of an extraordinary and prophetic character, has at some point to be related to the Catholic view of church order and of its understanding of the authority of Christ in His Church. We agreed to postpone these important questions because it seemed to us fundamentally important to begin, not with our differences and disagreements, but with our agreements and with that fundamental unity without which all our conversations would cease to be conversations between Christians.

Yet we realize that those questions do bear on the problems of authority, and have to be faced in our hope of approaching our goal of genuine communion between our Churches in sacris.66

"To postpone these important questions" was not to ignore them but to allow the process of growth "closer to each other on a deeper level" to enable a more fruitful approach.

Because it was central to so many "important questions," we might expect that episcopacy would receive very limited particular treatment and, in fact, that was the case. It received limited attention in the second or Dublin Report.

We note first, in that document, when it became the prime focus of attention, that this was said:

(88) Roman Catholics and Methodists agree that episcopacy (pastoral care and oversight) belongs essentially to the ordained ministry. Such episcopacy is exercised in different ways in their churches, but in each case it is

66 Ibid., 330,331 (Denver 100,101).
carefully ordered with the purpose of the building-up and discipline of the faithful, the training of the young, the maintenance of the unity and peace of the church, and in the planning and direction of mission and evangelism.67

Here, typically, difference in the respective expressions of episcopate is acknowledged, though barely, within the context of what is held in common.

In the subsequent sections also differences in the role of the bishop are acknowledged but the emphasis is on the similarity, in each denomination, of this special ministry—within relationships:

(89) In the Roman Catholic Church with its three-fold ministry the bishop exercises the fullness of the ordained ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care. He alone has the power of ordaining and the overall responsibility of teaching and governing, but he is related to the whole church as a member of the college of bishops, of which the Pope is head, and as pastor of his own people shares the ministry with presbyters and deacons.

(90) Similarly in American Methodism, which also has a three-fold ministry, membership in the annual conference (as an ordained elder) is primary, and all ministers have full and equal ministerial status. The bishop, as a member of the Council of Bishops, has responsibility for general oversight of the life of the church and possesses the power to ordain, but in this and all other matters he acts in conjunction with the conference.68

Section 91 indicates that in British Methodism, with only one order of ministers, episcopal functions are delegated by the Conference to its officers.

The general approach to ministry in this report is dominated by this affirmation of commonality and inclusivity. Section VII on Ministry69 begins with what

67 Ibid., 358 (Dublin 60).
68 Ibid., 358, 359 (Dublin 89, 90).
69 Ibid., 356-361 (Dublin 75-105).
these traditions affirm in common on this subject: "The fundamental ministry is Christ's own ministry" for which "Christ still chooses and equips" (77); as such it is a "gift . . . on God's initiative" (78), "lifelong" (79) and cooperative (80).

Within this context the document then deals with "Apostolic Ministry," first affirming the continuity of Christ's ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit through the "whole people of God" (81) but within which "we speak here primarily of the special ministry of those who are ordained."

Still emphasizing commonality, the treatment of the relationship between this "special ministry" and that of the apostles is described as follows:

The ordained ministry is given to the church by God, and the apostles were the first "ministers of the gospel." They were commissioned by Christ himself, and each ordained minister in his turn receives through the church at his ordination the commission of Christ. Thus this ministry has existed from New Testament times until now. 70

Similarly the treatment of the development of ministry in the early Church remains inclusive: It states (83) that "though the words bishop, presbyter and deacon are to be found in the New Testament, the New Testament nowhere speaks of a three-fold ministry of bishop." It then acknowledged the gradual development of the three-fold ministry in "the sub-apostolic age" and its "virtually

70 Ibid., 357 (DuBtIn 82).
complete" development "through the church at large" by the end of the second century.

The statement on "the church's apostolicity" (84) begins by affirming the agreement that it involves "faithfulness in doctrine, ministry, sacrament and life . . ." but acknowledging that "we differ in the account we give of apostolic succession":

For Roman Catholics the graded three-fold ministry is derived from the teaching of the New Testament through the living tradition of the church. True succession in ministry is guaranteed only by episcopal laying on of hands in historical succession and authentic transmission of the faith within the apostolic college.71

The next statement (86) indicates Methodist recognition of a variety of ministerial styles as being "at least as consonant with the presbyter-bishops of the New Testament as the three-fold ministry" adding: "They accept, however, the appropriateness of the three-fold ministry of other churches or for a united church." Methodism preserves and values succession in ministry as a "valuable symbol of the church's continuity" though not a "criterion."

The desire to build on what they hold in common in essentials, even within this habitually divisive area, which they here acknowledge, is apparent in these quotes and much more so in the remainder of their abundant material. In view of subsequent difficulties in dealing with divergences about ministry, etc., this strategy is to be respected as a long-term ecumenical option. It promises growth in mutual

71 Ibid., 358 (Dublin 85).
understanding on a solid foundation in Christian faith and life.

However, some critical questions arise: Is not "sanctification" but one aspect, though a major one, of Christian truth? Will not such a dominant emphasis on religious experience yield limited ecumenical advance? We cite two indications that this is so, each pertaining to episcopacy.

The first stems from the essential relationship between Christian spirituality and the means of grace. In its treatment of the Eucharist (V.), the Denver Report (83) cites "Points of Agreement" and under the heading "The real presence" says: "1. Both Methodists and Roman Catholics affirm as the primary fact the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the Mass, or the Lord's Supper."

Later, under "Points of Difference" it states:

(1) The presence in the Eucharist for the Methodists is not fundamentally different from the presence of Christ in other means of grace, i.e. preaching.
(2) For some Methodists, the preaching of the Word provides a more effective means of grace than the Eucharist.
(3) To the faith of the Roman Catholic, the bread and wine within the context of the Eucharistic celebration are transformed into another reality, i.e. the Body and Blood of the glorified Jesus. 72

Despite the affirmation of commonality in this section, here are really two realms of meaning, each involving quite different understandings of ministry, of relationships within the institutional Church and the significance of the sacrament.

72 Ibid., 326, 327 (Denver 83, 84).
Second, there is the matter of criteria for spirituality. Surely there must be parameters about the treatment of the "spiritual" for the Christian. This, in turn, raises the issue of the character of the Church's truth, with implications for the understanding of ministry.

This is acknowledged in The Denver Report, in a concrete way, in its treatment of Authority (VII.):

But the question then arises [about] our agreement in obedience to Christ, our acceptance of the authority of the Scripture, our acknowledgement of the apostolic faith as witnessed to in the creeds of the Ecumenical Councils—are these the hierarchy of truth at its indispensable, top level? Or must, say, the dogmas laid down in 1856 and 1870 be included among the indispensables? ... If this is so and the Mariological dogmas and infallibility are regarded as necessary to any communion in sacris, the way ahead is obviously going to be long, precarious and uncertain.73

In both these cases there are involved major differences in the understanding of ministry regarding sacramentality and authority about which developments in "spirituality" are hardly likely to yield adequate insight, as the results of these discussions seem to indicate. A more "whole meanings" approach to ecclesiology seems necessary.

(3) Roman Catholic-Reformed

These discussions, developing from initial conversations at the Uppsala Assembly of the World Council of Churches, are characterized by a much more "whole meaning" approach, one in which divergences are directly tackled with due emphasis on the hermeneutical, as one would

73 Ibid., 331 (Denver 101).
expect of the Reformed tradition. Of these three Roman Catholic-Protestant discussions, this one cuts most cleanly and concisely to the fundamental differences. Their method was outlined as follows:

The initial step in the conversations was a matter, on many issues, of listening carefully to one another in order to discern what lies behind the different terminologies to which we have grown accustomed. It was not the purpose of these sessions consciously to work toward specific recommendations on the topics assigned them. Rather, the task was to locate the present convergences, continuing tensions, and open questions which emerged from the process just described.74

The theme chosen to facilitate this deliberate and careful "listening" is stated here:

It was also expected that the discussion on the presence of Christ in Church and World, especially the meaning of his saving humanity, would tend to bring to light the differences between the two communions and that an honest appraisal of these differences could help the two traditions to overcome them . . . ."75

The value of this hermeneutical theme soon became evident in the uncovering in the discussions of "three traditional problems related to the central one of understanding the Lordship of Christ today: Christology, ecclesiology, and the attitude of the Christian in the world."76 Sub-topics chosen for later discussion in this series were: Christ's relationship to the Church; The Teaching Authority of the Church; The Presence of Christ in the World; The Eucharist and The Ministry.77

74 Ibid., 436 (The Presence of Christ In Church And World: Final Report 9).
75 Ibid., 435 (5).
76 Ibid. (6).
77 Ibid.
This emphasis on a "listening carefully" in order to "locate the present convergences, continuing tensions," and thus "open questions," indicates a desire to develop insight in process over the long term rather than to seek more quickly for answers or solutions; their work was "more descriptive than prescriptive." 78

Therefore we look for insights into the issues embodied in or underlying episcopacy rather than the more direct treatment of its role. In fact the only direct treatment of episcopacy is in the brief section (102) on Episkope and Collegiality wherein the close relationship between these two is emphasized in both traditions. 79

The nature and value of these discussions is evident especially within "On Ministry" (Pt. V.). Under the heading Different Emphases within Both Traditions (103, 104) the report explores divergences regarding the relationship between the divine and the Church as institution:

Some emphasize the "over-againstness" of the Spirit and structure; some emphasize the Spirit's work to shape and animate structure. One position more or less deplores the restriction of apostolic succession, for example, to institutionalization by means of what it takes to be mere continuity of laying on of hands. Another position more or less rejoices in that institutionalization as another instance of Christ's mediating his gracious presence through earthen vessels. 80

Here the report penetrates behind various Orders to the understandings of the divine-institutional relationship that underlies them. Although the sub-heading suggests that

78 Ibid., 436 (9).
79 Ibid., 459 (102).
80 Ibid., 459 (103).
these "different emphases are in both traditions," the two basic positions noted also constitute major Protestant and Catholic divergences regarding ecclesiology.

Mention of "the over-againstness of Spirit and structure" surely connotes Protestant distrust of "institutionalization" as a potential expression of sin. In fact, this is made explicit in the beginning of the next paragraph: "Some Reformed see God's fidelity as known mainly through his overcoming the Church's infidelity, and in this case tradition is seen as much as betrayal as transmission."

On the other hand "the Spirit's work to shape and animate structure" and "Christ's mediating his gracious presence through earthen vessels" surely indicate more Catholic concerns.

Thus the report here carries us beyond obvious differences in ecclesiology to underlying questions about grace and human institutions and even about the nature of God. Thus we are dealing with the relationship between the Incarnation and the historic Church, as the concluding statement implies:

This may mean that one point of convergence is that no one wishes to speak of the Church as "extension of Incarnation" but that real divergence occurs among us in the way we use incarnational language about the Church.81

This fundamental questioning continues in the following subsection, Different Emphases between the Two Traditions:

81 Ibid., (104).
There is a difference in the way each tradition approaches the question of how far and in what way the existence of the community of believers and its union with Christ and especially the celebration of the Eucharist necessitates an ordained office-bearer in the Church. In how far does the institutional connection with the office of Peter and the office of bishop belong to the regularly appointed ministry in the Church? For Roman Catholics, connection with the Bishop of Rome plays a decisive role in the experience of Catholicity. For the Reformed, catholicity is most immediately experienced through membership in the individual community. When it comes to the relation between ministry and sacrament, the Roman Catholics find that the Reformed minimize the extent to which God, in his plan for salvation, has bound himself to the Church, the ministry and the sacraments. The Reformed find that too often Roman Catholic theology minimizes the way the Church, the ministry and the sacraments remain bound to the freedom and the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Again the report points beyond the apparent divergence about ministry to the basic underlying issue which is the nature of the divine commitment to and involvement in the Church. The implication is that whereas the Roman Catholic would strongly affirm "the extent to which God, in his plan for salvation, has bound himself to the Church, the ministry and the sacraments," the Reformed would affirm "the way the Church, the ministry and the sacraments remain bound to the freedom and the grace of the Holy Spirit."

One finds the same kind of probing in the treatment of "The Teaching Authority of the Church" (Pt. 3) which states:

In the history of the Church, the difference between Catholics and Reformed has always focussed on the alternative: "Scripture and Tradition" and "Scripture only." Catholics stressed the need for and the authority of the Church's teaching office in the interpretation of

82 Ibid., 460 (107).
Scripture, whereas the Reformed declared that Scripture interprets itself and, as God's Word, must be strictly distinguished from all human tradition, desiring in this way to do justice not only to the doctrine of justification but also to the total witness of the Old and New Testaments.

The underlying assumption common to both traditions is stated later as follows:

(40) The promise made by God to the Church is this: God remains faithful to his covenant and, despite the weaknesses and errors of Christians, he makes his Word heard in the Church.

Recognizing the rethinking that is happening among Christians about the relationship between Scripture and Tradition, the report yet finds underlying differences in the respective understandings of how, "Faithful to his covenant," God "makes his Word heard in the Church."

Suggesting that the difference involved "may rest on a difference in pneumatology," the report continues: "Catholic thought is primarily sustained by confidence in the continuing presence of the Spirit as a constantly renewed gift of the ascended Lord." It follows that:

(41) Catholics hold that God's faithfulness to his Church necessarily means that when the People of God unanimously declares that a doctrine has been revealed by God and therefore demands the assent of faith, it cannot fall into error. And in particular that those who have been specially charged with the teaching mission are protected by a special charisma when it is a matter of presenting the revealed message.

On the other hand:

(29) In the Reformed Churches, the so-called "scripture principle," i.e. the confidence that the Word of God constantly creates the understanding of itself afresh,

83 Ibid., 439 (24).
84 Ibid., 443 (40).
85 Ibid., 443 (41).
postulates in the life of the Church a carefully maintained relationship between the theologically trained servant of the Word and the theologically informed, responsible total community.\footnote{Ibid., 441 (29).}

Different styles of ministry are here seen to grow from various emphases in pneumatology and in the Word among other differences in the relationship between God and Church:

\begin{quote}
(42) The Reformed rejection of any infallibility which is accorded to men derives from a repugnance to bind God and the Church in this way, in view of the sovereignty of Christ over the Church and of the liberty of the Spirit, a repugnance strengthened by the experience of frequent errors and resistances to the Word on the part of the Church. In addition there is a fear lest confidence in the infallibility of a formulation should distort the personal character of faith in the living Christ. \footnote{Ibid., 443 (42).}
\end{quote}

This kind of creative and deliberate "hearing" of the other yields valuable questions in other areas of ecclesiology, especially in reconsidering the meaning of the Eucharist.\footnote{Ibid., 450,451 (72-90).}

This report finds the grounds for our differences in many factors, both within and without the Church.\footnote{Ibid., 460 (105).} It offers no special line of discussion to follow, as in the Rome-Methodist discussions. It does, however, consistently point toward deeper theological understanding as, for example, in these comments:

\begin{quote}
Too often, imbalances in theologies of the ministry are the result and sign of an insufficiently trinitarian theology.\footnote{Ibid., 457 (94).}
\end{quote}
Christ discloses himself under the conditions of historical relativity. Theology must undertake the difficult task of seeking the normative within the relative, and of applying what is thereby found to the concrete realization of the Church in different historical situations.91

(C) The Anglican/Lutheran Niagara Report 1987

Dialogue between these confessions had been conducted on the international level (together with more localized discussions) from 1970. At its first meeting in 1986 the Anglican--Lutheran International Continuation Committee (ALICC) planned a joint consultation on episcopate because of the recognition through these talks of:

. . . differences in the practice of episcopate (that is, pastoral leadership, co-ordination and oversight), especially the presence or absence of bishops in the historic episcopate, as the chief (if not the only remaining) obstacle to full communion.92

This consultation took place in Niagara Falls, Ontario, in late September, 1987 followed by the meeting of ALICC which composed the final draft of the Niagara Report.

The method adopted in these discussions is especially important in view of the challenges involved of which we delineate three:

(1) Their treatment of the practice of episcopate must be consistent with that in the bilateral discussions of these confessions with Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy.93

91 Ibid., 438 (19).
93 Ibid., 2,7.
(2) Their treatment of episcope must be fully cognisant of the results of biblical and historical studies, then widely accepted. About episcope in the New Testament Church the Niagara Report comments:

Study of the life of the early Christian communities reflected in the pages of the New Testament should make it unthinkable for us to isolate ordination at the hands of someone in linear succession to the apostles as the sole criterion of faithfulness to the apostolic commission. So many investigations have now confirmed this conclusion that the burden of proof has passed to those who would argue otherwise. . . . the New Testament does not entitle us to assert that such supervision was carried out by a uniform structure of government inherited directly from or transmitted by the apostles.94

Noting the "striking absence of interest in titles or official designations"95 in the New Testament Church compared with similar voluntary associations in that milieu, the report goes on to note similar difficulty in substantiating any style of ministry from the story of the post-New Testament Church.96 Because of the degree to which the Church has reflected the world more than the triumph of Christ, there is the same reticence regarding the normative value of one's ecclesiology as a result of more recent experience:

We cannot . . . commend uncritically either the re-appropriation of historic episcopate or the perpetuation of existing forms of the exercise of episcope. Neither of our Churches is able to claim such a degree of faithfulness, that is, a continuity in either doctrine or order, as would enable it to sit in judgement on the other.97

94 Ibid., 13,14.
95 Ibid., 26.
96 Ibid. 26-27.
97 Ibid. 40.
The absence of particular norms for this ministry in such traditionally foundational sources would necessitate a radical regrounding of their approach.

(3) The complexity of episcope:

The difference between us in the dimension of episcope include not only the presence or absence of bishops in the historic episcopate but also differences in the significance our Churches attach to such bishops. These differences serve as the focal point for mutual fears and suspicions, prejudices and distorted perceptions.

The report comments on the import of these "differences in . . . [their] significance" for current relations with other Churches as well as for expectations in dialogues with Roman Catholicism and with Orthodoxy. It then emphasizes "some perspectives on this topic," gained in this and earlier dialogues, "which we believe can help our Churches to overcome their differences."98 The terms "significance" and "perspectives" here refer to the range of meanings of episcope at issue.

In response to such challenges the methodology adopted involved as its foundation a reconsideration of the Church's vocation and nature as a context for the understanding of a ministry "authoritative, but not authoritarian."99

A strong eschatological note is basic to this understanding of the Church:

The life of the Church is based upon this already victorious engagement with the powers of sin and death. It is the free and unmerited grace of God which, through

98 Ibid., 7.
99 Ibid., 13.
Christ's sacrificial death on the cross, once for all, brings us into union with him.100

The Church thus serves the reign of God, not the reign of sin and death. The Church serves the mission of God's suffering and vulnerable love, not a mission of its own devising.101

We note that God's "engagement with the powers of sin and death" goes on within the Church as in the world:

There must therefore be a two-fold consciousness in the mind of every Christian; on the one hand of the magnificence of God's gifts, on the other of the need to be prepared for difficulty, struggle and temptation. Honest reading of the history of the Christian Church compels us to admit that that Church, like the people of Israel, has repeatedly been blind or disobedient, has compromised with local rulers, persecuted its prophets and suffered horrific disasters. From that history we learn the necessity for continuous vigilance and the need for penitence.102

What the Church has received is "insight into both the grounding and character of the Kingdom of God (Christ as 'Alpha' and 'way') as well as the final eschatological victory of the Kingdom of God (Christ as 'Omega' and 'fullness' or 'consummation')."103

Given the nature of this struggle between the reign of God and that of sin and death, the essential vocation of the Church is to witness to it:

God's plan is the unification of all things in Christ; that, and nothing less, is the goal. Before that goal is realized the church has the task of embodying in all that it is, says and does the promise that the goal is realizable. The whole Church is witness to that promise, and every member (limb or organ) of it is inescapably part of how that goal will be understood.104

100 Ibid., 10.
101 Ibid., 15.
102 Ibid., 11.
103 Ibid., 15.
104 Ibid., 11, 12.
As the sign that embodies the nature and realizability of the goal, the whole Church is therefore necessarily an hermeneutical instrument and process:

In this sense the Church as a whole may be compared to a system of communication, no part of which is strictly irrelevant to the conveying of coherent meaning. . . . when the Church wishes to be heard in a given culture, it is important that the whole of its "language" be coherently interrelated so that its message makes sense. Every member of the Church is an integral part of its witness and its mission . . . .

That the efficacy of Church as "system of communication" depends on its coherence and faithfulness is the point where one understands the need for and role of episcopacy. The Niagara Report notes five qualities essential to the Church's being—which also govern the nature of episcopacy:

(1) "Doxology," has a certain primacy in that it reflects the basic stance of the Church in gratitude. "Its mission is a gift . . . it has been given the pearl of great price." 106

(2) "Continuity." Acknowledged elements of continuity given by God are "the canonical Scriptures," "the gift of baptism and the Lord's Supper," "orthodox confession" and "whatever historical continuity its bishops and presbyters have been given." 107 However, "such symbols of continuity are . . . only part of the life of the church, and need constantly to be interpreted afresh so that their meaning and impact may be always experienced as the

105 Ibid., 12.
106 Ibid., 16.
107 Ibid., 18.
liberating gospel of God's grace."108 Indeed, "the mere preservation of symbols of continuity may diminish their effectiveness."109

(3) Disciplined life together as a community of disciples. The governing truth is that "the Church's mission is given by God to a community."110 Therefore the quality of that community life is of basic importance:

The temptation to autonomous individualism and anarchy on the one hand and to oppressive collectivism on the other hand means that the Church requires discipline in its corporate life and at the same time that such discipline needs to be grounded in the obedience of Christ.111

Reference to the "obedience of Christ" indicates the ground and quality of the necessary leadership: "Leadership is not to be like that of the Gentiles (Mark 10:43). . . Love is never indifferent."112

(4) Nurture. Christ also governs nurture both as its ground and resource, its example as the good shepherd and as its goal.113

(5) Direction and goal. "In the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus the Church has been given a vision of the outcome of history".114 This, the ground of our hope, governs the style of our apostolicity as those governed not by the power of death and self-preservation and selfishness.

108 Ibid., 18, 19.
109 Ibid.
110 Ibid., 19.
111 Ibid., 20.
112 Ibid.
113 Ibid., 21, 22.
114 Ibid., 22.
One readily grasps the relationship between episcope and these five demands of the Church's nature. This is clearly true of the three of these, "doxology," "disciplined life together as a community of disciples" and "nurture," in which the relationship is not made explicit. This ministry does receive explicit mention as an element of "continuity" and its relevance to the maintenance of "direction and goal" is noted as follows:

"God may often have to work despite and against the Church. Because the church betrays its mission it requires episcope to recall it, rebuke it and reform it."

The Niagara Report also affirms emphatically a symbolic role for episcope regarding these five characteristics:

All these requirements for the mission of the church in time are given in Christ, yet need to be realized in history. Each one--the praise of the community, its faithfulness and continuity, its disciplined life together, its activity of nurture and its sense of goal and direction--must be focused in symbolic acts and structures.

In so far as the Church maintains its apostolicity in these qualities, it develops a measure of distinctiveness from society; it also develops special interrelationships within its own kind of polis--both of which have necessary implications for the nature of episcope.

If episcope has this symbolic role, it also contributes to the Church's unity. The report mentions various facets of this role: The need for unity between the

115 Ibid., 24.
116 Ibid., 24, 25.
117 Ibid., 27.
local and the universal and the need for unity in both space and time:

The point is rather that the symbolic position occupied by the bishop had two dimensions, the spatial and the temporal. The connections between the local and the universal, the present and the past, are both aspects of the one koinonia or communion.118

The Niagara Report speaks generally of episcope rather than of any more particular style of this ministry. In its survey of the development of special ministries in the Church it finds that from this story one can extract no detailed pattern that can be normative:

The significance of these developments is not that they can be extracted from the seamless web of church history and given normative status. Their importance lies rather in the basic intention to which they gave expression.119

In speaking of the need for episcope as symbol the report does relate this role to the office of the bishop.

As a report on these meetings, this report contains a twenty paragraph statement of "The Truths We Share,"120 recommendations for action (with practical steps) by both confessions together, and a series of critical questions to be asked about the practice of episcope in these confessions.121 It has surely contributed to the developing interrelationship between the Anglican and Lutheran communions. (It is notable that the overall approach to the eschatological here is more compatible with Catholic concerns than that in the Rome-Lutheran Malta Report.)

118 Ibid., 30.
119 Ibid., 28.
120 Ibid., 34–39.
121 Ibid., 40–52.
Anglican-Lutheran dialogue and relationships have continued to develop in many parts of the world since the Niagara Report and, surely, in part because of it. We cite, for example, the Porvoo Common Statement of 1992 which:

"... provides the basis for full church fellowship between all Lutheran churches in Northern Europe (i.e. Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden) and all Anglican Churches of Great Britain and Ireland (i.e. Church of England, the Episcopal Church of Scotland, and the Churches of Wales and Ireland)."

Regarding the treatment of the crucial issue of the meaning of the episcopate in Porvoo Gassmann writes:

With this statement the significance of the episcopate in historic succession as sign and service of the apostolic continuity and catholic unity of the whole church is affirmed. The participating churches, however, will as a first step declare mutually their recognition as churches and the recognition of the existing ministries. Only after this act will there be in the future as a "normal" practice mutual participation in the consecration or installation of bishops as an expression--and not as a condition, this is the crucial point!--of existing communion.

Here mutual recognition of churches and ministries is a major accomplishment. However, one must ask how much of the lacuna about the significance of ordered ministry allowed in the Niagara Report remains here and how that will affect the developing relationships between the churches involved.

