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|  |  | *Fundamental* |
| *Theology* |
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“. . . “fundamental theology” as commonly understood within Roman Catholic theology refer[s] to the introductory tract that treats the nature, possibility, and existence of revelation. In some versions, it also includes an analysis of the nature of Christian faith and a treatment of the nature, method, and sources of theology.”

(Fiorenza, F.S. “Foundational Theology.” *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. 2nd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2003. 5.827-31. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*. University of St Thomas. Web. 25 Nov. 2009.)

# Revelation and Faith

## Revelation

### Natural Revelation

1. **natural and supernatural theology**
   1. In natural theology, “reflection arises from the world and reaches up . . . to the ultimate principle, transcendent and personal, which explains the universe.” (Latourelle 12)
   2. In supernatural theology, the “point of departure is the living God,” who condescends to reveal himself. (Latourelle 12)
   3. This handout deals only with natural theology.
2. **creation**
   1. “When he [God] broke through his own transcendence to create a reality distinct from himself, this was an act of grace, . . . an act of love and mercy.” (Schmaus ix)
   2. “The continuing creative activity whereby God constantly sets in motion the causes immanent in the world [and] guides the world to its ultimate fulfillment manifests the continuance of his grace.” (Schmaus ix)
   3. (Ordinarily in theology, however, “grace” is used only of God’s interventions in human souls.)
3. **the doctrine**
   1. “Even in the fallen state, man can, by his natural intellectual power, know religious and moral truths. (*de fide*)” (Ott 233)
   2. restatements
      1. “. . . man can know God by the sole light of reason.” (Ott 234)
      2. “. . . man’s natural powers were not destroyed in the Fall . . ., although they were weakened by the loss of the preternatural gifts.” (Ott 233)
4. **scripture**
   1. Wis 13:1-9, “For all people who were ignorant of God were foolish by nature; and they were unable from the good things that are seen to know the one who exists, nor did they recognize the artisan while paying heed to his works . . . 5For from the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator. . . . 8not even they are to be excused; 9for if they had the power to know so much that they could investigate the world, how did they fail to find sooner the Lord of these things?”
   2. Rom 1:19-20, “what can be known about God is plain to them [wicked people], because God has shown it to them. 20Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made.”
5. **doctrinal declarations**
   1. Vatican I
      1. Vatican I (dogmatic constitution *Dei Filius* [24 Apr. 1870] ch. 2 § 1): God “can be known with certainty from the consideration of created things, by the natural power of human reason: ever since the creation of the world, his invisible nature has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made.” (Tanner)
      2. Vatican I (dogmatic constitution *Dei Filius* ch. 4 § 4): “reason, does indeed when it seeks persistently, piously and soberly, achieve by God’s gift some understanding, and that most profitable, of the mysteries, whether by analogy from what it knows naturally, or from the connexion of these mysteries with one another and with the final end of humanity . . .” (Tanner)
      3. Vatican I (dogmatic constitution *Dei Filius* canon 1 on ch. 2): God “can . . . be known with certainty from the things that have been made, by the natural light of human reason . . .”
   2. Pius X (“Oath Against the Errors of Modernism,” from the motu proprio *Sacrorum antistitum* [1910]): “I profess that God, the beginning and end of all things, can be certainly known and thus can also be demonstrated by the natural light of reason “by the things that are made” [Rom 1:20], that is, by the visible works of creation, as the cause by the effects.”
   3. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum*)
      1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 3): God “gives men an enduring witness to Himself in created realities (see Rom. 1:­19‑20).”
      2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 6): God “can be known with certainty from created reality by the light of human reason (see Rom. 1:20) . . .”
      3. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 6): but “it is through His revelation that those religious truths . . . accessible to human reason can be known by all men with ease . . .”
      4. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 6): God also “chose to share with [men] those divine treasures which totally transcend the understanding of the human mind.”
6. **limits of natural capability**
   1. “In the state of fallen nature it is morally impossible for man without Supernatural Revelation, to know easily, with absolute certainty and without admixture of error, all religious and moral truths of the natural order.” [*de fide*] (Ott 235)
   2. doctrinal declarations: Vatican I (dogmatic constitution *The Catholic Faith*, 1870): “it must be attributed to this divine revelation that those things, which in divine things are impenetrable to human reason by itself, can, even in this present condition of the human race, be known readily by all with firm certitude and with no admixture of error. Nevertheless, it is not for this reason that revelation is said to be absolutely necessary, but because God in His infinite goodness has ordained man for a supernatural end, to participation, namely, in the divine goods which altogether surpass the understanding of the human mind . . .” (Denzinger § 1786)
   3. speculation
      1. “. . . without supernatural Revelation, in point of fact only few men achieve a perfect knowledge of God and of the natural moral law . . .” (Ott 235)
      2. “The reason . . . lies in the “wound of ignorance” . . . caused by the Fall, that is in the weakening of man’s power of cognition.” (Ott 235)

### “Old” and “New” Testaments

One finds in the Old Testament instances where God formed a cov­en­ant (ברת, *berith*, “treaty” or “agree­ment”) with human beings. There were agreements between God and individuals: Adam (Gen 2:16-17), Noah (Gen 9:4-14), Abraham (Gen 15:13-16, 17:10), Levi (Jer 33:17-22), and David (2 Sam 7:5-17; Pss 89, 132). But the most important covenant was between God and the people of Israel, through the mediation of Moses (Exod 19:24, 31:12-13). In this covenant God gave the Israelites 613 laws to obey; these laws are now in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, and they are known as the Mosaic Law.

The covenant between God and the Israelites was ratified in a covenant ceremony (Exod 24:1-8). After Moses obtained blood from sacrificed animals, “half of the blood he threw against the altar [and half] upon the people, and said, ‘Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you . . .’”

The Mosaic covenant was c. 1220 bc. Jeremiah, a prophet who wrote c. 600 bc, prophecies a future covenant to replace the Mosaic one. Jer 31:31-33 says, “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers . . . [But] I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

Jesus picked up on this theme of the new covenant c. ad 30. At the institution of the Eucharist during the Last Supper, he spoke of “the blood of the cov­en­ant” (Matt 26:28, Mark 14:24) or of “the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:20, 1 Cor 11:25). Just as blood had sealed the Mosaic covenant between God and the Israelites, so Jesus’ blood is to seal the new covenant between God and the Church. Paul, too, refers to a new covenant on several occasions. In addition to 1 Cor 11:25 just mentioned, in 2 Cor 3:6 he refers to “a new covenant, not in a written code but in the spirit . . .” In 2 Cor 3:14 he says that when the Jews read “the old cov­en­ant,” a veil covers their understanding. (See also Gal 3:15-17, 4:22-28). But the most explicit contrast of the old cov­en­ant under Moses to the new covenant under Christ occurs in the Letter to the Hebrews. Heb 4:17 says that “Jesus [is] the surety of a better covenant”; and Heb 9:15-16 des­cribes Jesus as “the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the pro­mised eternal inheri­tance, since a death has oc­curred which redeems them from the trans­gressions under the first covenant . . .”

The Hebrew for “covenant” (*berith*) was translated into Greek as διαθήκη (*diathēkē*), which meant “covenant” but also “last will,” a written document expressing one’s wishes for the disposition of property after death. Latin Bibles translated διαθήκη with *testamentum*, which also meant both “covenant” and “last will.” English originally used “testament” in both senses, but unfortunately “testament” has since come to mean only “last will” (as in “last will and testament”). “Old Testament” and “New Testament” actually mean “Old Covenant” and “New Cov­en­ant,” but it is too late now to change the terms.

Originally, then, “old covenant” and “new covenant” referred to two rela­tionships with God, the former based on the Law and the latter based on grace. (Jeremiah predicted that in the new covenant, God would “put [his] law within them [and] write it upon their hearts”; and New Testament writers constantly describe the new relationship in terms of “grace” [e.g., Rom 6:13-14, “you are not under law but under grace”].) But Christians very quickly transferred the term “old covenant” from the relationship with God based on the Law to the set of books concerned with that way of relating. Already in 2 Cor 3:14, Paul says that when the Jews *read* “the old cov­en­ant,” a veil covers their understanding. Probably around ad 150-200, when the New Testament writ­ings were being collected, the con­cept “new cov­en­ant” was trans­ferred from the new way of relating to God to the set of books describing that way of relating.

### “A Plan for the Fullness of Time”: Ephesians 1:1-14

**1** 1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heav­enly places,

4 just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love.

5 He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ,

according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the for­giveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace 8 that he lavished on us.

With all wisdom and insight

9 he has made known to us the mystery of his will,

according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ,

10 as a plan for the fullness of time,

to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

11 In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance,

having been destined

according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will,

12 so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ,

might live for the praise of his glory.

13 In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit;

14 this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God’s own people,

to the praise of his glory.

——————————————————————————

9: “the mystery of his will”

10: “a plan for the fullness of time”

5: “according to the good pleasure of his will”

8: “With all wisdom and insight”

9: “according to his good pleasure”

11: “according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will”

4: “he chose us *in Christ* before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love”

5: “He destined us for adoption as his children *through Jesus Christ*”

11: “we [were] destined”

9: “he has made known to us the mystery of his will . . . that he set forth *in Christ*”

6: “his glorious grace . . . he freely bestowed on us *in the Beloved*”

7-8: “his grace 8. . . he lavished on us”

7: “*In him* we have redemption through his blood, the for­giveness of our trespasses”

3: “God . . . has blessed us *in Christ* with every spiritual blessing in the heav­enly places”

12: “so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory”

13: “*In him* you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit”

11: “*In Christ* we have also obtained an inheritance”

13-14: “the seal of the promised Holy Spirit 14is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God’s own people”

10: “a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things *in him*, things in heaven and things on earth”

### Some Other Scriptural Texts on Revelation

These are mentioned in *Dei Verbum* § 2 or note 2.

Bar 3:37, “Afterward she [Wisdom] appeared on earth and lived with humankind.”

Matt 11:27, “All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

John 1:14, “And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.”

John 1:17, “The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”

John 14:6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

John 17:13, “But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.”

2 Cor 3:16, “but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.”

2 Cor 4:6, “For it is the God who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

Eph 2:17 So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off [Gentiles] and peace to those who were near [Jews]; 18for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father.”

2 Pet 1:4, “he has given us . . . his precious and very great promises, so that through them you . . . may become participants of the divine nature.”

### Revelation in Scripture According to *Dei Verbum*

1. **Old Testament**
   1. Vatican II (dogmatic constitution *On Divine Revelation* [*Dei Verbum*, 18 Nov. 1965] § 14): in “preparing the salvation of the whole human race,” God chose “a people to whom He would entrust His promises.”
   2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 14): “The plan of salvation foretold by the sacred authors, recounted and explained by them, is found as the true word of God in the books of the Old Testament: these books, therefore, written under divine inspiration, remain permanently valuable.”
   3. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 15): “The principal purpose to which the plan of the old covenant was directed was
      1. “to prepare for the coming of Christ . . .
      2. “to announce this coming by prophecy . . ., and
      3. “to indicate its meaning through various types.”
         1. 1 Cor 10:11, “These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come.”
   4. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 15): the Old Testament books “give expression to a lively sense of God [and] contain a store of sublime teachings about God, sound wisdom about human life, and a won­derful treasury of prayers . . .” (ch. 4 art. 15)
   5. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 16): God “arranged that the New Testament be hidden in the Old and the Old be made manifest in the New [Augustine, *Questions on the Heptateuch* [*Questiones in Heptateuchum* [419/420] 2.73]. For, though Christ estab­lished the new covenant in His blood, still the books of the Old Testament with all their parts, caught up into the proclamation of the Gospel, acquire and show forth their full meaning in the New Testament . . . and in turn shed light on it and explain it.”
2. **New Testament**
   1. gospels
      1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 18): “among all the Scriptures, even those of the New Testament, the Gospels have a special preeminence . . .”
      2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 25): “It devolves on sacred bishops . . . to give the faithful entrusted to them suitable in­struc­tion in the right use of the divine books, especially the New Testament and above all the Gospels.”
      3. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 18): the gospels “are of apostolic origin. For what the Apostles preached [they] and apostolic men, under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, handed on to us in writing: the foundation of faith, namely, the fourfold Gospel . . .”
      4. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 19): the gospels, “whose historical character the Church unhesitatingly asserts, faithfully hand on what Jesus Christ, while living among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation . . .”
      5. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 19): “the Apostles handed on to their hearers what He had said and done. This they did with that clearer understanding which they enjoyed after they had been . . . taught by the light of the Spirit of truth [John 2:22, 7:39, 12:16, 14:26, 16:12‑13]. The sacred authors wrote the four Gospels, selecting some things from the many which had been handed on by word of mouth or in writing, reducing some of them to a synthesis, explaining some things in view of the situation of their chur­ches and preserving the form of proclamation but always in such fashion that they told us the honest truth about Jesus . . . [see Luke 1:2‑4].”
   2. other writings
      1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 20): “the New Testament also contains the epistles of St. Paul and other apostolic writings . . .” (ch. 5 art. 20)

### Revelation I

1. **introduction**
   1. “. . . the ultimate revelation of God, his self-revelation to mankind, is Jesus Christ, the Word of God made man.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 12)
   2. Vatican II’s “realities which have been handed down” (*Dei Verbum* § 8) are “not a series of propositions, but God’s self-revelation in his Word, Jesus Christ: the total Christ-event, as witnessed by the apostles.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 18)
2. “**authorized witnesses**” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 30)
   1. In revealed religion, “the ultimate authority is God the Revealer, and the absolute truth of his Word. The role of any human mediator, whether prophet, apostle, bishop or theologian, is to help others to know what God has said, and what his Word means here and now. Once the hearers recognise the message to be truly a Word of God, (and in this recognition the interior witness of the Spirit has its part to play), their act of faith is directed not to the human bearer of the message, but to the Word itself, and to God who has spoken it. The motive of the act of faith is not the reliability of the human messenger, but the truth of the Word itself as Word of God.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 29)
   2. “However, for the act of faith to be a reasonable decision, and not a rash leap in the dark, the hearers of the message need to be sufficiently certain that what is proposed to them as revealed truth is actually God’s Word.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 29)
      1. “The interior witness of the Spirit will help them to discern the presence of God’s Word, but this is usually not sufficient by itself.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 29)
      2. “It is the history of public revelation that only a few people have been chosen to be its direct recipients; all others have to rely on the testimony of witnesses to it.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 30)
      3. “The hearers have to be convinced of the reliability of the one who tells [29] them that this is what God has said.” (Sullivan Magisterium 29-30)
      4. “The reliability or trustworthiness of the witness to God’s Word, while not the motive of the act of faith, is important as providing reasonable certitude that God really has spoken this Word.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 30)
   3. “All Christians agree that the apostles, and the ‘apostolic men’ who were the authors of the New Testament, were chosen by God as authorised witnesses to the Christ-event. By their witness to Christ they gathered disciples who accepted their testimony ‘not as the word of men but as what it really is, the Word of God’ (1 Thess 2:13). Those who received this Word ‘devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching’ (Acts 2:42). The teaching of the apostles was recognised as normative for the faith of the Christian community, for they were the authoritative witnesses to what God had revealed in his Son Jesus Christ.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 30)

### Revelation II

1. **introduction**
   1. Revelation “comes to us under the form of events which intervene in the course of human history and make up the history of salvation.” (Latourelle 25)
   2. “. . . the ultimate revelation of God, his self-revelation to mankind, is Jesus Christ, the Word of God made man.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 12)
   3. Vatican II’s “realities which have been handed down” (*Dei Verbum* § 8) are “not a series of propositions, but God’s self-revelation in his Word, Jesus Christ: the total Christ-event, as witnessed by the apostles.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 18)
2. **dual nature of revelation**
   1. Vatican II (*Dei verbum* § 2): “In His goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will by which through Christ, the Word made flesh, man might in the Holy Spirit have access to the Father and come to share in the divine nature. Through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God out of the abundance of His love speaks to men as friends and lives among them, so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself.”
   2. Vatican II (*Dei verbum* § 2): “This plan of revelation is realized by deeds and words having an inner unity: the deeds wrought by God in the history of salvation manifest and confirm the teaching and realities signified by the words, while the words proclaim the deeds and clarify the mystery contained in them. By this revelation then, the deepest truth about God and the salvation of man shines out for our sake in Christ, who is both the mediator and the fullness of all revelation.”
   3. Revelation is “at the same time a manifestation [3] and communication of God . . .” (Latourelle 3-4)
      1. manifestation
         1. Revelation “accomplishes the designs of God in human history . . .” (Latourelle 4)
         2. “. . . the word of God . . . accomplishes what it signifies; it changes the situation of humanity; the life which it announces it also brings to pass. The revelation of God is an active word, efficacious and creative.” (Latourelle 4) Heb 4:12, “the word of God is living and active . . .”
      2. communication
         1. It is “a *message* [to] illuminate the hidden meaning of the saving events.” (Latourelle 4)
         2. It is “translated into human terms on the lips of the prophets and of Christ . . .” (Latourelle 4)
3. characteristics of revelation
   1. “When God reveals himself to man he does so in a way proportionate to his condition as being in time and space, a being both individual and social, composed of both body and spirit. Consequently, revelation has certain markedly specific characteristics . . .” (Latour­elle 4)
   2. universal destination: “It is addressed to the whole of humanity.” (Latourelle 4)
      1. Matt 28:19, “make disciples of all nations . . .”
      2. Mark 16:15, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.”
   3. public
      1. “It is not a secret confided to each individual in the depth of his heart to be hidden there, but good news, destined to be transmitted and proclaimed in the public square.” (Latourelle 4)
         1. Matt 10:27, “What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops.”
         2. Acts 2:14, “Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say.”” (There follows Peter’s Pentecost sermon.)
         3. Rom 10:14-17, “how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? 15And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” . . . 17So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.”
      2. communal
         1. “Revelation impinges upon individual persons not as isolated units closed [4] against one another but as members of the same body, in order that men may be aware of their communion with one another in revelation, as in faith and glory. It is made to men in order to make of them . . . the Church.” (Latourelle 4-5)
   4. progressive
      1. Humanity’s “being unfolds progressively in space and time. . . . God communicates with him through his senses and through history. From the very beginning of the world revelation has developed in quality and quantity through the centuries, maturing little by little as it makes man more mature, in order to prepare him for the fullness of time in Christ.” (Latourelle 5)
      2. Heb 1:1-2, “Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, 2but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.”
   5. accommodated to human understanding
      1. “In God, revelation is a mystery [5] of unity: unity of object, unity of operation, unity of structure. . . . but our manner of conceiving and expressing this mystery is . . . imperfect.” (Latourelle 5-6)
      2. “The human mind receives its object through the *senses*; that is why revelation is made to us by means of images, symbols, parables . . .” (Latourelle 6)
      3. “The human mind is *limited*; and so it is in the multiplicity of mysteries and enunciations that we become aware of the unique mystery, the mystery of the divine life.” (Latourelle 6)
      4. “The process of man’s mind is *discursive*; that is why we go from a general understanding to an understanding more precise and more profound . . .” (Latourelle 6)
   6. correlated with faith
      1. “Through revelation God opens himself to man in a disclosure of love and invites him to an exchange of friendship. Through faith man responds to God’s initiative . . .” (Latourelle 4)
   7. mediated
      1. “It is not made immediately to each person, but through the mediation of privileged witnesses chosen by God, the prophets and the apostles . . .” (Latourelle 5)

### Theology of Revelation

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2. **introduction**
   1. definition
      1. “[“Revelation”] is derived from the Latin *revelare*, meaning to unveil or disclose.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 193)
      2. common usage
         1. “. . . revelation means a sudden and unexpected receipt of knowledge of a profoundly significant character, especially that which gives the recipient a new outlook on life and the world.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 193)
         2. “It frequently designates the free action whereby one person confides his inner thoughts and sentiments to another, enabling the latter to enter into his spiritual world.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 193)
      3. theological usage
         1. natural revelation
            1. “Some authors use the term in a wider sense to include “natural” or “general” revelation, that is, the knowledge of divine things that God imparts through nature and conscience.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 193)
            2. “This usage has the advantage of making it clear that all man’s knowledge of God depends on God’s free initiative.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 193)
         2. supernatural revelation
            1. Revelation is “the action by which God communicates to creatures a participation in His own knowledge, including His intimate self-knowledge. Such a communication is supernatural since it transcends all that a creature could discover by its native powers.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 193)
            2. “. . . to avoid repeating what is said elsewhere [“Theology, Natural”], [this article speaks] only of supernatural revelation.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 193)
   2. organization of this article
      1. “The Christian view [of revelation] emerges from a concrete consideration as presented in Scripture and tradition . . .” This article therefore presupposes “the biblical idea of revelation . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
      2. “. . . this article first surveys the main statements of the Catholic magisterium and then sketches a general theory of revelation as understood in modern Catholic theology.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
3. **history of Church pronouncements on revelation**
   1. ad 30-1000
      1. “Until recent centuries the existence and knowability of revelation were taken for granted by Christians; little was therefore said concerning revelation as such.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
   2. ad 1000-1500
      1. “Church decisions were concerned . . . with specifying the contents of revelation in answer to particular heresies.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
      2. “In the Middle Ages it was repeatedly declared against Manichaean denials that the same God had spoken in the Old Testament and in the New Testament [DS 685, 790, 854].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
      3. Lateran IV (ad 1215) (DS 800-01): God gave his “salutary doctrine . . . through Moses and the holy Prophets and His other servants, according to a most orderly disposition of times, [until] the only-begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ . . . more evidently disclosed the way of life.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
   3. Trent
      1. Trent (*Decree Concerning the Canonical Scriptures*, 8 Apr. 1546, second sentence [DS 1501]): “Jesus Christ, the Son of God, first proclaimed with his own lips this gospel, which had in the past been promised by the prophets in the sacred scriptures; then he bade it be preached to every creature through his apostles as the source [*fontem*] of the whole truth of salvation and rule of conduct. The council clearly perceives that this truth and rule are contained in written books and in unwritten traditions which were received by the apostles [1] from the mouth of Christ himself, or else have come down to us, handed on as it were [2] from the apostles themselves at the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
   4. 1800s
      1. See the related *New Catholic Encyclopedia* second-edition articles, “Fideism,” “Rationalism,” “Agnosticism,” “Semirationalism.”
      2. “. . . fundamental errors concerning revelation and faith were condemned.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
      3. Fideists “were censured for their view that faith was not solidly supported by the evidences of credibility . . .” (DS 2751-56, 2765-69) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
      4. Rationalists were condemned for denying the possibility of revelation. (DS 2901-07) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
      5. Agnostics were reprobated for denying . . . [the] knowability of revelation . . .” (DS 2901-07) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
      6. Semirationalists were condemned for saying “that once human reason had developed to full maturity all the Christian dogmas could be established by human science and philosophy, without appeal to authority . . .” (DS 2856, 2909) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
      7. Vatican I
         1. Vatican I (DS 3004, 3015) “canonized the doctrine that human knowledge is of two distinct orders: natural knowledge—reason—and supernatural knowledge—revelation.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
         2. “Although human reason is able to attain some knowledge of God by its natural light, God has graciously consented to reveal Himself and His eternal decrees in a supernatural way [DS 3004].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
         3. “. . . revelation has a twofold aim [DS 3005].” (See “Destiny, Supernatural.”) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
            1. “First, it permits the most important naturally knowable truths of religion to be grasped by all, with full certitude, and without admixture of error.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
            2. “Secondly, it enables man as an intelligent creature to orient himself to the supernatural end for which God has destined him.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
         4. “If man had a merely natural destiny, revelation would be only morally necessary, but in view of man’s gratuitous call to the intuitive vision of God, revelation is absolutely necessary for salvation [DS 3015].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
         5. Revelation “contains not only truths that human reason could discover by its own efforts, but also . . . divine mysteries that could by no means be grasped without revelation [DS 3041]. These mysteries, even after their revelation, remain so hidden in God that man can apprehend them only obscurely in this life [DS 3016].” (See “Mystery [in Theology].”) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
         6. “Vatican I dealt with the relations between revelation and reason.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
            1. apologetics

Reason “can discern no absurdity in the fact or contents of Christian revelation [DS 3017, 3027].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)

Reason “can establish the reasonableness of believing, thanks to the abundant signs of credibility, notably miracles and prophecies [3009, 3014, 3019, 3033].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)

* + - * 1. theology

“Once the act of faith has been made, reason can ponder fruitfully on the data of revelation. If this meditation is made with due diligence, piety, and modesty, reason can achieve a very profitable, though limited, understanding of mysteries themselves [DS 3016].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)

“Such an understanding can arise from comparing the revealed mysteries with one another, with man’s last end, and with things naturally known [DS 3016].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)

* 1. 1900s
     1. Modernism
        1. “The Modernist heresy at the opening of the twentieth century gave occasion for further clarifications.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194)
        2. “The Roman magisterium declared that revelation is not a mere emotion or sentiment welling up from the depths of the subconscious; it has a definite intellectual content accepted not on the basis of intrinsic evidence, but on the authority of the revealing God [DS 3542]. Such acceptance is commended by the external signs of credibility, especially miracles and prophecies, which have not lost their efficacy for the modern mind [DS 3539]. Revelation, moreover, was complete in apostolic times [DS 3421]. The Dogmas of the Church are revealed truths [DS 3422]; they do not evolve in the course of time into [194] dogmas having another sense [DS 3541].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 194-95)
     2. “Vatican II devoted an entire dogmatic constitution, *Dei Verbum*, to the subject of revelation. The doctrine of that council will be closely followed in the exposition that follows.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)

