

FOOTNOTES TO THE OCDS CONSTITUTIONS

1. LG 31-35¹

31. The term “laity” is here understood to mean all the faithful except those in Holy Orders and those who belong to a religious state approved by the Church. That is, the faithful who by Baptism are incorporated into Christ, are placed in the People of God, and in their own way share the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ, and to the best of their ability carry on the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world.

Their secular character is proper and peculiar to the laity. Although those in Holy Orders may sometimes be engaged in secular activities, or even practice a secular profession, yet by reason of their particular vocation, they are principally and expressly ordained to the sacred ministry. At the same time, religious give outstanding and striking testimony that the world cannot be transfigured and offered God without the spirit of the beatitudes. But by reason of their special vocation it belongs to the laity to seek the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will. They live in the world, that is, they are engaged in each and every work and business of the earth and in the ordinary circumstances of social and family life which, as it were, constitute their very existence. There they are called by God that, being led by the spirit to the Gospel, they may contribute to the sanctification of the world, as from within like leaven, by fulfilling their own particular duties. Thus, especially by the witness of their life, resplendent in faith, hope and charity they must manifest Christ to others. It pertains to them in a special way so to illuminate and order all temporal things with which they are so closely associated that these may be effected and grow according to Christ and may be to the glory of the Creator and Redeemer.

32. By divine institution holy Church is ordered and governed with a wonderful diversity. “For just as in one body we have many members, yet all the members have not the same function, so we the many, are one body in Christ, but members one of another” (Rom 12:4-5).

There is, therefore, one chosen People of God: “one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Eph 4:5); there is a common dignity of members deriving from their rebirth in Christ, a common grace as sons, a common vocation to perfection, one salvation, one hope and undivided charity. In Christ and in the Church there is, then, no inequality from race or nationality, social condition or sex, for “there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor freeman; there is neither male nor female. For you are all ‘one’ in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3: 28 Greek; cf. Col 3 :11).

In the Church not everyone marches along the same path, yet all are called to sanctity and have obtained an equal privilege of faith through the justice of God (cf. 2P 1:1). Although by Christ’s will some are established as teachers, dispensers of the mysteries and pastors for the others, there

¹ English language translations of the Documents of Vatican II can vary. The translation utilized here is *VATICAN COUNCIL II, The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, General Editor Austin Flannery, OP, Revised Edition 1992, by Costello Publishing Company, Northport, New York.

remains, nevertheless, a true equality between all with regard to the dignity and to the activity which is common to all the faithful in the building up of the Body of Christ. The distinction which the Lord has made between the sacred ministers and the rest of the People of God involves union, for the pastors and the other faithful are joined together by a close relationship: the pastors of the Church—following the example of the Lord—should minister to each other and to the rest of the faithful; the latter should eagerly collaborate with the pastors and teachers. And so amid variety all will bear witness to the wonderful unity in the Body of Christ: this very diversity of graces, of ministries and of works gathers the sons of God into one, for “all these things are the work of the one and the same Spirit” (1 Cor 12:11).

As the laity through the divine choice have Christ as their brother, who, though Lord of all, came not to be served but to serve (cf. Mt 20:28), they also have as brothers those in the sacred ministry who by teaching, by sanctifying and by ruling with the authority of Christ so nourish the family of God that the new commandment of love may be fulfilled by all. As St Augustine very beautifully puts it: “When I am frightened by, what I am to you, then I am consoled by what I am with you. To you I am the bishop, with you I am a Christian. The first is an office, the second a grace; the first a danger, the second salvation.”²

33. Gathered together in the People of God and established in the one Body of Christ under one head, the laity—no matter who they are—have, as living members, the vocation of applying to the building up of the Church and to its continual sanctification all the powers which they have received from the goodness of the Creator and from the grace of the Redeemer.

The apostolate of the laity is a sharing in the salvific mission of the Church. Through Baptism and Confirmation all are appointed to this apostolate by the Lord himself. Moreover, by the sacraments, and especially by the Eucharist, that love of God and man which is the soul of the apostolate is communicated and nourished. The laity, however, are given this special vocation: to make the Church present and fruitful in those places and circumstances where it is only through them that she can become the salt of the earth.³ Thus, every lay person, through those gifts given to him, is at once the witness and the living instrument of the mission of the Church itself “according to the measure of Christ’s bestowal” (Eph 4:7).

Besides this apostolate which belongs to absolutely every Christian, the laity can be called in different ways to more immediate cooperation in the apostolate of the hierarchy,⁴ like those men and women who helped the apostle Paul in the Gospel, laboring much in the Lord (cf. Phil 4-3: Rom 5:3 ff.). They have, moreover, the capacity of being appointed by the hierarchy to some ecclesiastical offices with view to a spiritual end.

All the laity, then, have the exalted duty of working for the ever greater spread of the divine plan of salvation to all men, of every epoch and all over the earth. Therefore may the way be clear for them to share diligently in the salvific work of the Church according to their ability and the needs of the times.

² St. Augustine, *Sermon* 340, 1: *PL* 38, 1438.

³ See Pius XI, Litt. Encycl. *Quaragesimo anno*, 15 May 1931: AAS 23 (1931) p. 221 s. 2 Pius XII, Alloc. *De Quelle consolation*, 14 Oct. 1951: AAS 43 (1951) p. 790 s.

⁴ See Pius XII, Alloc. Six am sons écoulé 5 oct. 1957: AAS 49 (1957) p.927.

34. Since he wishes to continue his witness and his service through the laity also, the supreme and eternal priest Christ Jesus, vivifies them with his spirit and ceaselessly impels them to accomplish every good and perfect work.

To those whom he intimately joins to his life and mission he also gives a share in his priestly office, to offer spiritual worship for the glory of the Father and the salvation of man. Hence the laity, dedicated as they are to Christ and anointed by the Holy Spirit, are marvelously called and prepared so that even richer fruits of the Spirit may be produced in them. For all their works, prayers and apostolic undertakings, family and married life, daily work, relaxation of mind and body, if they are accomplished in the Spirit—indeed even the hardships of life if patiently borne—all these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (cf. 1P 2:5). In the celebration of the eucharist these may most fittingly be offered to the Father along with the body of the Lord. And so, worshipping everywhere by their holy actions, the laity consecrate the world itself to God.

35. Christ is the great prophet who proclaimed the kingdom of the Father both by the testimony of his life and by the power of his word. Until the full manifestation of his glory, he fulfills this prophetic office, not only by the hierarchy who teach in his name and by his power, but also by the laity. He accordingly both establishes them as witnesses and provides them with the appreciation of the faith (*sensus fidei*)⁵ and the grace of the word (cf. Acts 2:17-18; Apoc 19:10) so that the power of the Gospel may shine out in daily family and social life. They show themselves to be the children of the promise if, strong in faith and hope, they make the most of the present time (Eph 5:16; Col 4: 5), and with patience await the future glory (cf. Rom 8:25). Let them not hide this their hope then, in the depths of their hearts, but rather express it through the structure of their secular lives in continual conversion and in wrestling “against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of iniquity” (Eph 6:12).

As the sacraments of the New Law, which nourish the life and the apostolate of the faithful, prefigure the new heaven and the new earth (cf. Apoc 21:1), so too the laity become powerful heralds of the faith in things to be hoped for (cf. Heb 11: 1) if they join unhesitating profession of faith to the life of faith. This evangelization, that is, the proclamation of Christ by word and the testimony of life, acquires a specific property and peculiar efficacy because it is accomplished in the ordinary circumstances of the world.

The state of life that is sanctified by a special sacrament, namely, married and family life, has a special importance in this prophetic office. Where the Christian religion pervades the whole structure of life with a continuous and ever more profound transformation, there is both the practice and an outstanding school of the lay apostolate. In it the married partners have their own proper vocation: they must be witnesses of faith and love of Christ to one another and to their children. The Christian family proclaims aloud both the present power of the kingdom of God and the hope of the blessed life. Hence, by example and by their testimony, they convict the world of sin and give light to those who seek the truth.

Therefore, even when occupied by temporal affairs, the laity can, and must, do valuable work for the evangelization of the world. But if, when there are no sacred ministers or when these are impeded under persecution, some lay people supply sacred functions to the best of their ability, or if, indeed, many of them expend all their energies in apostolic work, nevertheless the whole laity must cooperate in spreading and in building up the kingdom of Christ. Let the laity, therefore,

⁵ See LG 12.

diligently apply themselves to a more profound knowledge of revealed truth and earnestly beg of God the gift of wisdom.

2. LG 31(Cf. Footnote #1, p. 22); CL 9

CL 9. Who are the Lay Faithful The Synod Fathers have rightly pointed to the need for a definition of the lay faithful's vocation and mission in *positive terms* through an in depth study of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council in light of both recent documentation from the Magisterium and the lived experience of the Church, guided as she is by the Holy Spirit.⁶

In giving a response to the question "Who are the lay faithful?" the Council went beyond previous interpretations which were predominantly negative. Instead it opened itself to a decidedly positive vision and displayed a basic intention of asserting *the full belonging of the lay faithful to the Church and to its mystery. At the same time it insisted on the unique character of their vocation* which is, in a special way, to "seek the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and ordering them according to the plan of God."⁷ "The term 'lay faithful'"—we read in the Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*—"is here understood to mean all the faithful except those in Holy Orders and those who belong to a religious state sanctioned by the Church. Through Baptism the lay faithful are made one body with Christ and are established among the People of God. They are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ. They carry out their own part in the mission of the whole Christian people with respect to the Church and the world."⁸

Pius XII once stated: "The Faithful, more precisely the lay faithful, find themselves on the front lines of the Church's life; for them the Church is the animating principle for human society. Therefore, they in particular, ought to have an ever-clearer consciousness *not only of belonging to the Church, but of being the Church*, that is to say, the community of the faithful on earth under the leadership of the Pope, the head of all, and of the Bishops in communion with him. These are the *Church...*"⁹

According to the biblical image of the vineyard, the lay faithful, together with all the other members of the Church, are branches engrafted to Christ the true vine, and from him derive their life and fruitfulness.

Incorporation into Christ through faith and Baptism is the source of being a Christian in the mystery of the Church. This mystery constitutes the Christian's most basic "features" and serves as the basis for all the vocations and dynamism of the Christian life of the lay faithful (cf. Jn 3:5). In Christ who died and rose from the dead, the baptized become a "new creation" (Gal 6:15; 2 Cor 5:17), washed clean from sin and brought to life through grace.

Therefore, only through accepting the richness in mystery that God gives to the Christian in Baptism is it possible to come to a basic description of the lay faithful.

⁶ Cf. *Propositio* 3.

⁷ LG 31.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Pius XII, Discourse to the New Cardinals, February 20, 1946: AAS 38 (1946), 149.

3. CIC 204-205

CIC 204. §1. The Christian faithful are those who, inasmuch as they have been incorporated in Christ through baptism, have been constituted as the people of God; for this reason, since they have become sharers in Christ's priestly, prophetic and royal office in their own manner, they are called to exercise the mission which God has entrusted to the Church to fulfill in the world, in accord with the condition proper to each one.

§2. This Church, constituted and organized as a society in this world, subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the successor of Peter and the bishops in communion with him.