In this chapter we have considered a series of discussions that constitute major ecumenical accomplishments. This is largely due to the acknowledgment

123 Ibid. 5.
that episcopacy constituted a perennial challenge to Christian unity because of its manifold significance for the various ecclesiology in question. Each of these discussions between Protestant and Catholic traditions has been a seminal response in its own way. That in the United Kingdom in the 1950's constituted an early theological assault on this challenge. Those surveyed between Rome and the Protestant bodies have a value arising from the particular concentration of each: The Lutherans brought to the dialogue concern about the implications of Justification; the Methodists brought their concern about Sanctification; and the Reformed brought a more broadly hermeneutical concern. In the Niagara Report one finds a daring recount of the challenge of episcopacy within a radically new context which takes seriously both Protestant and Catholic concerns and which challenges both sides.
Chapter 10

EPISCOPACY IN DISCUSSIONS WITHIN WESTERN CATHOLICISM

In this chapter we review the discussions of episcopacy within Western Catholicism, considering first those between the Old Catholic Church and Anglicanism and then those between Anglicanism and Rome.

(A) Episcopacy In Discussions Between The Old Catholic Church And Anglicanism

Because the recognition of Anglican orders was understood to be the necessary prelude to the desired intercommunion between these churches, the status of the Anglican episcopate was a central issue in these discussions. This affirmation of their orders was especially important to Anglo-Catholics who had Pope Leo XIII's action denying the validity of Anglican Holy Orders much in mind.

At issue was the nature of the continuity of the Anglican episcopate with that of the Western Catholic Church. In a letter to Canterbury, in June of 1925, Francis Kenninck, Archbishop of Utrecht, expressed the heart of the matter as follows:

The Old Catholic Church of Utrecht has hitherto been in doubt as to the validity of Anglican Orders. Its doubt concerned, not the fact of Parker's consecration, but the sufficiency of the rite of Edward VI as an adequate
expression of the Catholic belief. . . . We believe that the Church of England has wished always to maintain the episcopal rule of the Church of antiquity, and that the Edwardine formula of consecration must be accounted valid. We therefore declare, without reservation, that the apostolic succession has not been broken in the Church of England.1

The resulting agreement, concluded in 1932, gave Anglicans the support desired from the Old Catholics. (It was also the basis for the development of a similar relationship for limited intercommunion between the Polish National Catholic Church and the Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. in 1947.)

The distinction in Archbishop Kenninck's letter between "the fact of Parker's consecration" and the adequacy of "the rite of Edward VI" was important. Leo XIII's action regarding Anglican orders had denied that there was the requisite intention in their ordination.

The Bonn Agreement constituted an important ecumenical initiative also in the following understanding:

Intercommunion does not require from either Communion the acceptance of all doctrinal opinion, sacramental devotion, or liturgical practice characteristic of the other, but implies that each believes the other to hold all the essentials of the Christian faith.2

This kind of distinction between "the essentials of the Christian faith" and other "doctrinal opinion, sacramental devotion, or liturgical practice" appears in later ecumenical literature.

(B) Episcopacy In Discussions Between Anglicanism And Rome

As in other discussions within the Catholic family, episcopacy here consistently plays a key and a dual role; more than any other issue, it brings into focus both commonality and difference.

The first notable Anglican-Roman Catholic discussions in this century, those at Malines, Belgium in 1921-25, illustrate this.

Involving only a few persons and without official status, these meetings indicate how akin in spirit were many Anglo-Catholics and ecumenically oriented Roman Catholics. The participants believed that a more positive relationship between the hierarchies of Canterbury and Rome would lead to a restored unity while allowing sufficient autonomy to Anglicanism. Of central importance were the nature of jurisdiction and authority. Noteworthy is a paper The Church of England United not Absorbed by Dom Lambert Beauduin.3 The continuation of the meetings was officially discouraged from both sides.

Following Vatican II, as in discussions in recent decades between other traditions, the representatives of these world communions who began official talks were much aware of the difficulties involved and of the consequent need for an adequate method. The overall theological

3 G.K.A. Bell, Documents on Christian Unity Vol. 2, 21-32.
strategy chosen will be as important to us as their resulting more particular conclusions about ministry.

We shall consider the work of the Preparatory Commission and the subsequent work of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) as follows: (1) The Challenge. (2) Theological Strategy. (3) Koinonia as Theological Context. (4) Resulting Insights into Ministry. (5) The Episcopate.

(1) The Challenge

In Unitatis Redintegratio, Vatican II affirmed that, of all the Western communions "... in which some Catholic traditions and institutions continue to exist, the Anglican Communion occupies a special place." One may assume that episcopacy in its broad meaning was esteemed as one of the prime "Catholic traditions and institutions."

This assumption was, of course, characteristic also of the subsequent discussions between these communions. For example, in the Elucidation following ARCIC's study on Ministry and Ordination we read:

We both maintain that episcopate must be exercised by ministers ordained in the apostolic succession (cf. para. 16). Both our communions have retained and remained faithful to the threefold ministry centred on episcopacy as the form in which this episcopate is to be exercised. Because our task was limited to examining relations between our two communions, we did not enter into the question whether there is any other form in which this episcopate can be realized.

4 Documents of Vatican II, 356.
5 References to the work of the Preparatory Commission and ARCIC will use the numbering scheme in those reports.
6 Ministry And Ordination (Elucidation), 4.
Even as episcopacy was assumed in this way as a key common Catholic element, so also would it, through its manifold meaning, signify the most basic difficulties. Thus we find it to be the dominant theme running through the final statement of the Preparatory Commission, the Malta Report of 1968. Indicative are these comments:

We are agreed that among the conditions required for intercommunion are both a true sharing in faith and the mutual recognition of ministry. The latter presents a particular difficulty in regard to Anglican Orders according to the traditional judgement of the Roman Church. . . .

Real or apparent differences between us come to the surface in such matters as the unity and indefectibility of the church and its teaching authority, the Petrine primacy, infallibility, and Mariological definitions.7

We note here such ministry-related issues as the status of "Anglican Orders," "the Petrine primacy," "infallibility" and ultimately the nature of the Church's unity and apostolicity. This concern around ministry-related issues is reflected also in its recommendation that a Permanent Commission be established with two main tasks: "One to examine the question of intercommunion, and the related matters of Church and Ministry; The Other to examine the question of authority, its nature, exercise, and implications."8

The major concern expressed in the recommendations in the Malta Report was reiterated by the recommended "Permanent Commission" as is indicated in ARCIC's major studies: Eucharistic Doctrine, 1971 (Elucidation 1979);

7 Malta Report, 19, 20.
8 Ibid., 22.

Despite progress in some areas, the character of authority remained a difficult challenge. This is evident in this comment in ARCIC's first report on Authority In The Church, the Venice Statement of 1976:

The question of authority in the Church has long been recognized as crucial to the growth in unity of the Roman Catholic Church and the churches of the Anglican Communion. It was precisely in the problem of papal primacy that our historical divisions found their unhappy origin. Hence, however significant our consensus on the doctrine of the Eucharist and of the Ministry, unresolved questions on the nature and exercise of Authority in the Church would hinder the growing experience of unity which is the pattern of our present relations.9

The reality of such difficulty and the necessity of a radical new approach had been acknowledged in The Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Michael Ramsey initiating these studies in 1966. Noting that "serious obstacles stand in the way," they expressed their "wish to leave in the hands of the God of mercy all that in the past has been opposed to this precept of charity . . . ."10 This need for a new approach to the remaining "fundamental theological and moral questions between us" was echoed in the Malta Report: "In this search we cannot escape the witness of our history; but we cannot resolve our

---

9 Authority In The Church I, Preface.
10 The Common Declaration (1966).
differences by mere reconsideration of, and judgement upon, the past."11

Encouraged by various developments in theology which had enabled the seeing of "old problems in new horizons" and by "theological convergence which has often taken [us] . . . by surprise," ARCIC sought to penetrate the age-old barriers as follows:

In our three Agreed Statements we have endeavoured to get behind the opposed and entrenched positions of past controversies. We have tried to reassess what are the real issues to be resolved. We have often deliberately avoided the vocabulary of past polemics, not with any intention of evading the real difficulties that provoked them, but because the emotive associations of such language have often obscured the truth.12

But more precisely how would they proceed to "get behind the opposed and entrenched positions," to "reassess what are the real issues"? And what were the nature and ground of those "real issues"?

As was indicated in the Malta Report, the commissioners did not find the grounds of the "real issues" in the fundamentals of the faith:

We record with great thankfulness our common faith in God our Father, in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit; our common baptism in the one Church of God; our sharing of the Holy Scriptures, of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, the Chalcedonian definition, and the teaching of the Fathers; our common Christian inheritance for many centuries with its living traditions of liturgy, theology, spirituality, Church order, and mission.13

Whence, then, the differences?

11 Malta Report, 17.
12 Authority In The Church I, 25.
13 Malta Report, 3.
Divergences since the sixteenth century have arisen not so much from the substance of this inheritance as from our separate ways of receiving it. They derive from our experience of its value and power, from our interpretation of its meaning and authority, from our formulation of its content, from our theological elaboration of what it implies, and from our understanding of the manner in which the Church should keep and teach the Faith. Further study is needed to distinguish between those differences which are merely apparent, and those which are real and require serious examination.14

But what is meant by "our separate ways of receiving," "our experience," "our interpretation," "our formulation," "our theological elaboration" and "our understanding of the manner in which the Church should keep and teach the faith"? Even if the difficulty is not in "the substance of this inheritance," the ecumenical story indicates that "our separate ways of receiving" must yet be a formidable obstacle to understanding.

(2) Theological Strategy

Subsequent agendas of the Preparatory Commission reflect the insights in a paper, "Where Should Dialogue Begin?" by Eugene Fairweather, delivered at its opening session. After citing various divisive factors between Anglicanism and Rome, he selected two general issues. These warranted special attention because they influence all other divisive factors.

He categorized them as "formal" and "material":

... I believe that the primary issues can be reduced to two, and that other questions are matters of controversy principally because these two issues, in one way or another, enter into them. For ready reference I have identified the "formal" issue as "the authority of

14 Ibid., 4.
Christian doctrine" and the "material" issue as "the nature of the Gospel."15

Fairweather described the nature of the formal issue, "the authority of Christian doctrine," thus: "Christianity being a religion of revelation . . . By what authority do we teach a given doctrine as true? What is the relation of any doctrinal formula to the revelation of God in Christ?"16 He suggested three areas for study: (a) Scripture and Tradition. (b) The structure of ecclesiastical authority. (c) The exercise of authority in doctrine.17

Emphasizing the givenness of Christianity in revelation, Fairweather uses "formal" to indicate the whole nature of the context of order, both conceptual and ecclesiological, in which revelation is received, retained, transmitted and expressed.

Giving more insight into the "formal" are his subsequent comments. Welcoming the development of "a more integrally personal and less verbalistic, abstract and formal notion of revelation" on all sides, he notes that "this development opens the way to the reconsideration of such questions as the transmission of revelation and the nature and exercise of ecclesiastical authority, particularly in the doctrinal sphere."18

16 Ibid., 45
17 Ibid., 45-47.
18 Ibid., 52.
(Fairweather also notes that "modern biblical, historical and theological studies have rendered obsolete the rigid dualism of Scripture and Tradition which bedevilled theological teaching and controversy . . . the old controversial stereotypes have lost whatever relevance they once had." 19)

With such encouragement, related developments are both possible and adviseable:

If consensus can be reached on a personal, rather than a narrowly conceptual, view of revelation, and on a communal rather than an atomistic view of the transmission of revelation, a profitable review of the nature and institutional form of the Church's teaching office should be feasible. . . .

On the same basis, the nature of dogmatic formulations can readily be conceived in a less "fundamentalist" way, i.e. with less preoccupation with the verbal forms of dogma--than has been the case in most churches in recent centuries. Such a change of emphasis could be of major importance for the reconsideration of past and present dogmatic conflicts. 20

The creative work in ecclesiology reflected in Vatican II's Lumen Gentium also gives encouragement to the notion that such developments are possible. Its "more organic and mystical," in contrast to "institutional and external," emphases would greatly help the treatment of particular problems in ecclesiology such as the nature and status of hierarchy and, therein, the papal primacy. 21

Even as this "formal" or broadly hermeneutical aspect has wide-ranging implications, so also does the "material" one, "the nature of the gospel":

19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid., 53.
That question may conveniently be subdivided as follows: Why, and how badly, does man need to hear the Gospel of salvation? By whom, and how, is man saved? To what extent can man participate in the work of his salvation?22

Clearly at issue are the central questions of justification and grace. Dr. Fairweather's sub-sections were entitled: "(a) The condition of man. (b) The redemption of man. (c) Redeemed man."23

On the material issue there has been much less helpful development in theology and "we have no major document of Vatican II to help us forward."24 More particular issues noted were: The meaning and effects of grace, merit, penance, Marian doctrine and devotion and the sacramental questions.25 Regarding transubstantiation, Fairweather noted Anglican suspicion of it "as a rationalistic intrusion into the sacramental mystery."26

The breadth of concerns involved in the "formal" and "material" issues is reflected in the topics chosen for the second meeting of the Preparatory Commission: (1) What is the Word? (2) How is the Word received by man? (3) How does the Word call the Church into being? (4) How does the Church proclaim the Word? (5) What should be the minimum structure and essential life of the local Church? (6) How do local Churches form the unity of the Universal Church? (7) To what

22 Ibid., 47,48.
23 Ibid., 48,49.
24 Ibid., 54.
25 Ibid., 55-57.
26 Ibid., 58.
extent can or should there be diversity in the United Church?

This comprehensive theological approach is indicated again in the recognition in the Preparatory Commission's Malta Report that "the theology of the ministry forms part of the theology of the Church and must be considered as such."27 And this comprehensive theological approach is found yet again in ARCIC's attempt to find a very different and very comprehensive "formal" framework within which to deal with the challenges facing it.

The process of radical reconsideration in which it was engaged necessarily involved a process of development regarding its "aim and methods."28 Indeed, in the Preface the participants note that it was not until their first Statement on Authority in the Church, the Venice Report of 1976, "that we spoke more fully and revealed a more developed awareness of our aims and methods."29

In its Introduction to the Final Report, where, in saying that its members had taken seriously the issues that have divided us," ARCIC goes on to indicate that its members "have sought solutions by re-examining our common inheritance, particularly the Scriptures."30 Unlike traditional western Catholic positions, ARCIC found no clear and direct historic line of authority between Christ or the apostles and the episcopate. Its use of these sources at

27 Malta Report, 19.
28 The Final Report, Preface.
29 Ibid.
crucial points therefore involved both clear affirmations and some responsible conjecture. In their report on Ministry and Ordination one finds comments such as these:

Within the New Testament ministerial actions are varied and functions not precisely defined. At least by the time of the Pastoral Epistles and 1 Peter, some ministerial functions are discernible in a more exact form. The early churches may well have had considerable diversity in the structure of pastoral ministry, though it is clear that some churches were headed by ministers who were called episcopoi and presbyteroi. While the first missionary churches were not a loose aggregation of autonomous communities, we have no evidence that "bishops" and "presbyters" were appointed everywhere in the primitive period.31

This occasional indefiniteness regarding the ordering of the early church, necessitated by lack of evidence, also occurs in some statements made about the institution of the papacy, as was noted in ARCIC's first report on Authority in the Church:

It is within the context of this historical development that the see of Rome, whose prominence was associated with the death there of Peter and Paul, eventually became the principal centre in matters concerning the Church universal.32

Similarly, in its second report on Authority in the Church, ARCIC included this comment regarding the "Petrine Texts":

The New Testament contains no explicit record of a transmission of Peter's leadership; nor is the transmission of apostolic authority in general very clear. Furthermore, the Petrine texts were subjected to differing interpretations as early as the time of the Church Fathers.33

Authority in the Church II could add:

31 Ministry And Ordination, 5,6.
32 Authority In The Church I, 12.
33 Authority In The Church II, 6.
Peter's role is never isolated from that of the apostolic group; what is true of the transmissability of the mission of the apostolic group is true of Peter as a member of it. . . . Even if Peter's role cannot be transmitted in its totality, however, this does not exclude the continuation of a ministry of unity guided by the Spirit among those who continue the apostolic mission.34

The kind of indefiniteness in the fundamental sources regarding the specifics of ministry at issue--together with the emphasis on "the spirit of Phil. 3: 13" in their mandate,35 "forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead"--supported the determination "to pursue together that restatement of doctrine which new times and conditions are, as we both recognize, regularly calling for." The framework which arose from this process is expressed in ARCIC's use of "koinonia" as "the governing concept of what follows . . . ."36:

(3) Koinonia as Theological Context

This theme of koinonia runs through our Statements. In them we present the eucharist as the effectual sign of koinonia, episcopate as serving the koinonia, and primacy as a visible link and focus of koinonia.37

Koinonia could suffice as this comprehensive and fundamental context because of these qualities:

(a) Its Place in New Testament Thought:

In the early Christian tradition, reflection on the experience of koinonia opened the way to the understanding of the mystery of the church. Although "koinonia" is never equated with "Church" in the New Testament, it is the term that most aptly expresses the

34 Ibid., 8.
35 The Final Report, Preface.
36 The Final Report, Preface.
mystery underlying the various New Testament images of the Church. When, for example, the Church is called the people of the new covenant or the bride of Christ, the context is primarily that of communion.38

(b) Its Actual and Potential Richness of Connotation:

_Koinonia_ bespeaks personal relationships:

When the Church is described as the body of Christ, the household of God, or the holy nation, the emphasis is upon the relationships among its members as well as upon their relationship with Christ the Head. . . . . . . Union with God in Christ Jesus through the Spirit is the heart of Christian _koinonia_. Among the various ways in which the term _koinonia_ is used in different New Testament contexts, we concentrate on that which signifies a relation between persons resulting from their participation in one and the same reality (cf. I John I:3). . . _koinonia_ with one another is entailed by our _koinonia_ with God in Christ. This is the mystery of the Church. . . . .39

Thus, _koinonia_, in its theological richness within the New Testament and its connotation there both of interpersonal communion and personal relationship, came to provide a promising context for ARCIC's reconsideration of the "formal" issues. Here we recall Fairweather's call for "a personal, rather than a narrowly conceptual, view of revelation" and "a communal rather than an atomistic view of the transmission of revelation" as a basis for "a profitable review of the nature and institutional form of the Church's teaching office." He also hoped that "on the same basis, the nature of dogmatic formulations can readily be conceived in a less "fundamentalist" way, i.e. with less preoccupation with the verbal forms of dogma--than has been

39 Ibid., 4, 5.
the case in most churches in recent centuries" and "for the reconsideration of past and present dogmatic conflicts."

(4) Resulting Insights into Ministry

(A) The whole Church as the Instrument of Ministry

Koinonia, as given in Jesus Christ, is the ground and nature of Christian being and of all ministry:

The life and self-offering of Christ perfectly express what it is to serve God and man. All Christian ministry, whose purpose is always to build up the community (koinonia), flows and takes its shape from this source and model. The communion of men with God (and with each other) requires their reconciliation. This reconciliation, accomplished by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is being realized in the life of the Church through the response of faith. While the Church is still in process of sanctification, its mission is nevertheless to be the instrument by which this reconciliation in Christ is proclaimed, his love manifested, and the means of salvation offered to men.

In its place in ARCIC's report on Ministry and Ordination, this statement constitutes a declaration of first principles. That reconciliation and communion are the very essence of the Church means that the whole Church as community must have primacy and that all specialized ministries must flow out of and serve this larger and fuller life:

The Christian community exists to give glory to God through the fulfilment of the Father's purpose. All Christians are called to serve this purpose by their life of prayer and surrender to divine grace, and by their careful attention to the needs of all human beings. They should witness to God's compassion for all mankind and his concern for justice in the affairs of men. They should offer themselves to God in praise and worship, and devote their energies to bringing men into the fellowship of Christ's people; and so under his rule

40 Eugene Fairweather, "Where Should Dialogue Begin?", 52.
41 Ministry And Ordination, 3.
of love. The goal of the ordained ministry is to serve this priesthood of all the faithful.42

In their subsequent Elucidation of this report, after explaining that much attention was necessarily given in it to ordered ministry because therein lay the major divisive issues, ARCIC continued: "Here the ordained ministry is firmly placed in the context of the ministry of the whole Church and exists for the service of all the faithful."43

Thus within this context ordained ministry develops:

Like any human community the Church requires a focus of leadership and unity, which the Holy Spirit provides in the ordained ministry. This ministry assumes various patterns to meet the varying needs of those whom the church is seeking to serve. . . [The minister] is to discern what is of the Spirit in the diversity of the Church's life and promote its unity.44

Here is a very clear sense of the Holy Spirit enabling ordered ministry within the life of the whole Church as it moves through history, an understanding of variety and a process of development in ministry to differing milieux.

(B) The Nature of Authority

The final ground of authority in the Church must, of course, be the nature of the truth which is the Gospel. The nature of that truth must therefore govern the nature of Christian authority. The "Introduction" to the first statement on Authority in the Church provides another

42 Ibid., 7.
43 Ministry And Ordination (Elucidation), 2.
44 Ministry And Ordination, 7.
reminder of how thoroughly ARCIC would ground this in koinonia:

(1) The confession of Christ as Lord is the heart of the Christian faith. To him God has given all authority in heaven and on earth. As Lord of the Church he bestows the Holy Spirit to create a communion of men with God and with one another. To bring this koinonia to perfection is God's eternal purpose. The church exists to serve the fulfilment of this purpose when God will be all in all.45

The implications of koinonia for the nature of truth are more clear in this comment, quoted earlier, from ARCIC's Introduction to its Final Report:

Union with God in Christ Jesus through the Spirit is the heart of Christian koinonia. Among the various ways in which the term koinonia is used in different New Testament contexts, we concentrate on that which signifies a relation between persons resulting from their participation in one and the same reality.46

That Christian truth is known within relationships, that it is known within those relationships enabled by the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ, gives the following five qualities to Christian authority:

(1) It gives a primacy to the personal relationships of the apostles with Jesus of Nazareth through which that truth was made known and therefore to the Holy Scriptures which flowed from those relationships as absolutely normative:

Through the gift of the Spirit the apostolic community came to recognize in the words and deeds of Jesus the saving activity of God and their mission to proclaim to all men the good news of salvation. Therefore they preached Jesus through whom God has spoken finally to men. Assisted by the Holy Spirit they transmitted what they had heard and seen of the life and words of Jesus.45 Authority In The Church I, 1. 46 The Final Report, Introduction, 5.
and their interpretation of his redemptive work. Consequently the inspired documents in which this is related came to be accepted by the church as a normative record of the authentic foundation of the faith.47

(ii) It is the quality of this truth also as personal and communal that determines that, upon this basis, the Church must re-learn it in various milieux:

Entrusted with these documents the Christian community is enabled by the Holy Spirit to live out the gospel and so to be led into all truth. It is therefore given the capacity to assess its faith and life and to speak to the world in the name of Christ. Shared commitment and belief create a common mind in determining how the gospel should be interpreted and obeyed. By reference to this common faith each person tests the truth of his own belief.48

In so far as there is a deposit of faith for the church, it is not primarily in libraries, watched over by scholars, but in the ongoing calling of the laos.

(iii) Because truth is communal and relational, to a degree contextual while subject to scriptural norms, there is necessarily variety and development within the expression of the Christian faith:

The Church's life and word are shaped by its historical origins, by its subsequent experience, and by its endeavour to make the relevance of the gospel plain to every generation. . . . . . . . . . . .

All generations and cultures must be helped to understand that the good news of salvation is also for them. It is not enough for the church simply to repeat the original apostolic words. It has also prophetically to translate them in order that the hearers in their situation may understand and respond to them.49

This being so, there will always be an incompleteness about the Church's attempts to state the

47 Authority In The Church I, 2.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid., 15.
truth of Christ although some will, through their transparency to the Gospel, have a universality and normative value above others:

Although these clarifications are conditioned by the circumstances which prompted them, some of their perceptions may be of lasting value. In this process the Church itself may come to see more clearly the implications of the gospel. This is why the Church has endorsed certain formulas as authentic expressions of its witness, whose significance transcends the setting in which they were first formulated.50

(iv) Because truth through koinonia is known and continually being re-discovered within developing and changing community and relationships, it is the whole Church which is the final arbiter of Christian truth in the Holy Spirit—according to scriptural norms, of course. Here the currently developing doctrine of "reception" becomes important and this is one of the places where ARCIC mentions it:

The community, for its part, must respond to and assess the insights and teaching of the ordained ministers. Through this continuing process of discernment and response, in which the faith is expressed and the gospel is pastorally applied, the Holy Spirit declares the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the faithful may live freely under the discipline of the gospel.51

(v) Thus there can be no final basis of authority apart from the truth in Jesus Christ as known and shared by the whole Church as koinonia:

The common life in the body of Christ equips the community and each of us its members with what they need to fulfill this responsibility: they are enabled so to live that the authority of Christ will be mediated through them. This is christian authority: when

50 Ibid.
51 Ibid., 6.
Christians so act and speak, men perceive the authoritative word of Christ.52

(5) The Episcopate

We note finally the implications of koinonia for episcopacy as follows: (a) Episcopacy and Sacramentality. (b) Episcopacy as Guardian of Gospel Truth. (c) Episcopacy and the Church. (d) The Papacy.

(A) Episcopacy and Sacramentality

ARCIC would retain the essentials of Catholic sacramentality. For example, in its treatment of the Eucharist, while affirming the unrepeatable nature of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary, it affirms that here 'the Church enters into the movement of his self-offering.'53 Again, affirming 'sacramental realism' over 'mere symbolism,'54 ARCIC states that Christ is truly present: 'The bread and wine . . . become his body and blood.'55

Koinonia affects ARCIC's treatment of the Eucharist in the espousal of a personal relationship with God. This is a consistent theme throughout ARCIC's statement on Eucharistic Doctrine and its Elucidation. For example, the Introduction to the former says that "God calls us into a new relationship with himself as our Father and with one another as his children . . ."56 This involves the rejection

52 Ibid., 3.
53 Eucharistic Doctrine (Elucidation), 5.
54 Ibid.
55 Eucharistic Doctrine, 6.
56 Ibid., 2.
of any "materialistic conception of Christ's presence"57 sometimes associated with sacramentality.