1. **Protestant theological reflection**
   1. “Modern Protestant scholarship has given added impetus to the study of revelation.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
      1. “Biblical scholars such as C.H. Dodd, Oscar Cullmann, and Alan Richardson have called attention to the historical dimension of revelation, as witnessed by the mighty deeds of God recounted in Scripture.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
      2. “Dialectical theologians such as Karl Barth and Emil Brunner have stressed the mysterious attributes of God’s word to man, which cannot be fully captured in human concepts and language.” (See “Dialectical Theology.”) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
      3. “Existential theologians such as Rudolf Bultmann and Paul Tillich have pointed out the value of revelation in liberating man from the anxieties and pettiness of ordinary existence.” (See “Existential Theology.”) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
   2. “. . . recent Protestant theology tends to look on revelation primarily as event and experience.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
2. **Catholic theological reflection**
   1. “Catholic theologians, without ignoring [event and experience], are more concerned with safeguarding the doctrinal and transmissible features, as accentuated in the documents of the Church.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
   2. “The contemporary theologian will find valuable elements for a theory of revelation in the Greek Fathers and in St. Augustine.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
   3. “Among the scholastic doctors St. Thomas Aquinas has contributed most importantly to the field in his treatises on faith and prophecy [*ST* 2-2.1-16, 171-78].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
3. **objective aspects of revelation**
   1. “The Judeo-Christian revelation . . . is the noetic component of God’s total work of redemption. Through revelation man becomes a sharer in the knowledge proper to God, inchoatively on earth, definitively in the life after death. Revelation therefore introduces man into the blessedness of God’s own life.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
   2. objective aspect
      1. “. . . the divine message comes from without through a definite intervention of God in history.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
   3. subjective aspect
      1. “If he is to view reality, as it were, through God’s eyes, man’s mental horizons must be enlarged; otherwise he would reduce God’s message to purely human perspectives. Therefore, revelation has a subjective aspect, consisting in the inner transformation of man’s apprehensive faculties.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
   4. The objective aspect is “more explicitly treated under the headings of grace and faith. We shall therefore focus primary attention on the objective side, considering first the process by which revelation comes to man and then the inner structure of the revealed datum.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
4. **process of revelation**
   1. “Two phases may be distinguished—the original communication of God’s message to man and its subsequent transmission.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
   2. immediate revelation
      1. See the related articles in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed.: “Prophecy (Theology of)”; “Apostle.”
      2. “. . . immediate revelation was given in biblical times to the Prophets and Apostles . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
      3. prophets
         1. “The prophetic experience sometimes involved external sensation, dreams, visions, imaginary words, and even the direct infusion of new ideas, but none of these elements . . . is essential.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
         2. According to Aquinas (*ST* 2-2.173.2; *CG* 3.154), “The primary and indispensable element is the illumination of the Prophet’s understanding, giving him a divine insight into the meaning of what is presented to his mind.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
      4. apostles
         1. “The Apostles received revelation through the spoken words of Christ, in the context of His conduct.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
         2. “But in order for these words to take on the value of revelation, the recipients had to be inwardly attracted and enlightened by grace.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
            1. Matt 16:17, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.”
            2. John 6:64, ““among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. . . . 66Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.”
         3. “Some of the Apostles were later favored by ecstatic experiences . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
            1. Acts 9:3-19, “as he [Paul] was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” 5He asked, “Who are you, Lord?” The reply came, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 6But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” 7The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. 8Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. . . . 10Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, . . . 11“Get up and go to . . . Saul. At this moment he is praying, 12and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight. . . . 15he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel . . .””
            2. Acts 10:9-35, “Peter went up on the roof to pray. 10He became hungry and wanted something to eat; and while it was being prepared, he fell into a trance. 11He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. 12In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air. 13Then he heard a voice saying, “Get up, Peter; kill and eat.” 14But Peter said, “By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean.” 15The voice said to him again, a second time, “What God has made clean, you must not call profane.” 16This happened three times, and the thing was suddenly taken up to heaven. . . . 34Then Peter began to speak to them: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, 35but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.”
            3. 2 Cor 12:1, “. . . I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord.”
            4. “. . . but such experiences are not constitutive of apostleship as such . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
         4. Apostleship “depends rather on personal association with the risen Lord and on a special commission from Him.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
      5. words and deeds
         1. “The word of God, in its full biblical sense, includes God’s revelatory deeds. The early books of the Bible describe numerous theophanies (e.g., the burning bush, the pillar of fire) in which God visibly manifests His presence. The whole Bible bears witness to the salvific and punitive actions by which God intervenes in history. These deeds have value not simply as confirmatory signs, bearing out the Prophets’ declarations, but also as significant gestures. They are themselves revelatory, at least when accompanied by the commentary of prophetic interpretation. Words and deeds are closely interconnected; only in their mutual union do they constitute the full event of revelation. In the words of Vatican II, “the deeds wrought by God in the history of salvation manifest and confirm the teaching and realities signified by the words, while the words proclaim the deeds and clarify the mystery contained in them” [*Dei Verbum* § 2].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
         2. Nevertheless, “According to the Bible, revelation comes primarily through the word of God.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
            1. “The word may be spoken or written symbol . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
            2. “. . . or it may be an interior utterance whereby God articulates His message in the consciousness of the recipient.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
         3. “But the word of God, in Hebrew thinking, is not merely a vehicle of knowledge. Besides being noetic, it is dynamic: it effects what it signifies . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195)
            1. Isa 55:11, “my word . . . goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”
            2. Heb 4:12, “the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”
         4. “Even human words, as understood in modern speech-theory, are not devoid of efficacy. When one person addresses another or opens up his heart to him, the other becomes personally involved. If he responds appropriately in faith and trust, a new interpersonal relationship [195] is established.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 195-96)
         5. “God’s revelatory word opens up to the believer a salutary communion with God and with his fellow believers.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
            1. “St. John of the Cross, in his *Ascent of Mount Carmel* (2.31), connects the sanctifying power of God’s word with its dynamic efficacy.” (Peers, E. Allison, ed. *The Complete Works of St*. *John of the Cross*. 3 vols. London: Burns, Oates, and Washbourne, 1934-35. 1: 218-19.) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
   3. mediate revelation
      1. preaching
         1. See the related article in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed.: “Preaching III (Theology of).”
         2. “The Prophets and Apostles received revelation not for their own sake but for the people of God. They were conscious of a divine mandate to hand on the message faithfully. This they did primarily through their preaching . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
         3. “The Fathers (Augustine, Gregory the Great) and St. Thomas [*De veritate* 27.3 ad 12] look upon Christian preachers as instruments or disposing causes in the transmission of revelation. Their human words became revelatory when the grace of God fecundates the minds of their hearers.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
         4. “. . . authorized preaching in the Church continues to be a vehicle of revelation. Like the original divine word, the preached word is charged with mysterious power. Besides its objective reality, it has a spiritual dimension which gives it value as God’s word.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
      2. scripture
         1. “The inspired words of Scripture likewise convey revelation. Not all the biblical writers were immediate recipients of revelation. Some of them merely wrote down what they had learned from ordinary experience or from the testimony of others. Many statements in the Bible, taken in themselves, are merely secular pieces of information, and in that sense not revelation. But the entire Bible, according to Catholic faith, was composed under a divine impulse (or charism) known as inspiration. Therefore it constitutes a divinely guaranteed objectification of the religious consciousness of God’s people in its supernaturally guided existence, lived out under the impact of progressive revelation. In this sense, the whole Bible is revelatory.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
         2. “Some theologians hold that the Bible, like the preached word, has quasi-sacramental value; that is, that one who reads or hears it under favorable circumstances receives grace to enter into a new relationship with God in faith. The Bible becomes in fullest actuality the word of God when it is being read in a spirit of faith.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
      3. actions
         1. “The same combination of word and deed already noted in the original communication of revelation is characteristic of its further transmission. The Prophets often preach by dramatic actions.” (E.g.: Isa 20; Jer 27; Hos 1.2-9.) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
         2. “So too, in the Church the Christian revelation is transmitted not only by spoken and written sentences but by the liturgy and by the whole conduct of Christians, which reflects the teaching of Christ and visibly incarnates His grace at definite points of space and time.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
5. **stages of revelation**
   1. “The Judeo-Christian revelation was given progressively in the course of centuries. St. Thomas [*ST* 2-2.174.6] distinguishes three great periods of sacred history—before the Mosaic law, under the law, and under grace; these he connects with the great revelations made respectively to Abraham, Moses, and the Apostles.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
   2. “The revelation was from its inception public; it was addressed not simply to individuals but to a whole people.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
   3. Old Testament
      1. “The Israelite revelation in the Old Testament period was particular, being directed to a single nation, rather than, like Christianity, to all mankind. Moreover, it was preparatory for it pointed forward to a later fulfillment. From a Christian point of view, the Old Testament revelation appears as totally ordered toward Christ and the Church by way of type and prophecy. Christ Himself is depicted in the New Testament in terms borrowed from the Old Testament. He is the second Adam, the new Moses, the Son of David, the Messiah, the Servant, Son of Man, Son of God. Jesus Himself declares that the great personages of the Old Testament looked forward to His coming.” (Matt 13:16-17; John 5.45, 8.56) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
   4. Christ
      1. “Vatican II stated that Christ is “the Mediator and at the same time the fullness of all revelation” [*Dei Verbum* § 2]. This full revelation is present in Christ not only objectively but subjectively. Revelation should not be thought of as merely objective, existing outside of human minds. At its most perfect, it exists in the human intellect of Christ, which grasps the divine as fully as a finite mind can grasp it. Because Jesus as man was totally receptive to God’s word and perfectly faithful to His vocation as witness, He gave supreme expression to God’s message for mankind. And this He did by both words and deeds. “Because Christ Himself is the Word of God, the very deed of the Word is a word to us” [Augustine, *In evang*. *Ioh*. 24.2 (*Corpus Christianorum*. *Series latina* 36:244)].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 196)
      2. “Through the teaching and life of Christ—including His Passion and glorification—God communicates in an unsurpassable way His message of pardon and reconciliation, manifesting His eternal attributes and freely chosen attitudes toward man. When it is said that the deposit of faith was closed with the Apostles, this does not have the merely negative meaning that God decides to say nothing more. It has a positive aspect inasmuch as God has so completely expressed Himself in the Christ-event that any real addition would be superfluous. . . . Christians await no further public revelation within history [*Dei Verbum* § 4] . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
   5. theology
      1. “Whatever comes later has no function except to illumine the meaning of what Christ said and did and was. . . . [But] much remains to be done by way of clarification. To penetrate more deeply the meaning of the deposit is the ceaseless task of theologians and of the Church . . .” (See DS 3020, which quotes St. Vincent of Lerins.) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
      2. “But since mystery is the very heart of revelation, theological understanding does not aim to remove the essential obscurity of faith or render the revealed datum evident to reason. So long as man remains on earth, he must be content to walk by faith, reverently inclining his mind and will before the Word of God. At the end of time, faith will issue into vision, and the revelation will be clearly perceived by the help of the light of glory.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
6. **contents of revelation**
   1. Vatican I (DS 3004): the contents are “God Himself and the eternal decrees of His will.” (Qtd. in Dulles, “Revelation, Theology” 197)
   2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 2): “God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will.” (Qtd. in Dulles, “Revelation, Theology” 197)
   3. recital theology and dogmatic theology
      1. “The mighty deeds of God are the central theme of the confessions of faith found in the Old Testament [e.g., Deut 7, 26] and in the earliest Christian preaching [e.g., Acts 2, 10]. The focal message of the Old Testament is the liberation of Israel from the slavery of Egypt through Moses; that of the New Testament, the deliverance of mankind from the death of sin through Jesus Christ.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
      2. “In the course of centuries, this “recital theology” was gradually supplemented by more abstract, ontological formulas, as needed to settle questions that came up at a later stage of reflection. The successive creeds and dogmatic declarations of the Church exhibit this trend. The intelligible content of the Church’s dogmas, according to the Catholic view, is not an addition to revelation, but is an authentic aspect of the revealed datum itself [DS 3011].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
   4. “The primary object of revelation is God Himself in His gracious approach to man.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
      1. “In the final analysis, one believes in neither the salvific events nor the doctrines for their own sake, but in God who manifests Himself through these.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
      2. “Because revelation includes this element of divine encounter, it can never be fully contained in dogmatic propositions [DS 3886].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
      3. “Thanks to his faith-relationship to the Light of the World [John 8:12], the Christian is inwardly renewed in his mind [Rom 12:2].” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
7. **revelation and the Church**
   1. “The Church is commissioned to preserve, defend, and interpret the contents of faith, adapting the presentation to the capacities and needs of successive ages. As this process continues, the implicit contents of the deposit are progressively unfolded. The explicitation is not a mere matter of logical deduction from the primitive formulas. Thanks to the Spirit of Christ that animates it, the Church enjoys a kind of “connaturality” with the revealing God and a privileged insight into His word. In proclaiming dogmas, the Church therefore speaks with prophetic authority.” (See “Doctrine, Development of.”) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
8. **revelation outside the Church**
   1. religions with some degree of biblical revelation
      1. “. . . the whole patrimony of Christ, according to Catholic belief, was passed on to the Catholic Church . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
      2. “Non-Catholic Christian communities retain and teach large portions of the Christian revelation and can, to that extent, communicate authentic revelation to their adherents. Through the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, who is operative among them, non-Catholic Christians can achieve valid insights into the Gospel and in this way contribute to the development of doctrine. . . . the presence of revealed truth in these other confessions is a bond between them and Catholicism.” (Vatican II, *Decree on Ecumenism* §§ 2-3) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
      3. “Judaism continues to profess the revelation given under the Old Testament.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
      4. “Islam accepts certain elements from Judaism and Christianity.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
   2. religions with some degree of biblical revelation
      1. “Formerly it was widely believed that elements of the primitive revelation made to Adam or Noah had been kept alive in these religions, but this theory, in the light of what is now known about the antiquity of man, has been largely abandoned.” (See “Revelation, Primitive.”) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
      2. “However, few would deny that God in some way reveals Himself to the unevangelized.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
         1. God has “universal salvific will.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
         2. “. . . supernatural faith is absolutely necessary for salvation . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
         3. Therefore, God offers supernatural faith to all. (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
      3. “St. Paul seems to take it for granted that God has revealed Himself to the pagans of Paul’s time.” (Acts 14.16; Rom 1.19-20; 2.14-15) (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
      4. Aquinas (*ST* 1-2.89.6) “maintained that every man can make an act of justifying faith when he reaches moral maturity.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
      5. “Vatican II, in its *Declaration on Non-Christian Religions* [*Nostra aetate* § 2], speaks of them [non-biblical religions] as being based on a certain perception of the divine.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
      6. “Unlike the biblical revelation, these religious expressions are not protected against serious distortion.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
      7. “But thanks to the elements of truth they contain, the non-biblical religions may be providential channels of grace for those who have had no opportunity to hear an accurate and persuasive presentation of the gospel.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
9. **private revelation**
   1. See “Revelations, Private.”
   2. Aquinas (*ST* 2-2.174.6 ad 3) held “that prophetic revelation, insofar as it is ordered to doctrine, ceased with the Apostles, but that such revelation, insofar as it is directive of human action, will always continue.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
   3. “Whatever God has communicated since apostolic times to privileged souls can add nothing to the deposit of Christian faith. Private revelations of this character may be granted for the personal good of individuals and also to stir up among Christians a more faithful adherence to the gospel.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
   4. “In view of the dangers of delusion, fraud, exaggeration, and the like, reports of private revelations should be treated with caution. The Church never teaches that their contents must be accepted on a motive of divine faith, but sometimes it certifies that they contain nothing contrary to sound faith and morals.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)

### The Word of God

1. **the Lord has spoken**
   1. “There are numerous religions.” (Liégé “Sources” 2)
      1. world religions
         1. “The natural or cosmic religions, whose origin is the fear of man in face of the mysterious and impersonal forces which surround him, (all those religions which rest on a sacred emotion without a personal object), present a completely different religious attitude from that of Christianity. . . . the non-living gods . . . cannot say: “I.”” (Liégé “Sources” 2)
         2. “The specific character of Christianity lies . . . in the fact that Christianity proceeds entirely from the benevolent initiative of God, from a Word addressed by God to mankind. . . . When the Old Testament speaks of God, it is of a living God, of a God Who is living because He is a person . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 2)
      2. the religion of moral conscience
         1. “The closest religious attitude to that of Christianity is not . . . these religions, but . . . the religion of the moral conscience: that encounter made by a man of good will who, because of a sense of the seriousness of his destiny, has given up fancy in order to live faithfully. Faithful to what and to whom? To the gift of self, to the reception of the true, to a personal Being as yet unknown . . . Such a man has already heard a word of God; he has already answered a call by faithfulness. He is already involved at the fringes of the Christian dialogue.” (Liégé “Sources” 2)
         2. “. . . God has spoken . . . to men . . . in the obscurity of their conscience where He only allows Himself to be guessed at without giving an assurance of His friendship.” (Liégé “Sources” 2)
   2. “However, God has spoken more explicitly . . . The living God has turned towards men in order to mingle with them and become . . . their essential good. He has done so by His word.” (Liégé “Sources” 2)
2. **what the word of God is**
   1. Old Testament
      1. “In the Old Testament one must not first think of this word as a communication of knowledge, but as the manifestation of a living presence at the heart of a people’s existence.” (Liégé “Sources” 3)
      2. “. . . this manifestation can just as well take the form of actions as that of words properly speaking: “To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?” (Is. 53:1).” (Liégé “Sources” 3)
      3. “It was for the men of God, the prophets, to expound the meaning of these actions, to make known by their means God’s point of view concerning the history and life of the people. Thus Yahweh revealed by His word less what He is in Himself than what His people should be for Him and what He is for His people: the plan of adoption . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 3)
      4. “For the people who hear or see it the Word of God is an attack, a challenge, an active manifestation which wants to be accepted and which converts; which also judges him who has not accepted it; a word which brings about what it announces in him who has accepted it.” (Liégé “Sources” 3)
         1. Isa 55:10-11, “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”
      5. “In the Old Testament, the presence of the Living God was still an exterior manifestation realized in a people, in its temporal history and the prophecy of One who was to come. . . . The Old Testament revealed only a picture—yet a real one—of what was to come about . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 4)
   2. New Testament
      1. “The presence of God which His word brought about in the midst of the Jewish people has become a total presence in the person of the risen Christ whose mystery summarizes God’s purposes.” (Liégé “Sources” 3)
         1. Heb 1:1-2, “Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, 2but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.”
         2. “From the beginning God’s plan was to befriend men and to gather them together into a community of divine destiny. This plan has been wholly realized with the coming of Christ.” (Liégé “Sources” 3)
         3. “We have in Christ the definitive revelation of God’s plan.” (Liégé “Sources” 3)
      2. “Henceforth, the Word of God is both the reality of Christ as God and as risen man, and the promise of a glory like His for all mankind.” (Liégé “Sources” 3)
      3. “Throughout the New Testament the Word of God is qualified by [3] terms convertible with the mystery of Jesus . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 3-4)
         1. Matt 13:19, “the word of the kingdom”
         2. Acts 13:26, “the message [λόγος, “word”] of this salvation”
         3. Acts 14:3, “the word of his grace”
         4. 1 Cor 1:18, “the message [λόγος] about the cross”
         5. 2 Cor 5:19, “the message [λόγος] of reconciliation”
         6. 2 Cor 6:7, “truthful speech” (lit. “word of truth”); Eph 1:13, 2 Tim 2:15, “the word of truth”; Col 1:5, “the word of the truth”
         7. Phil 2:16, “the word of life” (also 1 Pet 1:23, “the living . . . word”: λόγου ζῶντος is literally “word of life”)
      4. “All these expressions can be summarized in one: the mystery of Christ; the plan of the heart of God become Christ and His work of salvation.” (Liégé “Sources” 4)
         1. Rom 16:25-26, “Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages 26but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith . . .”
         2. 1 Cor 2:7-10, “But we speak God’s wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. 8None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him”—10these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.”
         3. Gal 1:15, “But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased 16to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being . . .”
         4. Eph 1:8-10, “With all wisdom and insight 9he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, 10as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.”
         5. Eph 3:3-12, “the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, 4a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. 5In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: 6that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. 7Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God’s grace that was given me by the working of his power. 8Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, 9and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; 10so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.”
         6. Eph 6:19, “the mystery of the gospel”
         7. Col 1:25, “I became its servant according to God’s commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, 26the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints. 27To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”
      5. “The whole of mankind discovers itself dynamically inscribed by grace in this mystery of Christ.” (Liégé “Sources” 3)
      6. “We cannot go beyond the mystery of Christ, and consequently, revelation is closed. We can only await its entire accomplishment while keeping faith with the Word.” (Liégé “Sources” 3)
      7. Unlike “In the Old Testament, [where] the presence of the Living God was still an exterior manifestation . . . In the New Testament, the immanence of God reveals itself as having to attain the very heart of the personal destinies of *all* men. The flooding of the humanity of Christ by the glory of God was but a prelude to the divinization of all the sons of men. The purpose of sacred history has been already realized in Christ: it only remains to spread it to all men. . . . the New Testament reveals the truth about what has been accomplished and what continues to happen in those who believe.” (Liégé “Sources” 4)
   3. “Nevertheless, this definitive revelation still remains prophetic for the present Church. We must still await the Revelation of Jesus, although it has already been accomplished . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 4)
      1. Luke 17:30, “it will be like that on the day that the Son of Man is revealed.”
      2. Rom 8:18-19, “I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. 19For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God . . .”
      3. 1 Cor 3:13, “the work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done.”
      4. 2 Th 1:6-7, “For it is indeed just of God . . . 7to give relief to the afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels . . .”
      5. 1 Pet 4:13, “But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ’s sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed.”
      6. 1 Pet 5:1, “Now as an elder myself and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as one who shares in the glory to be revealed, I exhort the elders among you . . .”
      7. 1 John 3:2, “Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.”
   4. “It is towards this eschatological vision, “God all in all,” [1 Cor 15:28] the total presence of the Living God and the gathering together of all men in the fullness of Christ, and in the preparation for it, that all Revelation is ordained from the beginning.” (Liégé “Sources” 4)
   5. “. . . all apostolic preaching has a normative value, [and] one must not separate the revelation that Jesus gave of His mystery and the apostolic testimony . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 4)
      1. John 16:12-13, “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”
      2. Gal 1:8-9, “But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed! 9As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed!”
      3. 2 Tim 1:13-14, “Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.”
   6. “But, after the apostles, there is no further place in the Church for true prophecy. What remains is to preach Christ, to live and interiorize the Revelation of grace while awaiting the Revelation of glory. This is the Church’s task: the ministry of the Gospel in the name of Christ.” (Liégé “Sources” 5)
   7. “Revelation certainly contains doctrine. God “attacks” us as intelligent beings to whom He gives Himself by an objective determination of the mind’s assent. But, more than truths about God, it brings us the very Person of God and His Person through His plan of salvation: Theology through Economy, to use the vocabulary of the Greek Fathers. God wants us as disciples only that He may save us. Likewise, when the Church teaches, it is always in order to bring souls to the life of God; also in order to cause the Living God to be born in them.” (Liégé “Sources” 5)
   8. “Even more than in the Old Testament, the Word of God in the New is asserted to be sovereign, powerful, and efficacious in every man who accepts it by faith. To believe in the Word and to keep it in one’s heart is already to interiorize the very content of the Word; it is to enter into the mystery of Christ as a real participant. The word of salvation falls on every man as a summons from God in Jesus Christ.” (Liégé “Sources” 5)
      1. Acts 19:20, “So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.”
      2. 1 Th 2:11-12, “As you know, we dealt with each one of you like a father with his children, 12urging and encouraging you and pleading that you lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.”
      3. Heb 4:12, “the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

### Deposit of Faith

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   7. See also related articles in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed.: “Doctrine, Development of”; “Orthodoxy”; “Revelation, Fonts of”; “Revelation, Theology of”; “Rule of Faith”; “Tradition (in Theology)”; “Witness, Christian.”
2. **history of usage**
   1. “In Jewish, Grecian, and Roman law a deposit was a contract by which the depositor freely entrusted something to the guardianship of another.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
   2. scripture
      1. “The Greek word for deposit (παραθήκη [*parathēkē*]) is used three times in the New Testament . . .” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
      2. 1 Tim 6:20, “Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you.”
      3. 2 Tim 1:12, “I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him.”
      4. 2 Tim 1:14, “Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.”
      5. “In each case it refers to the spiritual heritage entrusted to the author of the Epistles or to their recipient.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
   3. Church Fathers
      1. “. . . Vincent of Lérins used it [“deposit”] in speaking of the unchanging teachings that the Church ever preserves.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
   4. medieval period
      1. The term was “Not in use in the Middle Ages . . .” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
   5. modern period
      1. “. . . the word came into the theological vocabulary at the end of the 16th century . . .” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
      2. “. . . it was canonized by Vatican Council I [DS 3070, see 3020], which identified the deposit of faith with the revelation made known by God and handed down to the Church through the Apostles.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
      3. Vatican II (dogmatic constitution *On Divine Revelation* [*Dei Verbum*, 1965] § 10): “Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred *deposit* of the word of God, which is committed to the Church.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 129, emphasis added)
3. **meaning**
   1. propositional sense
      1. “The deposit of faith can be considered as an ensemble of truths entrusted by Christ to the Apostles and now guarded as a sacred trust by the Church, which can neither subtract nor add to it.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
      2. “This notion is valid but incomplete, for the deposit of faith is first of all a reality given to the Church and only subsequently an apprehension of that reality.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
   2. “integral sense” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
      1. “. . . the deposit of faith is a divinely given reality whose salvific efficacy and divinely assigned meaning is preserved in the Church.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
      2. “The deposit of faith includes all that God has entrusted to the Church . . .” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
         1. It includes God’s “great acts in history (in the OT the acts by which God saved Israel; in the NT the activity, the Passion, and death of Christ) in their enduring salvific efficacy and in their divinely revealed meaning . . .” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
         2. It includes “the prolongation of that reality and meaning in the Church by means of the divinely given Sacraments, Scriptures, hierarchical institution, and the continuous interpretative assistance of the Holy Spirit in the whole body of the faithful.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
4. **the deposit of faith and the Church**
   1. 1-2 Timothy and Vatican I “stress that the Church has the duty to preserve and interpret the deposit of faith, neither adding to it nor subtracting from it. This must not be taken to mean that the Church keeps the deposit rigid and immobile as a buried treasure. Rather, because the deposit of faith is meant to be a living and efficient salvific reality for every age, the Church preserves it by proclaiming it in such a way as to make present and meaningful its salvific efficacy. . . . the Church guards the deposit by making it relevant to every age and mentality.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
      1. “Hence, in the apostolic age the Twelve made relevant the deposit to the needs and problems of the various communities they encountered.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
      2. “In subsequent ages the Church refuted erroneous interpretations of the deposit and gradually unfolded some of its inexhaustibly rich significance in accordance with the needs of the times.” (Chirico “Deposit” 65)
   2. “The existence of a deposit of faith forcefully impresses upon the Church that it is God’s servant. The divine goods with which the Church is enriched are not its own but God’s. Over these it has not an unlimited control. It is a faithful servant, a depositary, a guardian—not a master of these goods. The Church may act in regard to them only in the service of God.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
5. **related realities**
   1. “Revelation, Scripture, tradition, and Church are closely related to the deposit of faith.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
   2. “Revelation is the deposit of faith insofar as this deposit makes known or reveals the God who gives it to the Church.” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)
   3. “The Church is the divinely instituted community within which the deposit of faith is preserved in the Scriptures and in divinely guided traditional activity (e.g., oral tradition, liturgy, ecclesiastical practices, and attitudes passed on from generation to generation).” (Chirico “Deposit” 675)