CIC 205. §1. Those baptized are fully in communion with the Catholic church on this earth who are joined with Christ in its visible structure by the bonds of profession of faith, of the sacraments and of ecclesiastical governance.

4. Rule 2

2. Many and varied are the ways (cf. Heb 1:1) in which our saintly forefathers laid down how everyone, whatever his station or the kind of religious observance he has chosen, should live a life of allegiance to Jesus Christ (cf. 2Cor 10:5)—how, pure in heart and steadfast in conscience (cf. 1Tim 1:5), he must be unswerving in the service of his Master.

5. L 8:5

L 8:5. The good that one who practices prayer possesses has been written of by many saints and holy persons; I mean mental prayer—glory be to God for this good! If it were not for this good, even though I have little humility, I should not be so proud as to dare speak about mental prayer.

I can speak of what I have experience of. It is that in spite of any wrong they who practice prayer do, they must not abandon prayer since it is the means by which they can remedy the situation; and to remedy it without prayer would be much more difficult. May the devil not tempt them, the way he did me, to give up prayer out of humility. May those persons believe that God's words cannot fail. For if we are truly repentant and resolve not to offend God, He will return to the former friendship and bestow favors He previously did, and sometimes more if the repentance merits it.

Whoever has not begun the practice of prayer, I beg for the love of the Lord not to go without so great a good. There is nothing here to fear but only something to desire. Even if there be no great progress, or much effort in reaching such perfection as to deserve the favors and mercies God bestows on the more generous, at least a person will come to understand the road leading to heaven. And if one perseveres, I trust then in the mercy of God, who never fails to repay anyone who has taken Him for a friend. **For mental prayer in my opinion is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us** [emphasis added]. In order that love be true and the friendship endure, the wills of the friends must be in accord. The will of the Lord, it is already known, cannot be at fault; our will is vicious, sensual, and ungrateful. And if you do not love Him as He loves you because you have not reached the degree of conformity with His will, you will endure this pain of spending a long while with one who is so different from you when you see how much it benefits you to possess His friendship and how much He loves you.

6. Lk 2:19 [NAB]

Mary treasured all these things and reflected on them in her heart.

7. Jn 2:5 [NAB]

His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you."

8. Ac 1:14 [NAB]

All these devoted themselves with one accord to prayer together with some women and Mary the Mother of Jesus and his brothers.

9. 1K chapter 17- 2K chapter 2 (entire story of Elijah)

10. L 7:18, 38:16

L 7:18. Oh, help me God, if I should have to tell about the occasions God freed me from in these years and how I returned and placed myself in them again and of the dangers of losing my reputation completely from which He liberated me! I was doing deeds that uncovered what I was, and the Lord was covering my evils and uncovering some little virtue, if I had it, and making it great in the eyes of others so that they always esteemed me highly. For although sometimes my vanities leaked out, they were not recognized since other things that appeared good were what were noticed.

And the reason was that the Knower of all things already saw that this was necessary in order that those to whom I would afterward speak of His service would give me some credibility, and in His sovereign largess He looked not at my great sins but at the desires I often had to serve Him and at the sorrow I felt for not having the strength in me to put these desires into practice.

L 38:16. One night while I was in prayer the Lord began to speak some words by which he made me remember how bad my life had been, and these words filled me with shame and grief. Although they were not severe, they caused consuming sorrow and pain. More improvement in self-knowledge is felt from one of these words than would be got from many days of reflection on our wretchedness, for it engraves on us an undeniable truth. He brought before me the extremely vain friendships I had had and told me I should esteem highly the fact that a will that had been as badly occupied as mine should desire to be fixed on Him, and that He would accept it.

At other times He told me I should recall the time when, it seems, I considered it an honor to go against His will. Again, that I should remember what I owed Him, that when I was giving Him the hardest blow, He was granting me favors. If I have some faults, which are not few, His Majesty gives me an understanding of them that, it seems, reduces me to nothing; and since I have many, this happens often. It happened to me that, after having been reprimanded by my confessor, I desired to find consolation in prayer; and found there the true reprimand.

11. WP 21:2

WP 21:2. Now returning to those who want to journey on this road and continue until they reach the end, which is to drink from this water of life,¹⁰ I say that how they are to begin is very important—in fact, all important. They must have a great and very resolute determination to persevere until reaching the end, come what may, happen what may, whatever work is involved, whatever criticism arises, whether they arrive or whether they die on the road, or even if they don't have courage for the trials that are met, or if the whole world collapses. You will hear some persons frequently making objections: "there are dangers;" "so-and-so went astray by such means;" "this other one was deceived;" "another who prayed a great deal fell away;" "its harmful to virtue;" "its not for women, for they will be susceptible to illusions;" "its better they stick to their sewing;" "they don't need these delicacies;" "the Our Father and the Hail Mary are sufficient."

12. IC V:3:11, VII:4:6

IC V:3:11. When I see souls very earnest in trying to understand the prayer they have and very sullen when they are in it—for it seems they don't dare let their minds move or stir lest a bit of their spiritual delight and devotion be lost—it makes me realize how little they understand of the way by which union is attained; they think the whole matter lies in these things. No, Sisters, absolutely not; works are what the Lord wants! He desires that if you see a Sister who is sick to whom you can bring some relief, you have compassion on her and not worry about losing this devotion; and that if she is suffering pain, you also feel it; and that, if necessary, you fast so that she might eat—not so much for her sake as because you know it is your Lord's desire. This is true union with His will, and if you see a person praised, the Lord wants you to be much happier than if you yourself were being praised. This, indeed, is easy, for if you have humility you will feel sorry to see yourself praised. But this happiness that comes when the virtues of the Sisters are known is a very good thing; and when we see some fault in them, it is also a very good thing to be sorry and hide the fault as though it were your own.

IC VII:4:6. O my Sisters! How forgetful this soul, in which the Lord dwells in so particular a way, should be of its own rest, how little it should care for its honor, and how far it should be from wanting esteem in anything! For if it is with Him very much, as is right, it should think little about itself. All its concern is taken up with how to please Him more and how or where it will show Him the love it bears Him. This is the reason for prayer, always of good works, good works.

13. Cf. Sayings 46; LF 3:78; II A chapter 6, 29:6; Collect of the votive Mass of St. John of the Cross

Sayings 46. If you make use of your reason, you are like one who eats substantial food; but if you are moved by the satisfaction of your will, you are like one who eats insipid fruit.

LF 3:78. "So rarely, so exquisitely," means: in a way rare or foreign to every common thought, every exaggeration, and every mode and manner.

¹⁰ An allusion to Jn 4:14; *...but no one who drinks the water I shall give him will ever be thirsty again: the water I shall give him will become in him a spring of water, welling up for eternal life.*

Corresponding to the exquisite quality with which the intellect receives divine wisdom, being made one with God's intellect, is the quality with which the soul gives this wisdom, for it cannot give it save according to the mode in which it was given.

And corresponding to the exquisite quality by which the will is united to goodness is the quality by which the soul gives in God the same goodness to God, for it only receives it in order to give it.

And no more nor less, according to the exquisite quality by which it knows in the grandeur of God, being united to it, the soul shines and diffuses the warmth of love.

And according to the exquisite quality of the divine attributes (fortitude, beauty, justice, and so on) that the Beloved communicates, is the quality with which the soul's feeling gives joyfully to him the very light and heat it receives from him. Having been made one with God, the soul is somehow God through participation. Although it is not God as perfectly as it will be in the next life, it is like the shadow of God.

Being the shadow of God through this substantial transformation, it performs in this measure in God and through God what he through himself does in it. For the will of the two is one will, and thus God's operation and the soul's are one. Since God gives himself with a free and gracious will, so too the soul (possessing a will more generous and free the more it is united with God) gives to God, God himself in God; and this is a true and complete gift of the soul to God.

It is conscious therefore that God is indeed its own and that it possesses him by inheritance, with the right of ownership, as his adopted child through the grace of his gift of himself. Having him for its own, it can give him and communicate him to whomever it wishes. Thus it gives him to its Beloved, who is the very God who gave himself to it. By this donation it repays God for all it owes him, since it willingly gives as much as it receives from him.

II A Ch. 6. The theological virtues perfect the faculties of the soul and produce emptiness and darkness in them.

1. We must discuss the method of leading the three faculties (intellect, memory, and will) into this spiritual night, the means to divine union. But we must first explain how the theological virtues, faith, hope, and charity (related to these faculties as their proper supernatural objects), through which the soul is united with God, cause the same emptiness and darkness in their respective faculties: faith in the intellect, hope in the memory, and charity in the will. Then we shall explain how in order to journey to God the intellect must be perfected in the darkness of faith, the memory in the emptiness of hope, and the will in the nakedness and absence of every affection.

As a result it will be seen how necessary it is for the soul, if it is to walk securely, to journey through this dark night with the support of these three virtues. They darken and empty it of all things. As we said,¹¹ the soul is not united with God in this life through understanding, or through enjoyment, or through imagination, or through any other sense; but only faith, hope, and charity (according to the intellect, memory, and will) can unite the soul with God in this life.

¹¹ In II A 2:4.

2. These virtues, as we said, void the faculties: Faith causes darkness and a void of understanding in the intellect, hope begets an emptiness of possessions in the memory, and charity produces the nakedness and emptiness of affection and joy in all that is not God.

Faith, we saw, affirms what cannot be understood by the intellect. St. Paul refers to it *ad Hebraeos* in this way: *Fides est sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium* [Heb 11:1]. In relation to our discussion here, this means that faith is the substance of things to be hoped for and that these things are not manifest to the intellect, even though its consent to them is firm and certain. If they were manifest, there would be no faith. For though faith brings certitude to the intellect, it does not produce clarity, but only darkness.

3. Hope, also, undoubtedly puts the memory in darkness and emptiness as regards all earthly and heavenly objects. Hope always pertains to the unpossessed object. If something were possessed there could no longer be hope for it. St. Paul says *ad Romanos*: *Spes quae videtur, non est spes; nam quod videt quis, quid sperat?* (Hope that is seen is not hope, for how does a person hope for what is seen—that is, what is possessed?) [Rom 8:24]. As a result this virtue also occasions emptiness, since it is concerned with unpossessed things and not with the possessed object.

4. Charity, too, causes a void in the will regarding all things since it obliges us to love God above everything. We have to withdraw our affection from all in order to center it wholly upon God. Christ says through St. Luke: *Qui non renuntiat omnibus quae possidet, non potest meus esse discipulus* (Whoever does not renounce all that the will possesses cannot be my disciple) [Lk 14:33]. Consequently, these three virtues place a soul in darkness and emptiness in respect to all things.

5. That parable our Redeemer told in the 11th chapter of St. Luke is noteworthy here [Lk 11:5]. He related that one friend went to another at midnight to ask for three loaves (which signify these three virtues). And he asserted that the friend asked for them at midnight to indicate that the soul must acquire these three virtues by a darkness in its faculties regarding all things, and must perfect itself in these virtues by means of this night.