Three key insights were part of this reconsideration of the nature of the Eucharist:

First, the Eucharist is to be treated within the context of memorial or anamnesis:

The notion of memorial as understood in the passover celebration at the time of Christ—i.e. the making effective in the present of an event in the past—has opened the way to a clearer understanding of the relationship between Christ's sacrifice and the eucharist.58

Second, Christ's presence is made real, not only through the bread and wine, but through all facets of the Eucharist:

Christ is present and active, in various ways, in the entire eucharistic celebration. It is the same Lord who through the proclaimed word invites his people to his table, who through his minister presides at that table, and who gives himself sacramentally in the body and blood of his paschal sacrifice.59

Third, His presence is effected in Christ's transcendence at the right hand of the Father:

It is the Lord present at the right hand of the Father, and therefore transcending the sacramental order, who thus offers to his church, in the eucharistic signs, the special gift of himself.60

These shifts in emphasis have implications for ministry, so thoroughly related in Catholicism with the Eucharist. We note the following:

57 Eucharistic Doctrine (Elucidation), 6.
58 Eucharistic Doctrine, 5.
59 Ibid., 7.
60 Ibid.
That it is the transcendent Christ who enables His real presence, that the real presence eventuates through the anamnesis of its meaning in the wholeness of the sacrament de-emphasizes the notion that the line of authority through the historic episcopate and the Petrine succession guarantees its effectiveness, a long held position.

The potency of ministry as symbol in contributing to the whole meaning of the sacrament is central to ARCIC's reconsideration of the role of the priest (and thence of episcopal authority) within the Eucharist. The following quote significantly reflects the results of biblical and historical scholarship which effect a reconsideration of the priest's role as representative:

The priestly sacrifice of Jesus was unique, as is also his continuing High Priesthood. Despite the fact that in the New Testament ministers are never called "priests" (hierês), Christians came to see the priestly role of Christ reflected in these ministers and used priestly terms in describing them. Because the eucharist is the memorial of the sacrifice of Christ, the action of the presiding minister in reciting again the words of Christ at the Last Supper and distributing to the assembly the holy gifts is seen to stand in a sacramental relation to what Christ himself did in offering his own sacrifice. So our two traditions commonly use priestly terms in speaking about the ordained ministry. Such language does not imply any negation of the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ by any addition or repetition. There is in the eucharist a memorial (anamnesis) of the totality of God's reconciling action in Christ, who through his minister presides at the Lord's Supper and gives himself sacramentally.61

Here, then, is a major shift in the understanding of the horizontal and vertical relationships operative in the Eucharist. The koinonia emphasis, which articulates the

61 Ministry And Ordination, 13.
shift, places the episcopate as instrument of sacramentality in a context somewhat more personal and symbolic than juridical and institutional.

(B) Episcopacy as Guardian of Gospel Truth

As both the Preparatory Commission and ARCIC recognized, the character of authority is interrelated with the current understanding of truth. The Western Church has been associated with the highly propositional and legalistic.

The different understanding of truth in Christ associated with koinonia has major implications for episcopacy as guardian of that truth:

First, instead of the often assumed special, even privileged, relationship of the episcopal hierarchy with the "deposit" of truth given in Christ, ARCIC indicates a very different relationship in which the whole Church is recipient and mediator of revelation:

The perception of God's will for his Church does not belong only to the ordained ministry but is shared by all its members. All who live faithfully with the koinonia may become sensitive to the leading of the Spirit and be brought towards a deeper understanding of the gospel and of its implications in diverse cultures and changing situations. Ordained ministers commissioned to discern these insights and give authoritative expression to them, are part of the community, sharing its quest for understanding the gospel in obedience to Christ and receptive to the needs and concerns of all.

The community, for its part, must respond to and assess the insights and teaching of the ordained ministers. Through this continuing process of discernment and response, in which the faith is expressed and the gospel is pastorally applied, the Holy Spirit declares the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the faithful may live freely under the discipline of the gospel.62

The truth of the Gospel, as koinonia, is known and lived within the whole Church. It is from, or rather, within that source that episcopacy must discern the truth. Indeed, there is a reciprocal relationship of discernment and assessment between episcope and community.

Second, koinonia demands a different kind of responsibility in episcopacy for the preservation of truth in Christ. Rather than being vehicle of truth by way of participation in the episcopal succession, the bishop "is responsible for preserving and promoting the integrity of the koinonia in order to further the Church's response to the Lordship of Christ and its commitment to mission."63 This responsibility for the quality of community demands a much more sensitive, personal and collegial administration of authority than has sometimes been associated with episcopacy.

(C) Episcopacy and the Church

The main thrust of ARCIC's treatment of ordered ministry is to reconsider its place within the whole Church. We noted earlier that biblical and historical studies make this possible and obligatory. The context for ordered ministry is the living, changing koinonia in Christ which is the reality of the Church. It is within this form of life

62 Authority In The Church I, 6.
63 Ibid., 5.
that ministry is enabled by the Holy Spirit to meet the demands of the whole community in various milieux.

This understanding of a developing and reciprocal relationship between ordained ministry and Church is reflected in the following:

The goal of the ordained ministry is to serve this priesthood of all the faithful. Like any human community, the Church requires a focus of leadership and unity, which the Holy Spirit provides in the ordained ministry. This ministry assumes various patterns to meet the varying needs of those whom the Church is seeking to serve, and it is the role of the minister to coordinate the activities of the Church's fellowship and to promote what is necessary and useful for the church's life and mission. He is to discern what is of the Spirit in the diversity of the Church's life and promote its unity.64

Somewhat in tension with this koinonia-oriented treatment of Holy Orders, ARCIC retains the traditional role of the priest in the sacraments, as we have seen, and a distinction between the ordained and the more general ministry in the Church. In its report on Ministry and Ordination ARCIC states:

Nevertheless [the ordained] ministry is not an extension of the common Christian priesthood but belongs to another realm of the gifts of the Spirit. It exists to help the Church to be "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, to declare the wonderful deeds of him who called [them] out of darkness into his marvellous light." (I Peter 2:9)65

In response to questions about this statement, in its Elucidation of this report ARCIC said:

The word priesthood is used by way of analogy when it is applied to the people of God and to the ordained ministry. These are two distinct realities which relate, each in its own way, to the high priesthood of Christ,

64 Ministry And Ordination, 7.
65 Ibid., 13.
the unique priesthood of the new covenant, which is their source and model.66

It was within this general treatment of "Priesthood" in this Elucidation that ARCIC made the statement quoted earlier: "Here the ordained ministry is firmly placed in the context of the ministry of the whole Church and exists for the service of all the faithful."

Thus ARCIC struggled to rethink the context for ordained ministry while retaining for it a distinct reality and a distinct apostolicity.

This same struggle is evident in ARCIC's more particular treatment of episcopacy. For example, in noting the particular needs of the church for "oversight," it declares: "This responsibility involves fidelity to the apostolic faith, its embodiment in the life of the Church today, and its transmission to the Church of tomorrow."67

The role of the bishop is stated more generically as follows:

In the ordination of a new bishop, other bishops lay hands on him, as they request the gift of the Spirit for his ministry and receive him into their ministerial fellowship. Because they are entrusted with the oversight of other churches, this participation in his ordination signifies that this new bishop and his church are within the communion of churches. Moreover, because they are representative of their churches in fidelity to the teaching and mission of the apostles and are members of the episcopal college, their participation also ensures the historical continuity of this church with the apostolic church and of its bishop with the original apostolic ministry. The communion of the churches in mission, faith, and holiness, through time and space, is thus symbolized and maintained in the bishop. Here are comprised the essential features of what is meant in our

66 Ministry and Ordination (Elucidation), 2.
67 Ministry and Ordination, 9.
two traditions by ordination in the apostolic succession.68

The bishop, therefore, serves koinonia both through the functions of oversight and through the highly symbolic nature of the office.

(D) The Papacy.

One finds in the ARCIC reports two main grounds upon which to reconsider this ministry:

First it notes the needs of koinonia. In the following section, ARCIC points out the essential relationship between koinonia and catholicity, understood both in terms of universality and wholeness:

A local church cannot be truly faithful to Christ if it does not desire to foster universal communion, the embodiment of that unity for which Christ prayed. This communion is founded on faith in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, crucified, risen, ascended, and now living through his Spirit in the Church. Every local church must therefore ever seek a deeper understanding and clearer expression of this common faith, both of which are threatened when churches are isolated by division.69

Koinonia therefore necessarily involves the wholeness of the Christian family in time and space. It is in this regard that the great ecumenical councils and the doctrine of the reception by the whole Church are best treated. And it is in terms of the wholeness of the Christian community that primacy is to be understood:

According to Christian doctrine the unity in truth of the Christian community demands visible expression. We agree that such visible expression is the will of God and that the maintenance of visible unity at the

68 Ibid., 16.
69 Authority In The Church I, 13.
universal level includes the episcope of a universal primate. . . .70

The second ground it notes regarding the papacy is the unique historic significance of the see of Rome. In writing of the impulse to unity that was involved in episcope in the service of koinonia, ARCIC continued:

It is within the context of this historical development that the see of Rome, whose prominence was associated with the death there of Peter and Paul, eventually became the principal centre in matters concerning the Church universal.71

Therefore, in view of the need for "the complementary primatial and conciliar aspects of episcope serving the koinonia of the churches . . . at the universal level," ARCIC concludes: "It seems appropriate that in any future union a universal primacy such as has been described should be held by that see."72

This pioneering exercise in the use of koinonia as a theological framework/context for "that restatement of doctrine which new times and conditions are . . . calling for,"73 certainly as it pertains to ministry, is surely something of an ecumenical classic.

The decision of F. & O. (1994) to use koinonia as the conceptual framework for a major study on ecclesiology is both a tribute to ARCIC I and an indication that more remains to be accomplished in this regard.

70 Authority In The Church I (Elucidation), 8.
71 Authority In The Church I, 12.
72 Ibid., 23.
73 The Final Report, Preface.
Response to the work of ARCIC I (and ARCIC II) has been mostly enthusiastic but not without serious questions. Less public but arguably more troublesome than the issue of female ordination and consecration was the tenor of the response to ARCIC I by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

What seems to have distressed Anglicans most was not so much (a) a request for more precision and clarity in some statements or (b) disagreements in some major issues (many pertaining to ministry)—both concerns understandable to a degree)—but the tone of "The Observations."

The stark assumption of the finality of positions adopted by Trent and Vatican I together with a certain attitude to dogmatic statement seemed a denial of the spirit in which ARCIC had been inaugurated and had functioned.

This observation was made, not surprisingly, by 125 leaders of Evangelical Anglicanism. (It was emphasized by some parts of Roman Catholicism also.) It was made from perhaps a broader Anglican perspective by Paul Avis. Distinguishing between differences in doctrine and the "apparently insuperable" ones of "horizon," he adds:

These ultimate assumptions concern the nature of truth, the character and claims of reason, the status of dogmatic statements, the meaning of revelation and the extent of contingent human and historical elements in its interpretation and transmission. ARCIC I barely touched on these. But some will ask, What have these

---

75 Ibid., 283-297.
76 Ibid., 171-183.
questions to do with learning to love God together and worshipping and serving in one church—why should they be a barrier? To which I reply that the practical and pastoral implications of these deep-seated differences would soon become apparent in a prematurely unified church, in divergent interpretations of the scope and function of authority in the church—blowing wide open any contrived scheme of unity. 77

This questioning from both sides about the degree of consensus actually accomplished in ARCIC I may be viewed in a positive light as a necessary note of realism, indicating that many of the subtle but important differences between these traditions have yet to be seriously approached, as in other major dialogues, including BEM.

77 Paul Avis, Ecumenical Theology: And The Elusiveness of Doctrine, xii-xiii.
CHAPTER 11

THE TREATMENT OF EPISCOPACY IN NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN WESTERN AND EASTERN CATHOLICISM.

In this chapter we consider discussions between Western Catholicism and Orthodoxy, beginning with Anglicanism and then commenting briefly on the Roman Catholic-Orthodox relationship.

(A) ANGLICANISM AND ORTHODOXY

Major historical factors such as the migration of peoples, the Russian revolution and the World Wars (through the special pastoral needs that ensued), together with the demands of the ecumenical movement, have brought about increased interaction between Eastern and Western Christianity. Here the relationship between Orthodoxy and Anglicanism has played a special part. This has involved a variety of unofficial and official encounters, individual and group relationships, in which doctrinal expertise and church leadership on both sides has been engaged. For example, Orthodox delegations have been present at a number of more recent Lambeth Conferences.

That episcopacy has become central to these discussions is indicated in this comment by Nicolas Zernov:

In the nineteenth century the Filioque Clause and the Thirty-Nine Articles were two main items of discussion,
but in the twentieth century the emphasis has been shifted to the question of Orders.1

This chapter will reflect the areas of meaning with which episcopacy has functioned within this developing relationship: (1) Episcopacy as Symbol of Commonality. (2) Episcopacy as Focus for Differences in Ecclesiology. (3) Episcopacy and the Sacramental. (4) Episcopacy as Focus for Major Underlying Theological and Cultural Differences.

(1) Episcopacy as Symbol of Commonality

To speak of episcopacy as a symbol of commonality is to speak of the capacity of the episcopate to embody and express the degree of Catholicity held in common by the two traditions. That there has been a special kinship within Catholic Christianity between Anglicanism and Orthodoxy is indicated by L.V. Istauridis:

We can perhaps say that Orthodox feel a special sympathy for the Anglican Church and a greater closeness to it than to any other non-Orthodox Church. The same can also be said of Anglicans with regard to the Orthodox.2

Istauridis affirms the role of the episcopate in this relationship as follows:

It is immediately clear to anyone who studies our subject, that the Orthodox and Anglican Churches have many points in common which naturally draw them closer to one another. One of the most important of these is Episcopacy. . . . 3

3 Ibid., 150,151.
The developing relationship between Anglicanism and Orthodoxy has not come easily. The effort could hardly have been sustained without this kinship or this special expression of it.

This Catholic commonality has been particularly fostered by the fact that Anglican participation in this relationship has consistently been Anglo-Catholic. One interesting aspect of the relationship has been the fact that both Orthodoxy and Anglicanism have had to confront declarations of Rome of which we note especially the declaration of Pope Leo XIII in 1896 "that ordinations performed according to the Anglican rite are utterly invalid and altogether void."4

This Catholic kinship has to do with the measure of agreement on the essential nature of the Church. Both churches affirm the important status of the visible church in the economy of salvation, the importance of historical continuity within the Church, sacramentality and the general approach to liturgy. In all of these factors Holy Orders play a special role in each tradition.

Thus in its primary and most fundamental role the institution of episcopacy in general and its expression through individual bishops, primates and patriarchs in particular functions as a sign of the fundamental Catholic commonality which makes this story of commonality possible. (It is also this quality of episcopacy which has given

credibility, in the mind of Orthodoxy, to episcopal representatives of Anglicanism.)

(2) Episcopacy as Focus for Differences in Ecclesiology

Episcopacy has also signified, however, broad divergences about the nature of the Church. For example:

(A) Episcopacy in these traditions involves two different relationships of ordered ministry to the Church

Within western Catholicism, in the ARCIC discussions, Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism affirmed that "... their ministry is not an extension of the common Christian priesthood but belongs to another realm of the gifts of the Spirit." 5

Orthodoxy denies such a distinction to ordered ministry. Georges Florovsky comments on the interrelationship between the episcopate and the whole Church as follows:

Of course, the episcopal order is never detached from the body of the church; it is not a self-sufficient system, for, especially in ordaining and consecrating, bishops always act as leaders of definite local communities. A retired bishop has no right to ordain, not because he has no "authority" or "jurisdiction," but rather because he is not representing or leading a particular local church. 6

It follows that it is the whole Church which is apostolic, not simply the historic episcopate. Nikos A. Nissiotis writes:

One should not therefore think of a direct line of succession from Christ—the twelve apostles and the bishops, etc.—around which the lay members are added. The institution is not a work completed by Christ and the election of the twelve apostles. It is fulfilled by the operation of the Spirit, who, on the basis of the sacrifice of the blood of Christ, transmits salvation by means of the pastoral ministry to the whole Body of believers, which precedes and makes possible the election and ordination of the bishops and pastors, who are hearers of the call of Jesus in a special and personal way.7

Nissiotis indicates a more limited role for the episcopate in the Church's continuity than has been typical in Western Catholicism.

(B) In these two traditions the episcopate is the focus of two quite different approaches to unity

As a result of his study of Anglican—Orthodox discussions, V.T. Istaurides generalizes:

The Anglicans have always laid the greatest emphasis on the need for sacramental intercommunion, and in recent times have made this their primary aim. The Orthodox, however, have rejected the idea (though sometimes individual members, particularly in emergencies, have either supported it or have been undecided on the matter), and have insisted that unity in doctrine must first be obtained, and that only then can intercommunion follow.8

In proposing intercommunion as a viable first step towards unity, Anglicans have viewed the status of the episcopate as guarantor of the sacraments as a particular element within their limited strategy. However, the Orthodox treat the episcopate only within the wholeness of the Church.

8 Istauridis, Orthodoxy and Anglicanism, 150.
This latter emphasis has been a consistent theme in Orthodox critiques of the ecumenical movement. For example, the fundamental importance of the whole Church was affirmed as follows in the response by the Russian Orthodox to the World Council's study on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (or BEM):

The fundamental ecclesiological problem of unity lies not in an "ecumenical" mutual recognition of "ministry", but in recognition of the church, in which this ministry is exercised, as a "true church" confessing the faith of the apostles. This is the essential sign and the prerequisite for the visible unity or the restoration of the unity of the churches. Such was the understanding of unity in the early church, and it remains as such in the Orthodox Church to this day.9

This is why, in their message to the New Delhi World Council of Churches Assembly, the Orthodox Churches said: "For the Orthodox the basic ecumenical problem is that of SCHISM."10 The rift within the Church (and for the Orthodox this must be the visible Church) has to do with its wholeness in its confession of faith and must be treated accordingly.

(3) Episcopacy and the Sacramental

The sacramental role of the episcopate brings more sharply into focus major differences within the Catholic commonality of these traditions.

In their desire for inter-communion with Orthodoxy out of pastoral and long-term ecumenical interests,

Anglicans have treated the issue of the necessary relationship of Holy Orders with the sacraments in a quite direct way. Their emphasis has been on continuity in the historic episcopate and the sufficiency of the ordination service. Within these parameters they were confident about their own Orders and have not questioned those of Orthodoxy (the exception being the Syrian Orthodox where monophysitism had been a factor).

However, the Orthodox attitude to Anglican Holy Orders has been much more complex. For instance, expressing an early disquiet, in 1913 Prof. K. Dyovouniotis contended that the solution of the problem of Anglican orders "depends on its being proved (a) that the consecration of Matthew Parker, the first Anglican Bishop at the time of the Reformation, was duly and canonically performed . . ." 11 Historical investigation apparently satisfied many Orthodox regarding point (a). For example, the recognition of Anglican Orders by the Oecumenical Patriarchate in 1922 began with this affirmation: "That the ordination of Matthew Parker as Archbishop of Canterbury by four bishops is a fact established by history." 12 Similarly, the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Rumania stated in 1925: "That from the historical point of view no obstacle exists to the recognition of the Apostolic succession of Anglican orders." 13

11 V.T. Istauridis, Orthodoxy and Anglicanism, 22.
12 V.T. Istauridis, Orthodoxy and Anglicanism, 126.
However, Prof. Dyovouniotis wanted proof also "(b) that the Anglican church's teaching about Ordination and about the Sacraments in general is both correct and also in agreement with Orthodox doctrine on these subjects."14

Such concerns were expressed in a week-long meeting in June 1935 at the Patriarchal Palace, Bucharest, between delegations of the Rumanian Orthodox and Anglican Churches. Very important was the assurance that Anglican Holy Orders, while not one of the two "pre-eminent" Sacraments, "may be considered to have the character of Sacraments and are commonly called Sacraments."15

Part of what was involved is the intention expressed in ordination--the issue raised in the 1896 action of Leo XIII regarding Anglican Orders. The statement of the Oecumenical Patriarch in 1922 indicated satisfaction in this regard:

That in this ordination and those subsequent to it there are found in their fullness those orthodox and indispensable visible and sensible elements of valid episcopal ordination--namely, the laying on of hands and the Epiklesis of the all-Holy spirit, and also the purpose to transmit the Charisma of the Episcopal ministry.16

Similarly the discussions with the Patriarch of Alexandria in 1930 referred to the transmission of "a special charisma."17

Such assurances apparently satisfied many Orthodox in their more general questioning of Anglican

14 Istauridis, Orthodoxy and Anglicanism, 22.
15 Ibid., 46, 47.
16 Ibid., 126.
17 Ibid., 18.
sacramentalism. We noted above the positive action by the Oecumenical Patriarch in 1922. Stephen Neill comments:

. . . the Oecumenical Patriarch and the Holy Synod of Constantinople put forward for the consideration of the Orthodox Churches a memorable statement of its judgment on the validity of Anglican ordinations: "As before the Orthodox Church, the Ordinations of the Anglican Episcopal Confession of bishops, priests, and deacons, possess the same validity as those of the Roman, Old Catholic, and Armenian Churches possess, in as much as all essentials are found in them which are held indispensable from the Orthodox point of view for the recognition of the 'Charisma' of the priesthood derived from the Apostolic Succession." By 1935 four other churches, those of Alexandria, Jerusalem, Cyprus, and Rumania, had expressed their agreement with the opinion of Constantinople.18

However, that the action by the Oecumenical Patriarch did not satisfy all the Orthodox (a Professor Bratsiotis called it "a reckless gesture"19) indicates that this was a more complex matter.

That Anglican sacramentalism more generally remained problematic for many Orthodox was made clear in the action of the 1948 Moscow Conference of the Heads of the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches. In its resolution regarding Anglican orders it said:

The doctrine contained in the "Thirty-Nine Articles" of the Anglican Church differs markedly from the dogmas, doctrine and tradition confessed by the Orthodox Church; . . . the solution of the question of the recognition of the validity of Anglican Orders must first of all be based upon a doctrine of the sacraments which agrees with Orthodoxy. Personal expressions of agreement by members of the Anglican hierarchy to a modification of the teaching of these "Articles" concerning the sacraments in the direction of an approach to Orthodoxy cannot serve as a basis for the solution of the question in a positive sense. Therefore, if the Orthodox Church cannot consent to recognize the rightness of Anglican

18 Ibid., 371.
19 Ibid., 42.
teaching on sacraments in general and on the sacrament of Holy Order in particular, neither can she recognize as valid the Anglican ordinations that have taken place. If the Churches of Constantinople, Jerusalem, Cyprus, Rumania and other autocephalous Churches have expressed their favourable opinion on the recognition of the validity of Anglican ordinations, we have information that this recognition was conditional.20

(4) Episcopacy as Focus of Major Underlying Theological and Cultural Differences

The 1948 Moscow Conference of Orthodox leaders went on to request a major reconsideration by Anglicans of their life, with special emphasis on sacramentality. It expressed:

. . . the desire that the Anglican Church should alter its teaching of faith from the points of view of dogma, canon law and ecclesiology, and in particular its actual conception of the holy sacraments and more especially of the sacrament of Ordination. 21

The conference indicated that broad range of difference between these traditions about which Orthodoxy felt disquiet but could hardly articulate fully. Brought to a focus in the issue of Holy Orders and the nature of sacramentality, it was implied also in the differences noted above concerning the respective relationships between episcopacy and the Church.

That the nature of this underlying divergence is not readily articulated is implied by Nicolas Zernov:

In spite of negotiations for four hundred years between Anglicans and Eastern Orthodox, no agreement has been reached even on what are the main causes of their disunity. 22

21 Ibid., 36.
22 Nicolas Zernov, Orthodox Encounter, 154.
Thus Orthodox statements about the episcopate often sound like those of Western Catholicism. For example, the response to BEM by the Bulgarian Orthodox seems to affirm the historic episcopate as would Western Catholics:

The ordained minister transmits invisibly, but really, God's blessing to the faithful through the sacraments, established in the church . . . . By passing on to their successors the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the authority received from Christ himself, the holy apostles had preserved and handed down in the church the charism of the priesthood through an uninterrupted succession of the apostolic ordination. 23

And yet, one finds the Orthodox trying to articulate major differences with Anglicanism about Holy Orders as sacramental which are real and unavoidable to them. One finds this in their preference for the word "mystery" over "sacrament," as in this 1925 statement by the Rumanian Orthodox:

That from the dogmatic point of view the validity of Anglican orders depends upon the Anglican Church itself and especially upon whether or not that Church recognizes Holy Orders to be a Mystery (Sacrament). 24

The broad importance of "mystery" is central to this statement in the response of the Orthodox Church to BEM:

As is known, the Orthodox Church uses the term "mystery" (mysterium) and not "sacrament," and regards the church, founded by the Lord Jesus Christ, as a mystery from which the sacraments ensue. 25

Nicholas Zernov comments:

The Greek word mysterion, for example, is not identical with the Latin word sacramentum. The former underlines the hidden mystical side of the sacramental action and

25 Max Thurian, ed., Churches Respond to BEM 2, 15.
adopts a more cautious attitude towards any attempt at a
definition in strictly logical terms.26

Something of what is implied in "the hidden mystical
side" in contrast to the more "strictly logical," is
expressed also in the application of the rich meaning of the
"icon" to the episcopate in the Finnish Orthodox Church's
response to BEM:

The ministry cannot be based on functional arguments.
The ministry is directly based on the will of Christ
himself and is founded by him and thus the bishop (or
the priest) is the icon of Christ and not only his
representative.27

(Indicative of this different milieu for ministry
has been the consistent concern of the Orthodox in the
Anglican-Orthodox discussions that Anglicans fully recognize
the Seventh Ecumenical Council in which the role and status
of the icon was reaffirmed.)