### Philosophy of Revelation

Dulles

1. **demonstrability of revelation**
   1. compatibility of revelation with reason
      1. According to Vatican I and John Paul II (encyclical *Fides et Ratio*), “. . . God has furnished sufficient external signs to render the assent of faith fully reasonable.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
      2. “Without being able to give apodictic proofs of the truth of Christianity, reason can prepare for, and support, the decision of faith. Philosophy can show that the idea of revelation contains no absurdity.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
      3. “Why should God not be able to communicate with man? Considering man’s actual condition, as attested by human history and personal experience, a revelation would unquestionably be a great source of encouragement and guidance to man on his earthly pilgrimage; it seems entirely worthy of a beneficent God.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
   2. “The philosophy of religion can specify to some extent the form that a divine revelation might be expected to take.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
      1. “God would undoubtedly accommodate His revelation to man’s nature; He would speak so that man could hear.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
      2. “But man is by nature a historical and social being. He fulfills himself through free personal actions unfolding in time, interrogating the experience of his contemporaries and forbears.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
      3. “It seems likely, therefore, that God would communicate to man in a social and historical manner—through spatio-temporal symbols (words) given and transmitted in history. The religious inquirer, therefore, should turn to history to look for signs of whether God has spoken.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)
   3. “Apologetics can carry the investigation a stage further. It can assess the value of the various signs of credibility and exhibit the prudence of believing. But in view of the complexity of the evidences, the astounding and mysterious contents of the Christian message, and the heavy demands that it makes on fallen nature, apologetics will hardly be able to bring a man to the point of professing Christianity. The firm assent of salutary faith does not directly result from the arguments of credibility but from the grace of God.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 198)

Nichols

1. **introduction**
   1. “. . . philosophy can . . . justify rationally the possibility of theology, the making of the act of faith in the first place . . .” (Nichols 90)
   2. “Here we are concerned with the role of philosophy in establishing two . . . portions of theology’s earthworks.” (Nichols 74)
      1. “First, is revelation possible?” (Nichols 74)
         1. This is “a subjective apologia for revelation: a defense of revelation’s possibility in terms of criteria touching the divine subject and human subjects.” (Nichols 78)
      2. Second, is the Christian revelation historical? (Nichols 74)
         1. This is an “objective apologia [for revelation]. What are the objective criteria for determining the historical reality of an alleged revelation, in this case, that of the Judeo-Christian religion?” (Nichols 78)
         2. Here the concern is “the historicity of the actual revelation, established through the applying of external criteria to the sources . . .” (Nichols 75)
         3. . . . concern with “motives of credibility” has a distinguished ancestry . . .” (Nichols 74 n. 1)
            1. Lang, A. *Die Entfaltung des apologetischen Problems in der Scholastik des Mittelalters*. Freiburg: 1962.
            2. Aquinas, *ST* 2-2.1.4 ad 2.
   3. “. . . for one school of thought, the first question is scarcely worth dealing with in its own right. If we can answer satisfactorily the second question, . . . then the first question at once becomes otiose.” (Nichols 74)
      1. This is the position “of much Catholic apologetic around the turn of the century . . .” (Nichols 74)
      2. But it led to an “extrinsic and shallow view of revelation.” (Nichols 74)
         1. G. Daly calls it “robotic apologetics.” (*Transcendence and Immanence*: *A Study in Catholic Modernism and Integralism*. Oxford: 1980. 17.) (Nichols 74)
      3. “Since the beginning of this century, and in particular with the work of Maurice Blondel (1861-1949), apologetics (or fundamental theology) has been much more concerned with the possibility of revelation and especially [74] its intrinsic fittingness to the human condition . . .” (Nichols 74-75)
      4. The best neo-Thomists were careful to integrate both approaches . . .” (Falcon, J. *La Crédibilité du dogme catholique*. Lyons-Paris: 1933.) (Nichols 75 n. 3)
2. **Is revelation possible**?
   1. “There are three questions involved here.” (Nichols 75)
      1. “The first is, Is there reason to think that [God] could make a further revelation of himself?” (Nichols 75)
      2. “The second is, Are there reasons for thinking that man is incapable of receiving such a revelation were he offered it?” (Nichols 75)
      3. “And the third is, If none of the objections to the second question are valid, can we say why we positively think man could receive such a revelation? (Clearly, the last two questions are simply the two sides of the same coin.)” (Nichols 75)
   2. “First, then, we can look at the possibility of supernatural revelation from the side of God.” (Nichols 75)
      1. “The self-revelation of God is unthinkable unless [God] is transcendent, personal, and free.” (Nichols 75)
         1. “God must be transcendent . . .” (Nichols 75)
            1. “Without his transcendence of the world, God has no genuine partner to whom he can show himself. . . . You cannot have a conversation unless you have someone else to speak with.” (Nichols 75)
            2. “And so theories about God which consider the world to be in some sense part of God, or included within God’s being, cannot concede the possibility of supernatural revelation.” (Nichols 75)
            3. “It may be that pantheists appeal less to philosophy and more to religious feeling, reminding us that we often feel nature and nature’s God to be a unity. The English Romantic poets, for instance, are full of such feelings. But once we let reason come into play to test the functioning of imagination, we find that such feelings should be analyzed within a theistic, not a pantheistic, description of the world.” (Nichols 75)
            4. “But as we have seen, a number of arguments for God’s existence point toward a properly theistic (as distinct from pantheistic or panentheistic) concept of God.” (Nichols 75)
         2. God must be personal. (Nichols 75)
            1. “The basic picture behind the idea of special or supernatural revelation is that there is a someone revealed in a something.” (Nichols 75)

“We are all familiar with persons disclosing themselves in their actions: a smile, a handshake, a characteristic gesture, a letter, a poem, a painting. All of these are ways in which personal somebodies reveal themselves in impersonal somethings.” (Nichols 75)

“If God were not personal it would be impossible to suppose that he could step out of his silence or hiddenness [75] and show himself to us.” (Nichols 75-76)

* + - * 1. “. . . some of the arguments for God’s existence point in the direction of the personality of God.” (Nichols 76)
        2. “More generally, we can say that if God is the source of all created things, then these things must in some sense have preexisted in that source. But the highest things we know in the universe are interpersonal knowledge and love, being subjects capable of knowing and loving other subjects. So this too, and especially this, must preexist in its divine source.” (Nichols 76)
      1. God must be free. (Nichols 76)
         1. “If the world emanates automatically from God, as one takes pantheists to be saying, . . . then God is unfree vis-à-vis the world and cannot show his hand. . . . In pantheism God cannot help but reveal himself;” (Nichols 76)
         2. Or if “the world is a closed system over against God, as deists say, then God is unfree vis-à-vis the world and cannot show his hand. . . . in deism he cannot reveal himself further even should he want to.” (Nichols 76)
         3. “If supernatural revelation is to be possible, we must grant God the freedom to go beyond the order of creation if he so wills.” (Nichols 76)
  1. Is man unable to receive revelation? (Nichols 75)
     1. “Revelation is only possible from the side of man if he is open to transcendence.” (Nichols 76)
     2. “Various objections . . . against this basic openness of the human being to God . . . resolve themselves into two . . .” (Nichols 76)
        1. “. . . one is lodged in terms of humankind’s autonomy . . ., man’s taking responsibility for his own life . . .” (Nichols 76)
           1. Human autonomy “should rule out an appeal to revelation as a shortcut to the answers of life’s problems. It is unworthy of human dignity not to decide for oneself on all fundamental questions of existence.” (Nichols 76)
           2. But “being autonomous does not mean being liberated from all ties and obligations but rather being free to posit such ties and obligations as one’s own internal norm. [One obligation] is the duty to follow the truth wherever it leads. Thus if we have reason to think that a truth from beyond this world is being shown to us, then it is no lapse into heteronomy freely to accept and interiorize supramundane truth.” (Nichols 76)
        2. “. . . the other, which is quite incompatible with the first, [is lodged] in terms of their [humans’] determinedness by factors beyond their control.” (Nichols 76)
           1. Léonard, A. *Pensées des hommes et foi en Jésus Christ*. *Pour un discernment intellectuel chrétien*. Paris: 1980. 64-73, 84-97.
           2. “. . . several widespread reductionist theories [claim] that human ideas are so determined by causes internal to human beings themselves that they could not respond to a truth coming wholly from outside themselves even if they wished to. . . . in each case humankind’s intellectual and volitional life is seen as fully preprogrammed by one or more of its basic drives or needs.” (Nichols 77)
           3. “Most commonly, such theories are socioeconomic (as with Marxism-Len­inism) or psychological (as with orthodox Freudianism) in character.” (Nichols 77)

“In Marxism, the need to express oneself in work is at the start of a complex theory of man which ends by regarding all doctrines save Marxism itself as examples of “false consciousness,” or systematic misapprehension. Thus the concept of God can be reinterpreted as the projection on to the starry heavens of the best part of ourselves, motivated by our despair of ever realizing ourselves in society as we know it.” (Nichols 77)

“In orthodox Freudianism, the sexual drive is seen as explaining all human activities and beliefs in some way or another by regarding the entire fabric of human culture (including religion) as an endless series of adjustments between reality and the thrust toward pleasure.” (Nichols 77)

* + - * 1. “All such reductionisms stem . . . from the desire to be in possession of a single key that will open up all reality. Through this desire, theses about limited aspects of human behavior become total explanations of an imperialistic kind.” (Nichols 77)
        2. “To reduce the reductionisms to size is not only necessary in order to maintain man’s openness to revelation. It is also a mercy to the elements of truth in the reductionisms themselves.” (Nichols 77)
  1. Is man able to receive revelation? (Nichols 75)
     1. Blondel, Maurice. *L*’*Action*. Paris: 1893.
     2. Bouillard, H. *Blondel et le christianisme*. Paris: 1961.
     3. Daly, G. “Apologetics in the Modernist Period.” *Chesterton Review* 15.1-2 (Feb.-May 1989): 79-94.
     4. DiNoia, J.A. “Karl Rahner.” *The Modern Theologians*. Ed. D. Ford Vol. 1. Oxford: 1989. (190-92 describe the “sequentially related works,” *Spirit in the World* and *Hearers of the Word*. Nichols 78 n. 7)
     5. Rahner, Karl. *Spirit in the World*. New York and London: 1968.
     6. Rahner, Karl. *Hearers of the Word*. New York and London: 1969.
     7. Somerville, J.M. “Maurice Blondel 1861-1949.” *Thought* 36 (1961): 371-410.
     8. “At the turn of this century there arose a school of Catholic thought dubbed the “new apologetics.”” (Nichols 77)
        1. Maurice Blondel was the foremost proponent “in his *chef d*’*oeuvre*, called *L*’*action* . . .” (Nichols 77)
        2. “Considered historically, this “new” apologetics was a revival of the defense of Christianity found in Pascal.” (Nichols 77)
     9. “Its approach was by way of the “method of immanence,” “immanence” here referring to [77] human interiority, to needs and tendencies in the human person that point to a divine revelation as what is required to make a human life complete.” (Nichols 77-78)
     10. Blondel observes “that the will is greater than any of its possible earthly objects. By metaphysical instinct, it presses beyond them in the search for a good that is commensurate with its own infinitude. The implication is that in a created universe where nothing is as it is except for a good reason, this cannot be by chance. At some point in the past, present, or future, the supreme Object of action has offered, is offering, or at any rate will offer himself to all people as the only reality that can fully satisfy them.” (Nichols 78)
     11. “The stress here falls not on the divine truth making itself accessible to the human mind but on the divine goodness drawing to itself the human will. But a sound account of the act of faith should really include both of these components, mind and will. We recognize the truth of revelation intellectually insofar as we are capable of grasping God’s self-revelation. We also respond volitionally or affectively, by the will or heart, to the goodness of God, who is drawing us through this revelation to himself. Blondel and the new apologists concentrated somewhat unilaterally on the will, chiefly in order to correct a picture of human beings as thinking machines rather than as loving and desiring subjects which—they believed—a degenerate Scholasticism and the older apologetics had alike fostered. Others since have underlined the role of the mind, and perhaps most emphatically the late Karl Rahner in his *Spirit in the World* and its sequel, *Hearers of the Word*. A balanced account would integrate both.” (Nichols 78)

1. “**the historical reality of** [**the Christian**] **revelation**” (Nichols 78)
   1. “This enquiry falls into two parts . . .” (Nichols 78)
      1. “. . . the historical [78] credibility of the biblical narrative [“the vehicle of putative revelation”] that presents us with claims to revelation . . .” (Nichols 78-79)
      2. “. . . the credibility of the Bible’s own theological interpretation of this narrative.” (Nichols 79)
   2. “historical credibility of the biblical narrative” (Nichols 79)
      1. Judaism “is a thoroughly historical affair.” (North, C.R. *The Old Testament Interpretation of History*. Lon­don: 1946.) (Nichols 79)
      2. Christianity “is a thoroughly historical affair.” (Nichols 79)
         1. C.H. Dodd (*History and the Gospel*. London: 1938. 81): for Christianity history is “a process determined by the creative act of God vertically from above.” (Nichols 79 n. 9)
         2. Josef Pieper (*The End of Time*. London: 1954. 67): for Christianity “the temporal is inwardly sustained, saturated, pervaded by the un­temporal.” (Nichols 79 n. 9)
         3. C.A. Patrides (*The Grand Design of God*: *The Literary Form of the Christian View of History*. London: 1972. 2-3) considers “the distinctiveness of this viewpoint vis-à-vis other religious cultures . . .” (Nichols 79 n. 9)
      3. “Admittedly, not all of the books of the Bible are historical books . . . the Book of Exodus is a historical book, but the Book of Wisdom is not; the Gospel of Mark is a historical book, but the Letter of James is not. Nevertheless, all the books of Scripture are historical in the sense that they presuppose and depend on a religion which regards certain historical events as central to its own claims to be true. . . . Both Judaism and Christianity hold that [God] disclosed himself through these events of religious history . . . [God] entered a covenant relationship, a relationship of friendship and trust with a people: Israel, the Church. And this relationship was believed to exist because of events which had really transpired within history. . . . [Ideas] in their faith [were] not the basis of their belief but its further distillation.” (Nichols 79)
      4. “Two questions arise here of a philosophical or at least semi-philosophical kind.” (Nichols 80)
         1. “The first question is about the possibility of our knowing the past at all [80] . . . the possibility of historical knowledge as such.” (Nichols 80-81)
            1. Collingwood, R.G. *The Idea of History*. Oxford: 1946.
            2. Gallie, W.B. *Philosophy and the Historical Understanding*. London: 1964.
            3. Walsh, W.H. *An Introduction to the Philosophy of History*. London: 1951-58.
            4. “All historical knowledge is built up on evidence consisting of written or nonwritten remains.” (Nichols 80)
            5. skepticism

“Sceptics may allege that the attempt to construct a picture of the past on the basis of these remains is foredoomed to failure. We are obliged to use our imagination to fill in the gaps; our imagination is conditioned by the fact that we belong to the twentieth century after Christ and not to the first century after Christ or the twentieth century before him. What counts, therefore, as history tells us more about our own age, the age of the historian, than it does about the age such books purport to describe. But if this be true, then it will not be possible to establish the credibility of the truth-claims of the Judeo-Christian religion, for the obvious reason that if we can know nothing for certain about the events out of which Judaism and Christianity were built, we cannot *a fortiori* know whether the Jewish and Christian interpretation of these events is credible.” (Nichols 80)

* + - * 1. two traditions of philosophy of history

“. . . in continental Europe . . ., perhaps particularly in Germany, the philosophy of history consists in speculation on the universal meaning of a history composed of particular processes, an enquiry into how any given historical movement might be said to contribute to the totality of the experience of the race seen as a meaningful unity [Walsh 119-20]. I shall [81] not be concerning myself with the subject in this latter sense, which is perhaps just as well since it is an area where talking nonsense is more than usually easy.” (Nichols 81-82)

“In English-speaking countries, the philosophy of history largely consists in an attempt to show that historical knowledge is a legitimate form of human understanding, that statements about events in the past and the possible relations of cause and effect that hold between them can be justified before the bar of philosophical reason. In other words, philosophers working in this area are looking for ways of explaining how the practice of history is possible—because of course history books are in fact being written . . . The philosophy of history in the Anglo-Saxon tradition is, then, a modest discipline which does not set itself very high targets.” (Nichols 81)

“. . . I am concerned in what follows with the epistemology of historical statements, since this is necessary to render secure the claimed access of Christian minds to those past events on which their faith depends.” (Nichols 82)

* + - * 1. “The making and comprehending of a history book may be compared to the making and comprehending of any story [Collingwood 20-21]. The understanding of stories, narratives, is a form of human understanding which unfortunately has been somewhat played down since ancient times. Even though the Hellenes were rather good storytellers and historians, their philosophers concentrated almost exclusively on the search for universal truths, truths that held irrespective of the particularities of *those* people in *that* time and space [Gallie 22-71]. Yet surely there is a genuine, distinctive, and important kind of understanding involved in following a story with attention and insight, even though the story deals almost invariably with particularities and hardly ever with universal truths.” (Nichols 82)
        2. “The difference between a purely literary story and a historical narrative can be specified in terms of certain conditions which we expect a historical story to meet [Collingwood 246ff].” (Nichols 82)

“First and most obviously, a historical story must be set in real time and space. A story about life on the planet Nusquam in the year 3000 could scarcely claim our interest as history.” (Nichols 82)

“Second, a historical story must be consistent with all the known evidence relevant to the events it contains.” (Nichols 82)

“Third, it must arise out of public materials and possess a public aim, that of giving an account of some slice of the public past. The story of an individual’s love affairs would not in itself be history even if it took place in the eighteenth century, though doubtless by certain deft touches it could be rendered historically significant.” (Nichols 82)

“If a narrative meets these three conditions—set in real space and time, consistent with all the evidence, part of the public and not just private past, then it is history.” (Nichols 82)

* + - * 1. “There is no harm in admitting that imagination plays a considerable part in constructing such a story. By imagination writers of both fiction and history relate one event to another in ways that strike us as plausible because they have a feel cognate with that which we ourselves know from daily life. The ability to enter into the minds of other human agents and to see separate events as part of a coherent narrative is among the most vital forms [82] of imaginative understanding we have, even though by “understanding” here something very different is meant from our use of the same word in the context of, say, the scientist at work in his laboratory. Understanding—we can say—is polyvalent: the way we understand a poem is not the way we understand a philosophical argument, and neither is the way we understand our grandmother. Thus historical explanation is not a fading echo of the explanation found in the natural sciences but is *sui generis*, standing on its own two feet. In offering a historical explanation for some event or movement or personality, historians invites [*sic*] us to look with them at their chosen grouping of the known facts and the questions they raise. They present us with a pattern which, they believe, they have found in the evidence and invite our judgment as to whether this pattern is really there. We judge by deciding whether a historian’s highlighting enables us to follow a story more easily and renders it coherent in and of itself. Yes, it all seems to fit is the response that a successfully stated historical hypothesis should elicit.” (Nichols 82-83)
      1. “The second question concerns not the status of history in general but that of the biblical history in particular.” (Nichols 80)
         1. We “need to show that the particular segments of alleged historical material enshrined in the Bible are trustworthy. It may be the case that while many historical remains enable us to write reliable history, those included in Scripture are not among them. Here we must temporarily show the philosopher to the door and wait for the ancient historian to call instead.” (Nichols 80)
         2. “However, from the viewpoint of the preamble of faith, . . . the ancient historian [need not] credit any and every factual claim in the biblical narrative.” (Nichols 80)

“What we need to know theologically is whether the general outline of the biblical history can be trusted, that is, whether the events regarded as crucial and determinative by the biblical writers themselves really happened. I am thinking here of such things as the call of Abraham; the Exodus from Egypt; the Sinai experience of Moses; the establishment of the Davidic dynasty with its messianic promises; the Exile and restoration of Israel from Babylon; the conception, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; his founding of the Church; the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. If it could be shown that these events, or sequences (and clusters) of events, never happened, or that they happened in such a form that the Jewish and Christian interpretations of them are effectively excluded, then manifestly the claims of the [80] Judeo-Christian religion would fall to the ground.” (Nichols 80-81)

“Of less importance are such matters as whether in the book of his name Joshua made the sun stand still [Josh 10:12-13], or whether in the Acts of the Apostles Herod Agrippa I was smitten in Caesarea by an angel of the Lord and was eaten by worms [Acts 12:23]. In the preamble of faith there is no need to concern ourselves with the question as to whether every detail of the biblical history has a factual basis. To establish the credibility of the biblical revelation, it is not necessary to establish the facticity of such matters unless there is reason to think that the biblical revelation itself proposes them as necessary to its own cohesion.” (Nichols 81)

“In principle, it is possible that a genuine revelation could have been recorded in writings which only in part reflect that revelation and in part reflect the imperfect geography, historiography, and natural science of their day. The notions of revelation and of inerrancy are not coterminous.” (Nichols 81)

“What we need to know is whether or not it is credible to say that the central events of the sacred history happened through the power and guidance of the God whose character and purpose is disclosed through them. To assure ourselves of this we need to know that these central events really happened, and that the biblical interpretation of them is, at worst, believable, and at best the only satisfactory explanation possible.” (Nichols 81)

* + - * 1. historical event and theological interpretation

We must “distinguish between historical event and theological interpretation. When, for instance, we speak of the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost, we are conflating a claimed historical event and a claimed accurate theological interpretation of that event. The alleged historical event is that something very remarkable happened to the apostolic group in the upper room in Jerusalem on the Jewish feast of Weeks in the year of Jesus’ death. The allegedly accurate theological interpretation is that the something in question was the definitive gift of the Spirit of Jesus Christ and his Father. Parallel distinctions can be made right down the story line. What we have in the Bible is event plus theological interpretation.” (Nichols 83)

* + - * 1. “The result of this distinction is that we have two questions to cope with.” (Nichols 83)

“First, were there in fact historical events of the kind presupposed by the complex description of event-plus-theological-interpretation given in Scripture?” (Nichols 83)

“Second, is the theological account of the significance of these events compatible with what is believed about them by historians?” (Nichols 83)

Only exact study by historians of the biblical period can found critically any assurance on these questions, but an attempt will be made here to sketch out the rough lines of a response.” (Nichols 83)

“For most of the [83] episodes in the biblical history, the Bible itself is the only direct source of evidence.” (Nichols 83-84)

multiple attestation

“However, within the Bible there are often several distinct sources relevant to the same event. Within any one of these sources scholars may sometimes discern more than one authorial hand. This opens the possibility of multiple and convergent attestation of a kind that warrants confidence. . . . So because the Bible is a library of books and not a single book conceived and executed in terms of a unitary authorial scheme, it can and does contain a number of convergent witnesses to certain vital events along its central line.” (Nichols 84)

“Thus, for instance, the gospel stories about the resurrection appearances of Jesus occur in multiple and perhaps composite sources whose authors can be shown to have very different aims. For St. Mark, whose resurrection-appearance story is clearly indicated but missing in the “lost ending,” the resurrection is principally a consolation for Christians under persecution; for St. John, very differently, it is the foundation for the sacramental life of the Church. That writers so utterly at variance in their projects should agree on the fact of the resurrection appearances is reassuring.” (Nichols 84)

“However, this is not always so, and even when it is so it may sometimes be shown that one account has drawn so heavily on another as hardly to constitute an independent testimony at all. The sagas of the patriarchs in the Book of Genesis are examples of stories where we have no corroborating testimony from elsewhere in the Bible, for the references to, say, the life of Abraham in the Psalter, [*sic*] seem simply drawn from Genesis itself. Here historians are more likely to consider the extrabiblical evidence in a somewhat impressionistic sense of that word. If what is said of the patriarchs coheres with what is known from the social history of the nations around Israel in the patriarchal period, then a chastened confidence in the historicity of the biblical narrative is once more justified.” (Nichols 84)

“In assessing the historical character of the biblical story, it is often found that historians working within their own frames of reference are more optimistic about biblical historicity (abstracting for the moment from the dimension of the miraculous) than are theologians. This is at first sight a paradox, but it admits of two explanations.” (Nichols 84)

“First, theologians are naturally more interested than are historians in the theological significance of the events, and for this reason they sometimes tend to count as theological interpretation what should more properly count as event. To illustrate this syndrome, we can take the episode of the meeting of Mary Magdalene with the risen Jesus by the garden tomb in the Gospel of John. According to the evangelist, Mary [84] mistakes Christ for the gardener. Now the theologian, struck by this vignette, may want to suggest that in the mind of the author there is a deliberate double meaning. As the New Adam leading his disciples into the new paradise Christ, [*sic*] is indeed a gardener; he is preparing the new earth, which another writer of the Johannine school sees descending from above in his Apocalypse. Mary spoke more truly than she knew—an example of the celebrated Johannine irony. To the theologian, the theological affirmation that Christ is the New Adam seems a good deal more important than the simple historical fact involved in whether or not a Palestinian woman mistook Jesus for a gardener, a bricklayer, or a steeplejack. The historical episode thus falls into the background. Moreover, there is a sense in which the theological affirmation stands out more clearly from the pages of the Gospel if St. John simply created the story of the meeting in order to convey his own teaching. For, after all, if Mary really did mistake Jesus for the gardener, then perhaps there is nothing more to the story than the record of that mistake, and the theologian himself is reading into the text of St. John something which never crossed the author’s mind. Difficulties of this sort explain the not-infrequent situation in which theologians intent on theological meaning give the appearance of a historical iconoclasm, which, to the ordinary believer, cuts off the branch on which one is sitting. A theological interpretation without an undergirding event is like the smile on the face of the Cheshire cat; yet if the theological interpretation were to be entirely swallowed by the event, all we should be left with is sheer facticity without clear indications of wider significance.” (Nichols 84-85)

“The second cause of the paradox in question is intelligible rather than excusable.” (Nichols 85)

Greshake, G. *Historie wird Geschichte*. *Bedeutung und Sinn der Unterscheidung von Historie und Geschichte in der Theologie Rudolf Bultmanns*. Essen: 1963.