In the sixth chapter of Isaiah we read that the prophet saw a seraph at each side of God, and that they each had six wings: with two wings they covered their feet, which signified the blinding and quenching of the affections of the will for God; with two they covered their faces, which signified the darkness of the intellect in God's presence; and with the two remaining wings they flew, so as to indicate the flight of hope toward things that are not possessed, an elevation above everything outside of God that can be possessed, earthly or heavenly [Is 6:2].¹²

6. We must lead the faculties of the soul, then, to these three virtues and inform each faculty with one of them by stripping and darkening it of everything that is not conformable to these virtues. Doing this refers to the spiritual night that we above called active,¹³ because one does what lies in one's own power to enter this night. As we outlined for the sensory night a method of emptying the sense faculties, with regard to the appetite, of their visible objects so that the soul might leave the point of departure for the mean, which is faith, so for this spiritual night we will present, with divine help, a way to empty and purify the spiritual faculties of all that is not God.

¹² Here we have two classic examples of John's frequent use of the Bible in an accommodated sense. He freely adapts the text in order to illustrate the theme being dealt with and does not intend to use it as a proof of some truth or as an expression of his own intimate experience.

¹³ In I A1:2; cf. also I A 13:1.

By this method these faculties can abide in the darkness of these three virtues, which are the means and preparation, as we said, for the soul's union with God.

7. This method provides complete security against the cunning of the devil and the power of self-love in all its ramifications. Usually self-love subtly deceives and hinders the journey of spiritual persons along this road, because they do not know how to denude and govern themselves by means of these three virtues. They never succeed, therefore, in finding the substance and purity of spiritual good; neither do they journey by as straight and short a road as they might.

8. Remember that I am now especially addressing those who have begun to enter the state of contemplation; with regard to beginners this journey should be discussed in somewhat more detail. We will do this with God's help in the second book when we deal with the characteristics of beginners.¹⁴

II A 29:6 If you ask me why the intellect must be deprived of those truths since the Spirit of God illumines it through them and thus they are not bad, I answer: The Holy Spirit illumines the recollected intellect, and illumines it according to the mode of its recollection; the intellect can find no better recollection than in faith, and thus the Holy Spirit will not illumine it in any other recollection more than in faith. The purer and more refined a soul is in faith, the more infused charity it has. And the more charity it has the more the Holy Spirit illumines it and communicates his gifts because charity is the means by which they are communicated.¹⁵

Although in that illumination of truths the Holy Spirit does communicate some light to the soul, the light given in faith—in which there is no clear understanding—is qualitatively as different from the other as is the purest gold from the basest metal, and quantitatively as is the sea from a drop of water. In the first kind of illumination, wisdom concerning one, two, or three truths, and so on, is communicated; in the second kind, all of God's wisdom is communicated in general, that is, the Son of God, who communicates himself to the soul in faith.

*Collect. Lord God, you have given your Church our Father St. John of the Cross as a guide in the ways of the spirit. May his example and teaching lead us by faith, hope and charity to the perfect liberty which is the heritage of your sons and daughters.*¹⁶

14. Sayings: 119; Letter #19 October 12 1589

Sayings 119. There are three signs of inner recollection: first, lack of satisfaction in passing things; second, a liking for solitude and silence and an attentiveness to all that is more perfect; third, the considerations, meditations, and acts which formerly helped the soul now hinder it, and it brings to prayer no other support than faith, hope, and love.

¹⁴ Those who "have begun to enter the state of contemplation" are in John's terminology proficients. He has them especially in mind in this treatment of the purification of the spiritual faculties. He promises to go into more detail about beginners in what he here calls the second part, elsewhere referred to as the fourth part (cf. A. 1. 1. 2) or the third part (cf. A. 2. 2. 3). This projected teaching about beginners is actually found in IDN 1:7.

¹⁵ Here, John speaks for the first time explicitly of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, relating them directly to charity. As one progresses through the degrees of love the gifts grow in perfection; cf. C. 26:3. He does not make use of the theological theory about the gifts in which they are considered as principles that dispose one to be moved passively by the Holy Spirit. John also in nos. 5-6 establishes a relationship between faith and charity; in their dynamism they function supernaturally in the way that knowledge and love do naturally.

¹⁶ Cf. *The Carmelite Sacramentary*, Teresian Carmelites, Worcester, Massachusetts, 1997, p. 101.

Letter #19. [To Doña Juana de Pedraza, in Granada Segovia, October 12, 1589] Jesus be in your soul and thanks to him that he has enabled me not to forget the poor, as you say, or be idle, as you say. For it greatly vexes me to think you believe what you say; this would be very bad after so many kindnesses on your part when I least deserved them. That's all I need now is to forget you! Look, how could this be so in the case of one who is in my soul as you are?

Since you walk in these darkneses and voids of spiritual poverty, you think that everyone and everything is failing you. It is no wonder that in this it also seems God is failing you. But nothing is failing you, neither do you have to discuss anything, nor is there anything to discuss, nor do you know this, nor will you find it, because all of these are doubts without basis. Those who desire nothing else than God walk not in darkness, however poor and dark they are in their own sight. And those who walk not presumptuously, or according to their own satisfactions, whether from God or from creatures, nor do their own will in anything, have nothing to stumble over or discuss with anyone. You are making good progress. Do not worry, but be glad! Who are you that you should guide yourself? Wouldn't that end up fine!

You were never better off than now because you were never so humble or so submissive, or considered yourself and all worldly things to be so small; nor did you know that you were so evil or God was so good, nor did you serve God so purely and so disinterestedly as now, nor do you follow after the imperfections of your own will and interests as perhaps you were accustomed to do. What is it you desire? What kind of life or method of procedure do you paint for yourself in this life? What do you think serving God involves other than avoiding evil, keeping his commandments, and being occupied with the things of God as best we can? When this is had, what need is there of other apprehensions or other lights and satisfactions from this source or that? In these there is hardly ever a lack of stumbling blocks and dangers for the soul, which by its understanding and appetites is deceived and charmed; and its own faculties cause it to err. And thus God does one a great favor when he darkens the faculties and impoverishes the soul in such a way that one cannot err with these. And if one does not err in this, what need is there in order to be right other than to walk along the level road of the law of God and of the Church, and live only in dark and true faith and certain hope and complete charity, expecting all our blessings in heaven, living here below like pilgrims, the poor, the exiled, orphans, the thirsty, without a road and without anything, hoping for everything in heaven?

Rejoice and trust in God, for he has given you signs that you can very well do so, and in fact you must do so. If you do not, it will not be surprising if he becomes angry at seeing you walk so foolishly when he is leading you by a road most suitable for you and has brought you to so safe a place. Desire no other path than this and adjust your soul to it (for it is a good one) and receive Communion as usual. Go to confession when you have something definite; you don't have to discuss these things with anyone. Should you have some problem, write to me about it. Write soon, and more frequently, for you can do so in care of Doña Ana when you are unable to do so through the nuns.

I have been somewhat ill. Now I am well, but Fray Juan Evangelista is sick. Commend him and me also to God, my daughter in the Lord.

15. Cf. III A 23:1

III A 23:1. Many are the benefits derived through withdrawal of the heart from this joy. Besides preparing the soul for the love of God and for other virtues, it directly paves the way for humility toward self and general charity toward one's neighbor. By not becoming attached to anyone,

despite these apparent and deceptive natural goods, a person remains unencumbered and free to love all rationally and spiritually, which is the way God wants them to be loved. As a result one realizes that no one merits love except for virtue. And when one loves with this motive, the love is according to God and exceedingly free. If the love contains some attachment there is greater attachment to God, for as the love of neighbor increases so does the love of God, and as the love of God increases so does the love of neighbor, for what proceeds from God has one and the same reason and cause.

16. **Prec. 1 and 6**

Prec. 1. The soul must practice the following instructions if it wishes to attain in a short time holy recollection and spiritual silence, nakedness, and poverty of spirit, where one enjoys the peaceful comfort of the Holy Spirit, reaches union with God, is freed of all the obstacles incurred from the creatures of this world, defended against the wiles and deceits of the devil, and liberated from one's own self.

Prec. 6. Regard all as strangers, and you will fulfill your duty toward them better than by giving them the affection you owe God. Do not love one person more than another, for you will err;¹⁷ the person who loves God more is the one more worthy of love, and you do not know who this is. But forgetting everyone alike, as is necessary for holy recollection, you will free yourself from this error of loving one person more or less than another.

17. **Rule 2 and 10**

2. Many and varied are the ways (cf. Heb 1:1) in which our saintly forefathers laid down how everyone, whatever his station or the kind of religious observance he has chosen, should live a life of allegiance to Jesus Christ (cf. 2Cor 10:5)—how, pure in heart and steadfast in conscience (cf. 1Tim 1:5), he must be unswerving in the service of his Master.

10. Each of you is to stay in his own cell or nearby, pondering the Lord's law day and night (cf. Ps 1:2; Jos 1:8) and keeping watch at his prayers (cf. 1P 4:7) unless attending to some other duty.

18. **DV 25; WP 21:4; M 1:6, 11**

DV 25. Therefore, all clerics, particularly priests of Christ and others who, as deacons or catechists, are officially engaged in the ministry of the Word, should immerse themselves in the Scriptures by constant sacred reading and diligent study. For it must not happen that anyone becomes "an empty preacher of the Word of God to others, not being a hearer of the Word in his own heart," when he ought to be sharing the boundless riches of the divine Word with the faithful committed to his care, especially in the sacred liturgy. Likewise, the Sacred Synod forcefully and specifically exhorts all the Christian faithful, especially those who live the religious life, to learn "the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ" (Phil 3:8) by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures. "Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ."¹⁸ Therefore, let them go gladly to the sacred text itself, whether in the sacred liturgy, which is full of the divine words, or in devout reading, or in such suitable exercises and various other helps which, with the approval and

¹⁷ Though this may seem somewhat inhuman and contradictory to the way John behaved toward his own mother and brother, the tone finds its roots in the Gospel (cf. Lk. 14:26).

¹⁸ St. Jerome, *Comm. In Isaías*, Prol: PL 24, 17. Cf. Benedict XV, Encycl. *Spiritus Paraclitus*: EB 475-480; Pius XII, Encycl. *Divino Affante*: EB 544.

guidance of the pastors of the Church, are happily spreading everywhere in our day. Let them remember, however, that prayer should accompany the reading of sacred Scripture, so that a dialogue takes place between God and man. For “we speak to him when we pray; we listen to him when we read the divine oracles.” It is for the bishops, “with whom the apostolic doctrine resides” suitably to instruct the faithful entrusted to them in the correct use of the divine books, especially of the New Testament, and in particular of the Gospels. They do this by giving them translations of the sacred texts which are equipped with necessary and really adequate explanations. Thus the children of the Church can familiarize themselves safely and profitably with the sacred Scriptures, and become steeped in their spirit.

Moreover, editions of sacred Scripture, provided with suitable notes, should be prepared for the use of even non-Christians, and adapted to their circumstances. These should be prudently circulated, either by pastors of souls, or by Christians of any rank.