This is in striking contrast to this remarkably more
functional and pragmatic statement about The Historic
Episcopate by the Lambeth Conference of 1930:

As an institution it was, and is, characterized by
succession in two forms: the succession in office and
the succession of consecration. And it had generally
recognized functions: the general superintendence of the
Church and more especially of the Clergy; the
maintenance of unity in the one Eucharist; the
ordination of men to the ministry; the safeguarding of
the faith; and the administration of the discipline of
the Church. . . . . When therefore, we say that we must
insist on the Historic Episcopate but not on any theory
or interpretation of it, we are not to be understood as
insisting on the office, apart from the functions.28

26 Nicholas Zernov, Orthodox Encounter, 34.
27 Ibid., 28.
28 G.K.A. Bell, Documents on Christian Unity 2, (London:
Thus Orthodox disquiet about Anglican Holy Orders and the sacramental gradually and unevenly became articulate and bespeaks very different theological milieux. "Mystery" and "icon" connote underlying differences subtle yet so comprehensive in ecclesiology and theology as to lead us not only to the divergences between Christian traditions but even to those between Eastern and Western Christianity.

This is important for all relationships between Orthodoxy and western Catholicism (indeed, western Christianity). These underlying differences between East and West are increasingly recognized as both a challenge and a rich resource for future ecumenical reconsideration of assumptions about Faith and Order. Thus they warrant some further consideration.

Nicholas Zernov understands these underlying divergences to be grounded in cultural factors, reflected in language:

These two languages, in spite of their geographical nearness, have a distinct genius of their own. Latin is precise and logical but its danger is in its inflexibility. It discourages the more intuitive approach to life; it is better suited to lawyers and legislators than to philosophers and mystics, who possess in Greek the most perfect instrument for their purpose. The richness and sublety of the Greek vocabulary often put the theological arguments of the Byzantines beyond the grasp of the Latin scholars.29

Zernov goes on to mention other such differences:

The East, with its stress on community and the sacredness of matter, and the West with its individualism and sharper distinction between material and spiritual manifestations of life, were bound to develop a Church organization and sacramental practice.

29 Ibid., 33.
of their own not necessarily opposed, but certainly not identical with each other. 30

Characteristics in the respective ecclesiologies illustrate the important influence of these differing cultural factors on the Churches. For example, the emphases on (Eastern) "community" and (Western) "individualism" are reflected in the place of the episcopate within the wholeness of the Church in Orthodoxy on the one hand and the primacy given to the individual in the Western Catholic episcopate on the other. Differing treatments of the relationships of matter and spirit are reflected in a more ready and less problematic sacramentality within Orthodoxy. Difference connoted by "precise and logical" and "more intuitive" are reflected in contrasting understandings of revealed truth and authority.

Insight into the influence of these cultural factors at the heart of Orthodoxy can be gained through the treatment of Trinitarian theology. Here the filioque issue has been the most consistent and crucial expression of the underlying divergences between Orthodoxy and Western Christianity. Nikos Nissiotis indicates, as follows, Orthodoxy's continued concern about this issue:

This is what Eastern Orthodoxy stands for in the ecumenical dialogue, warning in humility, reminding in repentance, exhorting through its worship and theology against the dangers of filioquism and the neglect of the theology of the Paraclete. Filioquism has affected us all unconsciously, as an easy way of organizing chapters of theology, explaining a salvation granted automatically without existential participation in it. The most important and most difficult task of theology

30 Ibid., 33, 35.
was, and remains, that of delving more and more deeply into the doctrine of the Trinity, on the basis of pneumatology. This does not require merely a system or categories of thought. It is the thinking of the act and the act of thinking, the commentary which reflects the worship, the life and the mission of the Church. 31

Nissiotis' final sentence hints at the broad implications this concern about the Holy Spirit has for Orthodoxy. Because it pertains to the innermost nature of the eternal Trinity and to the whole character of the economy of salvation, it effects almost every aspect of "the worship, the life and the mission of the Church."

From a western and Roman Catholic perspective, J.M.R. Tillard views "the relationship between Christ, Holy Spirit and Church" as the "main difference" between Eastern and Western Christianity. He comments:

Eastern Churches are led entirely by the certitude that through the gift of the Holy Spirit the eschatological times are already present in the midst of the chaotic situation of our world. For them, exactly as the preparation, birth, baptism, ministry, resurrection of Jesus were seized by the power of Holy spirit, here and now the whole reality of human history is seized by the Spirit of the Risen Lord. Times are embraced by eternity. The eucharistic synaxis is thus the place, where--thanks to the answer of God to the epiclesis--the whole assembly is revealed to itself and the world as the eschatological church already present and including, together with the Lord, the departed, the saints, the angels. Wherever this Church is, there its totality is existing. 32

By contrast, the Western Church affirms a different relationship with history and the possibility and necessity of development.

To illustrate the comprehensive import of this emphasis on the Holy Spirit on Orthodoxy, we note these factors:

(1) The Orthodox understanding of the Trinity reflects its consistent grounding in worship and life rather than any philosophical milieu. Zernov comments:

In the East religion is seen more as a life than as a doctrine; elaborate definitions are mistrusted; the Eastern Christian believes that the Church and its sacraments are divine mysteries, intelligible and morally stimulating, but which evade a detailed analysis by logical reasoning since this function cannot penetrate into the depths of the relations between God and man.33

The primacy of religious experience over doctrine is reflected in Philipou's contrast of Arius' "confidence in reason" with the attitude of the Fathers:

In contrast to the "arrogance" of Arius, these Fathers understand their task as a theoretical scrutiny of the life of the worshipping community, undertaken in the very presence of God. 34

Nissiotis comments:

Orthodox Trinitarian theology takes as its basis the life of the Church and its true qualitative catholicity.35
In this Church, which is rightly named the worshipping Church, theology is the echo, the reflection, the voice of the praying and worshipping community.36

The consistent Orthodox affirmation of the fullness of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity must be recognized

33 Ibid., 69.
34 Angelos J. Philippou, "The mystery of Pentecost," in The Orthodox Ethos: Essays in honour of the Centenary of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, 72, 73.
36 Ibid., 67.
therefore as a result of their experience of God in the fullness of their culture and tradition.

(2) As the reference, quoted above to the "arrogance" of Arius indicates, the primacy of the Orthodox experience in the faith here conditions the role of doctrine.

The resulting difference between Eastern and Western theology is indicated in Philippou's comment that "for the Fathers the ontological structure of Hellenic metaphysics broke down at Nicaea, and the whole emphasis is now on God's unique action in history." 37

Thus Walter Wiest points to "the difference between the 'apophatic' theology of the East, with its emphasis on mystery and the ultimately indescribable or ineffable 'Essence' of God, and Western 'kataphatic' theology, with its tendency to stress what can be said positively about God." 38 Vladimir Lossky comments:

Apophaticism teaches us to see above all a negative meaning in the dogmas of the Church: it forbids us to follow the natural ways of thought and to form concepts which would usurp the place of spiritual realities. For Christianity is not a philosophical school for speculating about abstract concepts, but essentially a communion with the living God. That is why, despite all their philosophical learning and natural bent towards speculative thinking, the Fathers of the eastern tradition, in remaining faithful to the apophatic principle of theology, never allowed their thought to

37 Philippou, "The mystery of Pentecost," 94.
38 Walter E. West, "An Appreciation," in The Orthodox Ethos: Essays in honour of the Centenary of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, 8.
cross the threshold of the mystery, or to substitute idols of God for God himself.39

This caveat about the sufficiency of "thought," together with the primacy given to the worship life of the Church as the foundation for theology, all indicate a very different attitude to theological truth and ecclesiastical authority from that of the Western Church.

(3) The fullness of role which Orthodoxy affirms for the Holy Spirit within the Trinity is expressed by Nikos Nissiotis as follows:

Apart from the importance which the Bible attaches to the charismata of the Holy Spirit for building up the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 2; Ephesians 4:1-13), it is quite clear on the question of the procession, at least for a Greek-speaking church (John 15:26-16:7). The two words are clearly distinguished: "procession", meaning origin of being and action, and "mission", meaning instrumental cause; so that a Greek would immediately say that the Holy Spirit proceeds only from the Father in eternity and is sent in time through the Son.40

Eastern theology would emphasize the dynamic, the action of God over the essential, *energeia* over *ousia*. Nissiotis comments:

To understand the Holy Spirit simply as a divine power in man, deriving from faith in God the Father as Deus absconditus and in God the Son as the only Deus revelatus, deprives the triune essence of God of its dynamism.41

Here again, in this emphasis on the dynamic over the essential in the economy of salvation, is a profound

39 Eugene Lampert, "Theological Communication and the Certainties of Belief," in The Orthodox Ethos: Essays in honour of the Centenary of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, 224.
40 Nissiotis, "The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity for Church Life and Theology," 38.
41 Ibid., 38.
difference from much of Western theology, with implications for the role of truth and authority in the Church.

(4) Within the divine dynamic, the status of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity emphasizes the relational nature of the divine for the Orthodox. Nissiotis comments:

Relationships are the backbone of divine creation and revelation. We can say that this creative God who is revealed to us can only be a personal God. . . . According to the Bible, the Holy Spirit as Paraclete is ever present within the Trinity, effecting the relationship through a movement of personal communion with the Father and the Son. On the command of the Father, the Spirit proceeding from Him sets all things in motion here and now, as if the whole Trinity were present.42

One implication of the primacy of the relational within the divine is that, because divine truth is personal and known within personal relationships, truth lives within and is conveyed by the whole Church. Here is another basis for Orthodoxy's disquiet with the treatment of doctrine and authority within the Western Church.

(5) Finally, Orthodoxy affirms the continuous role of the Holy Spirit in creation and redemption with major implications for the relationship between the material and spiritual, the natural and historical and between nature and grace. Zernov says that "the East brings the whole universe within the scope of the redemptive action of the Holy Spirit and nature and grace are treated as interdependent parts of the same creation."43 This factor alone deeply influences the Orthodox understanding of the process and goal of

42 Ibid., 41.
43 Ibid., 69.
salvation, the nature of worship (most certainly the real presence within the Eucharist) and of the Christian life. Western Christians may note more obvious results in Orthodox church architecture and religious festivals.

(B) Episcopacy In Discussions between Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy

What we have found to be the ironic closeness and distance between Orthodoxy and Anglicanism is true also of the relationship between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism, this focused again in the episcopate.

In the Decree on Ecumenism (Unitatis Redintegratio) Vatican II strongly and warmly affirmed the special value of the Orthodox tradition:

All should realize that it is of supreme importance to understand, venerate, preserve, and foster the exceedingly rich liturgical and spiritual heritage of the Eastern Churches, in order faithfully to preserve the fullness of Christian tradition, and to bring reconciliation between Eastern and Western Christians.44

In their desire for this reconciliation, the Council Fathers also, in Unitatis Redintegratio, recognized primary elements of commonality between these two traditions:

Although these Churches are separated from us, they possess true sacraments, above all--by apostolic succession--the priesthood and the Eucharist, whereby they are still joined to us in a very close relationship. Therefore . . . some worship in common is not merely possible but is recommended.45

Vatican II's statement on the nature of the Church, Lumen Gentium, affirms more explicitly the crucial nature of

44 "Ecumenism" (15), The Documents of Vatican II, 359.
45 Ibid.
episcopal succession to the life of the Church in both these traditions:

For from that tradition, which is expressed especially in liturgical rites and in the practice of the Church both of the East and of the West, it is clear that, by means of the imposition of hands and the words of consecration, the grace of the Holy Spirit is so conferred, and the sacred character so impressed, that bishops in an eminent and visible way undertake Christ's own role as Teacher, Shepherd and High Priest, and that they act in His person.46

While this acknowledgment of commonality between these traditions in "true sacraments, above all--by apostolic succession--the priesthood and the Eucharist" together with improvements in the relationship already accomplished give cause for hope, one wonders how the broad differences in ethos between East and West (briefly explored earlier) that have frustrated Orthodox/Anglican negotiations can be treated here. Some appear to be more problematic, some less so.

As reminders of those differences in ethos we cite three areas of concern:

(1) Eschatology and History

Georges Florovsky reminds us, as follows, about what Tillard described as the "main difference" between Eastern and Western Christianity:

From the Orthodox point of view, there is an unresolved tension, or even rupture, in the Western theology of the church: the balance between the "historic" and the "eschatological" has been broken, and the indivisible identity of the church has been obscured. Either the "historic" was over-emphasized, as in Roman theology; or the "eschatological" has dismissed the "historic," and

46 Ibid., Lumen Gentium (21), 41,42.
the "visibility" of the church has been denied. In both cases the Chalcedonian balance has been distorted.47

Florovsky’s criticism that "the 'historic' was over-emphasized . . . in Roman theology" and his expression of Orthodox concern about the Chalcedonian balance indicate important differences from Roman Catholic understanding of the historic, institutional Church.

(2) The Nature of Truth and Authority

Anton Ugolnik finds that Augustine signifies a fundamental difference between West and East in the approach to the character of truth:

Sequestered in his garden with Paul’s Epistle to the Romans at hand, Augustine hears a voice: Tolle lege, "Take up and read." When Augustine takes up the book, he creates a primary epistemological model for the west. The reader directly relates to the text and therein finds meaning. From Augustine through the Reformers and to Bultmann’s effort to "de-mythologize," this remains a central quest—to wrest meaning from the Book.

Every year on Orthodoxy Sunday, celebrated as Lent begins, we celebrate the victory of that party which rejected the Book as the sole vehicle for meaning.

As a result of this long political and intellectual battle, the Orthodox world developed a rationale for its exaltation of the image as a semiotic vehicle.48

Related to this difference in understanding the nature of truth and its sharing is Orthodoxy’s approach to authority. Nicolas Zernov gives insight into Orthodox disquiet with Western Christianity’s treatment of authority:

The difference in the interpretation of the nature of the Christian community also marks the Eastern and Western approaches to the authority of the Church. The institutional character of Western Christianity

necessitates a definite source of authority for the faith it teaches. Violent controversies have arisen over this question in the past, and no agreement has yet been reached between the Western confessions.

This whole way of thinking is foreign to the Eastern, and especially to the Russian mind. A spokesman of the Russian church, Alexey Khomiakov (1804-60), was bold enough to declare that the Church has nothing to do with authority . . .49

(3) The Relationship between Ordered Ministry and the Church

Nikos Nissiotis notes that the "main aim of Orthodox pneumatology . . . exclude[s] the possibility of any deviation in the direction of a 'set apart' hierarchy."50 We recall his comment that:

One should not therefore think of a direct line of succession from Christ--the twelve apostles and the bishops, etc.--around which the lay members are added. The institution is not a work completed by Christ and the election of the twelve apostles. It is fulfilled by the operation of the Spirit, who, on the basis of the sacrifice of the blood of Christ, transmits salvation by means of the pastoral ministry to the whole Body of believers, which precedes and makes possible the election and ordination of the bishops and pastors, who are hearers of the call of Jesus in a special and personal way.51

We have noted three areas, two more theological and cultural, the third more particularly ecclesiastical, which have major implications for the character of ordered ministry. Each of these is broadly grounded in aspects of the Orthodox ethos.

This statement in Lumen Gentium reminds us of the different ethos which characterizes Roman Catholicism:

This most sacred Synod, following in the footsteps of the First Vatican Council, teaches and declares with

49 Nicholas Zernov, Orthodox Encounter, 94.
50 Nikos Nissiotis, "The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity for Church Life and Theology," 63.
51 Ibid., 64,65.
that Council that Jesus Christ, the eternal Shepherd, established His holy Church by sending forth the apostles as He Himself had been sent by the Father (cf. John 20:21). He willed that their successors, namely the bishops, should be shepherds in His Church even to the consummation of the world.

In order that the episcopate itself might be one and undivided, He placed blessed Peter over the other apostles, and instituted in him a permanent and visible source and foundation of unity and faith and fellowship. And all this teaching about the institution, the perpetuity, the force and reason for the sacred primacy of the Roman Pontiff and of his infallible teaching authority, this sacred Synod again proposes to be firmly believed by all the faithful.52

Here is affirmed and implied a distinct role for the episcopate and assumptions about the nature of Christian truth/authority ("infallible teaching authority") and the historicity of the Church which are at variance with Orthodoxy.

Moreover, one recognizes that these are essential to Roman Catholicism. The whole meaning of the Petrine primacy is grounded in essentials of Roman Catholicism. Avery Dulles reminds us that:

Catholicism is a thoroughly incarnational faith. Just as in the Incarnation, the Word is made flesh, so in the sacraments the prescribed word becomes embodied in the elements, the gestures, the persons.53

Related, of course, is the highly sacramental nature of this tradition. And Dulles emphasizes that the sacrament necessary involves certain demands of the particular:

The word is constituted as such by the meaning it bears. The sacraments, by contrast, are not reducible to their intelligible import. Though they are signs, they are

52 Ibid., Lumen Gentium (18), 37, 38.
closely bound up with material elements and gestures . . . 54

Especially important at this point is the description in Lumen Gentium of the Church as a "kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God,"55 an insight important to many contemporary Roman Catholic theologians.56 When the "thoroughly incarnational" is related to this comprehensive understanding of the sacramental, the resulting treatment of the Church would seem to demand the strong institutional and historical relationship with the New Testament Church that the Petrine succession affirms.

Thus, while the episcopate constitutes a central encouraging and enabling aspect of commonality between these great traditions, it, (and especially in the nature of the papacy) in its character on each side, expresses major differences in ethos.

Roman Catholicism has continued to make a strong commitment to a more positive relationship with Orthodoxy since Vatican II and much has been accomplished. Despite difficulties involved in inter-church relationships in Eastern Europe since the fall of the Iron Curtain, there are many grounds for encouragement. One notes especially the commitment of Pope John Paul II to the establishment of a more whole relationship with Orthodoxy as the next millennium is entered and his request that Church leaders and

54 Ibid., 112.
55 Lumen Gentium 1, 15.
56 Ibid., 111.
theologians assist in the reform of the papacy. How much can be accomplished towards a more fruitful relationship will depend on the treatment of the theological and cultural factors suggested in this chapter and, in this, the treatment of the episcopate will be central.

CHAPTER 12
EPISCOPACY IN THE B.E.M. PROCESS

Finally, we will examine episcopacy as a theological phenomenon in the important dynamic surrounding Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM), the Report of the Faith and Order Commission (F. & O.) of the World Council of Churches meeting at Lima, Peru in 1982.

The very nature of the BEM phenomenon allows this chapter to be an especially helpful end to our survey and prelude to our conclusions. If the overall method adopted was especially important to us in each major recent discussion surveyed earlier, this is true a fortiori in this case. We shall proceed as follows: (A) Introduction. (B) The Challenge. (C) BEM and the Traditional Sources: Scripture, Church History, The Whole Ministry of the Church. (D) The Method: "Ecumenical Conversion," Convergence, Tradition, BEM's Ecclesiology. (E) The BEM proposals regarding Ordained Ministry. (F) Some Representative Responses. (G) BEM's "Sacramental' Ecclesiology" Revisited. (H) Theological Fundamentals: Grace and the Church.

A. General Introduction
In the Introduction to Churches Respond to BEM 1, Max Thurian affirms BEM's background in the whole history of F. & O., beginning in 1927. He distinguishes between the first period of that history, "that of doctrinal comparisons between the definitions given by the different churches of their own identity" and the second, beginning with the Lund F. & O. meeting in 1952: "That of common building on the biblical and Christological foundations." 2

BEM is central to the latest phase of this "common building". Related to two other F. & O. projects, Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today and The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community, BEM deliberately focuses on the three crucial areas of difference in the everyday life of the churches. Its Preface notes:

If the divided churches are to achieve the visible unity they seek, one of the essential prerequisites is that they should be in basic agreement on baptism, eucharist and ministry. Naturally, therefore, the Faith and Order Commission has devoted a good deal of attention to overcoming doctrinal division on these three. During the last fifty years, most of its conferences have had one or another of these subjects at the centre of discussion. 3

1 According to its Preface, Thurian presided over the steering group that did the final drafting of BEM.
3 Growth in Agreement, ed. Harding Meyer and Lukas Vischer, F. & O. # 108, (Geneva: WCC, 1984), 466. This being the source used in this thesis, subsequent references to BEM will be to the document itself using "Preface" or its paragraph numbers with "b", "e" or "m" added to indicate in which of the three parts (baptism, eucharist or ministry) it is found.
Essential to the BEM process is "reception." As of 1990 186 churches had involved themselves in dialogue about its content.

Because of this background BEM differs in its greater comprehensiveness from the mainly bilateral discussions we have surveyed. Its Preface comments:

Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the Commission also includes among its full members theologians of the Roman Catholic and other churches which do not belong to the World Council of Churches itself. 4

B. The Challenge

Though encouraged by developments in "biblical and patristic studies, together with the liturgical revival and the need for common witness," after a long struggle to do so F. & O. had yet to make major progress in "overcoming doctrinal division on these three"5: baptism, eucharist and ministry. Experience had also indicated ministry to be the most difficult of the three areas.

"Ministry" received much the longest treatment in BEM and was to prove the most difficult in the reception process. According to the official F. & O. Report on the Process and Responses, although "a surprisingly large number of positive remarks on this section can be found in the responses of churches from all Christian traditions," it has received by far the most critical comment:

For many, ecumenical dialogue on the ordained ministry poses some of the most difficult problems. This is also

4 BEM, Preface.
5 BEM, Preface.
reflected in the style and presentation of the ministry section of BEM. It was expected, therefore, that the responses of the churches to this section would also be more critical than on the sections dealing with baptism and eucharist. Many churches have indeed come to such an evaluation and have stated so.6

The intent of BEM regarding ministry is outlined in the introductory paragraph to section VI: "Towards The Mutual Recognition of the Ordained Ministries":

In order to advance towards the mutual recognition of ministries, deliberate efforts are required. All churches need to examine the forms of ordained ministry and the degree to which the churches are faithful to its original intentions. Churches must be prepared to renew their understanding and their practice of the ordained ministry.7

What is involved in this "advance towards the mutual recognition" is essentially a process of critical self-examination by each church over against the normative ministry indicated in "its original intentions." But on what grounds can one affirm authoritatively the "original intentions" of ministry? The subsequent paragraph (52) affirms that apostolicity will be crucial to the normative.

C. BEM and the Traditional Sources: Scripture, Church History, the Whole Ministry of the Church

Scripture

Thurian indicates, as follows, the desire of the architects of BEM to be faithful to the biblical witness:

The Lima document on "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" is founded on the word of God; that is certainly its deepest intention. It quotes scripture frequently and

7 BEM, M51.
the theological argument is controlled by the Bible even where such citations seem absent.8

What does BEM conclude from the biblical witness about ordered ministry? It begins its review of this as follows:

The Church has never been without persons holding specific authority and responsibility. Jesus chose and sent the disciples . . . . The Twelve were promised that they would "sit on thrones judging the tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:30). A particular role is attributed to the Twelve within the communities of the first generation. . .

Jesus called the Twelve to be representatives of the renewed Israel. At that moment they represent the whole people of God and at the same time exercise a special role in the midst of that community. After the resurrection they are among the leaders of the community. It can be said that the apostles prefigure both the Church as a whole and the persons within it who are entrusted with the specific authority and responsibility. The role of the apostles as witnesses to the resurrection of Christ is unique and unrepeatable. There is therefore a difference between the apostles and the ordained ministers whose ministries is founded on theirs.9

Although there is ground for specialized ministries of leadership in the Church in Christ’s calling of the Twelve, the "unique and unrepeatable" fact of the apostolic witness of the resurrection prohibits an institutional treatment of apostolicity. We note also that BEM finds no "single pattern of ministry" indicated in the New Testament:

The New Testament does not describe a single pattern of ministry which might serve as a blueprint or continuing norm for all future ministry in the Church. In the New Testament there appears rather a variety of forms which existed at different places and times.10

9 BEM, M9, M10.
10 BEM, M19.
Church History

If there is no clear ground for a normative form of ordered ministry in the biblical witness, what of church history? BEM comments:

. . . .As the Holy Spirit continued to lead the Church in life, worship and mission, certain elements from this early variety were further developed and became settled into a more universal pattern of ministry. During the second and third centuries, a threefold pattern of bishop, presbyter and deacon became established as the pattern of ordained ministry throughout the church. In succeeding centuries, the ministry by bishop, presbyter and deacon underwent considerable changes in its practical exercise. At some points of crisis in the history of the Church, the continued functions of ministry were in some places and communities distributed according to structures other than the predominant threefold pattern. Sometimes appeal was made to the New Testament in justification of these other patterns. In other cases, the restructuring of ministry was held to lie within the competence of the Church as it adapted to changed circumstances.

It is important to be aware of the changes the threefold ministry has undergone in the history of the Church. . . .

.11

In affirming a normative form of ordained ministry, BEM can proceed no farther by way of argument from church history than to say that the "threefold pattern" is "predominant," noting also "the changes" this has "undergone."

The Whole Ministry of the Church

Are there grounds for a normative form of ordered ministry in the more general treatment of the whole Church in these basic sources? BEM carefully begins its treatment

11 BEM, M19, M20.
of Ministry with section I: "The Calling of the Whole People of God," beginning as follows:

In a broken world God calls the whole of humanity to become God's people. For this purpose God chose Israel and then spoke in a unique and decisive way in Jesus Christ, God's Son. Jesus made his own the nature, condition and cause of the whole human race, giving himself as a sacrifice for all. Jesus' life of service, his death and resurrection, are the foundation of a new community which is built up continually by the good news of the Gospel and the gifts of the sacraments. 12

Having thus emphasized the primacy of the "new community" for the work of Christ, BEH affirms no ground for special ministry on that basis (as one finds in ARCIC--koinonia or the Niagara Report--the eschatological). Although the six parts of this section on "The Calling of the Whole People of God" say much that is good and helpful, there is no such theological development.