Malevez, L. *The Christian Message and Myth*: *The Theology of Rudolf Bultmann*. Trans. London: 1958. 188.

“Theologians in the Lutheran tradition are customarily unhappy at the idea that objective, neutral investigation of the biblical record could play a role in establishing faith. If the pure gratuity of faith is stressed sufficiently over against all forms of “fallen” reason, including historical reason, then it become possible actually to rejoice when the Bible is thought to be historically defective. Thus writers influenced by Lutheranism will often prefer the Bible to be less a straightforward historical narrative and more a witness of faith to a new life given by God. This dichotomy is summed up in the distinction between the German words *Historie* and *Geschichte* popularized by the theologian-exegete Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1977). The general idea is that *Historie* is merely factual history while *Geschichte* is history laden with significance for human existence. Applied to the Bible, this [85] becomes a distinction between scientific history or objective narrative on the one hand and, on the other, the believer’s story of new life made possible through faith in Christ. But the distinction between *Historie* and *Geschichte* rests on a questionable division of reality into facts and values. Bultmann’s dichotomy, with its foundation in a Lutheran anthropology that we have already had cause to reject, should be of interest to Catholic theology only in encouraging us to find a better account of the relation between history and faith than his.” (Nichols 85-86)

* + - * 1. miracles

“It is plain that the biblical record cannot stand if miracles are to be outlawed.” (Nichols 86)

“At the level of the alleged historical events themselves, even the basic datum must sometimes be classified as strictly miraculous, no matter what wider theological interpretation we may wish to adopt.” (Nichols 86)

“Thus . . . we are faced with a claim (textually suppressed only by wonders of exegetical contortionism) that the corpse of Jesus of Nazareth did not rot in the grave but was resuscitated and perceived by others to have returned to life. . . . in principle the evidence for this resuscitation is something that historians (and not simply believers) can be invited to consider as part of their account of Christian origins.” (Nichols 86)

“When we move on to the theological interpretation of the historical events, the Bible presents us with more numerous if less inescapable instances of the allegedly miraculous.” (Nichols 86)

“Thus the crossing of the Sea of Reeds by the fleeing Israelites might have been interpreted as a providential coincidence based on the fluctuation of tides, but the Book of Exodus [claims] that only the hand of God can account for what happened, . . . that the Creator himself intervened in his creation at this point in time and space for the sake of the people he had chosen.” (Nichols 86)

“Scottish empiricist David Hume (1711-76)” (Nichols 87)

Hume thought miracles are theoretically possible: “for someone who believes in a divine Creator there can be no *a priori* exclusion, he thought, of the possibility of particular interventions of God in his own world.” (Nichols 87)

“Hume’s objection is that all of our rational activity as human beings is predicated on the assumption that the world is predictable. I do not refuse to make plans to go swimming tomorrow on the grounds that quite possibly the sun will not rise for the first time in history. . . . our assumption of order is so pervasive that it would take a quite extraordinary amount of evidence to convince us that in some particular case this assumption does not hold. Hume then goes on to say that in practice we never find this weight of evidence for any alleged miracle. We find evidence, certainly, but according to Hume, it is always more rational to suppose that something has gone wrong with the collection or transmission of the evidence than to suspend the assumption of cosmic order.” (Nichols 87)

“The reply to this is that while indeed part of rationality consists in acting on the assumption of the orderliness of reality, this idea does not in itself tell us which concept of order we should have. The Christian theist believes that the order exhibited by the universe is ultimately an order founded on God’s love, a love lying behind the world’s making and ahead at the world’s end. But if this is the basic order displayed in the creation, then the special acts of God’s providence we call miracles can themselves be seen as orderly, and not as ruptures of order.” (Nichols 87)

For instance, feeding the five thousand fits with God’s “provision of means for our survival and nourishment, something which goes on continually through the forces of nature. And second, it fits in with the promise of God the Redeemer that one day our spiritual hunger will be satisfied in the banquet of heaven—and while the non-Christian does not by definition credit such a promise, he or she can be brought to see imaginatively the understanding of future order it represents. On such a view of the world, the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes cannot be called disorderly, since it coheres perfectly [87] with the order of the purposes of a loving God. For the classical theist, the divine goodness is the most fundamental principle of predictability that there is.” (Nichols 87-88)

“So far we have been thinking about physical miracles. But the approach I have outlined would apply equally to that other main category of the miraculous in Judeo-Christianity, namely prophecy, or what is sometimes referred to as “intellectual miracle.” The biblical concept of prophecy is a good deal richer than simply that of accurately foretelling particular contingent events, yet such foretelling, even when shorn of simplistic interpretation, remains obstinately part of the biblical narrative. Once again, such foretelling should not be thought of as a bizarre and monstrous disruption or [*sic*] order. The basic order of the world is not simply the order of nature, or of the inherent possibilities of finite spirit, but the order of a God who wills to guide mankind into the knowledge of his truth.” (Nichols 88)

“In the central figure of the biblical narrative as a whole, Jesus Christ, we find an amazing concentration of miracle.” (Nichols 88)

“We find physical miracles: miracles in which Jesus repairs the order of creation, as with his many acts of healing the sick and crippled. We, find, too, miracles in which he transforms the order of creation and so points forward to the new life of the world to come, as with his transformation of water into wine at Cana in Galilee.” (Nichols 88)

“We find intellectual miracles: prophecies in which Jesus foretells the future history of the Jewish people in Roman Palestine and prophecies in which he foretells the future fate of his Church.” (Nichols 88)

“Then in his own person Jesus is the subject of miracle: as when in his own life story he fulfills the predictions of the Old Testament prophets and when at Easter he is raised from the dead.” (Nichols 88)

“Insofar as miracle is evidence of the presence of God inside history, this extraordinary concentration of miracle is *evidence* of a special intensity to God’s presence in the story of Jesus Christ. And this naturally raises the question of the unique status or authority of Jesus.” (Nichols 88)

“This special status or authority has been expressed in two main ways within a broadly philosophical conceptuality. Either it is spoken of in terms of the moral perfection of Jesus or in terms of the unsurpassable aesthetic authority of this style of life. Each of these concepts is an attempt to cast in rational terms the sense of a further dimension to Jesus, which strikes all who, through absorption in the biblical narrative, have felt the force of his fascination. In effect, we are saying, Is there not something about the figure of Jesus which suggests that this man was not like other figures in history, that he spoke and acted [88] with an authority not ultimately rooted in this world?” (Nichols 88-89)

“The more usual way in which to present this further dimension to Jesus is to speak of his moral perfection. [Sykes, S.W. “The Theology of the Humanity of Christ.” *Christ*, *Faith and History*. Cambridge Studies in Christology. Cambridge: 1972. 53-71.] He seems to have been a moral miracle. Among a race as deeply flawed as our own, he stood out a mile because of his ethical holiness. This is not simply a matter of degrees of virtuousness but a question of the mysterious absence of the equally mysterious but ubiquitous tendency toward evil in humanity. This contrast of moral glory with our usual experience of moral squalor in all its forms (many of them counterfeit virtue) can only be explained, it is suggested, by allowing Jesus special access to the divine resources of gracious transforming power. And such special access is itself unthinkable without positing at the same time a special place for Jesus in the divine overseeing of human history, and so a special authority.” (Nichols 89)

“Alternatively, the unique status or authority of Jesus can be brought out by speaking of the aesthetic rather than moral authority of his life. . . . the ethical aspect of Jesus’ transcendence [is conceived] in the wider context of humanity’s search for meaning and truth. A comparison is being instituted between the authority of Jesus and the authority of a great work of art. The latter is something before which we are brought up short, and to which we submit ourselves, because we find in it a meaning that goes beyond the realm of the everyday. The splendor of a great work of art communicates the radiance which belongs to the truth of things, what the Scholastic philosophers call *pulchrum*, beauty as a determination of being as such. In a similar way, it is proposed, the glory of God shines forth in the life and person of Jesus Christ. His words and works of love express the self-communicating goodness of being, a goodness derived from being’s transcendent ground or source. Once again, it becomes rationally credible to speak of him as a divine legate.” (Nichols 89)

R. Fisichella (*La rivelazione*) “presents a global view of the credibility of revelation as the self-manifestation of the Trinitarian love showing itself in its signs, first and foremost in Christ, but then, in dependence upon him, in the Church. His approach is based on his earlier investigation of Balthasar’s contribution here . . .” (Nichols 89 n. 16)

Fisichella, R. *Hans Urs von Balthasar*. *Amore e credibilità cristiana*. Rome: 1981.

Fisichella, R. *La rivelazione*: *evento e credibilità*. Bologna: 1985.

The “concentration of miracle in the life of Jesus signals something greater than any miracle, namely a new mode of divine presence and activity in history.” (Nichols 90)

* 1. “Jesus’ claims as a divine legate, and those of the Church he founded, may be defended as not unreasonable. More than this philosophy cannot do for theology without destroying the freedom of the act of faith itself, since faith is not simply coerced by evidence.” (Nichols 90)
     1. “Although for the First Vatican Council’s constitution on faith, the miracles are said to be “quite certain signs accommodated to all minds,” this does not mean that grace is not required to turn natural vision into eyes of faith . . .” (Rousselot, P. “Les yeux de la foi.” *Recherches de science religieuse* (1910): 241-59, 444-75.) (Nichols 90 n. 19)

## Faith

### Faith

1. **faith as trust**
   1. “Faith is first of all an act of trust in God and of self-commitment to him.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 12)
   2. It follows that “faith does not consist totally, or even primarily, in assent to the propositions enunciated in the creed. . . . what God has revealed to us does not consist in a series of propositions . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 12)
2. **faith as beliefs**
   1. “But because one trusts God and commits oneself to him, one also gives intellectual assent to what God has revealed to us.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 12)
   2. Of course “the act of faith does not terminate in the proposition as such, but in the reality of which the proposition always remains an imperfect sign.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 13)
      1. Aquinas (*ST* 2-2.1.2 ad 2): “An act of faith terminates in [affirms the truth of] not a statement but a thing [referred to].” (Hahn translation) (“*Actus credentis non terminatur ad enuntiabile*, *sed ad rem*.” Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 219 n. 9, italics added)
3. **will in faith**
   1. “. . . the truth of most of what God has revealed is not intrinsically evident to us; we have to ‘take it on faith’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 33)
      1. “When we give intellectual assent to an article of faith whose truth is not evident to our mind, our act of faith is a free assent, which means that our free will is involved, choosing to believe.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 33)
      2. “. . . we have to rely on the testimony of witnesses to know what God has revealed. [This is not] the kind of evidence that forces our minds to assent; so again our free will has a part to play in our choice to accept their testimony.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 33)
   2. “It is this role of our free will in the decision to believe which leaves room for the legitimate exercise of teaching authority. Of course it cannot be a purely arbitrary authority; it has to be an authority which commends itself to us as reasonable to accept.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 34)
   3. Aquinas says (*ST* 2-2.4.1; *De Veritate* 14.2) that “the same object, the essence of God, the intuitive vision of which constitutes the eternal and ineffable joys of heaven actually is accepted on faith during the time of our pilgrimage in this world.” (Fenton 27)
4. **The Church**’**s faith is normative for any who want to belong to it**.
   1. “We are now in possession of . . . the Word of God transmitted to us by the Prophets and the Apostles, and what is today presented to us by the living magisterium of the Church. The believer adheres to the whole of the transmitted message as something to which he can neither add nor subtract since it was given to him from on high. . . . He has no right to touch it.” (Henry “Theology” 256)
   2. “. . . it has always been recognised that the faith of the Christian community is normative for the faith of its individual members.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
      1. A profession of this normative faith has always been required of candidates for baptism . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
      2. “. . . perseverance in this faith is a condition for continued membership in the community.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
   3. “No one can be forced to be a Christian against his or her will. But, on the other hand, once the free choice to be a member of the Church has been made, one is not free to choose one’s own confession of faith; or to choose which articles of the Christian faith one will accept, which one will reject. The Christian Church has never understood itself as a collection of individualistic believers, each free to pick and choose among the various items offered for belief. It has always understood itself as a community of faith . . . This in fact is the significance of the recitation of the ‘Apostles Creed’ in the liturgy of baptism.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 12)

### Faith in the Theological and Moral Virtues

1. **introduction**
   1. definitions
      1. A habit is a tendency to do a certain act that results from repeated doings of the act.
      2. A “virtue” is a good habit.
      3. A “vice” is a bad habit.
      4. Man “is a being with bodily powers . . . and with powers of the mind by which he can seek to understand his environment and enjoy it, to get rid of obstacles and develop his powers . . . In order to achieve this he can train himself in habits which will enable him to use his powers more easily and effectively. Virtues are habits which tend towards man’s perfection, while vices are habits which tend against his perfection.” (Pontifex 10)
      5. A habit is “a particular kind of disposition which fits the human mind to deal successfully and happily with some aspect of reality.” (Nichols 13)
   2. On the basis of scripture the Church taught “that in the communication of himself to man, God brought about a healing—a change not only in man’s metaphysical essence but in his powers as well. The form in which this thesis was expressed was that the justified man was given theological and moral virtues. Although the transformation of a sinner into a new man always encompasses the whole person, different elements in the process can be distinguished: sanctifying grace as the basis and the virtues connected with it.” (Schmaus 82)
   3. “In ecclesiastical and theological language, an “infusion” of these virtues is spoken of. The meaning of this expression is that the human powers are permeated by God and orientated towards him, but not in such a way that man is wholly freed of the burden of trials and temp­tation. In this context the word virtue has a different sense from that of the Aristotelian ethic. Here what is meant is a growth in likeness of the human power to the divine in which an orientation towards God is also included. Thus the virtues are aids to right action; but in a higher sense [82] and more specifically they are conditions for the divinizing of man’s activity.” (Schmaus 82-83)
2. **theological virtues**, **gifts of the Holy Spirit**, **and moral virtues**
   1. “The Most Holy Trinity gives the baptized sanctifying grace, the grace of justification:
      1. “enabling them to believe in God, to hope in him, and to love him through the theological virtues;
      2. “giving them the power to live and act under the prompting of the Holy Spirit through the gifts of the Holy Spirit;
      3. “allowing them to grow in goodness through the moral virtues.” (*CCC* 1266)
3. **theological and moral virtues**
   1. “The conceptualization of the theological (and other) virtues is one of the greatest achievements of Christian thought, building on both sacred and secular sources . . .” (O. Loftin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Louvain: 1942-60), especially III/2, 99-150.) (Nichols 13 n. 1)
      1. In *ST* 1-2.62.3 the theological virtues are “grace-given adaptations of man to God as his supernatu­ral end, paralleling the natural virtues rooted in his natural orientation toward human perfection.” (Nichols 13 n. 1)
   2. “. . . our will needs supernatural aptitudes or virtues which adapt it, as it were, to perform everything under the action of charity.” Grace gives the theological virtues, whose “object is God himself: God in his infinite truth for faith, God in his infinite mercy for hope, God in his infinite loving-kindness for charity.” Grace also gives “the supernatural moral virtues, which adapt our wills not to God himself but to our conduct . . .” (Daujat 108)
   3. “The theological virtues—faith, hope, and love—are to be under­stood as those modifications of the human powers which enable the justified man to accept God on his word; to desire, trust, and strive towards him; and to love him. In Aristotelian terms, one could say that God is both material and formal object of these virtues.” (Schmaus 83)
   4. “By moral virtues the scholastic theologians understand those divine modifications of the human powers which assist man in mastering his daily situation in faith, hope, and love; that is, enable him to act in every situation in a way conforming to his union with God. Here the material object is something created, but the formal object is God. There are further classifications under the moral virtues, of which the cardinal virtues are the most important and the foundation.” (Schmaus 83)
   5. “. . . the Council of Vienne (1311-1312, DS 904) and that of Trent (DS 1530f.) declared that in the divine act of justification man is given the capacity for a divinizing life in faith, hope, and love. Actually this teaching of the Council of Trent does not differ from the idea of regeneration put forward by the Refor­mers, which refers simply to the justifying action of God himself in man.” (Schmaus 83)
4. **faith, hope, and love**
   1. the theological virtues in Paul
      1. verses with “faith,” “hope,” and “love”
         1. Rom 5:1-5, “since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. 3And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”
         2. 1 Cor 13:7, “It [love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”
         3. 1 Cor 13:13, “And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.”
         4. Col 1:4-5, “we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, 5because of the hope laid up for you in heaven.”
         5. 1 Thess 1:3, “remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.”
         6. 1 Thess 5:8, “But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.”
      2. verses with only “faith” and “love”
         1. 1 Cor 13:2, “And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.”
         2. 2 Cor 8:7, “Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eager­ness, and in our love for you—so we want you to excel also in this generous under­taking.”
         3. Gal 5:6, “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; the only thing that counts is faith working through love.”
         4. Eph 1:15, “I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints . . .”
         5. Eph 3:17, “and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love.”
         6. Eph 6:23, “Peace be to the whole community, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
         7. Col 1:4, “for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints . . .”
         8. 1 Thess 3:6, “But Timothy has just now come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love. He has told us also that you always remember us kindly and long to see us—just as we long to see you.”
         9. 2 Thess 1:3, “We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, be­cause your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of everyone of you for one another is increasing.”
         10. 1 Tim 1:5, “But the aim of such instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good con­science, and sincere faith.”
         11. 1 Tim 1:14, “and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.”
         12. 1 Tim 2:15, “Yet she will be saved through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.”
         13. 1 Tim 4:12, “Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.”
         14. 1 Tim 6:10‑11, “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. 11But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness.”
         15. 2 Tim 1:13, “Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.”
         16. 2 Tim 2:22, “Shun youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.”
         17. 2 Tim 3:10, “Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness . . .”
         18. Titus 2:2, “Tell the older men to be temperate, serious, prudent, and sound in faith, in love, and in endurance.”
         19. Titus 3:15, “All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with all of you.”
         20. Philem 1:5, “because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus.”
      3. verses with only “faith” and “hope”
         1. 2 Cor 10:15, “We do not boast beyond limits, that is, in the labors of others; but our hope is that, as your faith increases, our sphere of action among you may be greatly enlarged . . .”
         2. Gal 5:5, “For through the Spirit, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.”
         3. Col 1:23, “provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard, which has been pro­claimed to every creature under heaven. I, Paul, became a servant of this gospel.”
   2. “In faith, hope, and love the justified man reaches out towards the Father through Christ in the Holy Spirit [better: in the Holy Spirit through Christ towards the Father—Hahn]. Although he is already with God, he is at the same time called by God to himself. God is not only interiorly present to man as the Transcendent; he also stands before him, as the One calling him. The way is Jesus Christ. This way is constantly grasped anew in faith, which produces hope and love as fruits of itself. Faith is the foundation.” (Schmaus 84)
   3. “As faith is the foundation of hope and love, so love is the term of faith [Col 1:4-5; 1 Thess 1:3, 5,8—see quotations above]. Hope is ordered directly to the future. Inasmuch as it is inextricably bound up with faith and love, it carries these two also into the future in their own proper activity. Thus faith, hope, and love as a totality represent a future-orientated reality.” (Schmaus 84)
5. **faith as an element of the state of justification**
   1. scripture
      1. 2 Cor 4:6, “For it is the God who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”
      2. Eph 2:8, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God . . .”
   2. “Since faith, hope, and love are the primary principles of the Christian life, it belongs to moral theology to examine and discuss them thoroughly. But . . . several aspects must be stressed.” (Schmaus 84)
   3. “. . . faith is the movement towards Jesus Christ brought about by God. At the same time it is the act effected by God in which man holds fast to Christ, who is turning towards him and apprehended by him. Faith is the perpetual reaching beyond the self to Jesus Christ and the life of union with him. The encounter and union with Jesus Christ naturally implies an encounter also with the heavenly Father brought about by the Holy Spirit.” (Schmaus 84)
   4. “Included in the assent to Christ is the assent to his teachings, since the word of Jesus cannot be separated from his person. He is the Word of the eternal Father spoken in the world. The Father speaks his Word in history, clothed in the human nature of Jesus. The self-revelation of [84] God transmitted to men by Jesus during his life is the translation into human speech of the Word personally spoken by the Father. To examine and accept Jesus’ words means nothing other than to ponder and accept the Word spoken by the Father (Jn. 1,12).” (Schmaus 84-85) John 1:12, “to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God . . .”
   5. “Thomas Aquinas’s definition of faith as an assent of the intellect moved by the will, as an acceptance on the authority of God of the truth of what God has revealed, is a correct definition but not an exhaustive one. For the holding as true is in reality the holding fast of the personal, incarnate Word of God him­self. The believer does not simply or primarily assent in faith to truths or true statements, essential though this may be; rather, he assents to a living, personal Reality. He is not related to the content of his affirma­tion as subject to object; the relation is that of an encounter between persons—an encounter, to be sure, initiated by Christ. But while under­standing faith as an encounter, one must still say that it includes an intellectual element insofar as it is the affirmation of what has been communicated by Christ to men of the eternal divine decree of salvation.” (Schmaus 85)
   6. “Likewise in Scripture faith is characterized not only as seeing but also as surrender in obedience [John 6:45; Rom 1:5, 17; Rom 3:28; Rom 9:32; Gal 2:16; Eph 2:4-9, 3:16-19]. It involves being convinced of the truth of what is not yet seen, of a hidden reality [Heb 11:1].” (Schmaus 85)
      1. John 6:45, “It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.”
      2. Rom 1:5, “we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles . . .”
      3. Rom 1:17, “in it [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, “The one who is righteous will live by faith.””
      4. Rom 3:28, “we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.”
      5. Rom 9:32, “they [Israel] did not strive for it [righteousness] on the basis of faith, but as if it were based on works.”
      6. Gal 2:16, “we know that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law.”
      7. Eph 2:4-9, “God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us 5even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved . . . 8For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—9not the result of works, so that no one may boast.”
      8. Eph 3:16-19, “I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, 17and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. 18I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”
      9. Heb 11:1, “faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”
   7. “In order that man may know the love of God which appears in Jesus Christ, he must become free of the tyranny of his own spirit and surren­der his power of knowledge to the divine Spirit. Only in the obedient surrender of his spirit to the Spirit of God does man achieve the power to see the realities which are disclosed, and at the same time veiled, in Christ [85] . . . [2 Cor 10:3-6]. In faith man gives up his own undiscerning will [Rom 10:2]. The reality he grasps in his obedient surrender to God is different from the experienced reality which is familiar to the natural man. Even when he “sees” in faith, things remain obscure and strange. They are familiar and unfamiliar at the same time [1 Cor 1:18-31; 2 Cor 5:7].” (Schmaus 85-86)
      1. Rom 10:2, “I can testify that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened.”
      2. 1 Cor 1:18-31, “the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. . . . 20Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. 22For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, 23but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength. 26Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, 29so that no one might boast in the presence of God. 30He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.””
      3. 2 Cor 5:7, “we walk by faith, not by sight.”
      4. 2 Cor 10:3-6, “we live as human beings, but we do not wage war according to human standards; 4for the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments 5and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought cap­tive to obey Christ. 6We are ready to punish every disobedience when your obedience is complete.”
   8. “The primary basis for this twofold character of faith lies in the fact that God himself is a hidden God, that he exists in man as the transcen­dental reality. It is true that he is ever turned towards man in love. But this love is a prudent love, and the hiddenness of God is an element in its prudent character. The God who is always present ontologically becomes present existentially only for the person who is open to him. It is quite possible for a person who does not open himself to God in faith to suppose that God does not exist.” (Schmaus 86)
   9. “The Letter to the Hebrews presents a list of men of faith, attesting to the history of God’s self-revelation and man’s response, with Abraham at the head as the proto­type of all believers . . .: his faith is the model of faith itself. Abraham’s wanderings and Israel’s journey through the desert are the preparation for and the prefiguring of what took place in Christ. The land of Canaan is the earthly image of the future world. Jerusalem is the figure of the city of the future. Man sees these connections through faith without, of course, penetrating them: faith is both a knowing and a not-knowing (Heb. 11,3.8).” (Schmaus 86) Heb 11:3, “By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.” Heb 11:8, “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going.”
   10. “Faith is founded on the unseen, which will become visible only in the future. But . . . the future is in a certain sense already present, for the spiritual energies of the ages to come are already at work (Heb. 6,5)*.* The heavenly city is already dedicated by the blood of Jesus Christ (Heb. 9,24; 12,22f.). Man perceives this city in the distance in faith, but its very remoteness can bring him to doubt from which he is rescued only by his reliance on God’s promise. [86] . . . Since the eschatological fulfillment takes place in the resurrection from the dead, faith in the unseen and in the future becomes faith in the resurrection. Faith exists in the interval between the unfulfilled present and the fulfilling future.” (Schmaus 86-87)
       1. Heb 6:5-6, some “have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6and then have fallen away . . .”
       2. Heb 9:24, “Christ did not enter a sanctuary made by human hands, a mere copy of the true one, but he entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.”
       3. Heb 12:22-23, “you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, 23and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect . . .”
   11. “. . . the intellectual element in faith is frequently represented by the image of light . . .” (Schmaus 87)
       1. “In the Old Testament, light is the symbol of happiness and salvation and is often mentioned in con­nection with life.” (Schmaus 87)
       2. “In the literature of late Judaism an imagery arose in which light and darkness are in sharp opposition: we meet it often in the Qumran texts, where the Sons of Light war against the Sons of Darkness. This dualism of light and darkness is also fundamental to gnosticism.” (Schmaus 87)
       3. “In the New Testament, light as the symbol of salvation is seen in close connection with Jesus Christ. Light is the domain of God and of Christ, and in this sense it is a dimension of the good and of righteousness. Darkness, as the domain of Satan, symbolizes evil and godlessness, even though Satan sometimes clothes himself as an angel of light (Lk. 16,8).” (Schmaus 87) Luke 16:8, “his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light.” [Maybe Schmaus meant 2 Cor 11:14, “Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.”—Hahn]
       4. Paul “avails himself of the symbolism of light. Through Christ light streams into the darkness (2 Cor. 4,4f.; 1 Thess. 5,4ff.). God has rescued us from the realm of dark­ness and placed us in the kingdom of his beloved Son, so that we may share in the inheritance of the saints in the realm of light . . .” (Schmaus 87)
          1. Rom 13:12, “the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light . . .”
          2. 2 Cor 4:4-5, “the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.”
          3. Eph 5:8-14, “For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light . . . 11Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; 13but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, 14for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.””
          4. Col 1:12-13, give “thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son . . .”
          5. 1 Thess 5:4-8, “you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; 5for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. 6So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; 7for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. 8But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.”
          6. 1 Pet 1:9, “you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”
       5. “Those who believe in Christ are going forward towards the full revelation of the light (Acts 22,4f.).” (Schmaus 87) [Acts 22:4-5 are irrelevant; Acts 22:6, 9, and 11 speak of the “great light from heaven” that shone about Paul on the Damascus road.—Hahn]
       6. “We find the light symbolism most frequently and explicitly in John. It recalls the gnostic as well as the Qumran literature . . .” (Schmaus 87)
          1. John 3:19-21, “this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. 20For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. 21But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”
          2. John 8:12, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.”
          3. John 9:5, “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”
          4. John 12:36, “While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light.”
          5. 1 John 1:7, “if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.”
          6. 1 John 2:8-11, “I am writing you a new commandment that is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. 9Whoever says, “I am in the light,” while hating a brother or sister, is still in the darkness. 10Whoever loves a brother or sister lives in the light, and in such a person there is no cause for stumbling. 11But whoever hates another believer is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and does not know the way to go, because the darkness has brought on blindness.”
   12. dead faith
       1. “Considering the place held by faith in the formal structure of justifi­cation, the question arises whether a person who separates himself from Christ and God through falling again into mortal sin loses his faith . . .” (Schmaus 87)
          1. “Not every­one who says to Christ: “Lord, Lord” (Mt. 7,21f.) can call himself Christ’s disciple, but only those who fulfill the will of the heavenly Father . . .” (Schmaus 96)
          2. James 2:14-26, “What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? 15If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, 16and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? 17So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. 18But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. 19You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder. 20Do you want to be shown, you senseless person, that faith apart from works is barren? 21Was not our ancestor Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works. 23Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,” and he was called the friend of God. 24You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. 25Likewise, was not Rahab the prostitute also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by another road? 26For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.”
       2. “The Council of Trent stated that there is an “unformed” faith, a “dead” faith, which is not nourished by love. According to James, the devils also can have such faith . . .” (Schmaus 87)
          1. James 2:17, “faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.”
          2. James 2:19, “You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder.”
          3. James 2:26, “just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.”
       3. “It is a complete mystery how [87] anyone can assent in faith to Jesus Christ, and through him to the Father in heaven, without in some sense loving him. It cannot amount to more than a routine performance, insincere and entirely superficial, too weak to involve any real surrender to God.” (Schmaus 87-88)
       4. “Although this “dead” faith is insufficient for salvation, it is still a gift of God, for it can be the beginning of a revivified submission to God. But it is also described in Scripture as a way to that trembling in which the devils make their submission. In any case, it must be granted that there is a defect of faith in every mortal sin, an absence of living faith.” (Schmaus 88)
   13. “If faith, as a community of existence with Christ, in a certain sense also means a community of mind with him and the heavenly Father and an assent to everything that comes from God, including the creation, then in its most essential sense it does not mean a limitation on human thinking but an expansion and liberation of it. But in binding us to Jesus Christ it offers an assurance against error in the ultimate questions of human life. Since man attains his true self only in self-transcendence, faith is the way to true and living selfhood, the way in which a man truly possesses himself.” (Schmaus 88)
6. **hope as an element of the state of justification**
   1. a general definition of hope: optimistic anticipation that we may in the future have what we desire. (Hahn)
7. **love as an element of the state of justification**
   1. general definitions of love
      1. an inclination of the will toward something desireable
      2. wanting the good for someone
      3. loving something not only for our sake, or for its sake, but also for God’s sake: because God loves it, and we love God, and therefore we love what God loves