WP 21:4. I don’t say that I’m going to write a commentary on these divine prayers,¹⁹ for I wouldn’t dare. Many commentaries have been written; and even if they hadn’t been, it would be absurd for me to write one. But I will mention some thoughts on the words of the Our Father. For sometimes, with regard to many books, it seems we lose devotion in the very exercise in which it is so important for us to have devotion. Clearly, when a master teaches something he gets to love his disciple and is pleased if that which he teaches satisfies his pupil, and he helps him a great deal to learn the material. The heavenly Master will do the same with us.

M 1:6. I know someone who for a number of years had many fears, and nothing gave her assurance, but the Lord was pleased that she hear some words from the *Song of Songs*, and through them she understood that her soul was being well guided. As I have said, she understood that it was possible for a soul in love with its Spouse to experience all these favors, swoons, deaths, afflictions, delights, and joys in relation to Him. It does so after it has left all the world’s joys out of love for Him and is completely given over and abandoned into His hands, and when it has done this not just in words, as happens with some, but in all truth, confirmed with works.

M 1:11. Before I go any further, and so as not to forget, I want to say one thing—very important in my opinion—although the matter would fit better at another time, I hold as certain that there are many persons who approach the most Blessed Sacrament (and please the Lord I be lying) with serious mortal sins. Yet, if such persons were to hear a soul dying with love of its God say these words, they would be surprised and consider it great boldness. At least I am sure they themselves would not say them, for these words and other similar ones in the *Song of Songs* are said by love. Since such persons have no love, they can easily read the *Song of Songs* every day and not themselves become involved with the words; nor would they even dare take the words on their lips. For truly even hearing them makes one fear, for these words bear in themselves great majesty. How much majesty You bear, my Lord, in the most Blessed Sacrament. But since these persons do not have a living faith but a dead one, You do not speak to them when they see You so humble under the species of bread. They do not deserve to hear—and thus they are not so daring.

19. AA 4

AA 4. Christ, sent by the Father, is the source and origin of the Church’s whole apostolate. Clearly then, the fruitfulness of the apostolate of lay people depends on their living union with Christ; as the Lord said himself, “Whoever dwells in me and I in him bears much fruit, for

¹⁹ In the beginning Teresa had the intention of writing about both the Our father and the Hail Mary. See 24:2 and 42:4.

separated from me you can do nothing” (Jn 15:5). This life of intimate union with Christ in the Church is maintained by the spiritual helps common to all the faithful, chiefly by active participation in the liturgy. Laymen should make such a use of these helps that, while meeting their human obligations in the ordinary conditions of life, they do not separate their union with Christ from their ordinary life; but through the very performance of their tasks, which are God’s will for them, actually promote the growth of their union with him. This is the path along which laymen must advance fervently, joyfully, overcoming difficulties with prudent patient efforts. Family cares should not be foreign to their spirituality, nor any other temporal interest; in the words of the Apostle: “Whatever you are doing, whether speaking or acting, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Col 3:17).

A life like this calls for a continuous exercise of faith, hope, and charity.

Only the light of faith and meditation on the Word of God can enable us to find everywhere and always the God “in whom we live and exist” (Ac 17:28); and only thus can we seek his will in everything, see Christ in all men, acquaintance or a stranger, make sound judgments on the true meaning and value of temporal realities both in themselves and in their relation to man’s end.

Those with such a faith live in the hope of the revelation of the sons of God, keeping in mind the cross and resurrection of the Lord.

On life’s pilgrimage they are hidden with Christ in God, are free from the slavery of riches, are in search of the goods that last for ever. Generously they exert all their energies in extending God’s kingdom, in making the Christian spirit a vital energizing force in the temporal sphere. In life’s trials they draw courage from hope, “convinced that present sufferings are no measure of the future glory to be revealed in us” (Rom 8:18).

With the love that comes from God prompting them, they do good to all, especially to their brothers in the faith (cf. Gal 6:10), putting aside “all ill will and deceit, all hypocrisy, envy and slander” (1P 2:1), in this way attracting men to Christ. Divine love, “poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us” (Rom 5:5), enables lay people to express concretely in their lives the spirit of the Beatitudes. Following in his poverty, Jesus, they feel no depression in want, no pride in plenty; imitating the humble Christ, they are not greedy for vain show (cf. Gal 5:26). They strive instead to please God rather than men, always ready to abandon everything for Christ (cf. Lk 14:26) and to endure persecution in the cause of right (cf. Mt 5:10), having in mind the Lord’s saying: “If any man wants to come my way let him renounce self and take up his cross and follow me” (Mt 16:24). Preserving a Christian friendship with one another, they afford mutual support in all needs.

This lay spirituality will take its particular character from the circumstances of one’s state in life (married and family life, celibacy, widowhood), from one’s state of health and from one’s professional and social activity. Whatever the circumstances, each one has received suitable talents and these should be cultivated, as should also the personal gifts he has received from the Holy Spirit.

Similarly laymen who have followed their particular vocation and become members of any of the associations or institutions approved by the Church, aim sincerely at making their own the forms of spirituality proper to these bodies.

They should also hold in high esteem professional competence, family and civic sense, and the virtues related to social behavior such as honesty, sense of justice, sincerity, courtesy, moral courage; without them there is no true Christian life.

Perfect model of this apostolic spiritual life is the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Apostles. While on earth her life was like that of any other, filled with labors and the cares of the home; always, however, she remained intimately united to her Son and cooperated in an entirely unique way in the Savior's work. And now, assumed into heaven, "her motherly love keeps her attentive to her Son's brothers, still on pilgrimage amid the dangers and difficulties of life, until they arrive at the happiness of the fatherland." Everyone should have a genuine devotion to her and entrust his life to her motherly care.

20. WP 4:2

WP 4:2. Our primitive rule states that we must pray without ceasing.²⁰ If we do this with all the care possible—for unceasing prayer is the most important aspect of the rule—the fasts, the disciplines, and the silence the order commands will not be wanting. For you already know that if prayer is to be genuine, it must be helped by these other things: prayer and comfortable living are incompatible.

21. CL 33

CL 33. The lay faithful, precisely because they are members of the Church, have the vocation and mission of proclaiming the Gospel: they are prepared for this work by the sacraments of Christian initiation and by the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

In a very clear and significant passage from the Second Vatican Council we read: "As sharers in the mission of Christ, priest, prophet and king, the lay faithful have an active part to play in the life and activity of the Church.... Strengthened by their active participation in the liturgical life of their community, they are eager to do their share in apostolic works of that community. They lead to the Church people who are perhaps far removed from it; they earnestly cooperate in presenting the Word of God, especially by means of catechetical instruction; and offer their special skills to make the care of souls and the administration of the temporal goods of the Church more efficient."²¹

The entire mission of the Church, then, is concentrated and manifested in *evangelization*. Through the winding passages of history the Church has made her way under the grace and the command of Jesus Christ: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mk 16:15). "...and lo, I am with you always, until the close of the age" (Mt 28:20). "To evangelize," writes Paul VI, "is the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her most profound identity."²²

Through evangelization the Church is built up into a *community of faith*: more precisely, into a community that *confesses* the faith in full adherence to the Word of God which is *celebrated* in

²⁰ The Rule states: *Each of you is to stay in his own cell or nearby, pondering the Lord's law day and night (cf. Ps 1:2; Jos 1:8) and keeping watch at his prayers (cf. 1P 4:7) unless attending to some other duty.*

²¹ AA 10.

²² Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 14:AAS 68 (1976), 13.

the Sacraments and *lived* in charity, the principle of Christian moral existence. In fact, the “good news” is directed to stirring a person to a conversion of heart and life and a clinging to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour; to disposing a person to receive Baptism and the Eucharist and to strengthen a person in the prospect and realization of new life according to the Spirit.

Certainly the command of Jesus: “Go and preach the Gospel” always maintains its vital value and its ever-pressing obligation. Nevertheless, the *present situation*, not only of the world but also of many parts of the Church, *absolutely demands that the word of Christ receive a more ready and generous obedience*. Every disciple is personally called by name; no disciple can withhold making a response: “Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel” (1 Cor 9:16).

22. See AA 4 (Cf. Footnote 19, p. 34) and 10; CL 16-17, 25, 28-29

AA 10. Participators in the function of Christ, priest, prophet and king, the laity have an active part of their own in the life and action of the Church. Their action within the Church communities is so necessary that without it the apostolate of the pastors will frequently be unable to obtain its full effect. Following in the footsteps of the men and women who assisted Paul in the proclamation of the Gospel (cf. Ac 18:18, 26; Rom 16:3) lay persons of a genuinely apostolic spirit supply the needs of their brothers and are a source of consolation no less to the pastors than to the rest of the faithful (cf. 1 Cor 16:17-18). Nourished by their active participation in the liturgical life of their community, they engage zealously in its apostolic works; they draw men towards the Church who had been perhaps very far away from it; they ardently cooperate in the spread of the Word of God, particularly by catechetical instruction; by their expert assistance they increase the efficacy of the care of souls as well as of the administration of the goods of the Church.

The parish offers an outstanding example of community apostolate, for it gathers into a unity all the human diversities that are found there and inserts them into the universality of the Church. The laity should develop the habit of working in the parish in close union with their priests, of bringing before the ecclesial community their own problems, world problem's, and questions regarding man's salvation, to examine them together and solve them by general discussion. According to their abilities the laity ought to cooperate in all the apostolic and missionary enterprises of their ecclesial family.

The laity will continuously cultivate the “feeling for the diocese,” of which the parish is a kind of cell; they will be always ready on the invitation of their bishop to make their own contribution to diocesan undertakings. Indeed, they will not confine their cooperation within the limits of the parish or diocese, but will endeavor, in response to the needs of the towns and rural districts, to extend it to interparochial, interdiocesan, national, and international spheres. The widening of horizons is all the more necessary in the present situation, in which the increasing frequency of population shifts, the development of active solidarity and the ease of communications no longer allow any one part of society to live in isolation. The laity will therefore have concern for the needs of the People of God scattered throughout the world. Especially will they make missionary works their own by providing them with material means and even with personal service. It is for Christians a duty and an honor to give God back a portion of the goods they have received from him.

CL 16. We come to a full sense of the dignity of the lay faithful if we *consider the prime and fundamental vocation* that the Father assigns to each of them in Jesus Christ through the Holy

Spirit: the vocation to holiness, that is, the perfection of charity. Holiness is the greatest testimony of the dignity conferred on a disciple of Christ.

The Second Vatican Council has significantly spoken on the universal call to holiness. It is possible to say that this call to holiness is precisely the basic charge entrusted to all the sons and daughters of the Church by a Council which intended to bring a renewal of Christian life based on the Gospel. This charge is not a simple moral exhortation but an *undeniable requirement arising from the mystery of the Church: she is the choice vine*, whose branches live and grow with the same holy and life-giving energies that come from Christ; she is the Mystical Body whose members share in the same life of holiness of the Head who is Christ; she is the Beloved Spouse of the Lord Jesus who delivered himself up for her sanctification (cf. Eph 5:25ff.). The Spirit that sanctified the human nature of Jesus in Mary's virginal womb (cf. Lk 1:35) is the same Spirit that is abiding and working in the Church to communicate to her the holiness of the Son of God made man.