The result is that the section ends as follows:

Though the churches are agreed in their general understanding of the calling of the people of God, they differ in their understanding of how the life of the Church is to be ordered. In particular, there are differences concerning the place and forms of the ordained ministry. As they engage in the effort to overcome these differences, the churches need to work from the perspective of the calling of the whole people of God. A common answer needs to be found to the following question: How, according to the will of God and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the life of the Church to be understood and ordered, so that the Gospel may be spread and the community built up in love?13

Thus, other than indicating a direction "that the Gospel may be spread and the community built up in love," this first part gives no detailed grounds in response to the

12 BEH, M1.
13 BEH, M6.
concluding question as to how "the life of the Church" is "to be understood and ordered."

The United Church of Christ in Japan, while commenting that "the concept of the 'calling of the whole people of God'" is "appropriate and its content excellent," adds that "there is a gap between it and the subsequent interpretation of ministerial orders."14 Similarly, the Church of Norway said that "we would like to have seen a yet clearer presentation of the relationship between the priesthood of all believers and the ordained ministry of word and sacrament in the church."15 And the American Lutheran Church found that "the document does not adequately develop the ministry of the whole people of God as the framework within which to take up discussion of ordained ministry."16


"Ecumenical Conversion"

Over against this apparent dearth of content in biblical and historical sources for the grounding of Order, how could the authors of BEM proceed? Thurian indicates their overall strategy as follows:

What the churches are invited to experience and undertake, therefore, is an authentic ecumenical conversion, the enrichment of their own spiritual tradition from the patrimony of others, the surrender of all that separates them from the others and is not

14 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, ed. Max Thurian, F.& O.
15 Ibid., 119.
16 Ibid., 83.
required by a faithful obedience to the word of God. What we are invited to do is not to judge the Lima document in the light of our distinctive confessional tradition but rather to expose ourselves to the judgment and stimulus of those aspects of the faith of the undivided church of which this document reminds us. 17

This is reflected in the first response asked of participating churches: "The extent to which your church can recognize in this text the faith of the Church through the ages." 18

The "authentic ecumenical conversion" will happen when we "expose ourselves to the judgment and stimulus of those aspects of the faith of the undivided church of which this document reminds us." But this must involve confrontation with a truth of such richness and wholeness that it will draw the various traditions out of their limitations into that greater completeness which is "the faith of the undivided church" or of "the Church through the ages." Only this will make possible or justify the suspension of judgment "in the light of our distinctive confessional tradition" which is demanded. It must surely involve not only the praxis of ministry but the wholeness of its meaning in compelling significance. Thus the fullness and nature of the confession of this broader patrimony becomes crucial to this method.

The assurance of its authors that the statement in "this document," which is BEM, was sufficient for this task

17 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. I, 3.
18 BEM, Preface.
was expressed by William Lazareth, then director of the Secretariat on F. & O.: So, for example, if there is any incompatibility between BEM and the fifth article of the Augsburg Confession on "the Ministry," it may be so much the worse for the Augsburg Confession.19

Convergence

Its Preface indicates how essential "convergence" is to the BEM methodology:

In leaving behind the hostilities of the past, the churches have begun to discover many promising convergences in their shared convictions and perspectives. These convergences give assurance that despite much diversity in theological expression the churches have much in common in their understanding of the faith. The resultant text aims to become part of a faithful and sufficient reflection of the common Christian Tradition on essential elements of Christian communion. In the process of growing together in mutual trust, the churches must develop these doctrinal convergences step by step, until they are finally able to declare together that they are living in communion with one another in continuity with the apostles and the teachings of the universal Church.20

This means that BEM is different from a theological treatise: "Readers should not expect to find a complete theological treatment of baptism, eucharist and ministry. That would be neither appropriate nor desirable here."21

"Convergence" has the great advantage of affirming the positive and of building upon unity. One potential danger is that, without adequate theological commentary, the meaning of convergent statements like those in BEM may be

---

20 BEM, Preface.
21 Ibid.
unclear; language which affirms unity may conceal major differences. As we have seen earlier, this has often been the case in ecumenical statements regarding ministry. Because styles of ministry signify major ecclesiological and theological differences, convergent statements in this area are especially problematic.

Given the centrality of assumed convergences to the BEM method, their adequacy is crucial. In its reception of BEM, the American Lutheran Church observed:

The language of the text is frequently ambiguous, open to a number of possible interpretations. As such, the document may reveal as much about continuing divisions among the churches as it reveals about emerging unity.22

Tradition

We note again the reference in BEM's Preface to developments in "biblical and patristic studies, together with the liturgical revival and the need for common witness." The Preface affirms that "these convergences give assurance that despite much diversity in theological expression the churches have much in common in their understanding of the faith." These are elements of an assumed developing ecumenical tradition about which Thurian comments:

This ecumenical tradition, which we believe to be guided by the Holy Spirit, is the fruit of a common "reading" of holy scripture and of the great Tradition interpretative of the word of God, by the churches, in the hope of recovering the visible unity which is the will of Christ.23

22 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 80.
23 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 1, 4.
About the development of this ecumenical tradition in F. & O. work he makes the very strong statement that 
"the ecclesiological conviction underlying the production of the Lima document is that the churches are no less churches when they are brought together by the World Council of Churches in the persons of their representatives than when they meet separately to make a decision."24

The developing ecumenical tradition has validity and vitality because of its interrelationship with the underlying "great Tradition" or "common Christian Tradition." The Preface indicates the importance to the BEM method of this relationship:

The . . . text aims to become part of a faithful and sufficient reflection of the common Christian Tradition on essential elements of Christian communion. In the process of growing together in mutual trust, the churches must develop these doctrinal convergences step by step, until they are finally able to declare together that they are living in communion with one another in continuity with the apostles and the teachings of the universal Church.25

Immediately, recurring questions about the relationship between tradition and the Holy Scriptures arise. Thurian comments:

The Lima document . . . is founded on the word of God; that is its deepest intention. It quotes scripture frequently and the theological argument is controlled by the Bible even where such citations seem absent. The principle of the sovereign authority of holy scripture, vigorously recalled by the Reformation of the sixteenth century, is applied consciously and manifestly in the Lima document. There is no question, however, of a simplistic biblicism treating scripture as if it were an untouchable law. The Lima document takes the word of God as its basis; it reads and interprets scripture within

24 Ibid.
25 BEH, Preface.
the communion of the whole church and not according to a purely confessional tradition of a particular theological school.26

It is at the point where "the communion of the whole church" is involved in biblical interpretation that the "broad Christian Tradition" comes into play:

This is where the Tradition (with a capital T) comes in and performs its role as the act whereby the word of God is handed on by the church, as the universal interpretation of holy scripture and as the "sound deposit" of the doctrine (teaching of the truth) which is to be "safeguarded.". . . The Lima document is attentive to the great Tradition of the church, in accord with what the world conference in Montreal (1963) affirmed concerning the relationship between scripture and tradition. . . . The sola scriptura principle was wisely reduced to its true proportions: scripture is a sovereign authority in matters of faith but only in the church, i.e. within the authentic and universal Tradition of the word of God, can it be fully understood.27

One recognizes the wisdom involved in this affirmation of the traditions and the great Tradition. It seems to promise that ground for the normative in ministry in the developed wisdom of the great Christian family which seem elusive in the basic sources. But these assumptions, too, are not without difficulties:

For example, how thorough is the developing ecumenical tradition which Thurian affirms? Have churches understood F. & O. events to have the status he assumes? And does the underlying "great Tradition" have sufficient theological clarity and authority to play the central role asked of it in BEM? Yet more fundamentally, has the

27 Ibid.
relationship between Tradition and the Holy Scriptures been clarified as satisfactorily as Thurian indicates?

BEM's Ecclesiology

In his Introduction to the first volume of the responses to BEM Thurian wrote:

Clearly, therefore, how the Lima document is understood and welcomed by the different churches greatly depends on the ecclesiological doctrine of each of them. The way the study of the Lima document is approached and the assessment made of its theological content will be conditioned by the view taken of the nature of the church.28

That the approach to the sacraments and ministry in any denomination or their broader world communion is grounded in their understanding of the Church is readily consistent with the findings in our survey.

In view of its centrality, it is remarkable that the architects of BEM assumed sufficient support in the developing ecumenical convergence and tradition to affirm a particular ecclesiology. After noting alternate ecclesiologies Thurian comments:

Clearly these alternatives represent different ecclesiologies. They could be summed up as follows: Is the church the sign of God's presence, the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit, or is it merely the gathering of believers who obey the gospel and furnish themselves with ways and means of living, witnessing and praying together? The ecclesiology presupposed by the Lima document and thought of as that of the New Testament (which does not rule out institutional diversity), is definitely a "sacramental" ecclesiology. The church is the sign of God's presence and the instrument of God's work in the world; it is the body of Christ which unites believers by the word and

sacraments; it is the temple of the Holy Spirit in which Christians are sanctified by faith and prayer.29

It is at this point that the status of the various convergences, Tradition and the traditions becomes so important. What degree and kind of sanction does this "sacramental" ecclesiology have within the BEM constituency? And does BEM enable adequate response to it?

One notes that Thurian's treatment of alternate ecclesiology makes no provision for the most consistent and thorough questions about the Church. For example, the major divisive ecclesiological questions ask not whether the church is "the sign of God's presence, the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit" but how this is understood! Neither Thurian's grouping of ecclesiology nor the allowable "institutional diversity" seems to provide for such questions.

Suffice it to note at this point that any assumed convergence around this "sacramental" ecclesiology is problematic. Even more important than the question whether or not participating churches can see in it the basic faith of the Church is whether they can critically respond to it in a manner that enables growth in theological understanding.

E. The BEM Proposals Regarding Ordained Ministry

In part III of "Ministry," BEM states:

29 Ibid.
Although there is no single New Testament pattern, although the Spirit has many times led the Church to adapt its ministries to contextual needs, and although other forms of the ordained ministry have been blessed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, nevertheless the threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it. Historically, it is true to say, the threefold ministry became the generally accepted pattern in the Church of the early centuries and is still retained today by many churches. In the fulfilment of their mission and service the churches need people who in different ways express and perform the tasks of the ordained ministry in its diaconal, presbyteral and episcopal aspects and functions.

In view of the diversity of ministry in the Church according to biblical and historical sources, the grounds for recommending the threefold ministry here are (a) its widespread use and (b) as "an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it."

The relationship between that style of ministry and the unity and apostolicity of the Church in its development is expressed further in Part IV: "Succession in the Apostolic Tradition":

Under the particular historical circumstances of the growing Church in the early centuries, the succession of bishops became one of the ways, together with the transmission of the Gospel and the life of the community, in which the apostolic tradition of the Church was expressed. This succession was understood as serving, symbolizing and guarding the continuity of the apostolic faith and communion.

After acknowledging the discharge of this kind of function in non-episcopal ministries (#37) BEM continues:

These considerations do not diminish the importance of the episcopal ministry. On the contrary, they enable churches which have not retained the episcopate to appreciate the episcopal succession as a sign, though

30 BEM, M22.
31 BEM, M36.
not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church. Today churches, including those engaged in union negotiations, are expressing willingness to accept episcopal succession as a sign of the apostolicity of the life of the whole Church. Yet, at the same time, they cannot accept any suggestion that the ministry exercised in their own tradition should be invalid until the moment that it enters into an existing line of episcopal succession. Their acceptance of the episcopal succession will best further the unity of the whole church if it is part of a wider process by which the episcopal churches themselves also regain their lost unity.32

BEM's explicit recommendations about ministry are made in Part VI: "Towards The Mutual Recognition of the Ordained Ministries":

In order to achieve mutual recognition, different steps are required of different churches. For example:

(a) Churches which have preserved the episcopal succession are asked to recognize both the apostolic content of the ordained ministry which exists in churches which have not maintained such succession and also the existence in these churches of a ministry of episkope in various forms.

(b) Churches without the episcopal succession, and living in faithful continuity with the apostolic faith and mission, have a ministry of Word and sacrament, as is evident from the belief, practice, and life of those churches. These churches are asked to realize that the continuity with the Church of the apostles finds profound expression in the successive laying on of hands by bishops and that, though they may not lack the continuity of the apostolic tradition, this sign will strengthen and deepen that continuity. They may need to recover the sign of the episcopal succession.33

Although episcopal churches are to recognize "the apostolic content" and "a ministry of episkope in various forms" in non-episcopal ecclesiologies and are to regain their own "lost unity," the main burden of this strategy

32 BEM, M38.
33 BEM, M53.
towards mutual recognition falls clearly on non-episcopal churches in the adoption of the threefold ministry.

This involves what seems a remarkably hesitant but complex recommendation: Episcopacy is "a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church"; "this sign will strengthen and deepen," will help "the continuity of the apostolic tradition" they already have. Thus the "may" in "they may need to recover the sign."

Presented in what one response called a "diplomatic" way, this proposal involves several levels of argument:

The more straightforward level is pragmatic: Acceptance of episcopacy constitutes a relatively simple, sensible and vital contribution to church unity by non-episcopal churches (involving the minority of Christians).

Another level is more complex: Acceptance of "episcopal succession" is a "sign" which will "strengthen and deepen" "the continuity of the apostolic tradition." In view of the qualifications around the status of the threefold ministry noted in paragraph 22, quoted above, and the sensitivity of non-episcopal churches about the status of their orders, it is difficult to recommend episcopacy as of the very esse of the Church. Yet its role as "sign . . . of the continuity and unity of the Church" assumes this background of meaning about "sign."

34 Finnish Orthodox Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 28.
In fact, "sign" has a very special meaning throughout BEM, as Thurian indicates: "As used in the Lima document, the term 'sign' should be understood in the emphatic sense of 'effective sign.' This is equivalent to the term 'sacrament.'" 35 This is consistent, of course, with BEM's basic assumption of what is definitely a "sacramental" ecclesiology, according to Thurian.

Underlying these proposals, therefore, on both the pragmatic and the more theological level, is the attempt at an "authentic ecumenical conversion." This assumes that the statement about the "patrimony" of the broader church will be sufficiently convincing that non-episcopal churches will see the wisdom of adopting the dominant style of ministry for the sake of church unity and that the accompanying articulation of "'sacramental' ecclesiology," together with other elements of that statement of Tradition, will convince them that "the successive laying on of hands by bishops . . . will strengthen and deepen that continuity" and that "they may need to recover the sign of the episcopal succession."

F. Some Representative Responses

As episcopacy is central to the BEM recommendations, we find it, in its manifold significance, to be central also to the responses to "Ministry."

35 Churches respond to BEM, Vol.I, 10.
Because of the nature of the proposals, those from non-episcopal churches are especially important to us. We begin with the United Church of Canada:

We have not felt edified, however, by what some discern as a special pleading in the text for the existence of episcopal offices. We are not persuaded, and the text does not give grounds for believing, that there is a "need" of a minister of unity in the church. Nor do we see grounds for the assertion that the threefold order of ministry has a "powerful claim" to be accepted by churches which, like ours, do not have a threefold ordering of ministry as traditionally understood.36

The Congregational Union of Scotland states that "our conclusion is that the BEM material offers no good theological reason for its proposals regarding ministry. It simply adopts a majority traditional view . . . "37

From the Methodist Church (UK):

We agree that the episcopal, presbyteral and diaconal functions need to be exercised in the Church, but the report offers no clear reason why these functions are best exercised through three (or for that matter two, four or seven) distinct orders of ordained ministry, and this criticism is reinforced by the lack of clarity with which these functions are defined, and the extent to which they overlap. . . . the Methodist Church would judge that the text shows too great a leaning towards the three-fold ministry.38

From the Presbyterian Church in Canada:

Churches without the threefold model are being encouraged to change towards that pattern for pragmatic reasons. The implication is that these traditions are more likely to consider change than the episcopal ones. Episcopal churches are asked to recognize "apostolic content," "continuity in apostolic faith, worship and mission" and a "ministry of episkope" in non-episcopal churches (37, 53a) but they are not asked to recognize the validity of ordination in churches which have not accepted episcopal succession.39

36 Ibid., 283.
37 Ibid., 313.
38 Ibid., 226.
39 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 158.
There is no evidence of "ecumenical conversion" here! Moreover, that the United Church of Canada searches in vain for a sufficient "need" of a minister of unity, that the Scottish congregationalists find "no good theological reason for its proposals regarding ministry" but "simply" the adoption of "a majority traditional view," that Methodists (UK) also find "no clear reason" all indicate the demand for a ground for the normative in ministry as persuasive argument beyond what they have found in the BEM statement of the great Tradition. There is also implied in the Canadian Presbyterian response a critique of the unfair and insensitive nature of the recommendation.

These responses from four ecumenically concerned churches are significant. Non-episcopal churches indicate at best some interest in and openness towards the BEM recommendations. Despite the encouraging number and quality of responses to BEM and some willingness to consider these proposals, the dominant note is the inadequacy of the rationale in view of what is asked for in the adoption of episcopacy.

From the Catholic side also, churches find these recommendations inadequate in content and rationale. For example, the Finnish Orthodox Church wrote:

It is very positive that the document analyzes the threefold ministry of the church, although not yet enough. The ministry cannot be based on functional arguments. The ministry is directly based on the will of Christ himself and is founded by him and thus the bishop (or the priest) is the icon of Christ and not only his representative... The question of the nature of the
ministry has in many cases been formulated in a diplomatic way in the document.40

We find the same concern in the Roman Catholic response. Here is criticism of BEM's treatment of episcopacy as "sign/expression":

We agree that the "episcopal succession" is of the order of the sign that can signify, through the image of historic transmission, the fact that the church is rooted in the apostolic church around Christ and therefore shows its fundamental apostolicity. However, the meaning of "sign/expression" needs to be clear. In the previous version, One Baptism, One Eucharist and a Mutually Recognized Ministry (34), the text spoke of an "effective sign".41

Acknowledging the criticism of the "Ministry" section, the official Report on the Process and Responses says:

It was expected, therefore, that the responses of the churches to this section would also be more critical than on the sections dealing with baptism and eucharist. Many churches have indeed come to such an evaluation and have stated so.42

We delineate the following more specific critiques of the BEM proposals and method:

(1) The Matter of Convergence

As we suggested could happen, many "convergent" statements proved problematic for some. For example, welcoming the good in BEM, the Church of Sweden also states that "we must observe that the BEM text on the ministry

40 Ibid., 28.
suffers from the strong character of compromise throughout the text. Parts of it have double meanings."

More generally, the Lutheran Church in America notes with approval that "the language of the text seeks to create a new theological vocabulary" but adds that "at critical points the language . . . is open to a number of possible interpretations. This must be viewed as both a contribution and a problem." The Anglican Church of the Southern Cone comments that "we have the impression that at times statements from different schools of thought have been laid side by side without achieving a real synthesis."

Although the ambiguity noted can be corrected in some instances, some critiques indicate a dissatisfaction not so easily remedied. Regarding BEM's treatment of ministry the North Elbian Lutheran Church wrote:

At a point which is most important for the relationship of the churches to one another, therefore, the text betrays a fuzziness which does nothing to dispel the anxiety that what we have here is not an expression of convergence but rather a concealment of real differences.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada said:

...we are dismayed by a great deal of ambiguity in the BEM document...Terms are used in the document to indicate unity of belief when actually they are sources of division..."

(2) A Limited Spectrum

43 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 134,5.
46 Ibid., 50.
47 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 153.
Regarding those "real differences" and "divisions" there is a widespread dissatisfaction among Protestant Churches that BEM's treatment of the "faith of the undivided church" does not comprehend insights essential to them.

For example, The Church of Scotland (Reformed) expresses concern regarding "(1) an undervaluing of crises in the church's history. . . (2) a related undervaluing of the principle of reformanda, . . . (3) the need for a synodal dimension to episcope . . ."48 The United Methodist Church, Central and Southern Europe, comments:

(4) We have the impression from our study of the document that essential insights of the Reformation are given too little attention. The insight of the Reformation that the church is creatura verbi divini (created by the divine word) is hardly sounded at all. Instead the notion of the church as a dispensary of salvation (Heilsanstalt) presses to the fore.49

The Lutheran Church in America seeks a stronger affirmation of four "Reformed" concerns: "(1) A stronger articulation of the Word . . . (2) A clear expression of the dynamic of sin and grace . . . (3) The priority of a certain period of history as normative . . . (4) A wider perspective on ministry."50

Recognition of the inadequacy of a dialogue process that does not comprehend such essential elements of major traditions is implied also in these more general comments:

From the Methodist Church (UK):

In the first place we believe the ecumenical cause can best be served at the present time by complete openness.

48 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. I, 98.
49 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 201.
50 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. I, 34.
We believe it is possible to fall into error by contriving doctrinal accommodations that do not accord with the will and conviction of the people we represent.51

From the Roman Catholic response:

It will not be an opportunistic "recovering of the sign of episcopal succession" that will solve the problem, but newly gained convictions about God's will and the guidance of the Holy Spirit regarding the constitutive features of church order, the episcopal succession and its exercise in ordination.52

The Church of the Brethren (USA) asks: "What if we should be called to relinquish that very inheritance which constitutes God's gift and promise to us?"53

(3) The Normative in History

BEM's use of the predominance of the three-fold ministry in the Church's story as an argument for its universal acceptance raises the question of the normative in history. That a particular order received widest use in the Church's story is not sufficient reason in itself to espouse it for the whole Church. The United Methodist Church of Central and Southern Europe says:

In this formulation, as in others in the text, we find a tendency too quickly to accept as sacrosanct that which has grown historically. Of course, every church takes counsel from its own confessions and foundational documents as secondary authorities. But what is "the faith of the Church through the ages"? In the course of the centuries, the churches have not always lived their faith in agreement with the gospel.

Just because certain forms have survived does not decide whether they also conform to the gospel.54

51 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 228.
52 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 6, 36.
53 Ibid., 106.
54 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 201, 207.
The Roman Catholic Church comments:

The attention given to origins and "antiquity" meets a concern of many churches. But this approach in the document still remains incomplete because too often it involves only a statement of fact and is insufficiently supported by theological reflection on the normativity of such antiquity.55

This search for a sufficient basis for "theological reflection on the normativity of such antiquity" surely leads us into fundamental issues about the Church.

(4) Ecclesiology

We recall Thurian's observation in the first volume of the responses that:

Clearly, therefore, how the Lima document is understood and welcomed by the different churches greatly depends on the ecclesiological doctrine of each of them. The way the study of the Lima document is approached and the assessment made of its theological content will be conditioned by the view taken of the nature of the church.56

Thurian's observation was instantiated in that same introduction in its acknowledgment of the prevalent criticism of the Lima document: It is "too sacramental."57 That basic divergences about ecclesiology were evident in the response process was made very clear later in the official survey of the BEM responses:

One of the most important ecumenical convergences seems to be the recognition, expressed in many responses, that a common understanding of the nature of the church and of the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist is fundamental for any theology and structure of ministry.

55 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 6, 27.
57 Ibid., II.
and for mutual recognition of ministries—and not the reverse.\textsuperscript{58}

Here is recognition not only of fundamental differences regarding ecclesiology but also that these warrant a primacy in ecumenical theology and practice over particular issues regarding sacrament and ministry. This is expressed also in the Roman Catholic response:

It is clear to us then that Faith and Order must focus more directly on ecclesiology. We believe that, without serious attention to the broader questions of ecclesiology, there are disadvantages not only for the study and understanding of the content of BEM, but for our ecumenical progress as well.\textsuperscript{59}

The BEM process therefore obliges us to understand the fundamental criticisms of this ecclesiology.

\textbf{G. BEM's "Sacramental" Ecclesiology" Revisited}

We recall Thurian's acknowledgment of the adoption of an ecclesiology in BEM:

The ecclesiology presupposed by the Lima document and thought of as that of the New Testament (which does not rule out institutional diversity), is definitely a "sacramental" ecclesiology. The church is the sign of God's presence and the instrument of God's work in the world; it is the body of Christ which unites believers by the word and sacraments; it is the temple of the Holy Spirit in which Christians are sanctified by faith and prayer.\textsuperscript{60}

The "sacramental" character of this quite Catholic ecclesiology is operative particularly in BEM's proposal regarding the unification of ministry. This stated that "the continuity with the Church of the apostles finds profound

\textsuperscript{58} Report on the Process and Responses, 87.
\textsuperscript{59} Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 6, 5.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
expression in the successive laying on of hands by bishops and that, though [the churches without episcopal succession] may not lack the continuity of the apostolic tradition, this sign will strengthen and deepen that continuity." We recall Max Thurian's comment that "as used in the Lima document, the term 'sign' should be understood in the emphatic sense of 'effective sign.' This is equivalent to the term 'sacrament.'"61

"Sacramental" is here used broadly. We note that Vatican II, in Lumen Gentium, used this broad treatment of the sacramental to describe the Church: "By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind."62 Similarly, in the Introduction to their final report, the ARCIC authors state: "The Church as koinonia requires visible expression because it is intended to be the "sacrament" of God's saving work. A sacrament is both sign and instrument."63 That this broad usage of "sacramental" in ecclesiology has become widespread in ecumenical discussion seems to suggest an ecumenical convergence in this regard. Thurian observes that "sacramental" is "the liturgical form of faith in God's sovereignty and grace."64

In that statement he also assured us that, if this use of "sacramental" is held in common, "there is no great gulf here between the catholic churches and those of the

61 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. I, 10.
62 Ch. I.I.
64 Ibid., II.
Reformation" in this regard. However, that Protestant
dissatisfaction with this ecclesiology is more radically
serious than Thurian indicates is made clear by The United
Methodist Church of Central and Southern Europe:

Sacramental and hierarchical thinking colours many
formulations in the document. We acknowledge that there
are other church traditions for whom such thinking is
important. Both sacramental and hierarchical thinking
are foreign to our church. We reject such a way of
thinking, because we consider it irreconcilable with the
gospel.65

Similar concern is expressed when the United Church
of Christ (USA) speaks of "the 'high church tilt' of the
document,"66 and the United Church of Canada, commenting on
BEM's "'catholic' accent," asks "whether 'low church'
perspectives and attitudes have been recognized and honoured
sufficiently by the text."67

That Roman Catholicism also has fundamental concerns
about the genuinely comprehensive character of BEM's
ecclesiology is expressed in their response as follows:

As we reflect on the text, we think that many of the
criticisms that can be raised about it relate to the
notions of sacrament (and sacramentality), the precise
nature of the apostolic tradition, and the issue of
decisive authority in the church.68

To use Willebrands' wisdom again, what are we to
"hear" or "discern" as fundamental at issue in this crucial
matter?