### Faith and Theology

1. **introduction**
   1. “We are now in possession of the theological data, that is, the Word of God transmitted to us by the Prophets and the Apostles, and what is today presented to us by the living magisterium of the Church.” (Henry “Theology” 256)
   2. “The believer adheres to the whole of the transmitted message as something to which he can neither add nor subtract since it was given to him from on high. . . . He has no right to touch it.” (Henry “Theology” 256)
2. “**faith does violence to the intelligence**” (Henry “Theology” 256)
   1. “Nevertheless, the believer is also a being endowed with intelligence, and therein precisely lies the paradox which stimulates and crucifies him. On the one hand, as an intelligent being, he is made to see and to understand; so long as he does not see, he will never be satisfied. On the other hand, being still in the realm of faith, that is, in the impossibility of seeing, his intelligence must hold as certain truths which he has merely heard (Rom. 10:17), which surpass and will always surpass his natural capacity to understand them.” (Henry “Theology” 256) Rom 10:17, “So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.”
   2. “In a sense, therefore, faith does violence to the intelligence. It is not reason abandoned to its natural power which allows the believer to know what he knows by faith. It is the grace of God sown in him which is the inner light for his mind and the secret power of adhesion for his will. In addition, by reason of the violence done to his intelligence, the faith of the believer is spontaneously a desire to see, a need to understand. What intelligence would not desire to see what it holds to be more than itself since, in order to hold it, it had first of all to renounce itself? As paradoxical as that may seem, an intelligence which in no way seeks to understand shows by the very fact how little it is interested in what is said to it, how little it has committed itself, . . . how little it believes.” (Henry “Theology” 256)
3. **faith seeking understanding**
   1. “On the other hand, he who by his adhesion has accepted [256] to renounce himself shows what interest he attaches to Him who speaks; he considers Him as a light which surpasses any other that he can have, and strengthened by what he holds and desirous of entering into this light completely, he does not cease to press Him with the question: What do You mean? Make me to understand so that I do not adhere just with the tip of my tongue but with my whole heart, with my whole being; lead me, make me enter into the truth of Your words. The Christian lays hold on the word of God, and even if he has learned that here below he cannot entirely lift the veil, he has no rest until he attains deeper, more coherent, more extended knowledge of it. *Crede ut intelligas*. He believes in order to understand. Living faith is always in quest of understanding.” (Henry “Theology” 256-57)
   2. “This search for understanding on the part of an intelligence adhering to the true faith is precisely the task of the theologian.” (Henry “Theology” 257)
   3. “Irenaeus (*Against Heresies* 1.10.3. Ante-Nicene Fathers. Ed. Roberts and Donaldson. New York: Scribners, 1926. 1: 331): “His task is to bring out the meaning of those things which have been spoken in parables, and accommodate them to the general scheme of the faith; and explain the operation and dispensation of God connected with human salvation; show that God manifested longsuffering in regard to the apostasy of the angels who transgressed, as also with respect to the disobedience of men; set forth why it is that one and the same God has made some things temporal and some eternal, some heavenly and others earthly; understand for what reason God, though invisible, manifested Himself to the prophets not under one form, but differently to different individuals; show why it was that more covenants than one were given to mankind; teach what was the special character of each of these covenants; search out for what reason “God hath concluded every man in unbelief, that He may have mercy upon all”; gratefully describe on what account the Word of God became flesh and suffered; relate why the advent of the Son of God took place in these last times, that is, in the end, rather than in the beginning; unfold what is contained in the Scriptures concerning the end and the things to come; not be silent as to how it is that God has made the Gentiles, whose salvation was despaired of, fellow-heirs, and of the same body and partakers with the saints; discourse how it is that “this mortal body shall put on immortality and this corruptible flesh shall put on incorruption”; and proclaim in what sense (God) says, “That is a people who was not a people; and she is beloved who was not beloved”; and in what sense he says that “more and more are the children of her that was desolate than of her who possessed a husband.”” (Qtd. in Henry, “Theology” 257)
   4. “The theologian must [275] remain very humble in his work and remember the relativity of the arguments he uses as contrasted with the faith that everyone holds.” (Liégé “Believer” 275, 277)
   5. “Under one aspect, [theological] reflection adds nothing to the faith and has for its sole aim the interiorizing of the Word of God in the human mind, a task, moreover, in which it never perfectly succeeds.” (Liégé “Believer” 277)
   6. “Under another aspect, theological reflection adds explanations or conclusions to the Word of God which we must define as to their truth value and as to the obligation they impose upon the mind of the believer. It is a testimony to our respect for the sovereignty of the Word of God that we do not identify with it affirmations which, although made in continuity with this Word, call for the intervention of truths of human origin.” (Liégé “Believer” 277)
   7. “. . . to despise theological reflection under the pretext that it goes beyond the pure affirmation of the Word of God would be to deprive ourselves . . .” (Liégé “Believer” 277)
      1. Theological reflection is “an instrument for penetrating this Word . . .” (Liégé “Believer” 277)
      2. “. . . when a believer spontaneously reflects on his faith to any degree whatsoever, he is theologizing . . . inevitable theological affirmations accompany it [faith].” (Liégé “Believer” 277)
      3. “. . . it is much better to do it [theological reflection] consciously in order to judge exactly in what measure the absolute character of the affirmation of faith affects the inevitable theological affirmations . . .” (Liégé “Believer” 277)

# Scripture and Tradition

## Scripture

### The Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Bible

Paul Hahn

First let us consider the etymologies of “inspiration” and “inerrancy.” The root of “inspiration” is the Latin *spir-*, meaning “breath,” “wind,” or “soul” (as in “spirit”).[[1]](#footnote-1) “Inspiration” is applied to the Bible because the authority of the words God breathed to the prophets (“Hear the word of the Lord,” “The word of the Lord came to me,” etc., over 500 times in the prophets) came to be recognized as invested in the written texts also. As 2 Tim 3:16 says, “All scripture is inspired by God” (*theopneustos*, literally “God-breathed”). The root of “inerrancy” is *err-*, as in “error.” Inerrancy means the Bible is without error.

Most Christian denominations teach that the Bible is inspired and without error, but *how* it is inspired and *how* it is without error is explained differently. Let us begin with inspiration. There are two basic positions.

The first is the *dictation theory*, the idea that God dictated the words of scripture to the biblical writers. The dictation theory has been a tendency throughout Church history; some medieval paintings show a dove—the Holy Spirit—perched on an evangelist’s shoulder with its beak in his ear. But the theory hardened with the Protestant Reformation. Seeing every word of scripture as directly from God bolstered the Protestant claim that the only authority in religion is scripture.[[2]](#footnote-2) Already in 1566, to fix the authority of every detail of scripture, the *Second Helvetic Confession*, “one of the most authoritative statements of Reformed theology” (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, “Helvetic Confession”), asserted that even the vowel points in the Hebrew text were divinely inspired (Pelikan 4.346-47)—even though the vowel points were not added until the 800s ad! But the dictation theory reached its climax in American evangelicalism: “evangelical discussions concerning verbal inspiration . . . are dictation theories” (Trembath 91).

The second of the basic positions concerning inspiration has no fixed name but might be called the *subtle theory* of inspiration. God’s action on those who contributed to the biblical text is imagined, not as a blatant dropping of words into an author’s mind, but as a more subtle process: prompting an idea here, causing a sentence structure or word choice to well up there. It is not necessary that the author even know that God is influencing him; it is even probable in many cases that he did not.

One advantage to the subtle theory is that it allows the human authors to contribute to scripture. In the dictation theory, the human authors are mere “secretaries” (as the *Second Hel­vetic Confession* calls them): God’s words drip into their heads and flow out their arms, but their minds and personalities are shunted aside. The subtle theory, on the other hand, explains why the styles of biblical authors vary. Mark, for example, writes “gutter Greek”: he thinks in Aramaic, he constructs simple sentences, and his vocabulary is “street language” that contemporary Greeks would have found at times offensive. Luke, on the other hand, writes exquisite Greek: he crafts elegant periodic sentences, he uses admired rhetorical flourishes, and he selects vocabulary acceptable in polite society. If God equally dictated Mark’s, Luke’s, and the other biblical authors’ words, why are not all biblical books in one style—“God’s style,” whatever that is?

Which theory of inspiration one holds will determine which theory of inerrancy one holds. All believers agree that “God can neither deceive nor be deceived” (cannot lie or make an error); so if one believes that God dictated every word of scripture, then the Bible must be absolutely inerrant, i.e., must contain no error of any kind. But if one believes that God subtly influenced the human authors, it need not follow that every detail of scripture is literally true. So the dictation theory of inspiration requires a theory of absolute inerrancy, but the subtle theory of inspiration permits a theory of limited inerrancy.

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| --- | --- |
| *theory of inspiration* | *theory of inerrancy* |
| dictation theory → | absolute inerrancy |
| subtle theory → | limited inerrancy |

Today, the combination of dictation theory and theory of absolute inerrancy is called “fundamentalism.” The term came about in this way. The anti-intellectual (Hofstadter 28-141) theology of American frontier tent revivals was incorporated into a series of Bible conferences in the late 1800s; the conferences’ theology in turn was embodied in a series of twelve booklets, *The Fundamentals*, in 1909-1912. The term “fundamentalism” was coined in 1920 to refer to the theology of *The Fundamentals*. The booklets “presupposed the verbal inspiration of scripture in every detail as the basis for their whole system . . . Christian orthodoxy was identified with biblical inerrancy” (Hudson 147-48). The booklets covered doctrines besides inspiration and inerrancy: they affirmed the virgin birth, bodily resurrection, and so on; but today this broader theology of conservative American Protestantism is called “evangelicalism,” while “fundamentalism” is used to emphasize the evangelical approach to scripture. Present-day denominations that tend toward fundamentalism include Southern Baptists, the Assemblies of God, Pentecostal churches, “non-denominational” churches, and others.

One advantage to the subtle theory of inspiration is that it explains the diversity of styles in scripture. Similarly, one advantage to the theory of limited inerrancy is that it explains the many contradictions that actually exist in scripture. Fundamentalists, of course, deny on *a priori* grounds that the Bible has contradictions. This forces them to defend themselves against the hundreds of contradictions that can be found in scripture; for if even one contradiction can be shown to exist in scripture, then the whole fundamentalist position collapses.[[3]](#footnote-3) But which is better: to presume *a priori* that God must have inspired in this way, and therefore that the scriptures are inerrant in this way; or to begin with the Bible *as it actually is*, and to infer from the nature of the text how God apparently inspired and therefore how the scriptures are inerrant?

The theory of limited inerrancy is able to explain contradictions in scripture because it does not demand that inerrancy extend to the whole of scripture. The biblical quality of *inspiration* extends to the whole of scripture, because God was always present and influencing the contributors to the Bible; but the biblical quality of *inerrancy*, though it results from inspiration, does not extend to the whole of scripture, since God was not concerned, apparently, with the truth of peripheral details. If the Bible is imagined as a circle, then the circle of inspiration coincides with the biblical circle, i.e., extends to its periphery; but the circle of inerrancy is smaller, lying somewhere between the periphery and the center.

The crucial question is, of course: where does one draw the line? Which are the “peripheral details” with whose truth God was not apparently concerned? Clarity in this matter has been emerging only gradually over the past several centuries.

One type of assertion in the Bible that is now recognized as not necessarily inerrant is scientific truths. The Galileo case was an important episode here. Until the 1500s everyone accepted geocentrism (sun, planets, and stars revolve around the earth); one only needed to look up to prove it.[[4]](#footnote-4) But in 1543, the Polish priest Nicolaus Copernicus presented arguments for heliocentrism (planets revolve around the sun). Only ten people were convinced during the 1500s (*Encarta*, “Copernicus”), but one of them was the Italian Galileo Galilei. When the Church was considering condemning heliocentrism in the 1610s, Galileo set about reminding the Church “of its standing practice of interpreting Scripture allegorically whenever it came into conflict with scientific truth, quoting patristic authorities and warning that it would be ‘a terrible detriment for the souls if people found themselves convinced by proof of something that it was made then a sin to believe’” (de Santillana ??need bib entry). But scripture supported geocentrism (Mark 1:32, for example, refers to the sun *going down*), and the Church in 1616 declared heliocentrism erroneous. In 1633, the Inquisition tried Galileo for heresy, forced him to curse heliocentrism, and placed him under house arrest for the last eight years of his life.

Since then the Church has come to realize that statements in scripture referring to the subjects of the natural sciences need not always be taken literally. Pope Leo XIII in the encyclical *Providentissimus Deus* (1893) said:

There can never, indeed, by any real discrepancy between the theologian and the physicist . . . If dissension should arise between them, here is the rule also laid down by St. Augus­tine [ad 357-430] for the theologian: “Whatever they can really demonstrate to be true of physical nature we must show to be capable of reconciliation with our Scriptures.” . . . The Catholic interpreter . . . should show that these facts of natural science which investigators affirm to be now quite certain are not contrary to the Scripture rightly explained . . . (*Rome* 21-23)

Leo added a caution: one “must, nevertheless, always bear in mind, that much which has been held and proved as certain has afterwards been called in question and rejected” (*Rome* 23).

Fifty years later, Pope Pius XII in the encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (1943) indicated that even historical references in scripture need not be literally true.

. . . discov­eries [in] archaeology or in ancient history or literature . . . make better known the mentality of the ancient writers . . . the ancient peoples of the East, in order to express their ideas, did not always employ those forms or kinds of speech which we use today: but rather those used by the men of their times and countries. What those exactly were the commentator cannot deter­mine in advance, but only after a careful examina­tion of the ancient literature of the East. (*Rome* 97-99)

Again a useful caution was appended: “if the wished-for solution [to a given difficulty in scripture] be slow in coming or does not satisfy us, since perhaps a successful conclusion may be reserved to posterity, let us not wax impatient . . . No wonder if to one or the other question no solution wholly satisfactory will ever be found . . .” (*Rome* 101)

Finally, Vatican Council II, a meeting of all the Catholic bishops in the world from 1962-1965, recognized that even *religious* statements in scripture need not always be true. In *Dei Verbum* (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*, 1965), the council pointed out that revelation in the Bible is *progressive*: what is said at one place in scripture may be corrected or overturned at another place. This principle of progressive revelation, long recognized in Catholic exegesis (biblical interpretation), appears several times in *Dei Verbum*. For example:

* Christ is “the fullness of all revelation” (ch. 1 § 2). If Christ is the fullness, then what preceded him must have been less than full. Therefore, scripture leading up to Christ, the Old Testament, contains religious affirmations that are inadequate or incorrect.
* Vatican II says this explicitly elsewhere in the document: the Old Testament books “contain some things which are incomplete and temporary . . .” (ch. 4 § 15).
* “Israel daily gained a deeper and clearer understanding of His ways . . .” (ch. 4 § 14) Therefore, later understandings in the Old Testament that contravene earlier ones are generally to be preferred.
* “The word of God . . . shows its power in a most excellent way in the writings of the New Testament. . . . This mystery had not been manifested to other generations as it was now revealed . . .” (ch. 5 § 17)
* There is progressive revelation even within the New Testament: for in “the epistles of St. Paul and other apostolic writings [Jesus’] true teaching is more and more fully stated . . . For the Lord Jesus was with His apostles as He had promised (see Matt. 28:20) and sent them the advocate Spirit who would lead them into the fullness of truth [John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7, 13-14] . . .” (ch. 5 § 20)

By affirming the principle of progressive revelation, *Dei Verbum* indicated that even religious statements must be assessed in context before being accepted as inerrant. But the document went further. In the most authoritative statement on inerrancy by the Catholic Church to date, the council asserted: “the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching firmly, faithfully, and *without error* that truth which God wanted put into the sacred writings for the sake of our salvation” (ch. 3 § 11, italics added). The Bible does not teach inerrantly every statement of scripture, not even every religious statement; what it *does* teach inerrantly is those statements which assert salvific truth.[[5]](#footnote-5) To use the image of circles again: the set of all assertions in the Bible is of wider compass than the set of assertions declaring truths necessary for salvation.

The gradual recognition that inerrancy is limited was well summarized a quarter of a century ago by the Catholic scripture scholar, Raymond Brown (115):

Only gradually have we learned to distinguish that while all Scripture is inspired, all Scripture is not inerrant. . . . not every affirmation of truth is so germane to God’s purpose in inspiring the Scriptures that He has committed Himself to it. Already in *Providen­tis­simus Deus* (1893) Pope Leo XIII acknowledged that the scientific affirmations of the Bible were not necessarily inerrant, since it was not God’s purpose to teach men science. Eventually the same principle was applied to historical affirmations, but the last frontier has been religious affirmations. . . . Vatican II has made it possible to restrict inerrancy to the essential religious affirmations of a biblical book made for the sake of our salvation.

The subtle theory of inspiration and the theory of limited inerrancy are the established teaching of the Catholic Church. They seem also to be the understanding of inspiration and inerrancy in Eastern Orthodox and in “mainline” Protestant churches: Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, and so on.

### Development of the Old Testament Canon

(“Canon”: list or set of authoritative religious books.)

**1000-50 bc**: The Old Testament (hereafter “OT”) books are written.

**c**. **250-100 bc**: Rabbis translate the OT from Hebrew to Greek, a trans­la­tion called the “Septuagint” (abbreviation: “LXX”).

**c**. **ad 51-125**: New Testament authors use the LXX as their scriptures.

**c**. **ad 75-117**: Rabbis at an academy in Jamnia discuss the canon.

**by ad 200**: Jews have a closed canon of 39 books.

**by ad 200**: Christians in the Western Roman Empire are settling on 46 books; those in the Eastern Roman Empire are settling on 48 books.

**ad 384-405**: Jerome translates the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin (called the “Vulgate”). He wants to limit the OT to the 39 books of the Jewish canon; the 7 he would leave out (Tobit, Judith, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach [or “Ecclesi­asticus”], and Bar­uch) he calls “apo­crypha” that is, “hidden or private books.” But Pope Damasus wants all 46 traditionally-used books included, so the Vulgate OT has 46 books.

**ad 1536**: Luther publishes his translation of the Bible from Hebrew (OT) and Greek (NT) to German. He assumes that, since Jews wrote the Old Testament, theirs is the correct canon; he puts the extra 7 books in an appendix between the Testaments that he calls the “Apocry­pha.”

**ad 1442**: The Catholic Church at the Council of Florence lists 46 books as the OT canon.

**ad 1546**: The Catholic Church at the Council of Trent defines the canonicity of all 46 Old Testament books. Today, 75% of Christians (981 million Catholics, 61% of Christians; and 218 mil­lion Orthodox, 14%) include the 7 books (the Orthodox also include 1 Esdras and 3 Maccabees, for a total of 48); and 25% of Christians (404 mil­lion Protestants) have 39. (Population figures are for 1996, from the *1997 Britannica Book of the Year*.)

### Development of the New Testament Canon

**c**. **ad 51-125**: The New Testament books are written. (During this same per­iod other early Christian writings are produced—for example, *1 Clement* [c. ad 96], the *Didache* [c. 100], the *Epistle of Barnabas* [c. 100], and the 7 letters of Ignatius of Antioch [c. 110]). These works are basically or­thodox, but they are not in the NT probably because it never became tra­di­tion in the Church to use them in public worship.

**c**. **ad 140**: Marcion, a businessman in Rome, teaches that there are two Gods: Yahweh, the cruel God of the OT, and Abba, the kind God of the NT. So Mar­cion eliminates the OT altogether and creates a Christian collection containing ⅔ of Luke’s gospel (since Marcion is anti-Sem­i­tic, he deletes references to Jesus’ Jewishness) and 10 letters of Paul. Marcion’s “New Tes­ta­ment”—­the first ever compiled—forces the Catholic Church to decide on a core canon: the four gospels and the letters of Paul.

**c**. **ad 200**: But the perimeter of the canon is not yet determined. According to one list, compiled at Rome c. ad 200 (the *Muratorian Canon*), the NT consists of the 4 gospels, Acts, 13 letters of Paul, 3 of the 7 general epistles (1-2 John and Jude), the Wisdom of Solomon, and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 3 John, and Revelation are not included.

**ad 367**: The earliest extant list of the books of the NT, in about the number and order in which we presently have them, is written by Athanasius, Bishop of Alex­an­dria, in his Easter letter of 367.

**ad 404**: Pope Damasus in a letter lists the NT books in their present number and order.

**ad 1442**: The Catholic Church at the Council of Florence lists 27 books as the New Testament canon.

**ad 1536**: In his translation of the Bible, Luther re­moves 4 NT books (Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation) from their normal order and places them at the end, stating that they are less than canonical. But soon the Lutherans return to custom, and the books are back in place.