It is ever more urgent that today all Christians take up again the way of the gospel renewal, welcoming in a spirit of generosity the invitation expressed by the Apostle Peter "to be holy in all conduct" (1P 1:15). The 1985 Extraordinary Synod, twenty years after the Council, opportunely insisted on this urgency: "Since the Church in Christ is a mystery, she ought to be considered the sign and instrument of holiness.... Men and women saints have always been the source and origin of renewal in the most difficult circumstances in the Church's history. Today we have the greatest need of saints whom we must assiduously beg God to raise up."

Everyone in the Church, precisely because they are members, receives and thereby shares in the common vocation to holiness. In the fullness of this title and on equal par with all other members of the Church, the lay faithful are called to holiness: "All the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity;"²³ "All of Christ's followers are invited and bound to pursue holiness and the perfect fulfillment of their own state of life."²⁴

The call to holiness is *rooted in Baptism* and proposed anew in the other Sacraments, principally in the *Eucharist*. Since Christians are re clothed in Christ Jesus and refreshed by his Spirit, they are "holy." They therefore have the ability to manifest this holiness and the responsibility to bear witness to it in all that they do. The Apostle Paul never tires of admonishing all Christians to live "as is fitting among saints" (Eph 5:3).

Life according to the Spirit, whose fruit is holiness (cf. Rom 6:22; Gal 5:22), stirs up every baptized person and requires each to *follow and imitate Jesus Christ*, in embracing the Beatitudes; in listening and meditating on the Word of God; in conscious and active participation in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church; in personal prayer; in family or in community; in the hunger and thirst for justice; in the practice of the commandment of love in all circumstances of life and service to the brethren, especially the least, the poor and the suffering.

CL 17. The vocation of the lay faithful to holiness implies that life according to the Spirit expresses itself in a particular way in their *involvement in temporal affairs* and in their *participation in earthly activities*. Once again the Apostle admonishes us: "Whatever you do, in

²³ LG 40.

²⁴ LG 42.

word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (1 Col 3:17). Applying the Apostle’s words to the lay faithful, the Council categorically affirms: “Neither family concerns nor other secular affairs should be excluded from their religious program of life.”²⁵ Likewise the Synod Fathers have said: “The unity of life of the lay faithful is of the greatest importance: indeed they must be sanctified in everyday professional and social life. Therefore, to respond to their vocation, the lay faithful must see their daily activities as an occasion to join themselves to God, fulfill his will, serve other people and lead them to communion with God in Christ.”

The vocation to holiness must be recognized and lived by the lay faithful, first of all as an undeniable and demanding obligation and as a shining example of the infinite love of the Father that has regenerated them in his own life of holiness. Such a vocation, then, ought to be called *an essential and inseparable element of the new life of Baptism*, and therefore an element which determines their dignity. At the same time the vocation to holiness is *intimately connected to mission* and to the responsibility entrusted to the lay faithful in the Church and in the world. In fact, that same holiness which is derived simply from their participation in the Church’s holiness, represents their first and fundamental contribution to the building of the Church herself, who is the “Communion of Saints.” The eyes of faith behold a wonderful scene: that of a countless number of lay people, both women and men, busy at work in their daily life and activity, often far from view and quite unacclaimed by the world, unknown to the world’s great personages but nonetheless looked upon work in the Lord’s vineyard. Confident and steadfast through the power of God’s grace, these are the humble yet great builders of the Kingdom of God in history.

Holiness, then, must be called a fundamental presupposition and an irreplaceable condition for everyone in fulfilling the mission of salvation within the Church. The Church’s holiness is the hidden source and the infallible measure of the works of the apostolate and of the missionary effort. Only in the measure that the Church, Christ’s Spouse, is loved by him and she, in turn, loves him, does she become a mother fruitful in the Spirit.

Again we take up the image from the Gospel: the fruitfulness and the growth of the branches depends on their remaining united to the vine. “As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing” (Jn 15:4-5).

It is appropriate to recall here the solemn proclamation of beatification and canonization of lay men and women which took place during the month of the Synod. The entire People of God, and the lay faithful in particular, can find at this moment new models of holiness and new witnesses of heroic virtue lived in the ordinary everyday circumstances of human existence. The Synod Fathers have said: “Particular Churches especially should be attentive to recognizing among their members the younger men and women of those Churches who have given witness to holiness in such conditions [everyday secular conditions and the conjugal state] and who can be an example for others, so that, if the case calls for it, they [the Churches] might propose them to be beatified and canonized.”

At the end of these reflections intended to define the lay faithful’s position in the Church, the celebrated admonition of St. Leo the Great comes to mind: “Acknowledge, O Christian, your

²⁵ AA 4.

dignity!” St. Maximus, Bishop of Turin, in addressing those who had received the holy anointing of Baptism, repeats the same sentiments: “Ponder the honour that has made you sharers in this mystery!” All the baptized are invited to hear once again the words of St. Augustine: “Let us rejoice and give thanks; we have not only become Christians, but Christ himself.... Stand in awe and rejoice, we have become Christ.”

The dignity as a Christian, the source of equality for all members of the Church, guarantees and fosters the spirit of *communion* and fellowship, and, at the same time, becomes the hidden dynamic force in the lay faithful’s apostolate and mission. It is a *dignity*, however, *which brings demands*, the dignity of laborers called by the Lord to work in his vineyard: “Upon all the lay faithful, then, rests the exalted duty of working to assure that each day the divine plan of salvation is further extended to every person, of every era, in every part of the earth.”²⁶

CL 25. The lay faithful participate in the life of the Church not only in exercising their tasks and charisms, but also in many other ways.

Such participation finds its first and necessary expression in the life and mission of the *particular Church*, in the diocese in which “the Church of Christ, one, holy, catholic and apostolic, is truly present and at work.”

For an adequate participation in ecclesial life the lay faithful absolutely need to have a clear and precise vision of the *particular Church with its primordial bond to the universal Church*. The particular Church does not come about from a kind of fragmentation of the universal Church, nor does the universal Church come about by a simple amalgamation of particular Churches. Rather, there is a real, essential and constant bond uniting each of them and this is why the universal Church exists and is manifested in the particular Churches. For this reason the Council says that the particular Churches “are constituted after the model of the universal Church; it is in and from these particular Churches that there come into being the one and unique Catholic Church.”

The same Council strongly encourages the lay faithful to live out actively their belonging to the particular Church, while at the same time assuming an ever-increasing “catholic” spirit: “Let the lay faithful constantly foster”—we read in the Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People—“a feeling for their own diocese, of which the parish is a kind of cell, and be always ready at their bishops’ invitation to participate in diocesan projects. Indeed, if the needs of cities and rural areas are to be met, lay people should not limit their cooperation to the parochial or diocesan boundaries, but strive to extend it to interparochial, interdiocesan, national and international fields—more so because the daily increase in population mobility, the growth of mutual bonds, and the ease of communication no longer allow any sector of society to remain closed in upon itself. Thus they should be concerned about the needs of the People of God scattered throughout the world.”²⁷

In this sense, the recent Synod has favored the creation of *Diocesan Pastoral Councils*, as a recourse at opportune times. In fact, on a diocesan level this structure could be the principle form of collaboration, dialogue, and discernment as well. The participation of the lay faithful in these Councils can broaden resources in consultation and the principle of collaboration—and in certain instances also in decision-making—if applied in a broad and determined manner.

²⁶ LG 33.

²⁷ AA 10.

The participation of the lay faithful in *Diocesan Synods* and in *local Councils*, whether provincial or plenary, is envisioned by the Code of Canon Law. These structures could contribute to Church communion and the mission of the particular Church, both in its own surroundings and in relation to the other particular Churches of the ecclesiastical province or Episcopal Conference.

Episcopal Conferences are called to evaluate the most opportune way of developing the consultation and the collaboration of the lay faithful, women and men, at a national or regional level, so that they may consider well the problems they share and manifest better the communion of the whole Church.

CL 28. The lay faithful, together with the clergy and women and men religious, make up the one People of God and the Body of Christ.

Being “members” of the Church takes nothing away from the fact that each Christian as an individual is “unique and irrepeatable.” On the contrary, this belonging guarantees and fosters the profound sense of that uniqueness and irrepeatability insofar as these very qualities are the source of variety and richness for the whole Church. Therefore, God calls the individual in Jesus Christ, each one personally by name. In this sense the Lord’s words “You too go into my vineyard,” directed to the Church as a whole, come specially addressed to each member individually.

Because of each member’s unique and irrepeatable character—that is, one’s identity and actions as a person—each individual is placed at the service of the growth of the ecclesial community while, at the same time, singularly receiving and sharing in the common richness of all the Church. This is the “Communion of Saints” which we profess in the Creed. *The good of all becomes the good of each one and the good of each one becomes the good of all.* “In the Holy Church,” writes St. Gregory the Great, “all are nourished by each one and each one is nourished by all.”

Above all, each member of the lay faithful should always be *fully aware of being a “member of the Church”* yet entrusted with a unique task which cannot be done by another and which is to be fulfilled for the good of all. From this perspective the Council’s insistence on the *absolute necessity of an apostolate exercised by the individual* takes on its full meaning: “The apostolate exercised by the individual—which flows abundantly from a truly Christian life (cf. Jn 4:11)—is the origin and condition of the whole lay apostolate, even in its organized expression, and admits no substitute. Regardless of circumstance, all lay persons (including those who have no opportunity or possibility for collaboration in associations) are called to this type of apostolate and obliged to engage in it. Such an apostolate is useful at all times and places, but in certain circumstances it is the only one available and feasible.”²⁸

In the apostolate exercised by the individual, great riches are waiting to be discovered through an intensification of the missionary effort of each of the lay faithful. Such an individual form of apostolate can contribute greatly to a *more extensive* spreading of the Gospel, indeed it can reach as many places as there are daily lives of individual members of the lay faithful. Furthermore, the spread of the Gospel will be *continual*, since a person’s life and faith will be one. Likewise the spread of the Gospel will be particularly *incisive*, because in sharing fully in the unique conditions of the life, work, difficulties and hopes of their sisters and brothers, the lay faithful

²⁸ AA 16.

will be able to reach the hearts of their neighbors, friends, and colleagues, opening them to a full sense of human existence, that is, to communion with God and with all people.

CL 29. Church communion, already present and at work in the activities of the individual, finds its specific expression in the lay faithful's working together in groups, that is, in activities done with others in the course of their responsible participation in the life and mission of the Church.

In recent days the phenomenon of lay people associating among themselves has taken on a character of particular variety and vitality. In some ways lay associations have always been present throughout the Church's history as various confraternities, third orders and sodalities testify even today. However, in modern times such lay groups have received a special stimulus, resulting in the birth and spread of a multiplicity of group forms: associations, groups, communities, movements. We can speak of *a new era of group endeavours* of the lay faithful. In fact, "alongside the traditional forming of associations, and at times coming from their very roots, movements and new sodalities have sprouted with a specific feature and purpose, so great is the richness and the versatility of resources that the Holy Spirit nourishes in the ecclesial community, and so great is the capacity of initiative and the generosity of our lay people."

Often these lay groups show themselves to be *very diverse* from one another in various aspects, in their external structures, in their procedures and training methods, and in the fields in which they work. However, they all come together in an all-inclusive and *profound convergence* when viewed from the perspective of their common purpose, that is, the responsible participation of all of them in the Church's mission of carrying forth the Gospel of Christ—the source of hope for humanity and the renewal of society.