It is important to note at this point that the
difficulty is not necessarily with the elements of

65 Ibid., 206.
66 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 327.
67 Ibid., 284.
68 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 6, 6.
ecclesiology per se but rather with the kind of accent or emphasis each receives and, therefore, with the broader understanding which determines their meaning.

The Church of Sweden's response recognizes this point where it categorizes the elements of BEM's "ministry" section in terms of those "which we recognize as positive" and those "which we wish to comment upon with different emphases." Regarding the latter, it says that "in certain regards we would accent different features than BEM."69

Similar, though more strongly stated, is the "wariness of overestimating the ordained ministry" voiced by the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Czechoslovakia which "finds justification [for the wariness] in our context thanks to the disillusionment in the clergy before the Reformation and during the Counter-Reformation."70

The following aspects of BEM's treatment of ministry have begotten a kind of dissatisfaction which signifies underlying concerns about the nature of the Church that it espouses:

(1) The Character of Christian Authority in Episcope

One of these concerns is the manner in which BEM would localize authority within the ordained ministry—and especially the episcopacy.

BEM is clearly mindful of broad concerns about ecclesiastical authority. That it would place episkope, as the exercise of authority, in a very balanced and

70 Ibid., 297.
comprehensive context is indicated in its introduction to the section on "Ordained Ministry and Authority":

The authority of the ordained minister is rooted in Jesus Christ, who has received it from the Father (Matt. 28:18), and who confers it by the Holy Spirit through the act of ordination. This act takes place within a community which accords public recognition to a particular person. Because Jesus came as one who serves (Mark 10:45; Luke 22:27), to be set apart means to be consecrated to service. Since ordination is essentially a setting apart with prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit, the authority of the ordained ministry is not to be understood as the possession of the ordained person but as a gift for the continuing edification of the body in and for which the minister has been ordained. Authority has the character of responsibility before God and is exercised with the cooperation of the whole community. Authority is through Jesus Christ, for service and "is exercised with the cooperation of the whole community." This comprehensive approach is developed further in the remainder of this section (par. 16).

In its treatment of "The Forms of the Ordained Ministry" in paragraph 21, it finds a developing relationship between episcopoe and bishops in the early church. Paragraph 23 states:

The Church as the body of Christ and the eschatological people of God is constituted by the Holy Spirit through a diversity of gifts or ministries. Among these gifts a ministry of episkopoe is necessary to express and safeguard the unity of the body. Every church needs this ministry of unity in some form in order to be the Church of God, the one body of Christ, a sign of the unity of all in the Kingdom.

The exercise of authority is prominent in BEM's treatment and advocacy of episcopacy for a unified ministry of the Church: "Bishops preach the Word, preside at the
sacraments, and administer discipline in such a way as to be representative pastoral ministers of oversight, continuity and unity in the Church. "72 Although it recognizes that churches exercise episkope in various ways, BEM favours episcopacy for the fulfilling of this role; this is one element in its advocacy (paragraph 22) of the threefold ministry "as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it."

It is remarkable that, despite this careful treatment, many churches question, even radically, BEM's treatment of authority. The unhappy connotations authority, in a highly sacramental/hierarchical ecclesiology, has for some Protestants is apparent in the response of the United Methodist Church, Central and Southern Europe, to the BEM proposals:

Many of the statements sound sacramentalist. We regret this tendency, because it does not seek to get beyond the concept that a sacrament is effective in its mere exercise, and carries in itself the danger of a triumphalistic and authoritarian image of the church.73

"Authoritarian image" points to the whole meaning "authority" has within an ecclesiology. The relationship this church finds between the "sacramentalist" and "the danger of a triumphalistic and authoritarian image" indicates how much more "authority" involves than the actual exercise of discipline in the particular.

72 BEM, M29.
73 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 201.
The Mission Covenant Church of Sweden, in its delineation of the elements of "authority," indicates the complexity of the subject:

The concept of "authority" is more problematic than the BEM report indicates. It has several dimensions: it has to do with expert knowledge, with reputation and with authority. When speaking about the authority which is given to a person through an ordination it is important to make a distinction between these three aspects.74

This response calls for an exploration of the elements essential to an episcope for the Church that is genuinely authoritative rather than merely authoritarian.

Other churches also express a concern about the broader context for episcope. For example, from the United Church of Christ (USA):

We are not unaware, however, that the real issue behind the threefold pattern of ministry is not "labels," but "the relationship of the bishop to both the other ordained ministers and the laity of the church." As we witness the threefold pattern across the centuries, it confronts us less with a matter of "titles" than with "an approach to polity in which authority flows in a different direction than it is deemed to flow in the United Church of Christ".75

From the Remonstrant Brotherhood:

In our congregationalist tradition authority is not vested so much in certain offices but rather in God and the community of believers. The community summons or "calls" someone to an office. And it is through interaction with the community that the minister exercises his or her authority. Thus we see "authority" in terms of responsibility rather than as something bestowed from above.76

How "authority flows" and "responsibility rather than as something bestowed from above" indicate underlying

74 Ibid., 322.
75 Ibid., 333.
76 Ibid., 309.
concerns about the kind of koinonia the church is to be and about Christian responsibility. This interest is reflected in the search for an authentic Christian authority by the Churches of Christ in Australia: "... Churches of Christ have opted for a congregational rather than an episcopal form of church government and ministry, which we believe is more in accord with NT teaching." 77

Thus does this dissatisfaction with the treatment of episcopate in BEM point beyond particularities to the desired nature of the Church as koinonia and to the character of the discipleship that this should involve.

(2) Ordered Ministry as Person or Function?

BEM affirms the place of the personal in ordered ministry as follows:

The ordained ministry should be exercised in a personal, collegial and communal way. It should be personal because the presence of Christ among his people can most effectively be pointed to by the person ordained to proclaim the Gospel and to call the community to serve the Lord in unity of life and witness. It should also be collegial, for there is need for a college of ordained ministers sharing in the common task of representing the concerns of the community. Finally, the intimate relationship between the ordained ministry and the community should find expression in a communal dimension where the exercise of the ordained ministry is rooted in the life of the community and requires the community's effective participation in the discovery of God's will and the guidance of the Spirit. 78

Some Protestant churches have been positively challenged by this overall emphasis. For example the Church of Scotland observes:

77 Ibid., 272.
78 BEM, M26.
There is evidence that the Roman Catholic Church is considering ways of developing the collegial dimension, and that episcopal churches are paying more attention to the communal dimension; it is incumbent on the churches of the Reformation to give similar special consideration to the personal dimension.

Many in the Church of Scotland find that discharge of the personal dimension at congregational level alone is inadequate: the life of the Church is impoverished by the lack of a pastor pastorum; the mission of the Church is debilitated by the lack of the drive, initiative, and vision that one person in permanent official position can impart.79

Similarly, the Church of Norway says: "Our church disassociates itself in the same way as BEM from a purely functionalistic understanding of the ordained ministry. It is a matter of persons who are set aside and consecrated for service."80

However, in their responses to BEM, most Protestant churches have reacted negatively to this emphasis. Even those Protestant bodies which affirm the personal role in ministry, as indicated earlier in this chapter, do so in a limited way. The Church of Scotland does not really deal with the ecclesiological implications of the "personal dimension" of "pastor pastorum." And to its affirmative statement the Church of Norway added: "But, for us, it is more important to emphasize that it is this ministry as a service which is constitutive, than that it is performed through a certain type of office."

The United Church of Canada commented: "We have some difficulty as a church with what we perceive, in the

79 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. I, 92.
80 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 118.
doctrine of ministry, to be a priority given to the 'person' of the ordained over the 'function' to which that person is authorized."81

The Church of Sweden says:

Thus, in 12, emphasis is placed on the person of the ordained minister which Lutheran tradition would place rather on the office of the ministry as such. Not least would we find it risky to seek particular examples of "holiness" among the ordained ministers. All Christians are equally called to holiness.82

The Lutheran Church of Australia:

The idea that it is not simply the functions of the ordained ministry, especially the public preaching and teaching of the word and the administration of the sacraments, but as well something inherent in the person of the ordained minister that gives the office its special character and authority, seems to be implied in other parts of the statement.83

Even these more negative responses surely do not involve the denial of the value of personal qualities in the ordained minister. Again the difficulty is to be perceived in the overall context. It is when the personal element in ministry, "something inherent in the person of the ordained minister that gives the office its special character and authority," becomes institutionalized that this becomes a problem. Then the assurance of these personal qualities demands an institutional structuring of the means of grace and the church's being which many would radically question.

(3) Ordained Ministry as Constitutive

Widespread and significant dissatisfaction among Protestants has been expressed regarding BEM's statement

81 Ibid., 285.
82 Ibid., 136.
83 Ibid., 93.
that, in view of its overall representative role, ordained ministry is "constitutive for the life and witness of the Church":

In order to fulfil its mission, the Church needs persons who are publicly and continually responsible for pointing to its fundamental dependence on Jesus Christ, and thereby provide, within a multiplicity of gifts, a focus of its unity. The ministry of such persons, who since very early times have been ordained, is constitutive for the life and witness of the Church.84

In a subsequent paragraph (11), together with being "leaders and teachers" and "pastors," the role of ordained ministers as representative is emphasized: "As heralds and ambassadors, ordained ministers are representatives of Jesus Christ to the community, and proclaim his message of reconciliation."

Within the threefold ministry, this role falls primarily to episcopacy and is central to BEM's "tentative" outline of the work of the bishop:

Bishops preach the Word, preside at the sacraments, and administer discipline in such a way as to be representative pastoral ministers of oversight, continuity and unity in the Church. They have pastoral oversight of the area to which they are called. They serve the apostolicity and unity of the Church's teaching, worship and sacramental life. They have responsibility for leadership in the Church's mission. They relate the Christian community in their area to the wider Church, and the universal Church to their community. They, in communion with the presbyters and deacons and the whole community, are responsible for the orderly transfer of ministerial authority in the Church.85

One notes that the "representative" role is central to the three spheres for which bishops have responsibility:

84 BEM, M8.
85 BEM, M29.
the preaching of the Word, the presiding at the sacraments and the administration of discipline. It is in this "representative" role that the bishop helps assure to the worship, teaching and pastoral life of the church the necessary continuity and unity.

That the treatment given ordered ministry in BEM as "representative" received widespread disapproval among Protestant bodies is indicated in the official F. & O. survey of responses as follows:

Critical comments were also provided by the formulation in M.11 that ordained ministers are representatives of Jesus Christ, and similarly in M.14 that Christ's presidency at the Lord's supper is signified and represented by an ordained minister. . . . For quite a number of responses from Reformation and Free churches, the concept of "representation" is either ambiguous or too narrowly linked with the ordained ministry. If one would speak of "representation" at all, this would be rather the task of all the members of the community or, as the United Church of Canada says, of the liturgy as a whole.86

Commenting on paragraph 8, the Church of Sweden says: "We wish to interpret this statement so that what is constitutive for the church is the proclamation of the word of God and administration of the sacraments—but in order for this to happen a specially ordained ministry is called for."87

The Lutheran Church of Australia comments:

The paragraph that causes immediate concern, however, is M8. What precisely is it that provides "a focus for this (the Church's) unity—the ordained persons themselves, or their "pointing (the church) to its fundamental dependence on Jesus Christ"? If it is the latter, understood in the sense of the proclamation of the

87 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 136.
gospel and the administration of the sacraments in accordance with the divine word (ACVII), then there is no problem for us. 88

The United Methodist Church, Central and Southern Europe, makes more explicit their dislike of the results of this emphasis for the overall shape of the Church:

We have difficulty again where the "ordained ministry" is described as being the sole representatives of Jesus Christ for the congregation (#11 and 26). Out of our understanding, every Christian who has become a new creature in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) is such a representative. 89

BEM's treatment of ordained ministers as "priests" raises the same kind of concern. While affirming the primacy of Christ as "the unique priest" and thence of the priesthood of the whole Church, BEM continues:

Ordained ministers . . . may appropriately be called priests because they fulfill a particular priestly service by strengthening and building up the royal and prophetic priesthood of the faithful through word and sacraments, through their prayers of intercession, and through their pastoral guidance of the community. 90

Despite this careful treatment of the subject, dissatisfaction with the accent on ordered ministry associated with priesthood is expressed by some Protestant groups. For example, from the Waldensian and Methodist Churches in Italy:

M17 wants to justify the use of the term "priest" in place of "ordained ministers" in some churches. This justification does not convince us. We confirm, from one side, that all Christians are priests in themselves; and from the other side, the priesthood is definitely concluded with Christ's work (see the Letter to Hebrews)

88 Ibid., 93.
89 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 207.
90 BEM, M17.
once and for all, and special priesthoods do not exist in the Christian community.91

Underlying this dissatisfaction with BEM's affirmation of any representative role of ministry that is "constitutive" is concern about the whole shape and self-understanding of the Church. For instance, can the laos be other than second class citizens in this ecclesiology? And are we to assume that ordination bestows an exclusive grace?

(4) Ordered Ministry as Sacramental

This bring us to the most crucial representative role BEM affirms for ordained ministry: The presidency at the eucharist:

It is especially in the eucharistic celebration that the ordained ministry is the visible focus of the deep and all-embracing communion between Christ and the members of his body. In the celebration of the eucharist, Christ gathers, teaches and nourishes the Church. It is Christ who invites to the meal and who presides at it. In most churches this presidency is signified and represented by an ordained minister.92

This role for ordained ministry in the sacraments has been a special focus of Protestant discontent. For example, from the Lutheran Church in America:

Problems are posed by the statement . . . that, within the interrelatedness of ordained and lay members of the believing community, the presence of ordained ministers "reminds the community of the divine initiative, and of the dependence of the Church on Jesus Christ" and that "in them the Church sees an example of holiness and loving concern . . . The minister of the eucharist is the ambassador who represents the divine initiative. . . ."93

From the Waldensian and Methodist Churches in Italy:

91 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 251.
92 BEM, M14.
93 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. I, 35.
The statement of M14 is to be rejected: "It is especially in the eucharistic celebration that the ordained ministry is the visible focus of the deep and all-embracing communion between Christ and the members of his body." There is nothing in the New Testament that justifies such statements: they express "traditions" of churches, not the "faith" of the church.94

Here again, this dissatisfaction bespeaks concern about the overall shape of the Church involved in this accent on the ordained minister in the eucharist. For example, from the North Elbian Evangelical Lutheran Church:

Since Lutheran doctrine differentiates very carefully and concretely between the authority of the Lord who is himself present in the Supper and the authority of the ordained minister whom he authorizes to act, we cannot possibly make the validity of a celebration of the Lord's Supper depend on its being conducted by an ordained minister...95

From the United Methodist Church, Central and Southern Europe:

We have further difficulty where the significance of ordained ministry in the context of the celebration of the eucharist is given special emphasis (#14). In this emphasis concepts of priesthood are awakened and suggested which we cannot affirm. We see these statements as standing in unresolved tension to those in ## 13 and 14.96

And from the Church of the Brethren:

Although the language and images in this section are familiar and indeed could be read as expressions of Brethren practice, the document implies that eucharist occurs as individual believers come before a priest. And although the text affirms that the celebration of the eucharist is "an instance of the Church's participation in God's mission to the world, participation that takes everyday form in the proclamation of the Gospel, service of the neighbour, and faithful presence in the world," Brethren feel this section of the document nearly negates the apostolic affirmation that the congregation,

94 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 251.
95 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. I, 50.
96 Ibid., 207.
the eucharist community itself, is Christ's risen and living body in and for the world of God's creation.97

The more fundamental issues involved, however, pertain to the relationship between grace and the elements of the Church. For example, the Church of Sweden comments:

It is alien to our tradition when it is stated in 14 that the one who leads the celebration of the eucharist is a "visible focus"--even emphasized with the definite article ("the visible focus")--of the communion between Christ and the members of his body. Here it seems as though the eucharist is placed above the sermon. For us it is important to emphasize that communion with Christ is expressed to just as high a degree in the function of proclamation as is so properly expounded in 13.98

It is this kind of concern which underlies the statement by the Church of Lippe that:

The synod of the Church of Lippe endorses the suggestion of Prof. Dr. Jurgen Moltmann "that to the Lima texts at hand a further declaration of convergence entitled De evangeli be added or rather placed in front of it. It should discuss gospel-scripture-Tradition, Spirit and word, mission and evangelization and ministerium verbi divini..."99

H. Theological Fundamentals: Grace and the Church

The mode of questions about God's guidance and nurture of the Church, questions which underlie these more particular concerns about ministry, come to a focus in BEM's treatment of ordination:

(a) Ordination is an invocation to God that the new minister be given the power of the Holy Spirit in the new relation which is established between this minister and the local Christian community and, by intention, the Church universal. The otherness of God's initiative, of which the ordained ministry is a sign, is here acknowledged in the act of ordination itself. "The spirit blows where it wills" (John 3:3): the invocation

97 Churches respond to BEM, Vol 2, 110.
98 Ibid., 137.
99 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 6, 74.
of the Spirit implies the absolute dependence on God for the outcome of the Church's prayer. This means that the Spirit may set new forces in motion and open new possibilities "far more abundantly than all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20).100

Here is an emphasis on the sovereignty of God very important to Protestants in "the otherness of God's initiative," "'the spirit blows where it wills,'" and "the Spirit may set new forces in motion . . ." This is present also in the subsequent paragraph:

(b) Ordination is a sign of the granting of this prayer by the Lord who gives the gift of the ordained ministry. Although the outcome of the Church's epiklesis depends on the freedom of God, the Church ordains in confidence that God, being faithful to his promise in Christ, enters sacramentally into contingent, historical forms of human relationship and uses them for his purpose. Ordination is a sign performed in faith that the spiritual relationship signified is present in, with and through the words spoken, the gestures made and the forms employed.101

Here again is "the freedom of God." But one finds also a Catholic emphasis on the divine entry "sacramentally into contingent, historical forms" in faithfulness "to his promise in Christ."

For the Catholic, that "God, being faithful to his promise in Christ, enters sacramentally into contingent, historical forms of human relationship" underlies the efficacy and reality of the Church. This is made very clear in the affirmation of the real presence within the elements of the eucharist in the Roman Catholic response:

On the one hand, we welcome the convergence that is taking place. On the other hand, we must note that for Catholic doctrine, the conversion of the elements is a

100 BEM, M42.
101 BEM, M43.
matter of faith and is only open to possible new theological explanations as to the "how" of the intrinsic change. The content of the word "transubstantiation" ought to be expressed without ambiguity.102

Consistent with this emphasis on God's entry into the Church's particularity and historicity is an affirmation, in the Roman Catholic response, of BEM's treatment of ordained ministry as representative and a wish that it be strengthened:

The concept of "representation" is a valuable concept which roots in the theological understanding of the churches. But it needs further qualification in the context of the agreed statement, so that through its relation to the Archetypos Christ, the ordained ministry is in and for the church an effective and sacramental reality, by which a minister acts "in persona Christi." 103

Similarly this response affirms BEM's treatment of "episcopal succession" as "effective sign":

All other ministries are linked to his and function in relationship to it. Thus his ministry is a sacramental sign of integration and a focus of communion. Through the episcopal succession, the bishop embodies and actualizes both catholicity in time, i.e., the continuity of the church across the generations, as well as the communion lived in each generation. The actual community is thus linked up through a personal sign with the apostolic origins, its teaching and way of living.104

The Roman Catholic response finds ordained ministry and the sacraments to be expressive of the sacramental nature of the whole and historical Church:

But further reflection on ecclesiology will be needed in the Commission on Faith and Order, in order to put the ordained ministry in clear perspective. As an illustration, one essential dimension of the church that

102 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 6, 22.
103 Ibid., 29.
104 Ibid., 33.
remains obscure, although it is of the greatest importance for understanding and valuing the authority of ordained ministry, is the sacramental aspect of the whole church, at work in a particular way in the ministry, in its teaching office, in the administration of the sacraments and in its governing. In a real and effective sense the church is an icon of the presence of God and his kingdom in the world. This is always because of God's actual and constant faithfulness to his promise in Jesus Christ. The basic ministerial structures participate in that sacramental dimension. Further ecumenical dialogue will have to deal more fully with that spiritual and sacramental dimension of the church and its ministry. 105

The Orthodox responses reflect a similar view of ordination. The Russian Orthodox Church says:

The orderly ordination implies however not only the transmission of the responsibilities but also a special charism... . . .

The performer is to be possessed of the episcopal charism. 106

(Orthodoxy also, in its own way, in this regard affirms the primacy of the whole Church as the instrument of God. The Bulgarian Orthodox Church says: "As is known, the Orthodox Church uses the term 'mystery' (mysterium) and not 'sacrament', and regards the church, founded by the Lord Jesus Christ, as a mystery from which the sacraments ensue." 107)

On the other hand, Protestant reservation about a highly sacramental understanding of the meaning and import of ordination is indicated by the United Methodist Church (USA):

With most Protestants, we United Methodists do not consider ordination to be a sacrament, comparable to baptism or eucharist. BEM's unexplained reference to a

---

105 Ibid., 27.
106 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 7.
107 Ibid., 15.
"sacramental sign" in the act of ordination (V,B,41) makes us rather uneasy. We agree that the "laying on of hands is a sign of the gift of the Spirit" (V,A,39), but we regard any hint of an "indelible character" of ministerial priesthood with some ambivalence. 108

This hesitation about a too institutional relationship between the divine and the elements of the church has been a major theme running through Protestant critiques of BEM's treatment of ministry as authoritative and representative.

The Waldensian and Methodist Churches in Italy state strongly and clearly what underlies some Protestant reservations about the Catholic understanding of ordination and about BEM's treatment of ministry as authoritative and representative:

The sin of the churches has been the presumption of enclosing the freedom of the Spirit within its schemes, to create a security for itself with the presumption of the "orderly transmission of the ordained ministry" and with the "successive laying on of hands by bishops," ignoring or opposing the variety of ministries that the Spirit has bestowed through the centuries and to which explicit reference was made in M33.109

In the comments in BEM about ordination and in the various responses, one finds emerging the issue which underlies the divergence regarding this "sacramental ecclesiology":

It is not whether or not "God, being faithful to his promise in Christ, enters sacramentally into contingent, historical forms of human relationship"; rather, the issue is the nature of God's entrance. The manner of God's entry

108 Ibid., 196.
109 Ibid., 251.
into the historical Church, which the Catholic believes to be essential to the meaning of Christ, is, for the Protestant, unless rightly conceived, a potential threat to "the otherness of God's initiative."

It is this issue which, implicit in so much of what was quoted earlier regarding "ministry" in BEM, is made more explicit in the responses which express concerns about the nature of the Church. For example, the Finnish Orthodox Church says:

The point of the document concerning the sacramental nature of the ministry of the church is especially problematic. One of the greatest problems of the whole BEM document is closely related to this: the sacramental nature of the whole church.110

And in the Roman Catholic response:

It is clear to us then that Faith and Order must focus more directly on ecclesiology. We believe that, without serious attention to the broader questions of ecclesiology, there are disadvantages not only for the study and understanding of the content of BEM, but for our ecumenical progress as well.111

It is the very basic nature of such questions about Church and grace that causes some churches to question, in turn, the theological grounds in BEM. The Presbyterian Church in Canada voices concern that "It is unclear, for instance, on the issue of scripture and/or Tradition.112

The Methodist Church (U.K.) comments:

The second difficulty concerns the theological method adopted in the text. Nowhere is this defined, and it is not clear what authority the text wishes to accord, say, to reason or tradition. Neither is it clear what

110 Ibid., 28.
111 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 6, 5.
112 Ibid., 153.
approach to the authority and use of scripture is being adopted.113

And this leads to Markus Barth's kind of dissatisfaction. As one highly critical of BEM's ecclesiology from a Reformed Church and Protestant perspective, he finds it to be so flawed as to call for a new beginning. Concerned about BEM as an indication of the direction of future F. & O. work, he says:

I think it is necessary to pray to God and to request from responsible church authorities that we do not proceed in the direction taken so far, but rather return and start once more from the beginning.114

113 Ibid., 218.
114 Markus Barth, Rediscovering the Lord's Supper: Communion with Israel, with Christ, and Among the Guests, (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988), 113.
Part C
Chapter 13
FUTURE DIALOGUE ABOUT EPISCOPACY


(A) The Post-BEH Context

We note again how highly significant the whole BEH phenomenon is regarding the current climate of ecumenical discussion. One can delineate three ways in which this is so:

(1) Broad Ecumenical Involvement

Our survey has been sufficiently comprehensive to indicate the great breadth of recent and current ecumenical activity—-involving every major tradition in the Christian family. Thus the willingness of hundreds of denominations, out of every corner of the world and every major tradition, to engage in the BEH process is an indication of the positive ecumenical climate within the Christian family as we approach the next millennium. This is an encouraging factor.

(2) The Continuing Centrality of Ministry Issues
Our Introduction suggested that ministry, and therein especially the episcopate, has been and remains the crucial focus of differences between the great traditions. This has been amply indicated in our survey: In each discussion series, and those chosen for our purpose have been widely representative, ministry has almost invariably been recognized initially as the crucial explicit stumbling block and has proven to be so. Despite the many attempts to arrive at a mutually acceptable ministry, only in a very few instances (e.g. South-East Asia) has this credibly been accomplished to date. Moreover, we have observed very real limits to mutual understanding of the issues underlying ministry.

We recall, in the BEM Preface, these comments about the choice of the three foci for the study:

Naturally, therefore, the Faith and Order Commission has devoted a good deal of attention to overcoming doctrinal division on these three. During the last fifty years, most of its conferences have had one or another of these subjects at the centre of discussion.1

The inclusion of ministry as one of these foci together with the especially extensive treatment it received in BEM--and in the responses--is indicative of its continuing status in ecumenical dialogue.

(3) The Importance of the Underlying Differences

Our survey has indicated a growing awareness of the necessity of dealing with the differences underlying ministry rather than its more apparent particulars. We have seen an increasing concentration on method--the approach to such

1 Growth in Agreement, 466.
differences—rather than on their more obvious expressions in styles of ministry. And, despite the considerable progress achieved in the more recent and more sophisticated dialogues here surveyed, each has acknowledged the challenge to understanding that remains. Indeed, the unwillingness of the authors of the Niagara Report, for instance, to recommend definitive treatment of episcopate is significant of this recognition.