**ad 1546**: The Council of Trent defines once and for all the full list of 27 books, as traditionally accepted.

## Tradition

### Apostolic Tradition

1. “**authorized witnesses**” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 30)
   1. “It is the history of public revelation that only a few people have been chosen to be its direct recipients; all others have to rely on the testimony of witnesses to it.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 30)
      1. Acts 10:40-41, “God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, 41not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses . . .”
      2. Eph 2:19-21, “the household of God [is] 20built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. 21In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord . . .”
   2. In revealed religion, “the ultimate authority is God the Revealer, and the absolute truth of his Word. The role of any human mediator, whether prophet, apostle, bishop or theologian, is to help others to know what God has said, and what his Word means here and now. Once the hearers recognise the message to be truly a Word of God, (and in this recognition the interior witness of the Spirit has its part to play), their act of faith is directed not to the human bearer of the message, but to the Word itself, and to God who has spoken it. The motive of the act of faith is not the reliability of the human messenger, but the truth of the Word itself as Word of God.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 29)
   3. “However, for the act of faith to be a reasonable decision, and not a rash leap in the dark, the hearers of the message need to be sufficiently certain that what is proposed to them as revealed truth is actually God’s Word.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 29)
      1. “The interior witness of the Spirit will help them to discern the presence of God’s Word, but this is usually not sufficient by itself.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 29)
      2. “The hearers have to be convinced of the reliability of the one who tells [29] them that this is what God has said.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 29-30)
      3. “The reliability or trustworthiness of the witness to God’s Word, while not the motive of the act of faith, is important as providing reasonable certitude that God really has spoken this Word.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 30)
   4. “All Christians agree that the apostles, and the ‘apostolic men’ who were the authors of the New Testament, were chosen by God as authorised witnesses to the Christ-event. By their witness to Christ they gathered disciples who accepted their testimony ‘not as the word of men but as what it really is, the Word of God’ (1 Thess 2:13). Those who received this Word ‘devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching’ (Acts 2:42). The teaching of the apostles was recognised as normative for the faith of the Christian community, for they were the authoritative witnesses to what God had revealed in his Son Jesus Christ.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 30)
   5. “The Apostles hold a unique status in salvation history by reason of their immediate contact with the Incarnate Word [1 John 1:1] and their Pentecostal experience.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
   6. “Our knowledge of this revelation comes to us through the witness of the apostles and the apostolic Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 12)
   7. “Witness of the apostles” includes the witness of the twelve and of Paul. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 10)
   8. It includes others as well.
      1. 1 Cor 15:5-7, “he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. 7Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.”
      2. “All the apostles” here is not “synonymous with ‘the Twelve’ to whom he had already appeared . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 10)
   9. “Apostolic witness” includes “ultimately the witness of the apostolic Church, that is, the Christian Church of the period during which the New Testament was being written. This was the time of Christian revelation, and it is generally agreed that such revelation, which came to its definitive climax in Christ’s resurrection and glorification as Lord at the right hand of the Father, was complete at the end of the apostolic period.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 10)
2. **contents of the apostolic witness**
   1. apostolic tradition
      1. “In order to communicate to others what they had [known], the apostles had to use human means of communication: words, gestures, actions. Not only [12] words, of course: for they communicated the sacramental presence of Jesus himself in the eucharist, and they communicated the Holy Spirit in baptism and the laying on of hands. They communicated the way of life which they had learned from watching Jesus live and die: they communicated this by their own way of living and dying for him.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 12-13)
      2. So “no series of human words or propositions could ever adequately convey the total reality of this self-revelation of God in the Christ-event.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 12)
      3. “What the apostles handed on could not possibly be reduced to a series of propositions. For what they witnessed to was their experience of the Word of God made flesh.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 10)
         1. 1 John 1:1-3, “We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—2this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—3we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.”
      4. “What the [10] apostles handed on was not just the words of Jesus, as they remembered them, but the Word Himself, as they had experienced him: the whole Christ-event, which could never be reduced to words, so that any written account would never exhaust the reality of it . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 10-11)
         1. John 21:25, “But there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.”
      5. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* §§ 7-8): “the apostles, by their oral preaching, by example, and by ordinances, handed on what they had received from the lips of Christ, from living with him, and from what he did, or what they had learned through the prompting of the Holy Spirit. . . . Now what was handed on by the apostles includes everything which contributes to the holiness of life, and the increase in faith of the People of God.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 10)
      6. “. . . the apostles handed on their witness to Christ not only by preaching and writing but also by initiating a tradition of a Christian way of life, prayer and worship . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 11)
   2. scripture
      1. “. . . the inspired writings of the New Testament . . . could not possibly exhaust its [apostolic tradition’s] riches.” Nevertheless, they “embody a privileged witness to apostolic tradition . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 11)
      2. “Apostolic witness” includes “all the inspired writings of the New Testament, whether their authors were ‘apostles’ in the strict sense or not.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 10)
   3. creeds
      1. The transmission of tradition was “Not only by words, . . . [but it was] necessarily by words, if the Christian community was going to be united in a common profession of faith. The sharing of a profession of faith necessarily involved putting the basic elements of faith into propositions to which all would give their assent. We see already in the New Testament a number of such brief, basic confessions in propositional form . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 13)
         1. 1 Cor 12:3, “Jesus is Lord!”
         2. Rom 10:9, “Jesus is Lord and . . . God raised him from the dead . . .”
         3. 1 Cor 15:3-5, “For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, 4and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, 5and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.”
         4. 1 John 4:2-3 has a “requirement of a common confession”: “By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 13)
      2. “. . . propositions are necessary if the Church is going to have a common profession of faith, and indeed if there is going to be an intellectual content to which one gives intellectual assent in the act of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 13)
      3. “The practice of the Church, from the apostolic period on, of requiring of candidates for baptism the profession of faith according to a creed, is a clear indication of its realisation that basic elements of the faith could be expressed in propositions, and that the acceptance of [13] certain propositions as enunciated in the creed was an appropriate way for the new Christian to profess his faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 13-14)

### Divine Apostolic Tradition

1. **introduction**
   1. “The second among the theological places is, like Holy Scripture itself, also a source of divine public revelation. It is the only other point at which we may look for the teaching which God has given . . . all that God put into [revelation] is contained either upon the inspired pages of Holy Scripture or in the divine apostolic tradition itself.” (Fenton 97)
2. **traditions within the Church**
   1. three types of tradition
      1. “*divine apostolic tradition*” (“*unwritten tradition*,” “*oral tradition*”): “This divine apostolic tradition is the unwritten teaching of the apostolic college, the doctrine which they taught and presented to the Church as having been the message of our Lord Himself, and thus divinely revealed to man.” (Fenton 97)
         1. “. . . truths which are contained in the divine apostolic tradition . . . are said to be unwritten merely in the sense that they are not proposed on the pages of inspired Scripture.” (Fenton 99)
         2. “Those truths which constitute this *unwritten tradition* enter into the rule of faith in the same way as does Sacred Scripture itself.” (Fenton 99)
         3. “For example, the truths of the Immaculate Conception and of the perpetual virginity of our Lady form a part of the content of Christian revelation, although they are not taught explicitly in any inspired book.” (Fenton 99)
         4. “. . . the traditions of Christ and of the Apostles . . ., since they have not been written, but have come down to us orally, are rightly called oracles of the living voice.” (Fenton 82)
      2. “*merely apostolic traditions*”: “distinct from this divine apostolic tradition [are] certain other traditions which are merely [97] apostolic . . . The merely apostolic tradition is teaching given to the Church by the Apostles themselves, either individually or collectively. It is, however, doctrine which the Apostles offered precisely on their own authority . . .” (Fenton 97-98)
      3. “*ecclesial traditions*”: also “distinct from this divine apostolic tradition [are] . . . others again which are merely ecclesiastical. . . . The ancient ecclesiastical traditions come from early leaders within the Church, but again they rest upon the authority of those leaders alone. They are not offered as having been taught by Jesus Christ as a part of that divine message which all men are called upon to accept with the assent of divine faith.” (Fenton 98)
3. **priority of tradition to the New Testament books**
   1. “For the first few years in the life of the Catholic Church, this divine apostolic tradition was the only source [of] Christian teachings . . .” (Fenton 98)
      1. True if “Christian teachings” includes only divine apostolic traditions.—Hahn
      2. True if “divine apostolic tradition” were changed to simply “tradition.”—Hahn
      3. Not true if “Christian teachings” includes merely apostolic traditions and ecclesial traditions.—Hahn
   2. The New Testament books “expressed the then existent fund of divine tradition, although, of course, from time to time, truths which had not hitherto been communicated to man were set forth upon the sacred pages.” (Fenton 98)
   3. “No one of these books claimed, singly or collectively, to express the entire content of Christian revelation.” (Fenton 98)
      1. Actually, . . . they pointed to an already existing and well-known deposit of divine apostolic tradition.” (Fenton 98)
      2. 2 Tim 1:13, “Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me . . .”
4. “**divine apostolic tradition as a source of revelation distinct from scripture**” (Fenton 98)
   1. “It is of faith that not all of the public revelation which God has given to the world is actually expressed and contained on the pages of [98] Sacred Scripture.” (Fenton 98-99)
   2. “Like the revealed truths set down [in scripture], these unwritten verities are infallibly taught, guarded, propounded, and explained by the Catholic Church.” (Fenton 99)
   3. “Like the truths contained in Sacred Scripture, these facts which are stated in divine apostolic tradition are to be defended and expressed in the science of sacred theology.” (Fenton 99)
   4. “However, they have been committed to writing in noninspired works long ago. We can find this tradition expressed
      1. “in the works of the Fathers,
         1. [“A doctrine can be recognized as a component part of this oral tradition when a moral unanimity among the Fathers who deal with this matter set down as something which has been revealed . . . a truth which is not conveyed in [scripture].” (Fenton 99)]
      2. “in the documents of the councils,
      3. “and in the formularies of faith adopted and utilized by the Catholic Church.” (Fenton 99)
   5. “What the Fathers and the councils mention as the content of Catholic faith naturally includes all of the truth which has been brought to the world through our Lord.” (Fenton 99)
      1. Some of the truth is mentioned in scripture.
      2. “That portion of this public revelation which has always been proposed as such by the Catholic Church, but which is not contained in inspired Scripture constitutes . . . divine and apostolic tradition.” (Fenton 99)
      3. “Naturally this body of doctrine includes the authentic interpretation of those truths which are conveyed in Scripture itself. The sense or meaning of the Scriptures is something which the Church [99] has possessed from the very beginning. The Scriptures would be useless as a practical rule of faith apart from the divine and apostolic tradition by which they are explained and understood. But with the Scripture, this tradition constitutes the great source in which all of the truth which is to be expounded in the process of sacred theology is contained.” (Fenton 99-100)

### Scripture and Tradition I

1. **the gospel**’**s presence in the Church**
   1. The Word of God lives in Tradition, which is “the realistic consciousness of the Church of Christ animated by the Spirit of Truth.” (Liégé “Sources” 10)
   2. “Spiritual consciousness is the possession of an object, the dwelling of another being in oneself, and the power to recognize, the power of becoming aware of this object or this person. . . . In speaking, then, of the Tradition as the consciousness of the Church, we can have reference either to the objective aspect (the content of the Word of God), or to the subjective aspect (the power of recognizing and of affirming this same word) . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 10)
2. **the Church**’**s object of consciousness**
   1. The object of the Church’s consciousness “is the Word of God as has been said, but that hardly advances our understanding of its reality.” (Liégé “Sources” 10)
   2. “Let us look again at the analogy of human consciousness: in order to understand the concepts of a mind we must have recourse to the expressions of this thought. What, then, are the expressions which Tradition uses to manifest itself? A text of the Council of Trent [was] repeated by the Vatican Council.” (Liégé “Sources” 10)
   3. Vatican I (citing Trent, session 4, 8 Apr. 1546): “the Gospel [was] promised *formerly* by the prophets in the Sacred Scriptures, *first* promulgated by the Son of God, Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who *then* ordered that it be preached by His Apostles to all men as being the source of every salutary truth and of all moral [10] discipline; . . . this truth and this discipline are found contained in the written books and in the unwritten traditions which, having been received by the Apostles from Jesus Christ Himself, or transmitted as though from hand to hand by the Apostles themselves at the dictation of the Holy Spirit, have come down to us; [Trent] following the examples of the orthodox Fathers receives and venerates with equal piety and reverence, both all the *Books* of the Old and New Testament since both have for Author the one and the same God, and also the *traditions* themselves whether having to do with faith or morals, in so far as they have been dictated orally by Christ, or by the Holy Spirit, and conserved in the Catholic Church with uninterrupted continuity.” (Qtd. in Liégé, “Sources” 1: 10-11)
   4. “This text demands a commentary . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 11)
      1. “What we have named Tradition, the Council calls “the Gospel conserved in the Church, the source of every salutary truth and of all moral discipline.” This Gospel is the Word of God confided to apostolic preaching.” (Liégé “Sources” 11)
      2. “The Holy Books themselves are not the living Gospel purely and simply; they contain it and are its written form—one expression of it. Tradition remains the source.” (Liégé “Sources” 11)
      3. Tradition, apostolic traditions, ecclesiastical traditions
         1. *Tradition*: Tradition is “the living Gospel purely and simply . . . Tradition remains the source. . . . . . . the Scriptures and apostolic traditions are judged in the light of the living Tradition, the living, conscious communion which binds the Church to Christ.” (Liégé “Sources” 11)
         2. *apostolic traditions*: “Besides the Holy Books, the Word of God is also expressed in the unwritten *traditions* (which we must not confuse with Tradition), in the institutions of Christian worship or practice founded by Jesus Christ or by the Apostles at the dictation of the Spirit, which have been faithfully transmitted in the life of the Church from the beginning. . . . the sacraments may be considered prime examples . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 11)
         3. *ecclesiastical traditions*: “These traditions are concerned with essential faith and morals and, therefore, are not to be confused with all the pious customs and diverse practices which appear and disappear according to time, place, and culture in the life of the Church (ecclesiastical traditions).” (Liégé “Sources” 11)
   5. “A question still remains: namely, to know whether Scripture and the [apostolic] traditions are complementary expressions of God’s Word, or whether Scripture alone already contains the whole Word.” (Liégé “Sources” 11)
      1. “If we conceive the mystery of Christ as a living whole and not as a collection of principles to [11] be believed and practiced, we have many reasons to think that the apostolic preaching which was consigned to writing transmits to us the entirety of the mystery.” (Liégé “Sources” 11-12)
      2. “Such was the thought of the Fathers of the first centuries, on condition, evidently, that Scripture was read in the Church.” (Liégé “Sources” 12)
      3. “*In the Church*, means first with the active commentary provided by the worship and moral practices of the Christian community: thus it is that the reality of the communion of saints expressed in the epistles of St. Paul was better perceived in the light of the spontaneous practice of the cult of the martyrs.” (Liégé “Sources” 12)
      4. “*In the Church*, also means in the loving contemplation of the Body of Christ of its Head and in the conformity of its life to the spirit of its Saviour.” (Liégé “Sources” 12)
      5. “The Scriptures and traditions, as two expressions of the one Word, constantly refer to each other . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 12)
         1. “. . . the living traditions receive an explanation from Scripture.” (Liégé “Sources” 12)
         2. “What is contained by way of outline in the written Gospel has light thrown upon it by traditions which are in their own way also bearers of the mystery of Christ.” (Liégé “Sources” 12)
   6. “When the life of the Church points up an aspect of this Mystery which has until then lain implicitly in Tradition, this new dogma will be linked to one or the other expression of the Word of God in the Church. In many cases we can show why this new aspect has become explicit.” (Liégé “Sources” 12)
      1. “For example, the dogma of original sin was affirmed principally because of the practice of infant baptism; without this practice the dogma could hardly have been read out of St. Paul so easily.” (Liégé “Sources” 12)
      2. “We can also understand why Pius XII, in defining the Assumption of Mary, affirms that this dogma “rests on the Sacred Scriptures” although, historically speaking, it is not by a penetration of such or such a scriptural text that this aspect of the Christian Mystery has been manifested.” (Liégé “Sources” 12)
3. **the Bible and the Church**
   1. Augustine (*Exposition of St*. *John’s Gospel* 18 ch. 1): “Do you want to know how heresies are produced? The Scriptures, which are good in themselves, were badly interpreted, and it was precisely this bad interpretation that men supported with audacity and assurance.” (Qtd. in Liégé, “Sources” 1: 12)
   2. “The heretic’s mistake is to treat Scripture as though it were a self-sufficient and didactic text. Now a non-didactic text like the Bible must always be read in a synthetic context: a synthesis of expression and a synthesis of thought. After all, any text has to be read in the thought context from which it has proceeded. The Church of Pentecost contains [12] the living thought of Christ. It is by communion with her that we are assured of finding Christ in Scripture; of understanding what is said there obscurely or only in passing without stumbling over the narrownesses and the archaic condition of an ancient text; of making the separation between the sociological expression and the absolute expression of the writing. . . . We must see Scripture *in* the Church, not Scripture *and* the Church or the Church *and* Scripture.” (Liégé “Sources” 12-13)
   3. “The Church does not pass judgement on the Word of God since she is contemporaneous with and witness of that Word; but she has power over the interpretation of the written word in order to insure a greater interior fidelity, and she judges an interpretation of the Word . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 13)
4. **the Bible and our faith**
   1. “I find Christ, the object of my faith, in the expressions of Tradition, expressions which are constantly evaluated by their unique source. Can it then be said, since the expressions are relative, that I may bypass them in order to attain their source? Not at all! The assurance of the Spirit which maintains the living Tradition in no way dispenses us from attachment to its authentic expressions. God, who communicated the thought of His heart, is also the Author of Scripture and the traditions. No one knows better the normative value of these expressions than the Church which shows forth her faith and practice by perpetual reference to Scripture and traditions. It is comparable to the manner in which disciples disclose the living thought of their master, discovering beneath the words all the intellectual richness in which they had shared. We often ask at once both too much and too little from Scripture. On condition that it is read in the Spirit which animates it, Scripture presents the advantage of the stability of an ideally and integrally fixed text. The charism of inspiration (distinct from Revelation) assures us of its fidelity as a transcription of the Word. In addition, the Word of salvation is presented in an edifying and exhortatory form suitable to its content. This expresses sufficiently the necessity for reading Scripture in order to encounter Christ, in order to recognize Him there by the light of the Spirit present in the community of believers.” (Liégé “Sources” 13)
   2. “Any Catholic reading of Scripture, even if it is done alone, is reading in communion with and from within the Tradition; “without the Church the man of faith would not decipher the true Scripture of God in the Bible and in his soul.”” (Liégé “Sources” 16; the quotation lacks attribution)
   3. Tertullian (c. ad 200) already “had to oppose the heretics of Scripture alone . . .” Tertullian (*De Praes*. *Haer*. 19): in the Church, “Where one finds true teaching and true Christian faith one will also find at the same time true Holy Scripture, its true explanation, and the true Christian traditions.” (Liégé “Sources” 16)

### Scripture and Tradition II

1. **apostolic tradition after the apostles**
   1. “The post-apostolic Church receives revelation dependently on them [the apostles], through Scripture and tradition.” (Dulles “Revelation, Theology” 197)
   2. “As the apostolic witness was originally handed on by preaching and by example, as well as in writing, so it continues to be handed on in the Church not only in the form of the written Scriptures, but in the Church’s ‘teaching, life and worship’ [*Dei Verbum* § 7].” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 11)
   3. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* §§ 7-8): “Now what was handed on by the Apostles includes everything which contributes toward the holiness of life and increase in faith of the peoples of God; and so the Church, in her teaching, life and worship, perpetuates and hands on to all generations all that she herself is, all that she believes. This tradition which comes from the Apostles develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. . . . The words of the holy fathers witness to the presence of this living tradition, whose wealth is poured into the practice and life of the believing and praying Church. Through the same tradition the Church’s full canon of the sacred books is known, and the sacred writings themselves are more profoundly understood and unceasingly made active in her; and thus God, who spoke of old, uninterruptedly converses with the bride of His beloved Son; and the Holy Spirit, through whom the living voice of the Gospel resounds in the Church, and through her, in the world, leads unto all truth those who believe and makes the word of Christ dwell abundantly in them.” (Vatican II) Col 3:16, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom . . .”
   4. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 10): “Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, which is committed to the Church. Holding fast to this deposit, the entire holy people united with their shepherds remain always steadfast in the teaching of the apostles, in the common life, in the breaking of the bread, and in prayers.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 11)
   5. “Whatever may have to be said about the special role of the ‘shepherds’ in the handing on and interpreting of apostolic tradition, the primary fact, clearly stressed in these texts of *Dei Verbum*, is that it is the *Church* as such, the People of God, which has received the apostolic witness, and which unfailingly hands it on. In other words, the Church is indefectibly apostolic in its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 11)
   6. “. . . it is to the *Church* (and not just to the magisterium) that the whole deposit of the Word of God has been entrusted.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 31)
      1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 8): “the Church, in her teaching, life and worship, that perpetuates and hands on to all generations all that she herself is, all that she believes.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 31)
      2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 10): “Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, which is committed to the Church.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 11)
2. **tradition**
   1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 7a): Christ “commissioned the Apostles to preach to all men that Gospel which is the source of all saving truth and moral teaching . . . This commission was faithfully fulfilled by the Apostles who, by their oral preaching, by example, and by obser­vances handed on what they had received from the lips of Christ, from living with Him, and from what He did, or what they had learned through the prompting of the Holy Spirit. The commission was fulfilled, too, by those Apostles and apostolic men who under the inspiration of the same Holy Spirit committed the message of salvation to writing.” (Vatican II)
   2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 8): “and so the Church, in her teaching, life and worship, perpetuates and hands on to all generations all that she herself is, all that she believes.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 129)
   3. “The word ‘tradition’ is used both of what is handed on (the objective sense) and of the process by which this is handed on (the active sense). In current English usage, Tradition (with a capital T) is generally used in the objective sense, to mean the Gospel, the Word of God, precisely as it has been handed on in the Church (*verbum Dei traditum*).” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 130)
   4. “. . . facets of the total Christian mystery have come to be objects of the explicit faith-consciousness of the Church only after centuries of contemplation of this mystery. . . . insights which are the fruit of such ecclesial contemplation can bring to light truths which are really contained in the total Christ-event, and therefore really contained in the Gospel, even though they are not found explicitly in Scripture or in the early records of explicit Christian belief. . . . the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption [are] examples of such truths. . . . such truths as these are really there in the deposit of faith, even though it took centuries for the Church to come to see them clearly. Such truths as these, which are really, though only implicitly, contained in the Gospel, are still part of the deposit of revelation, and as such belong to the primary object of magisterium. They can be defined as dogmas of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 130)
   5. Tradition vs. scripture
      1. Vatican II (dogmatic constitution *On Divine Revelation* [*Dei Verbum*, 1965] § 10): “Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred *deposit* of the word of God, which is committed to the Church.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 129, emphasis added)
      2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 9): “it is not from sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 129)
      3. The deposit of faith is not propositions.
         1. “. . . this deposit cannot be thought of as a series of propositions in which the whole of divine revelation has been or could be expressed.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 129)
         2. “. . . we should [not] think of ‘sacred tradition’ as a certain number of revealed truths which were not written down in the inspired Scriptures, but were transmitted orally by the apostles and then handed on by word of mouth in the Church for generations until they eventually surfaced in some later Christian writings. There is no sound reason to think that there was such a body of revealed truths being explicitly taught and handed on from apostolic times, that would add significantly to what was transmitted in the writings that were eventually collected in the New Testament.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 130)
         3. “Scripture and Tradition are not two distinct and independent bodies of truths; rather it is a question of two ways in which the Gospel—the total Christian message—is preserved and handed on in the Church, namely both in inspired writings, and in the ‘teaching, life and worship of the Church’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 130)
   6. Tradition vs. traditions
      1. Tradition is *verbum Dei traditum*. But traditions are “beliefs and practices which have become traditional in the course of the Church’s life.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 131)
      2. “. . . not every opinion or practice which has become traditional in the Church is part of the *verbum Dei traditum* which, along with Sacred Scripture, constitutes the deposit of revelation.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 131)
      3. “. . . there are particular traditions (such, for instance, as the practice of baptising the children of Christian parents) which are vehicles of genuine Tradition.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 131)
      4. “The mere fact that a particular belief or practice is traditional does not guarantee that it is really part of the Gospel—or indeed that it is fully in accord with the Gospel. It is possible for unsound practices or superstitious beliefs to creep into such common usage that they gain a certain respectability as ‘traditions’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 131)
      5. “There is need of discernment to determine which traditions reflect the genuine message of the Gospel, and which might need to be reformed or even eliminated.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 131)
         1. “Cardinal Meyer of Chicago raised this question in one of his interventions at Vatican II . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 226 n. 15)
         2. *Acta Synodalia Conc*. *Vat*. *II*. III/3: 150-51.
         3. Ratzinger, Josef. *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*. Ed. Herbert Vorgrimler. 5 vols. London: Burns and Oates; New York: Herder and Herder; Montreal: Palm, 1967-69. 3: 185.