The actual formation of groups of the lay faithful for spiritual purposes or for apostolic work comes from various sources and corresponds to different demands. In fact, their formation itself expresses the social nature of the person and for this reason leads to a more extensive and incisive effectiveness in work. In reality, a "cultural" effect can be accomplished through work done not so much by an individual alone but by an individual as "a social being," that is, as a member of a group, of a community, of an association or of a movement. Such work is, then, the source and stimulus leading to the transformation of the surroundings and society as well as the fruit and sign of every other transformation in this regard. This is particularly true in the context of a pluralistic and fragmented society—the case in so many parts of the world today—and in light of the problems which have become greatly complex and difficult. On the other hand, in a secularized world, above all, the various group forms of the apostolate can represent for many a precious help for the Christian life in remaining faithful to the demands of the Gospel and to the commitment to the Church's mission and the apostolate.

Beyond this, the profound reason that justifies and demands the lay faithful's forming of lay groups comes from a theology *based on ecclesiology*, as the Second Vatican Council clearly acknowledged in referring to the group apostolate as a "sign of communion and of unity of the Church of Christ."

It is a "sign" that must be manifested in relation to "communion" both in the internal and external aspects of the various group forms and in the wider context of the Christian community. As mentioned, this reason based on ecclesiology explains, on one hand, the "right" of lay associations to form, and on the other, the necessity of "criteria" for discerning the authenticity of the forms which such groups take in the Church.

First of all, the *freedom for lay people in the Church to form such groups* is to be acknowledged. Such liberty is a true and proper right that is not derived from any kind of “concession” by authority, but flows from the Sacrament of Baptism which calls the lay faithful to participate actively in the Church’s communion and mission. In this regard the Council is quite clear: “As long as the proper relationship is kept to Church authority, the lay faithful have the right to found and run such associations and to join those already existing.”²⁹ A citation from the recently published Code of Canon Law affirms it as well: “The Christian faithful are at liberty to found and govern associations for charitable and religious purposes or for the promotion of the Christian vocation in the world; they are free to hold meetings to pursue these purposes in common.”

It is a question of a freedom that is to be acknowledged and guaranteed by ecclesial authority and always and only to be exercised in Church communion. Consequently, the right of the lay faithful to form groups is essentially in relation to the Church’s life of communion and to her mission.

23. Cf. IC V:3:11 (Footnote 12, p. 28); VII:3

24. Cf. AA 2-3

AA 2. The Church was founded to spread the kingdom of Christ over all the earth for the glory of God the Father, to make all men partakers in redemption and salvation, and through them to establish the right relationship of the entire world to Christ. Every activity of the Mystical Body with this in view goes by the name of “apostolate;” the Church exercises it through all its members, though in various ways. In fact, the Christian vocation is, of its very nature a vocation to the apostolate as well. In the organism of a living body no member plays a purely passive part, sharing in the life of the body it shares at the same time in its activity. The same is true for the Body of Christ, the Church: “the whole body achieves full growth in dependence on the full functioning of each part” (Eph 4 :16). Between the members of this body there exists, further, such a unity and solidarity (cf. Eph 4 :16) that a member who does not work at the growth of the body to the extent of his possibilities must be considered useless both to the Church and to himself.

In the Church there is a diversity of ministry but unity of mission. To the Apostles and their successors Christ has entrusted the office of teaching, sanctifying, and governing in his name and by his power. But the laity are made to share in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly office of Christ; they have therefore, in the Church and in the world, their own assignment in the mission of the whole People of God.³⁰ In the concrete, their apostolate is exercised when they work at the evangelization and sanctification of men; it is exercised too when they endeavor to have the Gospel spirit permeate and improve the temporal order, going about it in a way that bears clear witness to Christ and helps forward the salvation of men. The characteristic of the lay state being a life led in the midst of the world and of secular affairs, laymen are called by God to make of their apostolate, through the vigor of their Christian spirit, a leaven in the world.

AA 3. From the fact of their union with Christ the head flows the layman’s right and duty to be apostles. Inserted as they are in the Mystical Body of Christ by baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit in confirmation, it is by the Lord himself they are assigned to the apostolate. If they are consecrated a kingly priesthood and a holy nation (cf. 1P 2:4-10), it is in

²⁹ LG 37.

³⁰ Cf. LG 33.

order that they may in all their actions offer spiritual sacrifices and bear witness to Christ all the world over. Charity, which is, as it were, the soul of the whole apostolate, is given to them and nourished in them by the sacraments, however, the Eucharist above all.³¹

The apostolate is lived in faith, hope, and charity poured out by the Holy Spirit into the hearts of all the members of the Church. And the precept of charity, which is the Lord's greatest commandment, urges all Christians to work for the glory of God through the coming of his kingdom and the communication of eternal life to all men, that they may know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent (cf. Jn 17:3).

On all Christians, accordingly, rests the noble obligation of working to bring all men throughout the whole world to hear and accept the divine message of salvation.

The Holy Spirit sanctifies the People of God through the ministry and the sacraments. However, for the exercise of the apostolate he gives the faithful special gifts besides (cf. 1 Cor 12:7), "allotting them to each one as he wills" (1 Cor 12:11), so that each and all, putting at the service of others the grace received may be "as good stewards of God's varied gifts," (1P 4:10), for the building up of the whole body in charity (cf. Eph 4:16). From the reception of these charisms, even the most ordinary ones, there arises for each of the faithful the right and duty of exercising them in the Church and in the world for the good of men and the development of the Church, of exercising them in the freedom of the Holy Spirit who "breathes where he wills" (Jn 3:8), and at the same time in communion with his brothers in Christ, and with his pastors especially. It is for the pastors to pass judgment on the authenticity and good use of these gifts, not certainly with a view to quenching the Spirit but to testing everything and keeping what is good (cf. 1Th 5:12, 19, 21).³²

25. Cf. CD, 11; AA, 26; CL, 25

CD 11. A diocese is a section of the People of God entrusted to a bishop to be guided by him with the assistance of his clergy so that, loyal to its pastor and formed by him into one community in the Holy Spirit through the Gospel and the Eucharist, it constitutes one particular church in which the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and active.

Individual bishops to whom the care of particular dioceses is committed care for their flocks under the authority of the Supreme Pontiff, in the name of God, as their proper, ordinary and immediate pastors, sanctifying and governing them. They should, however, recognize the rights which are conformed by law on Patriarchs or other hierarchical authorities.

Bishops should devote themselves to their apostolic office as witnesses of Christ to all men. They should not limit themselves to those who already acknowledge the Prince of Pastors but should also devote their energies wholeheartedly to those who have strayed in any way from the path of truth or who have no knowledge of the gospel of Christ and of his saving mercy, so that ultimately all men may walk "in all goodness, justice and truth" (Eph 5:9).

AA 26. In dioceses, as far as possible, councils should be set up to assist the Church's apostolic work, whether in the field of evangelization and sanctification or in the fields of charity, social relations and the rest; the clergy and religious working with the laity in whatever way proves

³¹ Cf. LG 33.

³² Cf. LG. 12.

satisfactory. These councils can take care of the mutual coordinating of the various lay associations and undertakings, the autonomy and particular nature of each remaining untouched.

Such councils should be found too, if possible, at parochial, inter-parochial, inter-diocesan level, and also on the national and international plane.

In addition, a special secretariat should be established at the Holy See for the service and promotion of the lay apostolate. This secretariat will act as a center which, with the proper equipment, will supply information about the different apostolic initiatives of the laity. It will undertake research on the problems arising today in this domain; and with its advice will assist the hierarchy and laity in the field of apostolic activities. The various apostolic movements and institutes of the lay apostolate all the world over should be represented in this secretariat. Clerics and religious should also be there to collaborate with the laity.

CL 25. The lay faithful participate in the life of the Church not only in exercising their tasks and charisms, but also in many other ways.

Such participation finds its first and necessary expression in the life and mission of the *particular Church*, in the diocese in which "the Church of Christ, one, holy, catholic and apostolic, is truly present and at work."³³

The Particular Churches and the Universal Church

For an adequate participation in ecclesial life the lay faithful absolutely need to have a clear and precise vision of the *particular Church with its primordial bond to the universal Church*. The particular Church does not come about from a kind of fragmentation of the universal Church, nor does the universal Church come about by a simple amalgamation of particular Churches. Rather, there is a real, essential and constant bond uniting each of them and this is why the universal Church exists and is manifested in the particular Churches. For this reason the Council says that the particular Churches "are constituted after the model of the universal Church; it is in and from these particular Churches that there come into being the one and unique Catholic Church."³⁴

The same Council strongly encourages the lay faithful to live out actively their belonging to the particular Church, while at the same time assuming an ever-increasing "catholic" spirit: "Let the lay faithful constantly foster"—we read in the Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People—"a feeling for their own diocese, of which the parish is a kind of cell, and be always ready at their bishops' invitation to participate in diocesan projects. Indeed, if the needs of cities and rural areas are to be met, lay people should not limit their cooperation to the parochial or diocesan boundaries, but strive to extend it to interparochial, interdiocesan, national and international fields—more so because the daily increase in population mobility, the growth of mutual bonds, and the ease of communication no longer allow any sector of society to remain closed in upon itself. Thus they should be concerned about the needs of the People of God scattered throughout the world."³⁵

³³ CD 11.

³⁴ LG 23.

³⁵ AA 10.

In this sense, the recent Synod has favored the creation of *Diocesan Pastoral Councils*, as a recourse at opportune times. In fact, on a diocesan level this structure could be the principle form of collaboration, dialogue, and discernment as well. The participation of the lay faithful in these Councils can broaden resources in consultation and the principle of collaboration—and in certain instances also in decision-making—if applied in a broad and determined manner.

The participation of the lay faithful in *Diocesan Synods* and in *local Councils*, whether provincial or plenary, is envisioned by the Code of Canon Law. These structures could contribute to Church communion and the mission of the particular Church, both in its own surroundings and in relation to the other particular Churches of the ecclesiastical province or Episcopal Conference.

Episcopal Conferences are called to evaluate the most opportune way of developing the consultation and the collaboration of the lay faithful, women and men, at a national or regional level, so that they may consider well the problems they share and manifest better the communion of the whole Church.

26. VC 55

VC 55. These new experiences of communion and cooperation should be encouraged for various reasons. They can in fact give rise to the spread of a fruitful spirituality beyond the confines of the Institute, which will then be in a position to ensure the continuity in the Church of the services typical of the Institute. Another positive consequence will be to facilitate more intense cooperation between consecrated persons and the laity in view of the Institute's mission. Moved by the examples of holiness of the consecrated members, lay men and women will experience at firsthand the spirit of the evangelical counsels and will thus be encouraged to live and bear witness to the spirit of the Beatitudes in order to transform the world according to God's design.

The participation of the laity often brings unexpected and rich insights into certain aspects of the charism, leading to a more spiritual interpretation of it and helping to draw from it directions for new activities in the apostolate. In whatever activity or ministry they are involved, consecrated persons should remember that before all else they must be expert guides in the spiritual life, and in this perspective they should cultivate "the most precious gift: the spirit." For their part, the laity should offer Religious families the invaluable contribution of their "being in the world" and their specific service.