Similarly, the responses to BEM indicate quite clearly that the Faith dynamics underlying its foci remain a major challenge to ecumenical understanding. Especially does disquiet in the responses regarding BEM’s recommendations regarding ministry indicate concern about the underlying theological essentials.

Typical of the expression of such concern is that in the Roman Catholic response, quoted earlier:

*It is clear to us then that Faith and Order must focus more directly on ecclesiology. We believe that, without serious attention to the broader questions of ecclesiology, there are disadvantages not only for the study and understanding of the content of BEM, but for our ecumenical progress as well.*

The official BEM Report on the Process and Responses acknowledges the importance of such theological realities underlying ecclesiology as follows:

*One of the most important ecumenical convergences seems to be the recognition, expressed in many responses, that a common understanding of the nature of the church and of the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist is fundamental for any theology and structure of ministry and for mutual recognition of ministries—and not the reverse.*

---

2 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 6, 5.
3 87.
This statement provides evidence of a broad acceptance of that understanding which we found in many of the later discussions surveyed. The axiom that any ordered ministry is grounded in an ethos which distinguishes, energizes and unifies its tradition means that progress in theological reconciliation must precede any unifying in the particulars of ministry.

That this "ecumenical convergence" about the primacy of mutual understanding about "the nature of the Church" as fundamental to discussion of ministry reflects not only the BEM experience but the developing wisdom apparent in our survey affirms it as a major accomplishment in ecumenicity.

But how is ecumenical theology to approach "the nature of the Church"?

(B) Ministry and the Fundamentals of Ecclesiology

(1) The Instrumentality of the Church

Robert Jenson indicates that discussion about "ecclesiological questions at issue" (including ministry) generally leads to the issue of "continuity":

If we seek a common feature of the ecclesiological questions at issue—or indeed . . . of the dialogues' remaining problems about sacraments or ministry—we find that all are questions about continuity through time. . .4

The issue of "continuity" involves both the differing roles of these institutions and differing contexts within which they have ecclesiological meaning:

The problem about the necessity of churchly institutions concerns, first, the whole place of institutions in the reality of the church, that is, of the means by which the church persists as a community through history. 5

And, as Jenson says, this involves the more general character of the Church's instrumentality in God's work:

There is at present something close to consensus about the location of a Catholic-Protestant Grunddifferenz. It is thought to lie between opposed understandings of the church's role in the life of faith. 6

Jenson adds:

Andre Birmele, from a Protestant position, has provided an exhaustive account of the relevant dialogues, and a summary of the point to which they have come. "Behind all the surface questions appears one and the same question: about . . . the church and particularly about the nature of her instrumentality," in God's saving work.7

That "'the church and particularly . . . the nature of her instrumentality,' in God's saving work" is now recognized as "one and the same question" "behind all the surface questions" is a useful description of the theological dynamic in the recent major dialogues we have surveyed. We found differences regarding ecclesiology, in the responses to BEM, to pertain not to the particular elements of the Church per se but to the theological context in which they are understood. Or, how is God's activity related to the institutional Church?

Thus major issues in ecclesiology lead us, through the respective differing treatments of "churchly institutions," to try to understand the grounds of these differences in ecclesiology; what are the differences in Faith which

7 Ibid.
determine the respective understandings of the Church's instrumentality?

(2) The Theological Dynamics which Determine this "Instrumentality" in each Tradition

At this point the generalization by the inaugural assembly of the W.C.C. (Amsterdam, 1948) regarding "Our Greatest Difference" remains helpful:

. . . in each case we confront a whole corporate tradition of the understanding of Christian faith and life. We may illustrate this by saying that the emphasis usually called "Catholic" contains a primary insistence upon the visible continuity of the Church in the apostolic succession of the episcopate. The one usually called "Protestant" primarily emphasizes the initiative of the Word of God and the response of faith, focused in the doctrine of justification sola fide. . . . even when the conversation is between those who deeply trust and understand each other, there remains a hard core of disagreement between different total ways of apprehending the Church of Christ.8

These brief sketches of Catholic and Protestant positions suffice to indicate:

(a) A Catholic emphasis, on "visible continuity" in the Church's being as essential to wholeness in apostolicity. At issue is the on-going fullness of the meaning and reality of the Incarnation and the nature of God's involvement in history.

(b) A Protestant concern that the our approach to the fullness of divine grace in the Church's instrumentality respect the "divine initiative." Here we recall the disquiet, expressed in their response to BEM by the Methodist and Waldensian Churches of Italy, about "the presumption of

enclosing the freedom of the Spirit within its [the churches'] schemes."

Here is a clear distinction between a Catholic "primary insistence upon the visible continuity of the Church in the apostolic succession of the episcopate" and a Protestant primary emphasis on "the initiative of the Word of God and the response of faith, focused in the doctrine of justification sola fide."

As was noted above, at issue are the nature of "continuity" of the Church with Christ and the status and character of certain aspects of ecclesiology judged essential to that continuity. Mention of the "apostolic succession of the episcopate" and "the initiative of the Word of God and the response of faith" imply major differences in attitude to these factors. While both sides affirm the necessity to the Church's apostolicity of specific elements of ecclesiology such as ministry and sacraments, in contrast to the Catholic position Protestantism both affirms and radically limits their roles as instruments of grace.

Here we encounter again the two understandings of the involvement of the divine with the historical which we met in BEM's treatment of ordination: On the Protestant side the affirmation of "the otherness of God's initiative . . . the spirit blows where it wills" and on the Catholic side the affirmation of the divine entry "sacramentally into

9 Churches respond to BEM Vol. 2, 251.
contingent, historical forms" in faithfulness "to his promise in Christ."10

Can we understand these backgrounds to differences about the instrumentality of the Church's institutions without venturing further into the character of the divine grace in Jesus Christ and the Trinity? John Huxtable states that our basic difference "... has in the end to do with our basic understanding of the nature of grace."11 This involves our understandings of the relationship between grace and nature/the historical but surely also raises questions about the character of grace within the divine.

(C) The "Elusive" Fundamentals

(1) "Something Amiss in the Basement"

It would be presumptuous for us to try to "name" the fundamentals which underlie the respective treatments of grace and the historical in the Church. We recall the observation by Gunther Gassmann (in 1996) which indicates how difficult this undertaking has proven to be:

Early in this century Protestant and Roman Catholic theologians have predicted that this will be a "century of the Church. Indeed, there has never been such a wealth of ecclesiological reflection (and publications) than during the last seven decades. But at the end of this century, after a history of faithfulness and failure of the churches, we still face the challenge of achieving a basic agreement on a common and relevant understanding of the church in the world.12

10 BEM M42,43.
Rather is our interest in clarifying the nature of the fundamental differences which underlie ecclesiologies (and ministries) and our approach to them. What, in the final analysis, are we to "discern" and to "hear" as most crucial in the particulars of the "other"—and one's own—tradition.

That this is, for ecumenical theology, somewhat like the marathon runner's "hitting the wall" is indicated in the broad ecumenical experience (including BEM) surveyed here and expressed by Robert Jenson (in 1992) in The Elusive Bottom Lines as follows:

The question is: What really divides the churches? . . . At the beginning of the current dialogues it was assumed that we knew. . . . But at the present advanced stage of the dialogues, we are no longer sure what finally divides us, though in each case it remains clear that something does.13

This affirms the importance of approach and method for current ecumenical theology. Jenson stated that "there is indeed something amiss in the basement that constantly generates occasions of division."14 But where do we look and what do we seek?

(2) Reflecting about "Fundamental Difference"

The challenge inherent in such concern has caused some ecumenical theologians to raise again the question of "fundamental difference."

In Part 2, "Suggested Roots of the Catholic-Protestant 'Fundamental Difference,'" of an article written in

13 Ibid., 111.
14 Robert Jenson, Unbaptized God (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1992) 8.
1986 on this subject, Harding Meyer (Director of the Strasbourg Institute for ecumenical Research) provides a useful survey of the approaches adopted to focus on this basic difference. He finds these to have developed in three phases:

(a) "Tracing Diverse Individual Differences Back to a Single 'Root' Difference" 17

Early practitioners of this approach cited are Ritschol [sic], Kaftan, Mulert, Przywara and Tillich. Somewhat more recent were: Gerhard Ebeling (Distinguishing between "the church of the sacrament" and "of the word," finding "ultime difference in language--in truth-consciousness and reality-experience."); Yves Congar (A Protestant imbalance in Christology--"'a monophysitistic' flavour"--leading to a "monergism" or "monopraxis" which involves "a soteriology reduced to the 'sole effectiveness' of God, thus repudiating any human cooperation whatsoever" with "important ecclesiological consequences."); H. Muhlen (Differences in "the understanding of person."); A. Brandenburg (Fundamental difference between the authority of the "ecclesiastical teaching office" and the assumption that "Scripture interprets itself.").

(b) "After Vatican II . . . A Difference Between Different Thought Process" 18

Vatican II's Unitatis redintegratio (20-23)

(Differences in "thought processes"--the importance of

17 Ibid., 249-251.
18 Ibid., 251-252.
"linguistic problems."); The Wurzburg Synod of Catholic dioceses in the Federal Republic of Germany ("Unavoidable differences in the understanding of the one faith," finding them rooted in "the diversity of 'language.'" "Language . . . means . . . not only vocabulary but the whole mentality, the spirit of a culture, the philosophical way of thinking, tradition, and lifestyle."); O. H. Pesch ("Sapiential (Aquinas) and "existential" (Luther) theology.) W. Beinert ("Platonic-Augustinian-Lutheran"-"existential" and "Aristotelian-Scholastic-Catholic- "Scholastic" thought.).

(c) "Recently . . . Particular Arenas of Theological Reflection 19

E. Hermes (Protestant faith as response to revelation as act and therefore not "traditionable" and Catholic faith as "faith in dogma" and therefore "traditionable.")); J. Bauer (The relationship between divine and human in Jesus Christ with major implications for Christology.); H.M Muller (A Protestant distinction between "evangelical truth (doctrina evangeli) and human conditions (traditions humanae) made in the Reformation but not in Catholicism.); E. Jungel (the church as sacrament.); R. Friedling ("Distinctive emphases on the saving events of Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection."); Pope John Paul II (". . . basic questions regarding the correct interpretation and appropriation of the Christian faith."); Cardinal Ratzinger ("Fundamental decisions Grundentscheid," a "radical personalization" of faith in contrast to "'co-faith' with the church." "the Catholic

19 Ibid., 253-257.
ranking of faith and love and the Lutheran 'dialectic of law and gospel'"—"the real fundamental difference can, in the final analysis, be found in the doctrine of justification."); Bishop K. Lehmann ("Luther's personalizing faith and detaching it from the church . . . the strict precedence given to the word of God over the church.").

Meyer's survey is instructive in indicating the variety and complexity involved in credible and noteworthy attempts to begin to "name" the fundamentals. And yet, despite their value as truth, the intelligence cannot rest content with any.

Out of our survey in this thesis, as we try to see through this complexity, some preliminary assumptions are possible:

(D) Discerning/Hearing: Some Directions and Parameters

(1) The Comprehensive Character of Fundamental Difference

Meyer's survey of notable judgments about "fundamental difference" is helpful in indicating the comprehensive nature of the theological factors named. Each, with the ring of truth about it, leads us toward others. Some examples: One senses the relationship between hermeneutic factors and our approach to the Incarnation. So also is there a relationship between our Christology and our understanding of "person." One appreciates Meyer's observation that "epistemological" and "theological" approaches "can be combined."20

20 Ibid., 251.
Here we return to the WCC (Amsterdam) statement quoted in our Introduction:

The essence of our situation is that, from each side of the division we see the Christian faith and life as a self-consistent whole, but our two conceptions of the whole are inconsistent with each other.21

Here is emphasized the "total" or comprehensive nature of "Our Greatest Difference." It affirms that "the essence of our situation is that, from each side of the division we see . . .["the Christian faith and life"] . . . as a self-consistent whole, but our two conceptions of the whole are inconsistent with each other."

One must conclude that the "self-consistent whole" on either side comprehends the range of Christian doctrine. It is as if on either side the "self-consistent whole" receives a certain colouring. The comprehensiveness of that "colouring" must be respected.

For example, important as the doctrine of Incarnation may be, one recognizes that the different emphases and nuances each side finds in it are essentially grounded more broadly. That Justification remains a challenge not only in its inner content but in its proper overall context in Faith and Order also implies comprehensive theological factors operative on either side. Thus, the commonality or "colouring" running through the respective treatments of Incarnation, of Justification and of other doctrines demands a Faith/noetic

ground for this on either side not bound to any particular doctrine.

(2) The Unavoidable Challenge of the Great Traditions

Our Introduction included quotes from eminent theologians from the major Western traditions indicating the on-going difficulty inherent in understanding the great traditions (e.g. Ebeling: a "difficult and inexhaustible task") and the gulf between them. Is that task unavoidable?

There is a clear answer in the BEM story. The "common understanding of the nature of the church and of the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist... fundamental for any theology and structure of ministry" must lie at the core of each tradition's self-understanding. The basic Faith affirmations that ground every Ordering of the Church are essential to every major tradition and also primary factors determining its character. Most critical responses to BEM involve the rejection of any attempt to bypass what is most precious in one's own confessional ethos.

That any tradition has endured in God's work of salvation means that such basic living Faith intuitions are to be cherished. This was made clear in the response of the Church of the Brethren to BEM as follows: "What if we should be called to relinquish that very inheritance which constitutes God's gift and promise to us?"22

Moreover, it is hardly likely that any "new manifestation" in a richer unity would involve understandings

22 Churches respond to BEM Vol. 6, 106.
of the nature and purpose of the Church sufficient for its greater unity and being that do not comprehend the major aspects of the "very inheritance which constitutes God's gift and promise to us." This is an accumulated wisdom received through and in grace that must somehow be carried into any more comprehensive new Church; more comprehensive unity must retain and enhance the genius of both Protestantism and Catholicism (and Orthodoxy). This demands of ecumenical theology the deliberate knowing and retention of the self-understanding of Church which underlies each confession—despite the difficulties involved.

Therefore, although the attempt to find a more adequate conceptual framework for dialogue such as in the work of ARCIC or the Niagara Report is both useful and necessary, there is no alternative to Ebeling's way. As Von Balthasar observed, "unity will not be found in some open no-man's-land between the denominations; it can only be found within the bounds of the Church." 23

John Macquarrie makes this statement:

... the main traditions of the Christian church, Roman, Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, Reformed, Methodist and others—have an integrity and distinctiveness that ought not to be sacrificed. In the history of religions, syncretism has always proved to be a weakness... 24

(3) A Strange and Elusive Cognition

It is instructive that the nature of understanding plays a key role in so many of the insights into "fundamental

differences" cited by Meyer. What character of basic insight underlying respective treatments of ministry do we seek?

We must be open to a knowledge which is simultaneously both known and hardly known. The individual parishioner knows a tradition as his/her spiritual home without being able to articulate why. Here we return to Willebrands' quote from Pascal: "Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connait point."25 Ebeling points to the common experience of theologians struggling to understand conceptually the nature of a confession which, in another way, they must thoroughly know, being nurtured as Christians within its meaning.

There is an instructive parallel in the world of philosophy. Langdon Gilkey comments:

Philosophical thought is not so much the root by which self-evidence is achieved, as it is the explication and unfolding, in the face of all the facts, of affirmations which have come to be regarded by the thinker during the course of his actual living as self-evident.26

In this regard Gilkey quotes Dorothy Emmett:

I do not believe that any of the great metaphysicians have cast round looking for some interesting idea on which they might be able to construct a theory. They have been charged with a sense of the importance and significance in some spiritual or intellectual experience, and the excitement of this has driven them on to attempt to give intelligible form to other vague reaches of experience with reference to this basic thought.27

The parallel is useful because Gilkey and Emmett indicate the presence, underlying the great philosophical

systems, of a core of meaning, in a real sense "given" to the philosopher, which remains the comprehensive basis and energy for explication. It is a core of meaning which its devotees understand only in part and never exhaust.

One can understand how similarly, a fortiori, a core of meaning, given and inexhaustible, can be at the heart of each of the great confessions, known intuitively more than conceptually and which has manifold expressions in the life of that tradition. One recognizes also, in this parallel, how such a basic intuitive knowledge in Christ can involve broad commonality and also great divergence for the Christian family.

(4) The Dynamic Faith/Order Interaction

From the work of the pre-ARCIC Preparatory Commission we quoted earlier a helpful commentary about the nature of the hermeneutic or "formal" factors which give character to the major traditions:

Divergences since the sixteenth century have arisen not so much from the substance of this inheritance as from our separate ways of receiving it. They derive from our experience of its value and power, from our interpretation of its meaning and authority, from our formulation of its content, from our theological elaboration of what it implies, and from our understanding of the manner in which the Church should keep and teach the Faith. Further study is needed to distinguish between those differences which are merely apparent, and those which are real and require serious examination. 28

The Commission found divergence to lie in the hermeneutical factors involved in each tradition's treatment of the Faith rather than "the substance of this inheritance."

28 Harding Meyer and Lukas Vischer, Growth in Agreement, 121.
The result was the adoption of koinonia as an alternate hermeneutical context for their future dialogue.

Although this insight is very helpful, many responses to BEM indicate that the theological factors that contribute to our differing understandings of the Church may very well also reach beyond such hermeneutical factors into "the substance of this inheritance."

Thus we affirm that our search for that core of insight which underlies each ecclesiology and colours every aspect of Order within a tradition, and most especially ministry, leads into the core of Faith.

Therefore the living relationship between Faith and Order in each tradition is central to our quest. However, this is not to be approached as a matter of concepts and deductions, or even as readily delineable; rather is it to be approached as a subtle, dynamic movement of cognition oscillating between the ground of the sacred and those particularities of the Church in which the sacred is sought and found.

For example, in probing the meaning of the Eucharist in one's tradition, the mind moves restlessly back and forth between the meaning of the particulars involved and the meaning of the divine. Calvin noted such interaction in the first lines of the Institutes:

Our wisdom, in so far as it ought to be deemed true and solid wisdom, consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But as these are connected together by many ties, it is not easy to
determine which of the two precedes, and gives birth to the other. 29

(E) Discerning/Hearing II: Suggestions re: Style

All of this indicates that what is demanded of ecumenical theology is a careful and critical "hearing," through the theological context for its ecclesiological specifics (including ministry), of the basic character of one's own and of that other confession. The process is subject to the challenge of the biblical witness primarily but also secondarily of historical studies and the demands of the contemporary world.

It is because of the "elusive" nature of the fundamentals that the dialogue must be focused upon the specifics of ecclesiology in which fundamentals are expressed, episcopacy being the most obvious example. But these particulars must be viewed as expressing those fundamentals.

There must be a careful "hearing" of one's own and of that other confession if we are to reach beyond peripherals into that which fundamentally distinguishes the one from the other and which causes "Our Greatest Difference." In our survey the understanding of grace has emerged as the instrument by which to discern the different meaning that governs each ethos.

Thus we return to Willebrands' emphases on discernment of "id quod requiritur et sufficit (ad unitatem)" and of the

"hermeneutical . . . to find the authentic sense of formulations of faith"30 as the first and second tasks of ecumenical theology.

How might this process of critical or discerning hearing occur in Protestant/Catholic discussion of ordered ministry? We suggest a worthwhile style as follows:

(1) The Theological Significance of Protestant Ministry

(A) Proclamation and The Word

John Macquarrie notes that Protestants "have tended to emphasize the apostolic preaching as the essential which must be maintained in a true Christian ministry."31 The nature of Protestantism's beginnings has determined the centrality of proclamation, the scriptures and Christ as the Word to its understanding of ordained ministry. Ernst Fuchs indicates how this dominant factor has been restated in some recent theology in terms of "language event":

The language event can also be described as carrying out the assembling function of being to which Heidegger had called attention. Theologically speaking, proclamation is such a language event in which the body of Christ is constituted, assembled. The church as assembly takes place in the language event of proclamation. Here the distinctively Protestant definition of the church in terms of the preaching of the word has been restated in terms of the new hermeneutic's understanding of language.32

What, beyond historical circumstances, governs this understanding of ministry as primarily ministry of the word? The understanding of grace operative here is expressed in Calvin's treatment of the ministry in the Institutes:

We see that God, who might perfect his people in a moment, chooses not to bring them to manhood in any other way than by the education of the Church... God inspires us with faith, but it is by the instrumentality of his gospel, as Paul reminds us, "Faith cometh by hearing" (Rom. 10:17). God reserves to himself the power of maintaining it, but it is by the preaching of the gospel, as Paul also declares, that he brings it forth and unfolds it...

... for among the many noble endowments with which God has adorned the human race, one of the most remarkable is, that he deigns to consecrate the mouths and tongues of men to his service, making his own voice to be heard in them. 33

Here is a quite remarkable affirmation of grace in the proclamation of the Gospel: "God... brings it forth and unfolds it... deigns to consecrate the mouths and tongues of men to his service, making his own voice to be heard in them." Thus does grace create the Church as realm of meaning, enabling all of ecclesiastical life, including the sacraments.

But Calvin also describes a quite remarkable limitation to preaching in that it is so thoroughly subject to the divine initiative: God "reserves to himself the power of maintaining it." This description has major implications for the status of ecclesiastical life and the sacramental.

The primacy of proclamation over the sacramental in Protestant ecclesiology involves this limiting. What are we to discern/hear in this?

33 John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. Henry Beveridge (London: James Clarke, 1957), Bk. 4, Ch. 1, #5, 284f.
(B) The Protestant Affirmation/Limitation Tension

Calvin, while affirming the grace-Church relationship, also places a limit upon it. For example, in this statement he strongly affirms the role of the Church as "mother":

. . . God, in accommodation to our infirmity, has added such helps, and secured the effectual preaching of the gospel, by depositing this treasure with the Church. He has appointed pastors and teachers, by whose lips he might edify his people (Eph. 4:11); he has invested them with authority, and, in short, omitted nothing that might conduce to holy consent in the faith, and to right order. In particular, he has instituted sacraments which we feel by experience to be most useful helps to fostering and confirming our faith . . . to those to whom he is a Father, the Church must also be a mother.34

But together with this must be a sharp qualification of the status of the "visible" Church:

When in the Creed we profess to believe the Church, reference is made not only to the visible Church of which we are now treating, but also to all the elect of God, including in the number even those who have departed this life . . . Hence, regard must be had both to the secret election and to the internal calling of God, because he alone "knoweth them that are his" (2 Tim. 2:19) . . . to God alone must be left the knowledge of his Church, of which his secret election forms the foundation . . . let us know that the death of Christ produces fruit, and that God wondrously preserves his Church, while placing it as it were in concealment.35

Thus, from its beginnings in the Reformation, Protestant ecclesiology has been essentially characterized by a tension within the relationship between grace and the institutional: Here is both an affirmation and a limitation; that which demands its utter primacy within the faith also necessarily prevents any presumption regarding grace.

34 Ibid., Bk. 4, Ch. 1, #1, 280f.
35 Ibid., Bk. 4, Ch. 1, #2, 281f.
This tension was more recently expressed in Tillich's "Protestant Principle":

Protestantism denies the security of sacramental systems with inviolable forms, sacred laws, eternal structures. It questions every claim of absoluteness . . . All of this, of course, does not mean that Protestantism must surrender its own foundation, the Gestalt of grace, and the Protestant principle protecting it.36

Tillich emphasizes the breadth of this limitation; he finds the primacy of grace in justification to limit radically not only the sacramental and hierarchy as instruments of salvation but also the whole realm of meaning which is the natural and finite in the visible church:

The step I myself made in these years was the insight that the principle of justification through faith refers not only to the religious-ethical but also to the religious-intellectual life.37

Similarly is this tension regarding the Church as avenue of grace important to Karl Barth:

It is now, in view of the actual and recurrent Roman temptation, certainly not appropriate to silence or even to soften the stress on the judgment beginning with the house of God which, after all, runs through the entire Bible . . . And it certainly was and is no good undertaking to reverse the sequence whereby event precedes institution, which is also established by the entire Bible.38

That Barth also understands comprehensively the radical affirmation and limitation to be inherent in the sovereignty of grace is made clear as follows:

The facts are that God Himself veils Himself and in the very process—which is why we should not dream of intruding into the mystery—unveils Himself. It is good

37 Ibid., x.
for us that God acts exactly as He does, and it could only be fatal for us if He acted otherwise, if He were manifest to us in the way we should hold correct, directly and without any veil, without worldliness or only in that harmless transparent form of it analogia entis. It would not be greater love and mercy, it would be the end of us and the end of all things if the Word were addressed to us thus.39

The above comment makes clear what was implicit in the earlier comments: That this affirmation of God's grace which includes within it a limitation to human presumption upon it—which characterizes Protestant ecclesiology—leads us into the fundamentals of Faith.

Can we probe further into the grounding of this tension between affirmation and negation which pervades so thoroughly the spirit of Protestant ecclesiology and theology?

(C) Underlying Theological Dynamics

Of the "theologians of the word," David Tracy found the necessity of negation to be the "one major characteristic [which] unites them all into a genuine family resemblance." Judging "dialectical language" to be one of the "classic theological languages par excellence,"40 he describes it in this way:

Amidst all the genuine differences in the formulations of theological language as dialectical language by the theologians of the word, one major characteristic unites them all into a genuine family resemblance: the necessity of radical theological negations to constitute all Christian theological language. 41

Of Barth he wrote:

41 Ibid., 415.
That focal meaning, to be sure, will never be allowed to admit any despised, negated "point of contact" between this God and this humanity. Rather the focus will always prove to be the irrevocably dialectical reality of God's Revealed Word in Jesus Christ.42

Of "all the other 'giants' of the theology of the word" Tracy comments:

No one of them ever betrayed the focussed and intense original vision of the negations released by the word as necessary in all properly theological language.43

What is at the heart of the underlying "focused and intense original vision of the negations released by the word"?