### Fonts of Revelation: Scripture and Tradition

1. **bibliography**
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   2. Rahner, Karl, ed. “Scripture and Tradition.” *Encyclopedia of Theology*: *The Concise Sacramentum Mundi*. New [192] York: 1975. 6: 54-57. (See also bibliography.)
   3. Congar, Yves M.-J. *Tradition and Traditions*. New York: 1967.
   4. Dulles, Avery. *The Craft of Theology*. 2nd ed. New York: 1995.
   5. Skillrud, H.C., et al., eds. *Scripture and Tradition*: *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue IX*. Minneapolis: 1995. [193]
2. **definition**
   1. “Fonts of revelation” is a technical term used by theologians of recent centuries to designate the authoritative sources of Christian doctrine.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 190)
   2. There are two: scripture and tradition.
3. **ancient and medieval treatments**
   1. “Although the Church Fathers and medieval theologians regularly treated Scripture and tradition as authentic sources, the problem of [190] their respective dignity and mutual connection did not become acute until the time of the Reformation.” (Latourelle 190-91)
4. **Reformation**
   1. “In the 16th century the burning question was whether the finally decisive authority was single or double. Was it Scripture alone or Scripture together with apostolic traditions?” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 193)
   2. “Luther, followed by many other Protestants, took the position that Scripture alone was the final authority, and that the tradition of the Church, as expressed in creeds, dogmas, liturgy, and the like, had to be tested against Holy Scripture.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
      1. *Epitome of the Formula of Concord* (in the Lutheran *Book of Concord*, 1580, first sentence): “We believe, teach, and confess that the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments are the only rule and norm according to which all doctrines and teachers alike must be appraised and judged.”
      2. Anglican William Chillingworth (1638; *Works* [Philadelphia: 1844] 480-81): “The Bible, I say, and the Bible only, is the religion of protestants!” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
   3. Trent (*Decree Concerning the Canonical Scriptures*, 8 Apr. 1546, second sentence [DS 1501]): “Jesus Christ, the Son of God, first proclaimed with his own lips this gospel, which had in the past been promised by the prophets in the sacred scriptures; then he bade it be preached to every creature through his apostles as the source [*fontem*] of the whole truth of salvation and rule of conduct. The council clearly perceives that this truth and rule are contained in written books and in unwritten traditions which were received by the apostles [1] from the mouth of Christ himself, or else have come down to us, handed on as it were [2] from the apostles themselves at the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Following the example of the orthodox fathers, the council accepts and venerates with a like feeling of piety and reverence all the books of both the old and the new Testament, since the one God is author of both, as well as the traditions concerning both faith and conduct, as either directly spoken by Christ or dictated by the holy Spirit, which have been preserved in unbroken sequence in the catholic church.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
   4. two-source theory
      1. definition
         1. “. . . the revelation of Christ is contained partly in Holy Scripture and partly in sacred Tradition . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
         2. One or more revealed truths are “contained either in Scripture alone or in tradition alone.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
      2. “Perhaps this was the meaning intended by the Fathers at Trent . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
      3. But an earlier draft of the *Decree Concerning the Canonical Scriptures* said that “the truth of the gospel is contained “partly in written books and partly in written traditions,” [and] the words “partly” were stricken from the final text.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
   5. two-channel theory
      1. “To satisfy the demands of Trent it would therefore be sufficient to say that the word of God is accessible in two ways. It is transmitted both through Scripture and through apostolic tradition, [and] both attest with divine authority to the same gospel.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
5. **1600s-1800s**
   1. “During the next several centuries, Catholic theologians . . . commonly professed [the] “two-source” theory . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
6. **1900s**: **Protestants**
   1. “In the ecumenical climate of the 20th century the cleavage between the Catholic and Protestant positions became less sharp. Protestant Scripture scholars recognized that Holy Scripture depends heavily on a prior oral tradition, of which it is a privileged sedimentation. Protestants also recognized that they themselves read Scripture in the light of tradition, and that it is practically impossible to bypass tradition and approach Scripture, as it were, for the first time.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts”)
   2. Paul Tillich (*Systematic Theology* 1: 36): “the radical biblicistic attitude is a self-deception. No one is able to leap over two thousand years of church history and become contemporaneous with the writers of the New Testament, except in the spiritual sense of accepting Jesus as the Christ.” (Qtd. in Dulles, “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
   3. the World Council of Churches’ Faith and Order Commission
      1. influences
         1. The Commission was influenced by “this more positive attitude toward tradition . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
         2. “It was affected also by the traditionalism of the Orthodox, since several important Orthodox churches had been admitted to membership in 1951.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
         3. “Finally, it was influenced by the new climate of cooperation with Roman Catholic scholars.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
      2. statement on tradition
         1. “The Faith and Order Commission accordingly launched in 1954 an in-depth study of the problem . . . [Its report was] accepted at the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order in Montreal in 1963.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
         2. World Council of Churches’ Faith and Order Commission (“Scripture, Tradition, and traditions [*sic*],” 1963): “We exist as Christians by the Tradition of the gospel (the *paradosis* of the *kerygma*) testified in scripture, transmitted in and by the church through the power of the Holy Spirit. Tradition taken in this sense is actualized in the preaching of the word, in the administration of the sacraments and worship, in Christian teaching and theology, and in mission and witness to Christ by lives of the members of the Church.” (Qtd. in Dulles, “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
         3. “By this declaration the Montreal statement distanced itself from those Protestants who thought it possible to appeal to “Scripture alone,” but the statement did not provide a clear rule for distinguishing between merely human traditions and divine or apostolic Tradition (which it spelled with a capital T).” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
7. **1962-65**: **Vatican II**’**s *Dei Verbum***
   1. Vatican II “manifested the effects of the ecumenical movement on Catholic theology.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
   2. “The first draft of the Constitution on Revelation began with a chapter on “The Two Sources of Revelation” (*De duplici revelationis*) that was sharply criticized at the first session in November 1962 and was withdrawn by order of Pope John XXIII.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
   3. “The new text, composed in 1963 and several times revised, became in November 1965 the dogmatic constitution *Dei Verbum*.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
8. **two-source vs**. **two-channel theory**
   1. Here the question is: is tradition a source of truths not found in scripture?
   2. “In the early centuries it may have been possible to identify certain particular traditions as coming from the apostles by word of mouth. Theologians speculate that doctrines such as infant baptism and the perpetual virginity of Mary may have been transmitted in this way. But at the distance of many centuries scientific history can no longer establish the apostolic origin of these doctrines. Thus the concept of tradition as a source of factual information, parallel with and alongside of Holy Scripture, has been losing favor.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
   3. Some elements of Christian faith, barely hinted at in Holy Scripture, may be more vividly attested by tradition.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
   4. *Dei Verbum* (§ 9): “It is not from sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything that has been revealed.” (Qtd. in Dulles, “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
      1. One can interpret this statement according to the two-source theory.
      2. Or: “all revealed truth is in some way contained in Scripture, [yet] tradition is needed to grasp it with the required assurance.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
   5. *Dei Verbum* (§ 10): scripture and tradition together “form one sacred deposit of the word of God.” (Qtd. in Dulles, “Revelation, Fonts” 191)
   6. “Vatican II viewed both Scripture and tradition not statically, as depositories containing particular truths, but rather dynamically, as ways in which God converses with his People (DV 8 and 21).” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
      1. “Tradition, moreover, consists not simply in oral and written statements but in the total life and practice of the praying and believing Church.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
      2. “. . . apostolic tradition is, like Scripture, a form of the word of God.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
      3. That is why Trent and Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 9) say “that the two are to be received with the same sense of devotion and reverence . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
9. “**the relative dignity of Scripture and tradition**” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
   1. tradition’s priority
      1. “Scripture itself is actively handed down (“traditioned”) in the Church.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
      2. “. . . while tradition cannot contradict the true meaning of Scripture, Scripture cannot be confidently identified or authoritatively interpreted without the help of tradition.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
      3. Tradition identifies the canon.
         1. Tradition is “necessary, not least for the identification of the canonical Scriptures.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
         2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 8): “Through the same tradition the Church’s full canon of the sacred books is known . . .” (Qtd. in Dulles, “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
         3. “Tradition does not first arise from the study of Scripture. [It] existed even before Scripture was written . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
      4. Tradition interprets scripture.
         1. Tradition “accompanies Scripture at every stage of history as a kind of surrounding atmosphere.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
         2. *Dei Verbum* (§ 8): “Through the same tradition . . . the sacred writings themselves are more profoundly understood and unceasingly made active in her [the Church].” (Qtd. in Dulles, “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
         3. “Tradition, therefore, gives a perspective for biblical interpretation deeper than merely philological exegesis.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
   2. scripture’s priority
      1. But scripture “enjoys a certain priority, since the very text of Scripture is the word of God (DV 24) . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
         1. “. . . tradition is a more elusive reality. Particular traditions, which may be thought to be apostolic, have to be sifted and evaluated in order to determine their authenticity. Scripture, as the divinely guided expression of God’s word in human language, has a certain critical function over against all other expressions.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
         2. “Thus there is a sense in which Catholics, as well as Protestants, can speak of Scripture as being finally normative.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
         3. “Some theologians look upon Scripture as the true source and regard tradition as a succession of commentaries upon it. Although unexceptionable in what it affirms, this position tends to be reductive.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
10. **distinguishing** “**genuine tradition from merely human and possibly distorted traditions**” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
    1. This question was “raised at Montreal . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
    2. “. . . Catholics refer to a variety of tests . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
       1. “conformity with Scripture”
          1. “Exegetes and theologians by their preparatory study help the judgment of the Church to mature (DV 12).” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
       2. “coherence with Catholic tradition as a whole”
       3. “harmony with the norms for worship (the *lex orandi*)”
       4. “acceptability to the community of believers (the *sensus fidelium*)”
       5. “agreement with the past teaching of popes and councils”
       6. “approval of the contemporary magisterium” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
          1. “According to Vatican II, the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, as found in Scripture or tradition, is entrusted to the living magisterium, which exercises its authority in the name of Jesus Christ (DV 10).” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
11. **recent developments**
    1. “In recent centuries the theology of tradition has been taking on new features.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
    2. “Authors such as Johann Adam Möhler, John Henry Newman, and Maurice Blondel have propounded the thesis that” follows. (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
       1. “. . . authentic tradition is sustained and illuminated in the Church by the Holy Spirit . . .” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
       2. Authentic tradition “gives rise to a “sense of the faith” on the part of committed members of the Church.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
       3. “Vatican II adopted this dynamic concept of tradition.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
          1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 8): “This tradition which comes from the apostles develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. For there is a growth in understanding of the realities and the words that have been handed down. . . . As the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfillment in her.” (Qtd. in Dulles, “Revelation, Fonts” 192)
    3. “In the 20th century theologians asked how best to use both Scripture and tradition in order to find the word of God in them. Christians of many different ecclesial affiliations involved themselves in the effort to reexamine Scripture in the light of their own traditions, and to evaluate their traditions in the light of Scripture. Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox have been engaged in similar pursuits and have come to understand each other better. As Christianity enters the third millennium, the churches may hope to be further enriched both by their own traditions and those of other ecclesial bodies as they listen to one another and prayerfully read the Scriptures they hold in common.” (Dulles “Revelation, Fonts” 192)

### Tradition I

1. **tradition**
   1. “Tradition represents the Church’s continued possession and faithful transmission of the original experience of faith in God’s Word, together with its progressive understanding and expression in the life of the Church.” (van Ackeren 13: 893)
   2. Tradition includes
      1. “the understanding that the apostolic community had of these writings” (van Ackeren 13: 893)
      2. the liturgy
      3. “customs of the Christian community” (van Ackeren 13: 893)
      4. theology
      5. magisterium
   3. Are revealed truths passed on solely by tradition?
      1. “. . . a good number of theologians think that at least some truths of revelation were passed on that are not contained in Scripture . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 893)
      2. “. . . others, such as J. Geiselmann, E. Ortigues, and G. Tavard, maintain that Scripture gives the content of tradition, whereas tradition provides the interpretation . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 893)
2. **three** “**stages of theological reflection concerning Tradition**” (Liégé “Sources” 8)
   1. Paul
      1. 2 Thess 2:15, “stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by our letter.”
      2. 2 Tim 1:13-14, “Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.”
      3. “. . . already [*paradosis*] meant both the act of transmitting and the object transmitted.” (Liégé “Sources” 8)
      4. “. . . Paul insists on the exterior transmission, the continuity from Jesus to the Apostles, from the Apostles to their disciples—a continuity without innovation.” (Liégé “Sources” 8)
   2. Irenaeus (bishop of Lyon, fl. c. ad 180)
      1. Irenaeus was a “great theologian of Tradition. The discussion was occasioned by the struggle against the Gnostics who interpreted Scripture by a self-styled secret tradition. Our tradition is not secret, replied Irenaeus: it is the teaching of the Apostles transmitted orally from generation to generation of Christians by preaching, and possessed in each local Church through continuity with the word of its apostolic founder.” (Liégé “Sources” 8)
      2. “Irenaeus (*Against Heresies* [*Adversus Haereses*] 1.10. The Ante-Nicene Fathers. New York: 1926. 1: 331): “The Church, having received this preaching and this faith, although scattered throughout the entire world, yet, as if occupying but one house, carefully preserves it. She also believes these points [of doctrine] just as if she had but one soul, and one and the same heart, and she proclaims them, and teaches them, and hands them down, with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth.” (Liégé “Sources” 8)
      3. “Irenaeus kept the insistence of St. Paul on the verifiable continuity by means of apostolicity, but he insists in addition on the living and contemporaneous character of evangelical truth in the Church. He says that it is a Tradition of the living word rather than one of written letters (*non per litteras tradita*, *sed per vivam vocem*).” (Liégé “Sources” 8)
   3. 1800s
      1. “In the context of a new discovery of historical duration, several Christian thinkers” deepened the idea of Tradition in two ways:
         1. recognition of “organic development of the transmitted deposit”;
         2. “appreciation of the role of the Holy Spirit, soul of the Church, as the living principle of . . . continuity” (Liégé “Sources” 9)
      2. “Whoever wants to reflect on Tradition cannot ignore”: (Liégé “Sources” 9)
         1. Johann Adam Möhler (1796-1838), at Tübingen, “in the framework of German Romantic thought” (*Symbolik*, Mainz: 1835)
         2. Johann Baptist Cardinal Franzelin, SJ (1816-86), at Rome, “in the midst of an entirely different type of thought” (*De divina traditione et scriptura*, Rome: 1870)
         3. Blondel (1861-1949), “in reference to his philosophy of action” (*l*’*Action*: *Essai d'une critique de la vie et d*’*une science de la pratique*, PUF, 1950; trans. 1893: *Action*: *Essay on a Critique of Life and a Science of Practice*. Rpt. Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 1984)
      3. “Möhler (qtd. in Geiselmann, J.R., ed. *Geist des Christentums und des Katholizismus*. 14: 450-51): “Since the birth of the Church Christ and His Spirit are at work in the community. The Church in its development is an uninterrupted continuation of His first appearance, an ever new creation of Christ. The Church does not grow old. Generations and men may pass away, but Christ and His Spirit abide in her and assure the permanence of the Word and the continuity of teaching with a true understanding of this Word and this teaching. One can only remain in communication with the teaching of Christ and the faith of the Apostles by remaining in communion with the universal teaching of the Church, since this teaching propagates itself in a living manner within the Church through the Spirit of Christ, by means of an ever active spiritual generation in uninterrupted continuity. It is the Church alone which brings about spiritual birth into divine life, without which the meaning of the Gospel remains closed. It is also the Church alone which assures the uninterrupted and incorrupted development of Christian teaching through her living tradition. . . . As a moral person the Church bears within her the consciousness of her being in the possession of a single faith.” (Qtd. in Liégé, “Sources” 9)
3. **The Word of God is found in Tradition**.
   1. The Word of God “historically speaking seems to be situated in the past . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 6)
      1. “. . . Christianity must [5] constantly refer back to that sovereign Word which establishes the new creation in Christ.” (Liégé “Sources” 5-6)
      2. “Revelation was closed with the apostolic age. There will be no more prophets in the Church. From the beginning, then, we can exclude . . . any idea that God might enrich or modify the objective content of His revelation. The only word with which we have to deal is that addressed to men in Jesus and proclaimed by the apostles.” (Liégé “Sources” 6)
   2. But “the Word of God . . . in fact remains always present . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 6)
      1. If “the deposit of faith remains ever the same, that supposes a transmission, a *tradition*. . . . The closed Revelation becomes Tradition.” (Liégé “Sources” 6)
      2. “Where can we find the Word of God? *In Tradition*.” (Liégé “Sources” 6)
      3. In the Church “. . . God continues at this present moment to speak the Word first published in the prophetic and apostolic eras.” (Liégé “Sources” 7)
   3. juridical relationship vs. loving relationship
      1. Apostolic tradition is not “the act of transmitting, as it were from hand to hand, a text, a holy book, or a creed . . . such a tradition would remain only that of a juridical society founded on legislative texts. [6] . . . The Church’s faith is not limited to a purely exterior adhesion . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 6-7)
      2. The Word of God “in today’s Church [is] not like a collection of objects on display in a museum . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 6)
      3. The Church is a living, spiritual Body whose soul is the Holy Spirit . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 6)
      4. “The Church knows Christ [with] the rich, realistic knowledge of two beings united by love. The Church is faithful to Christ by a fidelity based on love, rather than by a juridical fidelity alone.” (Liégé “Sources” 7)
      5. Christ’s presence in the Church is a “presence prior to any formulation; one possessing a depth greater than all expressions, (deeper even than Scripture itself, because it wells up from a more interior source); one which will at last judge all the expressions of itself.” (Liégé “Sources” 7)
4. **Tradition as the Church**’**s consciousness**
   1. Tradition is simultaneously “the content of Revelation and the power to recognize and judge this content. As bearer of this deposit of God’s Word, which is her very life, the Church is invested with a power of awareness which permits her to formulate and express that Word throughout the course of her life, to understand it with ever new freshness, to make it more explicit through a progress of subjective penetration of what she had not yet perceived (as in all personal relationships where expressions of friendship are laden with far more meaning than is at first perceived).” (Liégé “Sources” 7)
   2. The “personalist notion of the consciousness of the Church expresses very well the reality in question. This consciousness designates here at once and indissolubly the object of consciousness and the active power of judgement: consciousness-object and consciousness-subject.” (Liégé “Sources” 7)
   3. “. . . the consciousness in question is not that of a blind life force, but one of an intellectual nature capable of objectifying itself, of even formulating itself . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 7)
   4. “. . . this consciousness has an integral possession of its object within itself from the beginning . . .” (Liégé “Sources” 7)
   5. “. . . one can only lay hold of the content of this consciousness in the measure that it [7] is formulated, but this formulation does not exhaust its content, and ultimately, it is this lived content which remains as essential and permanent throughout the successive formulations which may manifest it.” (Liégé “Sources” 7-8)
5. **tradition and magisterium**
   1. “Tradition is a broader reality than the magisterium . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 893)
   2. “Tradition belongs to the whole Church, to laity as well as to hierarchy. The same is true of theology . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 893)
   3. “. . . the magisterium is only a part of tradition. It is an active element within tradition that not only pushes tradition forward but gives it authentic, even infallible, expression.” (van Ackeren 13: 893)

### Tradition II

1. **introduction**
   1. “. . . Tradition is never accessible in itself, in its pure form, but only comes to us via some kind of concrete mediation. The texts of Scripture are the primordial instance of such mediation, a uniquely important monument of Tradition. But there are other, less important mediations to set side by side with Scripture . . .” (Nichols 181)
   2. Tradition uses “other ways [than scripture] of expressing Christian truth that bring us revelation . . . [These other ways] are everything involved in the Church’s life.” (Nichols 34)
   3. “They include the liturgy, the Fathers of the Church, the creeds and other doctrinal definitions, the evidence of Christian art and archaeology, the witness of ordinary believers. When we talk about the Church’s Tradition we are referring to all these (and more), seen as an interconnected unity, the life of the Church.” (Nichols 34)
   4. “It can be said that tradition is more a medium than it is an object. Though tradition has its own *loci*, it is more an environment or context or at­mosphere in which we read Scripture than an object set side by side with Scripture.” (Nichols 22)
2. **roots of the Catholic concept of tradition**
   1. Judaism
      1. “First of all, it has a Jewish pedigree.” (Nichols 165)
      2. “The Judaism of the time of our Lord and his apostles had its own notion of tradition, a notion [165] which affirms the immediate background of the idea in early Christianity. The rabbis saw themselves as preserving and passing on a cer­tain way of reading the texts of Scripture. The original revelation of God’s being and plan given to Moses was not exhaustively expressed in writing. It also existed as an oral interpretation passed down by the teachers of Israel in all ages, explaining how the Scriptures should be understood. In each generation, disciples, *talmid*, formed the links of a chain of transmission going back to Moses himself.” (Nichols 165-66)
      3. “What has been called “rabbinic ordination,” a ceremony of the laying on of hands, was, at least in part, a recognition by other rabbis that the new rabbi belonged to the orthodox tradition.” (Lagrange, M.J. *Le Judaisme avant Jésus-Christ*. Paris: 1931. 295ff.) (Nichols 166)
      4. “Much of the oral tradition of Juda­ism in the time of Jesus found its way into” the Mishnah, compiled c. ad 200. (Nichols 166)
   2. Jesus
      1. “. . . Christian revelation it­self had an oral form until the writing of the New Testament.” (Nichols 166)
      2. “There is good reason to think that this corresponds to the actual intentions of Jesus himself. The formation of an inner group of disciples, described in all the Gospels, looks very much like a Jewish teacher gathering around him a group of men to whom he would communicate his doc­trine in the hope that, through them, it would reach a wider audience beyond.” (Gerhardsson, Birger. *The Origins of the Gospel Traditions*. Trans. Gene J. Lund. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979.) (Nichols 166)
      3. “The parables and the shorter sayings of Jesus may well have been formulated as they were simply because they would be easy to memorize and retell. The culture of Jesus’ Palestine was in some ways highly literate and literary because of the paramount role that the Hebrew Bible played within it, but it was also a culture where oral forms of preserving and transmitting knowledge were still very important. We are dealing with a culture not of the manuscript alone, but of mem­ory and manuscripts.” (Gerhardsson, Birger. *Memory and Manuscript*: *Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity*. Trans. Eric J. Sharpe. Acta Seminarii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis 22. Uppsala: Gleerup, 1961.) (Nichols 166)
      4. “. . . the principle of tradi­tion is written into the missionary charge of the risen Christ as reported at the end of Matthew’s Gospel . . .” (Nichols 166) Matt 28:19-20, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
      5. Jesus was “quite aware of the possibility of a misuse of tradition in the hands of fallible people: some of his hardest gibes against the Pharisees concern what he saw as their perversion of tradition . . .” (Nichols 167) Matt 15:1-9, “Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, 2“Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands before they eat.” 3He answered them, “And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? 4For God said, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.’ 5But you say that whoever tells father or mother, ‘Whatever support you might have had from me is given to God,’ then that person need not honor the father. 6So, for the sake of your tradition, you make void the word of God. 7You hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied rightly about you when he said: 8‘This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; 9in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.’”
      6. “The coexistence of these two statments [*sic*], both ascribed to Jesus in St. Matthew’s Gospel, already suggests the possibility that Jesus saw the transmission work of his own disciples as guarded and guided by more-than-human means. This suspicion is confirmed as soon as we turn to the Fourth Gospel. There, the activity of the disciples in com­municating Jesus’ revelation of the Father is said to be underpinned by the work of the Spirit . . .” (Barrett, C.K. “The Holy Spirit in the Fourth Gospel.” *Journal of Theological Studies* 51 (1950): 1-15.) (Nichols 167) John 14:26, “But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.”
   3. Paul
      1. Here “we can see this Spirit-guided apostolic tradition at work. Paul appeals to tradition, *paradôsis*, “what is handed on,” as to an authority understood and accepted by his read­ers. [Cerfaux, Lucien. “La tradition selon S. Paul.” *Receuil Lucien Cerfaux*. 2: 253-63.] Using the technical vocabulary of the Jewish concept of tradi­tion, Paul speaks of what has been “transmitted,” what has been “received,” and what must be “conserved” and “held fast.” (Congar, Yves M.-J. *Tradition and Traditions*: *An Historical and a Theological Essay*. Lon­don: 1966. 9.) (Nichols 167)
      2. “In writ­ing to Corinth, for example, about the institution of the Eucharist, he speaks of this as something which he received from the Lord and passed on to the local Corinthian Church.” (Geiselmann, J. *Jesus der Christus*. Stuttgart: 1951. 70ff.) (Nichols 167) 1 Cor 11:23, “For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread . . .”
         1. “What Paul means is that the account given by the Twelve, the pillars of the mother Church of Jeru­salem, about what Jesus did at the Last Supper is not just any old piece of reporting. It is holy tradition, the authorized, memorized, and [167] solemnly handed down account of Jesus’ words and actions on the night of his betrayal. For this reason, its force is the same as if it had been a direct revelation of Christ himself. Here we can observe the principle of tradition in action. Christ himself is engaged and present in the handing on and receiving of tradition. He is not simply the Word found in a book, but the Word found in oral tradition.” (Nichols 167-68)
   4. Luke
      1. “The earliest full-scale ecclesiology, or account of the Church’s nature, that we possess is the Acts of the Apostles . . .” (Nichols 168)
      2. Luke “is an account of the workings of God through the historical Jesus; [Acts] considers the same workings now mediated through the community of the glorified Jesus, the Church. The Book of the Acts presents tradition as principally the handing on of the wit­ness of the apostles.” (Nichols 168)
         1. Luke 24:44-49, “Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you--that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” 45Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, 46and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, 47and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48You are witnesses of these things. 49And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.””
         2. Acts 1:1-2, “In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning 2until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.”
         3. In Luke-Acts “Tradition, witness and mission are closely bound up.” (Congar, *Tradition and Tradi*­*tions* 13) (Nichols 168 n. 13)
      3. “The apostles are for Luke the bearers of the tra­dition about the things Jesus said, did, and suffered, and the Church grows through the appropriation of their witness by new believers.” (Nichols 168)
   5. Pastoral Epistles
      1. “. . . further precisions are added.” (Nichols 168)
      2. “Faith is presented as a “deposit,” *paratheke*, to be handed on.” (Nichols 168)
      3. The “desire to protect orthodoxy, the integrity of the gospel, against what would later be called heresy is already there in the New Testament.” (Nichols 168)
      4. “It is guarded by a living teaching authority: originally the apostles, then “apostolic men” such as Timothy and Titus, at once apostolic delegates and the presiding figures of local Churches—what Luke portrays in Acts as “presbyter-bishops.” (Nichols 168)
         1. 1 Tim 6:20, “Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the profane chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge . . .”
         2. 2 Tim 1:14, “Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.”
         3. Neither “presbyter” nor “bishop” appears in the nrsv Acts. “Elder” as Christian leader occurs in 11:30; 14:23; 15:2, 4, 6, 22-23; 16:4; 20:17; and 21:18.
   6. 100s ad
      1. “Finally, in the generation following the age of the New Testament, the guardians of the deposit are identified with the bishops of the Catholic episcopate.” (Nichols 168)
         1. Van den Eynde, D. *Les Normes de l*’*enseignement chrétien dans la littérature des trois premiers siècles*. Gembloux: 1933. Esp. 57-67.
         2. Turner, C.H. “Apostolic Succession.” *Essays on the Early History of the Church and the Ministry*. Ed. H.B. Swete. London: 1921. 95-214. Turner thought the idea of apostolic succession “emerged in ex­plicit form by way of opposition to Gnostic notions of a pedagogical succession in the [168] transmission of esoteric doctrine, as found in, for instance, Ptolemy’s *Letter to Flora* . . .” (Nichols 168-69 n. 15)
      2. the task of Catholic bishops
         1. negatively, “to secure the de­posit against attempts to corrupt it . . .” (Nichols 168)
         2. positively, “transmitting the tradition to one’s contemporaries across space and to one’s successors across time.” (Nichols 168)
   7. summary
      1. For Paul, “tradition is revelation itself . . .” (Nichols 169)
      2. For Luke, “it is the oral witness of the apostles.” (Nichols 169)
      3. For the Pastoral Epistles, “tradition is both . . .: [the] faith of the community . . . as witnessed to by the apostles and guarded by their successors.” (Nichols 169)
3. **definition of tradition**
   1. “The moment has come to attempt a definition of what tradition is. We have some of the necessary New Testament materials at hand.” (Nichols 169)
   2. “Concretely, Tradition is the Church’s life . . .” (Nichols 169)
      1. Congar, *Tradition and Traditions* 51-61 (“on the unwrit­ten traditions up to Trent as overwhelmingly liturgical in character and thus pertinent to the concept of *institutio Christiana*”). (Nichols 169 n. 17)
      2. “The Christian religion, if we think of it in concrete terms, is the whole life of the Church in all its essential lines.” (Nichols 169)
      3. “. . . Tradition is the institutions, rites, and practices that make up the Christian religion in all its concreteness.” (Nichols 169)
      4. “Tradition is the *institutio Christiana*, the “Chris­tian institution,” that is, the way of life and worship that is the Church.” (Nichols 169)
   3. “. . . ab­stractly or reflectively, it is the Church’s faith.” (Nichols 169)
      1. Van den Eynde, *Les Normes* 282-306 (patristic texts on the *regula fidei*).
      2. “The same religion, if we think of it in abstract or conceptual terms, as a reality reflected in how people think as Christians, is the orthodox faith of that same Church.” (Nichols 169)
      3. “. . . Tradition is the rule of faith of a Church in continuity with the apostles.” (Nichols 169)
      4. “Tradition is also the *regula fidei*, the normative expression of faith by which theological language, and especially the interpretation of Scrip­ture, are to be judged.” (Nichols 169)
   4. “Through­out the history of the idea of tradition, we find these two elements.” (Nichols 169)
      1. Yves M.-J. Congar (*Tra­dition and Traditions* 26): “the essential idea is that of the transmission of a body of truths and principles of life, both normative and efficacious for salvation.” (Nichols 169 n. 16)
4. **tradition and scripture**: **one source or two**?
   1. patristic period
      1. The Fathers had a “naive or innocent view of the unity of Scripture and Tradition . . .” (Nichols 171)
      2. The “customarily accepted view,” even as late as Henry of Ghent (d. 1293), was (*Commentarium super sententias*, Prologus 10.1): “Concerning the things of faith, the Church and Holy Scripture agree in everything and testify to the same thing.” (Nichols 173)
      3. “In the age of the Fathers, the unity of Scripture and Tradition is largely taken for granted. The apostolic tradition is found in Scripture; conversely, what is found in Scripture is the apostolic tradition.” (Nichols 170)
         1. “Faced with some alternative readings of Scrip­ture by heretics, the Fathers are likely to reply that heretics have no right to read the Bible at all. The Bible is the Church’s book, and she is its only rightful interpreter.” (Nichols 170)
         2. “Tertullian [*De praescriptione* 5.40] is the most forthright represen­tative of this point of view, applying to heretical interpretations of Scrip­ture the Roman legal notion of *praescriptio*, “prescription.” If you had a dispute with someone and both of you went to court in order to settle it, you might be able to win the case right at the outset by invoking *praescriptio*. That is, you might be able to prove that for some reason your adversary was not competent to speak in court on the matter in question. So Tertullian argues that there is no need to confute hereti­cal exegesis in detail. Heretics simply have no right to use the Bible, it is not their property. Here Scripture and the Church’s tradition are implicitly regarded as coterminous. There is no possibility of play­ing one against the other, or even of analyzing their unity into two distinct parts.” (Stirnimann, J.K. *Die Praescriptio Tertullians im Lichte des rö­mischen Rechtes und der Theologie*. Fribourg: 1949.) (Nichols 170)
      4. But the patristic period “did show some sign of recognizing our prob­lem.” (Nichols 171)
         1. “. . . there was the issue of the status to be accorded the Fathers and Doctors of the Church vis-à-vis the Bible. Precisely be­cause of the idea of the coinherence of Church and Scripture, the charism of biblical inspiration was sometimes regarded as spilling over in a more diluted form to the great commentators on the Bible.” (Tavard, G. *Holy Writ or Holy Church? The Crisis of the Protestant Reformation*. Lon­don: 1959. 7.) (Nichols 171)
         2. c. 500: “. . . Pope Gelasius added to his list of the canonical books “certain other writings,” which, he says, the Roman Church has received as of faith, though they are not on the same level as Scrip­ture. He identifies these as the decrees of the first four ecumenical coun­cils, the writings of various Church Fathers, the decretals of his predecessors, the acts of the martyrs, and lives of the saints.” (Nichols 171)
   2. middle ages
      1. 1000s
         1. In the middle ages “an attempt is made to tidy up and ex­plain theologically the existence of . . . lists of what we can call “subbiblical books.”” See “c. 500” above. (Nichols 171)
         2. “In the eleventh century, Hugh of St. Victor can say [*Eruditio didascalia* 4.4] that the mind of the Church considers together the books of the Bible [171] on the one hand, and, on the other, the conciliar creeds and the works of the Fathers. He explains this by saying that the conciliar and patris­tic texts are, after all, summaries of Scripture and commentaries upon Scripture, and so are necessary for Scripture’s evaluation.” (Nichols 171-72)
         3. “In the same period, other theologians are found saying that the subbiblical books are necessary for understanding the spiritual sense of the Scriptures.” (Tavard, *Holy Writ or Holy Church?* 19-20) (Nichols 172)
      2. 1100s
         1. Rupert of Deutz (c. 1075-1129)
            1. Rupert of Deutz (*De Omnipotentia Dei* 27): “Whatever may be arrived at, or concluded from, arguments outside the Holy Scriptures . . . in no way belongs to the praise and confession of Al­mighty God . . . and no one can lawfully demand that a Catholic be­lieve it.” (Qtd. in Nichols 171)