27. OCDS Rule of Life (1979) art. 8

Art. 8. Prayer and the apostolate, when they are genuine, are inseparable, and each profits the other. The Secular Carmelites are therefore bound to the fervent practice of fraternal charity and must take their share of apostolic responsibility in the Church and in the world.

With this object, the Secular Carmelites will first of all seek to intensify their personal union with God, and to bear witness to Christ by their life of prayer. They are also free to engage in any type of apostolic activity. They will dedicate themselves especially to the promotion of priestly and religious vocations, and collaborate in the Order's activities and undertakings. All these activities will be evaluated and made more precise by local statutes according to the various geographical regions.

28. MC 37

MC 37. Finally, we wish to point out that our own time, no less than former times, is called upon to verify its knowledge of reality with the word of God, and, keeping to the matter at present under consideration, to compare its anthropological ideas and the problems springing therefrom with the figure of the Virgin Mary as presented by the Gospel. The reading of the divine Scriptures, carried out under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and with the discoveries of the human sciences and the different situations in the world today being taken into account, will help us to see how Mary can be considered a mirror of the expectations of the men and women of our time. Thus, the modern woman, anxious to participate with decision-making power in the affairs of the community, will contemplate with intimate joy Mary who, taken into dialogue with God, gives her active and responsible consent,³⁶ not to the solution of a contingent problem, but to that “event of world importance,” as the Incarnation of the Word has been rightly called. The modern woman will appreciate that Mary’s choice of the state of virginity, which in God’s plan prepared her for the mystery of the Incarnation, was not a rejection of any of the values of the married state but a courageous choice which she made in order to consecrate herself totally to the love of God. The modern woman will note with pleasant surprise that Mary of Nazareth, while completely devoted to the will of God, was far from being a timidly submissive woman or one whose piety was repellent to others; on the contrary, she was a woman who did not hesitate to proclaim that God vindicates the humble and the oppressed, and removes the powerful people of this world from their privileged positions (cf. Lk 1:51-53). The modern woman will recognize in Mary, who “stands out among the poor and humble of the Lord,”³⁷ a woman of strength, who experienced poverty and suffering, flight and exile (cf. Mt 2:13-23). These are situations that cannot escape the attention of those who wish to support, with the Gospel spirit, the liberating energies of man and of society. And Mary will appear not as a Mother exclusively concerned with her own divine Son, but rather as a woman whose action helped to strengthen the apostolic community’s faith in Christ (cf. Jn 2:1-12), and whose maternal role was extended and became universal on Calvary. These are but examples, but examples which show clearly that the figure of the Blessed Virgin does not disillusion any of the profound expectations of the men and women of our time but offers them the perfect model of the disciple of the Lord: the disciple who builds up the earthly and temporal city while being a diligent pilgrim towards the heavenly and eternal city; the disciple who works for that justice which sets free the oppressed and for that charity which assists the needy; but above all, the disciple who is the active witness of that love which builds up Christ in people’s hearts.

29. RM 37

RM 37. The Church, which from the beginning has modeled her earthly journey on that of the Mother of God, constantly repeats after her the words of the Magnificat. From the depths of the Virgin’s faith at the Annunciation and the Visitation, the Church derives the truth about the God of the Covenant: the God who is Almighty and does “great things” for man: “holy is his name.” In the Magnificat the Church sees uprooted that sin which is found at the outset of the earthly history of man and woman, the sin of disbelief and of “little faith” in God. In contrast with the “suspicion” which the “father of lies” sowed in the heart of Eve the first woman, Mary, whom tradition is wont to call the “new Eve” and the true “Mother of the living,” boldly proclaims the undimmed truth about God: the holy and almighty God, who from the beginning is the source of

³⁶ LG 56.

³⁷ LG 55.

all gifts, he who “has done great things” in her, as well as in the whole universe. In the act of creation God gives existence to all that is. In creating man, God gives him the dignity of the image and likeness of himself in a special way as compared with all earthly creatures. Moreover, in his desire to give God gives himself in the Son, notwithstanding man’s sin: “He so loved the world that he gave his only Son” (Jn 3:16). Mary is the first witness of this marvelous truth, which will be fully accomplished through “the works and words” (cf. Ac 1:1) of her Son and definitively through his Cross and Resurrection. The Church, which even “amid trials and tribulations” does not cease repeating with Mary the words of the Magnificat, is sustained by the power of God’s truth, proclaimed on that occasion with such extraordinary simplicity. At the same time, by means of this truth about God, the Church desires to shed light upon the difficult and sometimes tangled paths of man’s earthly existence. The Church’s journey, therefore, near the end of the second Christian Millennium, involves a renewed commitment to her mission. Following him who said of himself: “(God) has anointed me to preach good news to the poor” (cf. Lk 4:18), the Church has sought from generation to generation and still seeks today to accomplish that same mission. The Church’s love of preference for the poor is wonderfully inscribed in Mary’s Magnificat. The God of the Covenant, celebrated in the exultation of her spirit by the Virgin of Nazareth, is also he who “has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly, ...filled the hungry with good things, sent the rich away empty, ...scattered the proud-hearted... and his mercy is from age to age on those who fear him.” Mary is deeply imbued with the spirit of the “poor of Yahweh,” who in the prayer of the Psalms awaited from God their salvation, placing all their trust in him (cf. Pss 25; 31; 35; 55). Mary truly proclaims the coming of the “Messiah of the poor” (cf. Is 11:4; 61:1). Drawing from Mary’s heart, from the depth of her faith expressed in the words of the Magnificat, the Church renews ever more effectively in herself the awareness that the truth about God who saves, the truth about God who is the source of every gift, cannot be separated from the manifestation of his love of preference for the poor and humble, that love which, celebrated in the Magnificat, is later expressed in the words and works of Jesus. The Church is thus aware—and at the present time this awareness is particularly vivid—not only that these two elements of the message contained in the Magnificat cannot be separated, but also that there is a duty to safeguard carefully the importance of “the poor” and of “the option in favor of the poor” in the word of the living God. These are matters and questions intimately connected with the Christian meaning of freedom and liberation. “Mary is totally dependent upon God and completely directed towards him, and at the side of her Son, she is the most perfect image of freedom and of the liberation of humanity and of the universe. It is to her as Mother and Model that the Church must look in order to understand in its completeness the meaning of her own mission.”

30. AA 28-29

AA 28. A training, at once many-sided and complete, is indispensable if the apostolate is to attain full efficacy. This is required, not only by the continuous spiritual and doctrinal progress of the layman himself, but also by the variety of circumstances, persons and duties to which he should adapt his activity. This education to the apostolate must rest on those foundations which the Council has in other places set down and expounded.³⁸ Not a few types of apostolate require, besides the education common to all Christians, a specific and individual training, by reasons of the diversity of persons and circumstances.

³⁸ LG 9-17, 30-42.

AA 29. Since the laity participate in the Church's mission in a way that is their own, their apostolic training acquires a special character precisely from the secularity proper to the lay state and from its particular type of spirituality.

Education for the apostolate presupposes an integral human education suited to each one's abilities and conditions. For the layman ought to be, through an intimate knowledge of the contemporary world, a member well integrated into his own society and culture.

But in the first place he should learn to accomplish the mission of Christ and the Church, living by faith in the divine mystery of creation and redemption, moved by the Holy Spirit who gives life to the People of God and urges all men to love God the Father, and in him to love the world of men. This education must be considered the foundation and condition of any fruitful apostolate.

Besides spiritual formation, solid grounding in doctrine is required: in theology, ethics, and philosophy, at least, proportioned to the age, condition and abilities of each one. The importance too of a general culture linked with a practical and technical training is something which should by no means be overlooked.

If good human relations are to be cultivated, then it is necessary for genuine human values to stand at a premium, especially the art of living and working on friendly terms with others and entering into dialogue with them.

Training for the apostolate cannot consist in theoretical teaching alone; on that account there is need, right from the start of training, to learn gradually and prudently to see all things in the light of faith, to judge and act always in its light, to improve and perfect oneself by working with others, and in this manner to enter actively into the service of the Church. Inasmuch as the human person is continuously developing and new problems are forever arising, this education should be steadily perfected; it requires an ever more thorough knowledge and a continual adaptation of action. While meeting all its demands, concern for the unity and integrity of the human person must be kept always in the foreground, in order to preserve and intensify its harmony and equilibrium.

In this way the layman actively inserts himself deep into the very reality of the temporal order and takes his part competently in the work of the world. At the same time, as a living member and witness of the Church, he brings its presence and its action into the heart of the temporal sphere.

31. CIC 298, 301

CIC 298. §1. In the Church there are associations distinct from institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, in which the Christian faithful, either clergy or laity, or clergy and laity together, strive by common effort to promote a more perfect life or to foster public worship or Christian doctrine to exercise other apostolic works, namely to engage in efforts of evangelization, to exercise works of piety or charity and to animate the temporal order with the Christian spirit.

§2. The Christian faithful should enroll especially in associations which are erected or praised or recommended by competent ecclesiastical authority.

CIC 301. §1. Competent ecclesiastical authority alone has the right to erect associations of the Christian faithful which set out to teach Christian doctrine in the name of the Church or to promote public worship or which aim at other ends whose pursuit by their nature is reserved to the same ecclesiastical authority.

§2. Competent ecclesiastical authority, if it judges it expedient, can also erect associations of the Christian faithful in order to attain directly or indirectly other spiritual ends whose accomplishment has not been sufficiently provided for by the efforts of private persons.

§3. Associations of the Christian faithful which are erected by competent ecclesiastical authority are called public associations.

32. Cf. *Documents and Ritual for Promises and Vows* – Instruction of Fr. Philip Sainz de Baranda, OCD, (Superior General) October 15 1980 pp. 78-80

33. CIC 301, 303-306, 313

CIC 301. [see footnote #31, p. 49.]

CIC 303. Associations whose members lead an apostolic life strive for Christian perfection while living in the world and who share the spirit of some religious institute under the higher direction of that same institute are called third orders or some other appropriate name.

CIC 304. §1. All associations of the Christian faithful, whether public or private, by whatever title or name they are called, are to have their own statutes which define the end of the association or its social objective, its headquarters, its government, the conditions of membership and by whom its policies are to be determined, according to the need or utility of time and place.

§2. They are to choose a title or name for themselves which is adapted to the usage of their time and place, selected especially in view of their intended purpose.

CIC 305. §1. All associations of the Christian faithful are subject to the vigilance of competent ecclesiastical authority, whose duty it is to take care that integrity of faith and morals is preserved in them and to watch lest abuse creep into ecclesiastical discipline; therefore that authority has the right and duty to visit them in accord with the norm of law and the statutes; such associations are also subject to the governance of the same authority according to the prescriptions of the following canons.

§2. Associations of any kind whatever are subject to the vigilance of the Holy See; diocesan associations and also other associations to the extent that they work in the diocese are subject to the vigilance of the local ordinary.

