

WORKSHOP: THE LIMA DOCUMENT *BAPTISM, EUCHARIST AND MINISTRY*

This workshop provided an interim report from the research team established in 1983 to prepare for the CTSA a response to the Lima Document of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches entitled: *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*. The CTSA Board of Directors invited this task-force to prepare a theological evaluation as part of the overall process of reception presently underway in the churches. The team consists of: Edward Kilmartin (professor of liturgical theology, formerly at the University of Notre Dame, now at the Pontifical Oriental Institute, Gregorian University, Rome); William Marvee (professor of systematic theology, St. Paul's University, Ottawa); PHEME PERKINS (professor of New Testament, Boston College); George Worgul (professor of sacramental theology, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh); and Michael Fahey (professor of ecclesiology, Concordia University, Montreal) who serves as chairman. Present for this workshop were Fahey, Kilmartin, Marvee and a large number of the CTSA membership as well as invited guest of the Society, Professor Geoffrey Wainwright.

The research team held its first working session for two days in November, 1983, at Montreal. The committee is addressing the issues raised in the document's introduction, namely: the extent to which our church can recognize in this text the faith of the Church throughout the ages; the consequences that our church can draw from this text for our relations and dialogues with other churches, especially those who recognize the text as an expression of apostolic faith; the guidance our church can take from it for our worship, educational, ethical and spiritual life and witness; and finally suggestions that our church can make for the ongoing work of the Faith and Order Commission, the agency of the WCC especially responsible for theological projects.

The CTSA report is envisaged as part of the wider national and international responses by the Roman Catholic Church. Pope John Paul II has asked the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity to solicit reactions from Catholics around the world and to prepare a comprehensive summary. The episcopal conferences world-wide have been contacted. In the USA the National Association of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (NADEO) in cooperation with the United States Catholic Conference has asked that diocesan ecumenical commissions set up local study groups. This appeal to the shared-responsibility of the various dioceses was hailed at the workshop as a promising procedure that improves on previous requests addressed only to theology professors at seminaries or schools of theology.

In their interim report members of the CTSA research team praised the comprehensiveness of the three theological sections of the Lima

Document. They saw the text as a clear product of years of reflection and discussion among a wide spectrum of churches and theologians. It was stressed that although the Roman Catholic Church is not an official member of the WCC it does have official representatives on the Faith and Order Commission who participated actively in the text's formulation. Members of the team described some of the background studies they are preparing for their report: "The Historical and Theological Roots of the Lima Document"; "The Lima Text and New Testament Imperatives for Unity"; "Scriptural Hermeneutics and the BEM Document"; "Faith and Sacraments of Faith: Reflections on the Sacramental Theology of the Lima Text"; "Can the Church Cope with the Lima Document?"; "A Biblical Assessment of the Lima Text (with Scriptural Index)." A section-by-section analysis of the text will follow the three-fold structure of the document itself. Objections are rarely to what is said in the Lima Document but rather to what is omitted or treated too briefly from a Roman Catholic perspective.

Baptism

Some of the general reactions included the following remarks. 1) The text does not address the reinstatement of the catechumenate, thus weakening the treatment of conversion as such. 2) The text does not underscore the role of the Church as the instrument of grace whereby one is incorporated into Christ; although the text correctly notes the personal character of faith it does not explicitly stress the ecclesial character of faith. 3) The effects of infant baptism are not adequately described. 4) Roman Catholics will be puzzled by the omission of discussion regarding original sin. 5) Regarding the relationship of baptism and confirmation the text (B14) correctly states that baptism and the bestowal of the Spirit are inseparable and notes that some churches associate the gift of the Spirit with confirmation. The grounds for this persuasion are not explained in a way that would prove satisfactory for Roman Catholics.

Eucharist

Here the following questions were discussed at the workshop: 1) The description of the sanctification of the elements of the eucharist (E15) does not sufficiently integrate the action of Christ through his ministers with that of the Holy Spirit (the epiclesis question). 2) The meaning of the eucharist as "propitiatory sacrifice" according to the Roman Catholic tradition is mentioned. However, the way in which the Mass is propitiatory sacrifice from the standpoint of Christ's sacramental act is not adequately explained. 3) Further reflections should be given to explain how the ordained minister shares in the ministry of Christ and represents it in the eucharistic celebration while at the same time expressing the faith of the Church. 4) The post-Prædication prayer of the liturgy, the prayer offering Christ to the Father, found in the Byzantine and Roman eucharistic prayers is not mentioned in the list of items found historically in the eucharistic liturgy (E27). It should be mentioned and discussed because

its meaning is interpreted by some Reformation theologians as contradicting the theology of justification by faith. 5) Although the text affirms the real presence of Christ during the celebration, it does not treat adequately the question of the relation of this presence with the signs of bread and wine, nor the continuing presence after the celebration.

Ministry

1) The text is a clear and developed understanding of ministry that roots it in the responsibility of the whole people of God. It situates the authority of the ordained ministry in Christ's authority. It describes the ordained ministry as a charism functioning within and among the community of believers and never above them. 2) The text states (M14) that it is "appropriate" for one who is ordained to preside at the eucharist. This way of stating the relation between the ordained and the eucharist is not satisfactory. 3) The text mentions (M27) the collegial dimension of the ordained ministry but neglects the international level of this collegiality. 4) The text states (M40) that ordination "denotes" the action of God and the community. Rather it should be said that ordination denotes the action of the community: incorporation into a specific ministry of the community. This, in turn, connotes for the eyes of faith the communication of the Spirit to enable the ordained to fulfill his or her task.

The membership of the CTSA will be kept abreast of the research-team's work as it progresses.

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