The "vision of the negations released by the word," which Protestants claim, is engendered by Protestantism's recurrent recovery of biblical insight. Tillich wrote of Luther's experience as follows:

"Righteousness" was the Old Testament word that Paul, and after him Luther, used in order to express the unconditional demand that stands over man as man. . . . Human freedom inescapably involves him in human ambiguity, in that mixture of truth and falsehood, of righteousness and unrighteousness, which all human life exhibits. Luther, the young monk, stood in the depth of this boundary-situation and dared to reject all safeguards that piety and the church wished to extend to him. He remained in it and learned in it that just this and only this is the situation in which the divine "Yes" over the whole of human existence can be received; for this "Yes" is not founded on any human achievement, it is an unconditional and free sovereign judgment from above human possibilities.44

Karl Barth, in his retrospective work, "The Humanity of God," describes such a recovery of biblical insight:

The stone wall we first ran up against was that the theme of the bible is the deity of God, more exactly God's

42 Ibid., 417.
43 Ibid., 418.
44 Paul Tillich, The Protestant Era, 201.
deity—God's independence and particular character, not only in relation to the natural but also to the spiritual cosmos; God's absolutely unique existence, might, and initiative, above all, in His relation to man.45

In writing, in the same work, of the completion of this development through understanding the "humanity" of God, expressed in the statement that "God's high freedom in Jesus Christ is His freedom for love," Barth outlined the fuller theological context for the earlier statement:

God's independence, omnipotence, and eternity, God's holiness and justice and thus God's deity, in its original and proper form, is the power leading to this effective and visible sequence in the existence of Jesus Christ: superiority preceding subordination.46

What is the character, for Protestantism, of the divine "superiority" or "God's deity" which precedes "subordination," and which therefore enables "His freedom for love?" Or what is there in the divine which enables and gives character to grace?

Tillich points to a reply in his comments about Isaiah 6 which he describes as "one of the greatest [passages] in the Old Testament" because "it clearly reveals the essence of Biblical religion":

Only the power of Divine Holiness, having touched our existence, can bring us near to God. Something of our existence, sin, iniquity, or uncleanness must be burned away, must be annihilated. Only through such annihilation can God speak to us and through us. But whether or when He speaks to us at all does not depend upon us in any way. Isaiah did not produce either the vision or the purification.47

45 Karl Barth, The Humanity of God, 41.
46 Ibid., 48.
Isaiah's experience of the "Divine Holiness" was an experience of an entity by which "something of our existence, sin, iniquity, or uncleanness must be burned away, must be annihilated." Here we recall terms such as "righteousness" or "God's holiness and justice" in earlier quotes from Tillich and Barth.

This character of the divine transcendence and sovereignty in which the "negations of the word" are grounded, expressed in the reformation doctrines of Justification and Election, demand expression in more "personally" oriented metaphors rather than philosophical, essentialist categories. This distinction, according to the Protestant theologian, Jurgen Holtmann, with its implications for our reception of grace, is made strongly by him in _The Crucified God_:

So [the human's] knowledge [of God] is achieved not by the guiding thread of analogies from earth to heaven, but on the contrary, through contradiction, sorrow and suffering. To know God means to endure God. To know God in the cross of Christ is a crucifying form of knowledge, because it shatters everything to which a man can hold and on which he can build, both his works and his knowledge of reality, and precisely in so doing sets him free.48

Beside the stress on the burning or shattering aspect of grace, Tillich also emphasizes that our reception of grace must be likened to a personal relationship; there is that within the quality of the Holy, of deity, of grace which can only be known in the very act of receiving:

Is God a thing that can be grasped and known among other things? Is God less than a human person? We always have to wait for a human being. Even in the most intimate

communion among human beings, there is an element of not having and not knowing, and of waiting.49

Finally, Tillich emphasizes the point that God's grace must always be considered in the context of forgiveness and, indeed, "unconditional" forgiveness. He comments on Luke 7: 36-47:

Forgiveness is unconditional or it is not forgiveness at all. Forgiveness has the character of "in spite of," but the righteous ones give it the character of "because." The sinners, however, cannot do this... God's forgiveness is unconditional. 50

Tillich, having given an account of grace, voices a Protestant critique of the Catholic understanding, contending that it tends to lose or ignore its personal character:

In all this, grace is interpreted as a tangible, special reality—an object like other natural or historical objects—and this in spite of its transcendent, and therefore unconditional, meaning.51

We find this understanding of grace as holy, as personal, and as forgiveness reflected in Protestant distrust about what seems to be presumption in our reception of it. Tillich even refers to this as demonic hybris:

The Protestant protest prohibits the appearance of grace through finite forms from becoming an identification of grace with finite forms. Such an identification is, according to the Protestant principle, demonic hybris. And examples of just such a demonic hybris must be seen in the hierarchical possession of the sacramental grace, in the orthodox possession of the infallible Word of God and the "pure doctrine," and in the scientific possession of the "historical Jesus" and his new law.52

49 Paul Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations, 150.
51 Paul Tillich, The Protestant Era, 211, 212.
52 Ibid., 211, 212.
We recall a similar Protestant concern expressed in the response to BEM of the Methodist and Waldensian Churches of Italy where it spoke of "the presumption of enclosing the freedom of the Spirit within its [the church's] schemes."53

One finds a comprehensive, subtle but strong direction of theological insight running through the great Reformation themes to Protestant ecclesiology. For Protestants, it is the very quality of grace which renders it sovereign and enabling for the Church. Its character as judgment/forgiveness, though often hardly understood on the conceptual plane, engenders a profound disquiet before any seeming presumption in our reception and transmission of it through the Church's institutions.

(2) The Theological Significance of Catholic Ministry.

(A) Episcopate as Chief Ministry

Lumen Gentium comments:

Among those various ministries which, as tradition witnesses, were exercised in the church from the earliest times, the chief place belongs to the office of those who, appointed to the episcopate in a sequence running back to the beginning, are the ones who pass on the apostolic seed.54

Lumen Gentium grants a marked prominence, even an essential character, to this "chief" ministry in the essential continuity of the historical Church, as is indicated in "from the earliest times," "a sequence running back to the beginning" and "who pass on the apostolic seed."

53 Churches respond to BEM Vol. 2, 251.
54 Lumen Gentium III:20
The essential relationship between this ministry and the continuity (and unity) of the Church for Catholicism is expressed in ARCIC's treatment of episcopal ordination and consecration:

The communion of the churches in mission, faith, and holiness, through time and space, is thus symbolized and maintained in the bishop. Here are comprised the essential features of what is meant in our two traditions by ordination in the apostolic succession.55

How comprehensively the episcopate is involved in the continuity and unity of the Church is emphasized in the Roman Catholic response to BEM:

In his very personal ministry, the bishop represents the local church entrusted to him. He is its qualified spokesperson in the communion of the churches. At the same time he is the first representative of Jesus Christ in the community. By his ordination to the episcopacy he is commissioned to exercise leadership in the community, to teach with authority and to judge. All other ministries are linked to his and function in relationship to it. Thus his ministry is a sacramental sign of integration and a focus of communion. Through the episcopal succession, the bishop embodies and actualizes both catholicity in time, i.e. the continuity of the church across the generations, as well as the communion lived in each generation.56

Lumen Gentium gives an implicit explanation of the bishop's manifold representative role in its description of Christ's use of this "chief" ministry:

In the bishops, therefore, for whom priests are assistants, our Lord Jesus Christ, the supreme High Priest, is present in the midst of those who believe. For sitting at the right hand of God the Father, He is not absent from the gathering of His high priests, but above all through their excellent service He is preaching the Word of God to all nations, and constantly administering the sacraments of faith to those who believe. By their paternal role (cf. 1 Cor. 4:15), He incorporates new members into His body by a heavenly regeneration, and finally by their wisdom and prudence He directs and guides

55 Harding Meyer and Lukas Vischer, Growth in Agreement, 83.
56 Churches respond to BEM Vol. 6, 33.
the people of the New Testament in its pilgrimage toward eternal happiness.57

This chief ministry is key, it is evident, to the sacramental, the essence of Catholic continuity and wholeness, as Lumen Gentium indicates:

A bishop, marked with the fullness of the sacramental orders, is "the steward of the grace of the supreme priesthood," especially in the Eucharist, which he offers or causes to be offered, and by which the Church constantly lives and grows. 58

Lumen Gentium describes this role more fully as follows:

For the discharging of such great duties, the apostles were enriched by Christ with a special outpouring of the Holy spirit, who came upon them (cf. Acts 1:8; John 20:22-23). This spiritual gift they passed on to their helpers by the imposition of hands (cf. I Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6-7), and it has been transmitted down to us in episcopal consecration. This sacred Synod teaches that by episcopal consecration is conferred the fullness of the sacrament of orders, that fullness which in the Church's liturgical practice and in the language of the holy Fathers of the Church is undoubtedly called the high priesthood, the apex of the sacred ministry.59

Much the same emphasis is made within Orthodoxy in the Bulgarian Orthodox response to BEM:

The holy apostles laid their hands on the chosen persons and transmitted to them the special gift, they transmitted to them the blessed gifts of the Holy Spirit to enable them to perform the specific sacramental ministry they had entrusted them with. In that way the hierarchical ministry in the church is a continuation of the apostolic ministry.60

The Catholic emphasis on the sacramental requires a realm of meaning assured in its apostolicity: "The body of the faithful as a whole, anointed as they are by the Holy One (cf.

57 Lumen Gentium, III: 21.
60 Churches respond to BEM, Vol. 2, 21.
Jn. 2:20,27), cannot err in matters of faith."61 It is through episcopal collegiality and succession that this assurance of the indefectibility of the Church in grace is operative. It is given primarily through the Roman Pontiff. However:

The infallibility promised to the Church resides also in the body of bishops when that body exercises supreme teaching authority with the successor of Peter.62

This high sacramentalism therefore involves the primacy of episcopal authority, operative usually through the priesthood. Lumen Gentium states: "The ministerial priest, by the sacred power he enjoys, molds and rules the priestly people." 63

Thus the essential nature of the episcopate, as chief Catholic ministry, is in its enabling the wholeness of the continuity of the historic Church, as "a kind of sacrament," with the Incarnate Christ. This is fulfilled by the bishop as symbol, as officiant in ordination and consecration and as teacher. It is the crucial role of the episcopate in enabling these essential qualities of wholeness and continuity which renders this ministry to be of the very esse of the Church.

(B) Catholic Wholeness (Continuity and the Sacramental)

The importance of this wholeness/continuity to Catholicism is expressed, as follows, in the Vatican II document "On the Sacred Liturgy":

To accomplish so great a work, Christ is always present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He

61 Lumen Gentium, II: 12.
62 Lumen Gentium, III: 25.
63 Lumen Gentium, II: 10.
is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of His minister, "the same one now offering, through the ministry of priests, who formerly offered himself on the cross," but especially under the Eucharistic species. By his power He is present in the sacraments, so that when a man baptizes it is really Christ Himself who baptizes. He is present in His word, since it is He Himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the church. He is present, finally, when the Church prays and sings, for He promised: "Where two or three are gathered together for my sake, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt. 18:20).64

Among the ways in which Christ is present in "His Church" his presence "especially under the Eucharistic species" is quintessential. The "especially" denotes the Catholic affirmation of the fullness of Christ's involvement with us in our creatureliness. The comprehensive and integral character of the reality of grace in the Eucharist for Catholicism is expressed in the Roman Catholic response to BEM:

...we must note that for Catholic doctrine, the conversion of the elements is a matter of faith and is only open to possible new theological explanations as to the "how" of the intrinsic change.

But the thought that they become sacramental signs is linked to the intrinsic change which takes place, whereby unity of being is realized between the signifying reality and the reality signified. 65

Yet, as was implied in many of these statements, the wholeness of continuity with Christ that is found in the eucharist is true, to a striking degree, of the whole Church. The opening statement of Lumen Gentium says:

By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the

64 Sancrosanctum Concilium, 1:7.
65 Churches respond to BEM Vol. 6, 22.
unity of all mankind. She is also an instrument for the achievement of such union and unity.66

Therefore Karl Rahner can affirm the integral relationship between the particular sacraments and the Church "as the ongoing presence of eschatologically victorious grace":

For the Church does not merely give and administer the sacraments, but rather in giving and administering them it also actualizes its own essence as the ongoing presence of eschatologically victorious grace. And for this reason every sacrament has its own quite special ecclesiological and ecclesial aspect.67

Thus, unlike Protestantism, Catholicism does not hesitate to affirm, as the sacrament of grace, the visible, institutional Church. Lumen Gentium states:

Christ, the one Mediator, established and ceaselessly maintains here on earth His holy Church, the community of faith, hope, and charity, as a visible structure. Through her He communicates truth and grace to all. But the society furnished with hierarchical agencies and the Mystical Body of Christ are not to be considered as two realities, nor are the visible assembly and the spiritual community, nor the earthly Church and the church enriched with heavenly things. Rather they form one interlocked reality which is comprised of a divine and a human element. For this reason, by an excellent analogy, this reality is compared to the mystery of the incarnate Word.68

Can one, through these characteristics of Catholic ecclesiology, discern and "hear" something of the major affirmations of Faith which underlie this Order?

(C). Underlying Theological Dynamics

Eugene Fairweather discerns Catholic wholeness and continuity within its broader theological context as follows:

66 Lumen Gentium, I: 1.
68 Lumen Gentium, I: 8.
Catholicism requires the communication of being and act, as well as word, because it recognizes that both the nature of man and the mystery of his union with God demand more than the simple correlation of word and faith. In particular, it sees the necessary connection between Christological realism, which traditional Protestantism professes, and that realism of the Church and grace which the central principle of Protestant thought negates, and insists on a fuller continuity than that of the apostolic word alone. This fuller continuity is nothing less than that of a visibly continuous community, which enshrines in its distinctive institutions the being and act of Christ, as well as his words. Christ and the Church constitute an historical unity, embodying an enduring supernatural unity, that interior unity of the God-man and his mystical Body which is the very heart of Christian history.

Ultimately it is "the nature of man and the mystery of his union with God" in Christ which demand "the communication of being and act, as well as word" to which the character of the historical Church as sacramental is essential; the "fuller continuity than that of the apostolic word alone" which Catholicism affirms in the wholeness of the Church's very historical and institutional continuity with Christ expresses that "realism of the Church and grace" which "Christological realism" both enables and demands.

Protestants will recognize certain aspects of Catholic "realism" which flow from "the nature of man":

Karl Rahner emphasizes the communal nature of humanity's reception of grace.

"... this faith may not be regarded as something which happens in the private interiority of an individual. In this case it could never be the continuation of God's offer of himself in Jesus. Rather it must be public, it must be a profession, it must be the faith of a community.

69 Fairweather and Hettlinger, Episcopacy and Reunion, 3.
Catholic realism, in view of "the nature of man" also results in a positive treatment of the status of human endeavour in the work of salvation. Von Balthasar comments:

... the distinctive teachings of the Catholic Church ... flow from Catholicism's attempt to respect the union of divine and created nature in Christ. In Christ, human nature is not ground under by the divine; it is given a chance to cooperate and serve. It is a service made possible and real by grace, but it is an authentic service. Whether we are talking about ecclesial structures (e.g., infallibility, sacramental grace) or man's cooperation with grace (e.g., merits, the saints, Mariology), we are really talking about God's free use of man and human realities in Christ. What the Protestant sees as a stress on human capabilities is, for the Catholic, the ultimate sign and high point of God's condescending grace. 71

From this follows the affirmation of the positive role played by culture and philosophy in human endeavour. Von Balthasar:

If there is no philosophy, then the whole hierarchy of values and scholarly disciplines collapses. If there is no philosophy, then there are no absolute truths and values any more. Man is left with the things that confront him in this temporal world, and no theology can save us from positivism. 72

More fundamental than the "realism of the Church and grace" is "Christological realism." The analogy between Christological realism and ecclesiological realism is strongly affirmed in Lumen Gentium's statement that the Church "by an excellent analogy ... is compared to the mystery of the incarnate Word." Similarly, in describing the Church as God's self-offer, Rahner comments that "this is true because of the very nature of God's offer." 73 He describes the Church in its

71 Hans Urs von Balthasar, The Theology of Karl Barth, 290.
72 Ibid., 296, 297.
essential sacramentality as "efficacious sign" within the theological context of "the continuation of God's self-offer in Jesus Christ":

But insofar as the church is the continuation of God's self-offer in Jesus Christ in whom he has the final, victorious and salvific word in the dialogue between God and the world, the church is an efficacious sign. And to this extent the church is what is called opus operatum as applied to the individual sacraments.74

In this description Rahner finds the character of the Church's sacramentality to reflect the nature of that "self-offer" as "dialogue" which is "final, victorious and salvific." In the following quote Rahner continues this theme in understanding the Church's sacramentality in terms of "Christology" and the implications of the new covenant:

It is to be remembered here that we have called the Church the fundamental sacrament, not by a vague borrowing of the concept of sacrament known to us already from the current teaching about the sacraments, but by deriving our concept from Christology. Therefore fundamental sacrament means for us the one abiding symbolic presence, similar in structure to the incarnation, of the eschatological redemptive grace of Christ; a presence in which sign and what is signified are united inseparably but without confusion, the grace of God in the "flesh" of an historical and tangible ecclesiastical embodiment, which therefore cannot be emptied of what it signifies and renders present, because otherwise the grace of Christ (who always remains man), would also be something merely transitory and replaceable, and in the last resort we would still be under the old covenant.75

This essential relationship between christology and ecclesiology means that the broad hermeneutic implications of the Incarnation are especially important for Catholic thought. Avery Dulles cites Richard McBrien's Catholicism:

74 Ibid., 412.
. . . McBrien inquires into the theological foci of Catholicism, and finds that they are three: sacramentality, mediation, and communion. By the principle of sacramentality he means the acceptance of tangible and finite realities as actual or potential carriers of the divine presence. The principle of mediation is a corollary of that of sacramentality. The universe of grace, for the Catholic, is mediated by Christ, the Church, and other signs and instruments. Communion is a further corollary.76

According to Dulles, Robert Imbelli affirms the same understanding:

Beneath the successive empirical forms of Catholicism he finds a consistent "depth structure" that may be described as "sacramental consciousness."77

This high sacramentalism assumes a very nearly uninterrupted relationship between nature as means of grace and grace. Indeed, Von Balthasar speaks of the necessity for the faith of "analogy in the order of creation" as follows:

Doesn't the analogy of faith (or grace) presuppose an analogous (by no means identical) analogy in the order of creation and even in the order of sin? Without the latter analogy as its external ground, can the analogy of faith become truly and effectively operative?78

Similarly David Tracy finds analogical (affirming a degree of likeness) language, the second of the two "classic theological languages par excellence," to be "predominant" in Catholic thought:

Analogical language can be found as the predominant language employed by Catholic theologians from Justin Martyr, Augustine, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure to Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan.79

77 Ibid.
78 Ibid.
In this way discernment of what is essential to Catholic ministry leads through the role of the episcopate to fundamentals in anthropology, the understanding of Creation and of the Incarnation.

In conclusion we cite an illustration of the challenge inherent in this careful "discerning/hearing" process. Carl Peter, a Roman Catholic theologian, proposes a "Catholic Principle" in response to the "Protestant Principle" which Paul Tillich described as follows:

The central principle of Protestantism is the doctrine of justification by grace alone, which means that no individual and no human group can claim a divine dignity for its moral achievements, for its sacramental power, for its sanctity, or for its doctrine.80

In response to the radical critique of "Catholic Substance" which flows out of the "Protestant Principle," according to Tillich, Peter expresses the concern that "unless the substance is protected by a principle it will gradually be eroded by a criticism that does not know where to stop." Therefore his "Catholic Principle" is as follows:

"Be not so prone to expect abuse that you fail to recognize God's grace as working, as having worked, and as hopefully going to work again" through the means that have been given.81

Protestants should heed what Carl Peter here expresses; indeed, Tillich lamented Protestantism's relative neglect of all that is potentially sacramental. However, Peter does not quite touch the core issue.

80 Paul Tillich, The Protestant Era, 226.
81 Ibid., 6.
Protestant ecumenists should not need the reminder that grace has been, is, and will tomorrow be present throughout "Catholic Substance"; Protestant concern is rather with the assumption that grace will invariably flow through the particulars of that "Substance" in the historical Church as "efficacious sign," thus with the Catholic understanding of the Church as ultimately opus operatum, focused especially in the doctrines of transubstantiation, infallibility and, to a considerable extent, Mariology. This concern remains reflected in the Protestant affirmation of Election and Justification.

So elusive are the deepest concerns which motivate and govern the affirmations of our ecumenical dialogue partners!

(D) Visioning

A careful "hearing" of that other treatment of ordered ministry leads, on the Catholic side to underlying concern about the divine involvement in the Church's historicity in the light of the Incarnation and, on the Protestant side, to a concern about the character of divine sovereignty. That both have to do with the nature of divine grace is evident throughout this survey and in the suggested Protestant and Catholic "Principles." Both comprehensively affect Order and Faith. Both have their validity and importance for the adequate expression of our common Faith. And they involve differences in ecclesiology which are not easily reconciled.

The development of a comprehensive and energizing vision of a unified Church, the third responsibility of
Ecumenical theology, according to Willebrands, can only flow out of the long-term and demanding discerning/hearing process which reflects these realities.

What is to be "heard" is how that other tradition (and one's own), at its best, serves as such an instrument of God's loving. And this hearing process demands a certain collective or institutional humility before the lessons of history.

Thus the Catholic can recognize, with Carl Peter, the necessity, for the Church, of the radical critique which flows from the "Protestant Principle's" affirmation of the divine initiative in grace and confess that this has appeared to be beyond the comprehension of the present Roman Catholic Church. The Catholic must also understand that such a critique flows out of the Protestant understanding of Election and Justification with all that this implies.

On the other hand, Protestants must acknowledge, with respect, Peters' warning against the dangers inherent in this. The Protestant must recognize the pertinence of Fairweather's concern about the "realism of the Church and of grace" and the value of "Catholic Substance" within the common Christian heritage. Protestantism very easily becomes thin, dry stuff, easily subject to strange aberrations! Indeed, Protestants might very well ask, at least heuristically, whether their tradition could stand alone for long in history without Catholicism.
Thus there must be the kind of "ecumenical conversion" envisioned in BEM. And the Western Church might well be assisted in this by riches of the Eastern tradition.

The process will be helped by the better practical relationship gained in ecumenical relationships in this century. And it will be helped by better understanding in biblical and historical studies and more adequate philosophical resources, especially in the field of hermeneutics, enabling new approaches to the reception, retention and expression of truth.

However, this process, and the visioning which flows from it, ultimately depends, as Willebrands emphasized, on the reception of a richer Truth in Christ. The ultimate horizon of meaning in which this takes place must be deeper insight into the Church's high calling through and for a needy and desperate world. It is this alone which can give us adequate perspective really to understand ourselves as churches and Church in our strengths and weaknesses as actual and potential means of grace.

It is within the richer understanding of grace which this process will enable that a renewed understanding of ordered ministry can develop. And within this context, the potential of the episcopate, especially as symbol, would remain a primary factor.
SOURCES CONSULTED

Archival Material

The source for all the archival material used was the section Interchurch Anglican/United Negotiations in the United Church Archives at Victoria College in the University of Toronto. At the present this is contained in 43 boxes, each containing as much as fifteen to twenty files. Most of this material was read in the preparation of this thesis. This is referred to as I A/U N, followed by the box number and that of the file, when applicable. The following are the main components in that material:

Committee on Reunion 1943-1946, Minutes. I A/U N, Box 2.

Committee on Reunion 1943-1946, Correspondence. I A/U N, Box 3.


Joint Consultation on Doctrine. I A/U N. Box 14.

Sub-Committee on Drafting "Plan of Union." I A/U N. Box 16.

Sub-Committee on Revisions of "Plan of Union." I A/U N. Box 16.


Books


The Principles of Union between The Anglican Church of Canada and The United Church of Canada. Toronto: United Church Literature Distribution Services.


Articles


Tavard, George. "The Doctrine of Justification in Ecumenical Discussion." Ecumenical Trends 19 (1990): 17-


**Pamphlets**


Craig, Robert. *Questions on Church Union: The Secretary Answers Your Questions on Union*. Toronto: The Committee on Union and Joint Mission.


Growth in Understanding: A Study Guide on Church Union. Toronto: The Committee on Christian Unity and the Church Universal of the Anglican Church of Canada and the Committee on Union of the United Church of Canada.
Kaill, R.C. Ecumenism, Clergy Influence and Liberalism: An Investigation into the Sources of Lay Support for Church Union.


Addresses

Hunt, Canon H.R. Reunion Conversations with Other Churches in Canada. The Clergy Conference, St. George's Church, Oshawa, October, 1959.


Unpublished Sources


Dr. Angus MacQueen: one of the "Tens" that developed the Principles.

Dr. A.B.B. Moore: one of the "Tens" and later co-chairman of the General Commission.

Dr. John Grant: among other roles key draft writer of the Plan and chair of the Revisions Task Group.

Dr. William Fennell: Co-chairman of the Doctrinal Commission.

Dr. Robert Craig: One of the "Tens", later co-Secretary of the General Commission and Secretary to CUJM.

Dr. Eugene Fairweather: One of the "Tens".

Dr. Derwyn Owen: One of the "Tens" and member of the General Commission.

The author's personal involvement in the 1943-75 Canadian discussions: Theological studies in Toronto in the late 1950's brought some knowledge of the discussions through a participant, Bill Fennell, our theological professor. After ordination into the United Church ministry in 1960 work in the Halifax area brought involvement in a Faith and Order group and leadership in some major ecumenical events held jointly with Anglicans. After 1967, my work as a minister within the Toronto Conference of the United Church involved ecumenical discussions between my own and a neighbouring Anglican parish. However, membership on the Conference Executive involved also work on special projects with Anglicans. This lead also to membership as Commissioner in several General Councils especially important to these discussions as well as membership on the United Church's national Board of Evangelism and Social Service which had strong opinions on this subject.