CIC 306. In order for a person to enjoy the rights and privileges, indulgences and other spiritual favors granted to the association, it is necessary and suffices that a person has been validly received into it and not legitimately dismissed from it, in accord with the prescriptions of the law and the proper statutes of the association.

CIC 313. A public association as well as a confederation of public associations is constituted a juridic person by the decree by which it is erected by competent ecclesiastical authority in accord

with the norm of can. 312; it also thereby receives a mission to pursue the ends which it proposes for itself in the name of the Church, to the extent that such a mission is required.

34. CIC 305, 311-315

CIC 305. [see footnote #33, p. 50.]

CIC 311. Members of institutes of consecrated life who preside over or assist associations in some way united to their institute are to see to it that these associations give assistance to the works of the apostolate in a diocese, especially cooperating, under the direction of the local ordinary, with associations which are ordered to the exercise of the apostolate in the diocese.

CIC 312. §1. The authority competent to erect public associations is: 1) the Holy See for universal and international associations; 2) the conference of bishops in its own territory for national associations, that is, those which are directed by their founding purpose toward action in the whole nation; 3) the diocesan bishop in his own territory for diocesan associations, but not the diocesan administrator; however, those associations are excepted for whose erection the right has been reserved to others by apostolic privilege.

§2. The written consent of the diocesan bishop is required for the valid erection of an association or a branch of an association in a diocese, even if this is done in virtue of an apostolic privilege; however, the consent given by a diocesan bishop for the erection of a house of a religious institute also allows for the erection in the same house or church attached to it, of an association proper to the institute.

CIC 313. A public association as well as a confederation of public associations is constituted a juridic person by the decree by which it is erected by competent ecclesiastical authority in accord with the norm of can. 312; it also thereby receives a mission to pursue the ends which it proposes for itself in the name of the Church, to the extent that such a mission is required.

CIC 314. The statutes of any public association as well as their revision or change require the approval of the ecclesiastical authority which is competent to erect the association in accord with the norm of can. 312, §1.

CIC 315. Public associations on their own initiative can begin undertakings in keeping with their character, and they can direct them in accord with their statutes, but under the further direction of the ecclesiastical authority mentioned in can. 312, §1.

35. “Regional” refers to nations or a geographical territory of more than one province of the friars.

36. CIC 307 §1; 314

CIC 307. §1. The reception of members is to be done in accord with the norm of law and the statutes of each association.

CIC 314. [see footnote #34, p. 50.]

37. CIC 328-329. *Constitutions of the Discalced Carmelite Friars 103, Norms 56*

CIC 328. Those who preside over associations of the laity, even those associations erected in virtue of an apostolic privilege, are to see to it that they cooperate with other associations of the Christian faithful, where it is expedient, and willingly assist the various Christian works especially those in the same territory.

CIC 329. Moderators of associations of the laity are to see to it that the members of the association are duly formed for the exercise of the apostolate which is proper to the laity.

OCD Const. 103. In accordance with our Holy Mother St. Teresa's express wish, our apostolic mission in the Church obliges us to be available for the spiritual guidance and formation of the nuns of the Order. This should be a prime concern to all, and superiors, especially Major Superiors, should make adequate provision for this in an organized way within their respective jurisdictions.

We have a similar fraternal duty towards the members of our Secular Order, also towards those religious families who share in our life and spirit.

OCD Norm 56. In order to promote the apostolate to our Secular Order:

- (a) a Secular Order should be set up in every house wherever possible;
- (b) our religious should support the Secular Order with prayer and the example of a fervent life; they should foster vocations to it and offer to take on the spiritual care of the members;
- (c) special care should be used in training those members who are put in charge of the Secular Order;
- (d) in regions where there are several provinces of the Order, coordination of Secular Order activities should be promoted by the Provincial Superiors.

The care of the confraternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel must be counted among the apostolic works most consonant with the Order. Its members belong to one and the same family of the Blessed Mother as we do.

38. CIC 317

CIC 317. §1. Unless otherwise provided in the statutes, the ecclesiastical authority mentioned in can. 312, §1, has the right to confirm as moderator of a public association the person elected by the association or to install the one presented or to name the person by his own right; the same ecclesiastical authority also names the chaplain or ecclesiastical assistant, having heard the major officials of the association where this is expedient.

§2. The norm stated in §1 is also valid for associations erected outside their own churches or houses by members of religious institutes in virtue of apostolic privilege; however, in associations erected by members of religious institutes in their own church or house, the nomination or confirmation of the moderator and chaplain belongs to the superior of the institute, in accord with the statutes.

§3. In associations which are not clerical, lay persons can exercise the office of moderator; the chaplain or ecclesiastical assistant shall not assume that role unless the statutes provide otherwise.

§4. Those who exercise leadership in political parties are not to be moderators in public associations of the Christian faithful which are directly ordered to the exercise of the apostolate.

39. CIC 318

CIC 318. §1. In special circumstances where grave reasons require it the ecclesiastical authority mentioned in can. 312, §1, can designate a trustee who is to direct the association temporarily in the name of the authority.

§2. The one who named or confirmed the moderator of a public association can remove the moderator for a just cause, having heard both the moderator and the major officials of the association in accord with the norm of the statutes; however, the one who named the chaplain can remove him in accord with the norm of cann. 192-195.

40. CIC 308 and 316

CIC 308. No one who has been legitimately enrolled may be dismissed from an association except for a just cause in accord with the norm of law and the statutes.

CIC 316. §1. One who has publicly rejected the Catholic faith or abandoned ecclesiastical communion or been punished with an imposed or declared excommunication cannot be validly received into public associations.

§2. Those legitimately enrolled who fall into the situations mentioned in §1, are, after a warning, to be dismissed from the association, observing the association's statutes and reserving the right of recourse to the ecclesiastical authority mentioned in can. 312, §1.

41. CIC 312 §2

CIC 312 §2. [see footnote #34, p. 50].

42. CIC 309

CIC 309. Legitimately constituted associations have the right, in accord with the law and the statutes, to issue particular norms respecting the association itself, to hold meetings, to designate moderators, officials, other officers and administrators of goods.

43. CIC 319

CIC 319. §1. Unless other provision has been made, a legitimately erected public association administers the goods which it possesses in accord with the norm of its statutes under the higher direction of the ecclesiastical authority mentioned in can. 312, §1, to whom the association must render an account of the administration each year.

§2. The association must also render to the same ecclesiastical authority a faithful account of the disposition of offerings and alms which it collects.

44. & 45. CL 34

CL 34. *The Hour Has Come for a Re-evangelization* Whole countries and nations where religion and the Christian life were formerly flourishing and capable of fostering a viable and working community of faith are now put to a hard test, and in some cases are even undergoing a radical transformation as a result of a constant spreading of an indifference to religion, of secularism and atheism. This particularly concerns countries and nations of the so-called First World in which economic well-being and consumerism, even if coexistent with a tragic situation of poverty and misery, inspires and sustains a life lived “as if God did not exist.” This indifference to religion and the practice of religion devoid of true meaning in the face of life’s very serious problems are not less worrying and upsetting when compared with declared atheism. Sometimes the Christian faith as well, while maintaining some of the externals of its tradition and rituals, tends to be separated from those moments of human existence which have the most significance, such as, birth, suffering and death. In such cases, the questions and formidable enigmas posed by these situations, if remaining without responses, expose contemporary people to an inconsolable delusion or to the temptation of eliminating the truly humanizing dimension of life implicit in these problems.

On the other hand, in other regions or nations many vital traditions of piety and popular forms of Christian religion are still conserved; but today this moral and spiritual patrimony runs the risk of being dispersed under the impact of a multiplicity of processes, including secularization and the spread of sects. Only a re-evangelization can assure the growth of a clear and deep faith, and serve to make these traditions a force for authentic freedom.

Without doubt a mending of the Christian fabric of society is urgently needed in all parts of the world. But for this to come about what is needed is to *first remake the Christian fabric of the ecclesial community itself* present in these countries and nations.

At this moment the lay faithful, in virtue of their participation in the prophetic mission of Christ, are fully part of this work of the Church. Their responsibility, in particular, is to testify how the Christian faith constitutes the only fully valid response—consciously perceived and stated by all in varying degrees—to the problems and hopes that life poses to every person and society. This will be possible if the lay faithful will know how to overcome in themselves the separation of the Gospel from life, to again take up in their daily activities in family, work and society, an integrated approach to life that is fully brought about by the inspiration and strength of the Gospel.

To all people of today, I once again repeat the impassioned cry with which I began my pastoral ministry: “*Do not be afraid! Open, indeed, open wide the doors to Christ! Open to his saving power the confines of states, and systems political and economic, as well as the vast fields of culture, civilization, and development. Do not be afraid! Christ knows ‘what is inside a person.’ Only he knows! Today too often people do not know what they carry inside, in the deepest recesses of their soul, in their heart. Too often people are uncertain about a sense of life on earth. Invaded by doubts they are led into despair. Therefore—with humility and trust I beg and implore you—allow Christ to speak to the person in you. Only he has the words of life, yes, eternal life.*”

Opening wide the doors to Christ, accepting him into humanity itself poses absolutely no threat to persons, indeed it is the only road to take to arrive at the total truth and the exalted value of the human individual.

This vital synthesis will be achieved when the lay faithful know how to put the Gospel and their daily duties of life into a most shining and convincing testimony, where, not fear but the loving pursuit of Christ and adherence to him will be the factors determining how a person is to live and grow, and these will lead to new ways of living more in conformity with human dignity.

Humanity is loved by God! This very simple yet profound proclamation is owed to humanity by the Church. Each Christian's words and life must make this proclamation resound: God loves you, Christ came for you, Christ is for you “the Way, the Truth and the Life!” (Jn 14:6).

This re-evangelization is directed not only to individual persons but also to entire portions of populations in the variety of their situations, surroundings and cultures. Its purpose is the *formation of mature ecclesial communities* in which the faith might radiate and fulfill the basic meaning of adherence to the person of Christ and his Gospel, of an encounter and sacramental communion with him, and of an existence lived in charity and in service.

The lay faithful have their part to fulfill in the formation of these ecclesial communities, not only through an active and responsible participation in the life of the community, in other words, through a testimony that only they can give, but also through a missionary zeal and activity towards the many people who still do not believe and who no longer live the faith received at Baptism.

In the case of coming generations, the lay faithful must offer the very valuable contribution, more necessary than ever, of a *systematic work in catechesis*. The Synod Fathers have gratefully taken note of the work of catechists, acknowledging that they “have a task that carries great importance in animating ecclesial communities.” It goes without saying that Christian parents are the primary and irreplaceable catechists of their children, a task for which they are given the grace by the Sacrament of Matrimony. At the same time, however, we all ought to be aware of the “rights” that each baptized person has to being instructed, educated and supported in the faith and the Christian life.

46. & 47. LG 38

LG 38. Each individual layman must be a witness before the world to the resurrection and life of the Lord Jesus, and a sign of the living God. All together, and each one to the best of his ability, must nourish the world with spiritual fruits (cf. Gal 5:22). They must diffuse in the world the spirit which animates those poor, meek and peace-makers whom the Lord in the Gospel proclaimed blessed (cf. Mt 5:3-9). In a word: ‘what the soul is to the body, let Christians be to the world.’