This statement sounds “bizarre to a modern Catholic ear . . . Such a statement, if made in the sixteenth century, would imply Protestantism . . .” (Nichols 171)

“. . . but in the twelfth century, where it comes from the pen of the monastic theologian Rupert of Deutz, it simply implies a one-hundred-percent trust in the unconditional unanimity of the Bible and the Church.” (Nichols 171)

* + - * 1. Rupert of Deutz (*Commentarium in Apocalypsim* 7.12): “That woman, Ecclesia, drew the Scriptures from the well of truth, the well that is set in her midst and makes her the garden of the Lord.” (Qtd. in Nichols 171)
      1. “The Church is not merely the organization that passes down the Scriptures from one generation to the next. Rather, there is a mystical unity or coinherence between the Church and the Bible. . . . So the idea that the Church could teach some­thing not in Scripture or Scripture teach something not taught by the Church simply never arises.” (Nichols 171)
    1. 1200s
       1. “In St. Bonaventure in the thirteenth century we find an important dis­tinction, that between the credibile and the intelligibile [*sic*], invoked to throw light on this issue.” (Nichols 172)
          1. Bonaventure (*Breviloquium* 1.1.4): “Theology is one single body of knowledge. Its subject matter considered as what we should believe, the *credibile*, is the books of the canon of the Bible; but consid­ered as how to understand what we should believe, the *intelligibile*, it is the writings of the biblical commentators (i.e. the Fathers and Doc­tors of the Church).” (Qtd. in Nichols 172)
       2. In Aquinas “*sacra doctrina* may be translated either as “Scripture” or as “tradition” or as “the­ology,” depending on the context. When thinking globally about the work of a theologian, Thomas does not distinguish between the Bible and the theology evolved around it by Fathers and Doctors in the tra­dition.” (Patfoort, A. *Thomas d*’*Aquin*, *Les Clés d*’*une théologie*. Paris: 1983. 27-48.) (Nichols 172)
       3. A “glimmering . . . recognition . . . foreshadows the later notion that revelation has two distinct sources.” (Nichols 172)
          1. “Theologians were concerned to defend certain features of the Church’s liturgical cultus: either quite wide-ranging aspects of Chris­tian worship like the making and venerating of images, or very limited, but (to contemporaries) significant matters, like the instruction in the rubrics of the Roman Rite that at the consecration the celebrant, fol­lowing the example of Jesus, should raise his eyes toward heaven, a detail not found in the Gospels.” (Nichols 172)
          2. “Both Bonaventure [*Commentarium super sententias* 3.9.1.2 ad 6] and Thomas [*ST* 3.25.3 ad 4; 3.64.2 ad 1] offer an apologia for the traditional pattern of Christian worship by appeal­ing to the unwritten customs of the apostles.” (Nichols 172)
       4. Henry of Ghent [early 1200s-1293)
          1. “People are beginning to ask whether at least in principle there could be [172] discrepancies between what the Bible says and what the Church says.” (Nichols 172-73)
          2. Henry “puts just this question in his commentary on the *Sen*­*tences* of Peter Lombard [*Commentarium super sententias*, Prologus 10.1] . . .” (Nichols 173)
          3. “Henry begins reassuringly by putting forward the customarily accepted view: “Concerning the things of faith, the Church and Holy Scripture agree in everything and testify to the same thing.” But then he goes on to say, and this is new, “Yet while there can be no con­tradiction between Scripture and the Church, there may be a discrep­ancy between Scripture and a church which seems to be the Church but is the Church only according to human opinion and not in the eyes of God.” Henry does not mean that there might be a contradiction about Scripture and the church of the *Waldenses*: he is talking exclu­sively about the Catholic Church. He suggests that it is theoretically conceivable that virtually all Catholics should apostatize interiorly from the faith. In such a situation, when the Church had become a purely nominal Church, a merely sociological reality, the last remaining be­liever would have the duty to follow Scripture alone and not the Church. And this shows us, Henry concludes, that in principle a Chris­tian adheres more fundamentally to the words of Scripture than to the testimony of the Church.” (Nichols 173)
          4. “By this thought experiment, Henry of Ghent thus anticipated the basic problematic of the Reformation.” (Nichols 173)
    2. 1300s
       1. Tavard, *Holy Writ or Holy Church?* 28-30.
       2. Congar, *Tradition and Traditions* 99-100.
       3. “As the fourteenth century advanced, one finds increasingly such statements as, I believe this either on the authority of Scripture or on the authority of the Church teaching. Once this dichotomy had opened up, people began to opt for one of two courses: the subordination of Scripture to the Church or of the Church to Scripture.” (Nichols 173)
       4. “In the four­teenth century itself, such views are usually put forward for the sake of argument, to expound theoretically possible positions.” (Nichols 173)
       5. William of Ockham (1280-1349)
          1. “Thus William of Ockham, the English Franciscan, proposes three views of the rela­tion between Scripture and customary Church teaching, none of which views he necessarily shares but all of which are, he thinks, quite pos­sible. . . . Clearly, Ockham does not subscribe to all of these views, since they are mutually exclusive. But he regarded them as possible opinions within the Catholic theo­logical world of his time.” (Nichols 173)

“First, there is *Scriptura sola* . . .” (Nichols 173)

William of Ockham (*Dialogus contra haereticos* 2.3): “The only truths that are to be con­sidered Catholic and necessary to salvation are explicitly or implicitly stated in the canon of the Bible. . . . All other truths which neither are inserted in the Bible nor can be formally and necessarily inferred from its contents, are not to be held as Catholic even if they are stated in the writings of the fathers or the definitions of the supreme [173] pontiffs, and even if they are believed by all the faithful.” (Qtd. in Nichols 173-74)

“Second, there is the idea that besides [scripture] God could and does reveal other truths to the universal Church: that there is, in other words, an ecclesiastical revelation alongside and supplementing apostolic revelation.” (Nichols 174)

Third, Ockham considers (*Dialogus contra haereticos* 2.5) “the notion of an orally transmitted apostolic revelation, parallel to the written transmis­sion of the apostolic teaching in the Scriptures.” (Nichols 174)

* + 1. 1400s
       1. “. . . we find a sharpening of attitudes to the question, prompted especially by reactions to the Great Schism [1378-1417]. Here, apparently for the first time, people began to believe quite sincerely some of the conceptual possibilities worked out earlier.” (Nichols 174)
       2. “We can distinguish four groups.” (See Tavard, *Holy Writ or Holy Church?* 48-66 for references.) (Nichols 174)
          1. “First, ultra-papalist canonists held a concept of the Petrine office so high that, according to Fr. George Tavard [*Holy Writ or Holy Church?* 49], had they been consistent they would have ascribed to the authority of Scripture “no more than a nominal value.”” (Nichols 174)
          2. “Second, [conciliarists] held that only ecumenical councils could interpret Scripture, consonant with their idea that such councils speak for all the faithful by representing them through their bishops.” (Nichols 174)
          3. “Third, there were biblicists who postulated the radical subordination of Church tradition and authority to the written word of Scripture.” (Nichols 174)
          4. “Fi­nally, there were those who held that esoteric oral traditions, coming down subterraneously from the apostles, could be used to defend exist­ing Church practice even in the face of the silence of the Bible.” (Nichols 174)
  1. Protestant Reforma­tion
     1. “Not surprisingly, then, the age of the Reformation found Catholic theology in a state of considerable disarray on the topic of the rela­tions between Scripture and Tradition. There were still a few theo­logians, Thomists, especially, who held sane views on the matter, but their voice was just one among many.” (Nichols 174)
     2. Martin Luther
        1. “The crisis broke with Luther’s revolt in 1517.” (Nichols 174)
        2. Luther created a twofold subordination of tradition.” (Nichols 174)
           1. “He subordinated Church tradition to the Bible . . .” (Nichols 174)
           2. He “subordinated the Bible to the essence of the gospel, regarded by him as the doctrine of justification by faith alone.” (Nichols 174)

“Here the analogy of faith, the interrelationship of doctrines within revelation, has been destroyed through the elevation of one principle above all the rest.” (Nichols 175)

* + - 1. Church
         1. “. . . the Church is defined by Luther as all those Christians who accept the pure gospel, who hold that justification by faith is the key to biblical revela­tion. . . . the Church has suffered redefinition, as those who accept that this one doctrine is in fact supreme.” (Nichols 175)
         2. “The task of the Church is to distinguish [174] the word of God from the words of men, that is, to distinguish the doctrine of justification by faith alone from all theological discourse which does not flow from this central truth.” (Nichols 174-75)
      2. The “consensus . . . saw revelation as lying in Scripture as a whole read within the total life of the entire Church.” (Nichols 175)
    1. John Calvin
       1. “A similar revolution takes place with Calvin, the other outstand­ing theological mind among the Reformers.” (Nichols 175)
       2. “For Calvin, the Word him­self speaks through [scripture], but only when the Holy Spirit working in the believer prompts him to find the Word in the Bible [*Institutes* 1.7.1].” (Nichols 175)
       3. “. . . in Calvinist theology, there is no objective test for discovering the mean­ing of Scripture.” (Nichols 175)
          1. “How, then, do we know which believers to fol­low in the interpretation of the Bible? For Calvin, we can be sure that such reliable guides exist, because some people are absolutely predes­tined by God’s grace to enjoy the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. How­ever, we do not always know at any given time who the elect in fact are, though there are certain signs, such as zeal for sanctification or assurance of salvation, which are usually trustworthy. The most we can say positively is that there will always be individuals in local Churches who find and teach God’s word through [the Bible].” (Nichols 175)
       4. “In the Reformed Churches flowing from Calvin, the need for such a test [“for discovering the mean­ing of Scripture”] was, however, soon felt. The most common solu­tion was to describe the Bible as self-interpreting—since any part of it may be able to illuminate any other. The task of discerning that process of self-interpretation falls to Reformed and godly scholars. Dis­carding the infallibility of the Church, the left wing of the Reforma­tion ended up in the Modern period with the infallibility of exegetes—a notion which sometimes appears to have seeped into contemporary Catholic liberalism also!” (Nichols 175)
  1. Trent
     1. Ortigues, E. “Ecritures et Traditions apostoliques au concile de Trente.” *Recherches de science religieuse* 36 (1949).
     2. Geiselmann, J. “Das Konzil von Trient über dans Verhält­nis der Heiligen Schrift und der nicht geschriebenen Traditionen.” *Recherches de science religieuse* 36 (1949).
     3. “The Catholic Church does not regard revela­tion as adequately presented in Scripture alone—if the word “alone” there is taken to mean the Scriptures divorced from their setting in the life of the Church. Over against the sixteenth-century Reformers, the Council of Trent affirmed that there is something yet more primary than Scripture or Tradition, namely, the Gospel itself, portrayed at Trent as “the font of all saving truth and rules of conduct.” [*Decree Concerning the Canonical Scriptures* (*Decretum de libris sacris et de traditionibus recipiendis*), 8 Apr. 1546, DS 1501.] Neverthe­less, the Fathers of Trent continue, “These truths and rules are con­tained in the written books *and unwritten traditions* which have come down to us.” And they conclude, therefore, that “all traditions con­cerning faith and morals . . . come from the mouth of Christ or are inspired by the Holy Spirit and have been preserved in continuous succession in the Catholic Church.” Their statements are certainly directed against the nascent Protestantism of the 1540s. But equally certainly, in making them, Trent saw itself not as evolving new no­tions to meet an emergency but as reiterating the constant conviction of the Church, something which, in the words of the fifth-century monk-theologian Vincent of Lérins [*Commonitorium* 2], “has been believed always, every­where, by everyone.” The Vincentian canon, as it is called, is notori­ously hard to apply in its full rigor to any aspect of faith whatsoever: in every age of the Church, not excluding the age of the apostles, there has been difference and debate. But in fact, Trent’s concept of tradi­tion, if not quite a perfect example of the Vincentian principle at work, does have a highly respectable pedigree.” (Nichols 165)
     4. *et* . . . *et*
        1. In “an earlier draft, revela­tion is . . . said to endure “partly” as Scripture and “partly” as traditions [*partim* . . . *partim*].” (Nichols 176)
        2. “. . . Trent speaks of the gospel as found *both* in the Scriptures *and* in apostolic traditions, insofar as these latter (1) pertain to faith and morals, and (2) are known to be part of the con­tinuous practice of the Church.” (Nichols 176)
        3. “. . . the exact significant [*sic*] of the dropping of the phrase *partim* . . . *partim*, and its replacement by *et* . . . *et* is disputed by historians, we can at least say that Trent closed off certain approaches while leaving others open.” (Nichols 176)
        4. Trent “appears to speak of Scripture and Tradition as sharing the same sta­tus as mediations of Christian truth.” (Nichols 170)
     5. “Three approaches were declared, implicitly, to be cul-de-sacs.” (Nichols 176)
        1. “First, Trent closed off the Protestant position in its Lutheran or Calvinist form.” (Nichols 176)
        2. “Second, it also excluded the late medieval concept of postapostolic reve­lation made to the Church.” (Nichols 176)
        3. “Finally, it disposed of the idea of an eso­teric, nonpublic apostolic tradition coming out of the closet from time to time.” (Congar, *Tradition and Traditions* 164-66) (Nichols 176)
     6. “On the other hand, Trent kept open three other possibili­ties.” (Nichols 176)
        1. “. . . as so often, a council leaves a plurality of options open . . .” (Nichols 180)
        2. “It left open the so-called two-source theory . . .” (Nichols 176)
           1. “On this view, there are (alongside Scripture) confessional, liturgical, and ethical traditions in the Church deriving from ancient times and testifying to revelation.” (Nichols 176)
           2. This view is “found in, for instance, Peter Canisius (1521-97), and Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621).” (Nichols 176 n. 37)
           3. “The two-source theory came to be dom­inant in the period between the council and the nineteenth century.” (Nichols 176)
        3. “It left open . . . the “classical view” of the High Middle Ages, namely, that all revelation is virtually contained in Scripture, requiring, however, the Church’s interpretation, leaning on apostolic tradition, for its explica­tion.” (Nichols 176)
        4. It left open the modern view, now favored by Catholic theologians. (Nichols 176)
  2. the modern view
     1. This view defines “Tradition as the life and consciousness of the Church . . .” (Nichols 177)
        1. J.A. Möhler (*Die Einheit in der Kirche*, *oder das Princip des Katholicismus*, *dargestellt im Geiste der Kirchenväter der drei ersten Jahrhunderte*. Tübingen: 1825. 56): “Tradition is the expression of that Holy Spirit who enlivens the community of believers—an expression that courses through all ages, living at every moment, but always finding embodiment. The Scriptures are the expres­sion of the Holy Spirit, embodied at the beginning of Christianity through the special grace given to the apostles. The Scriptures are in that respect the first component of written tradition.”
        2. “On Möhler’s view of tradition”: Geiselmann, J. *Lebendiger Glaube aus geheiligten Überlieferung*. *Der Grundgedanke der Theologie J*.*A*. *Möhlers und die katholische Tübinger Schule*. Mainz: 1942. (Nichols 177 n. 39)
     2. “. . . Tradition is never accessible in itself, in its pure form, but only comes to us via some kind of concrete mediation.” (Nichols 181)
     3. Tradition “is the Chris­tian religion itself, a reality larger than that of the scriptural text.” (Nichols 169)
     4. “And because in Catholic Christianity, as in the New Testament, the life and faith of the com­munity of Jesus are held to be Spirit guided, . . . the life and faith of the Church are seen as the proper context in which to read, study, and expound the Scriptures.” (Nichols 169)
     5. “Tradition as the Christian religion itself, the life and consciousness of the Church considered as a reflection of the word of God, of God’s self-communication, is neces­sarily a reality at once larger than the Bible and inclusive of it.” (Nichols 169)
     6. relation of scripture and Tradition
        1. “. . . Tradition (now spell [*sic*] with a capital *T* and distinguished from traditions in the plural) [is] theologically prior to the Bible . . .” (Nichols 176)
        2. Of “Tradition as the life and consciousness of the Church, . . . Scripture forms an essential part.” (Nichols 177)
        3. “The texts of Scripture are the primordial instance of such mediation [of Tradition], a uniquely important monument of Tradition. But there are other, less important mediations to set side by side with Scripture . . .” (Nichols 181)
        4. “. . . Scripture can still be called the supreme norm of faith, the *norma non normata*, in the sense that to appeal to Tradition to interpret Scripture aright is not to appeal away from Scripture to something other than Scripture.” (Nichols 177)
           1. Charles Journet (Cardinal, Fribourg: *What Is a Dogma?* Trans. London: 1964. 51): “The Church raises Scripture above itself . . .” (Nichols 177)
        5. “. . . Tradition is not thought of as exhaustively expressed in Scripture . . .” (Nichols 177)
        6. The unwritten traditions express the same Tradition expressed in scripture. “To judge the Bible on the basis of Tradition as expressed in traditions is not, *pace* Protestant fears, to submit the Bible to an alien authority, but rather to identify and declare what is the Bible’s own deepest reality.” (Nichols 177)
        7. “. . . the principal monument of Tradition is Scripture.” (Nichols 177)

1. **types of Tradition**
   1. Congar, *Tradition and Traditions* 287-88.
   2. “monuments of Tradition”
      1. In the 1800s, two members of the Roman College introduced the idea of “monuments of Tradition.”
         1. Kasper, Walter. *Die Lehre über die Tradition in der Römischen Schule* [Roman College]. Freiburg: 1962. 31.
         2. The first to speak of “monuments of tradition” was Giovanni Perrone, SJ (1794-1876). (*Praelectiones theologicae*. Rome: 1835. 1: 195.) (Nichols 177 n. 41)
         3. “Monuments of tradition” “was given wide currency” by Cardinal Johann B. Franzelin, SJ (1816-86). (*Tractatus de divina Traditione et Scriptura*. Rome: 1970. 306.) (Nichols 177 n. 41)
      2. “. . . the principal monument of Tradition is Scripture . . .” (Nichols 177)
      3. “. . . Tradition’s other monuments [are] other ways in which the life and faith of the Church as something larger than Scripture becomes articulate.” (Nichols 177)
         1. But, “since Tradition is not . . . exhaustively expressed in Scripture, we can also expect to find it alive and well in the various concrete traditions that manifest the life of the Church.” (Nichols 177)
         2. “The unwrit­ten traditions mentioned at Trent are only encountered by us when they become in some way visible and tangible . . .” (Nichols 177)
   3. “*loci theo*­*logici*”
      1. “From the sixteenth century onwards, the study of such authori­ties or resources for theology has been known as the study of *loci theo*­*logici*, literally, “theological places,” places where you can go to look for enlightenment in the work of theology.” (Nichols 178)
      2. Cano, Melchior. *De locis theologicis*. Salamanca: 1563.
      3. Gardeil, A., “Lieux.” *DTC* 9: cols. 712-47.
      4. Congar, Yves M.-J. *La foi et la théologie*. Tournai: 1962. 142-45.
   4. “theological criteriology”
      1. “Another term sometimes used for the monuments of Tradition, especially in the systematic the­ology of the present century, is “theological criteriology.” This some­what unlovely phrase means that the sources for theology can also be looked on as criteria for judging our theology when we have completed it.” (di Bartolo, S. *Nuova Espozione dei Criteri teologici*. Rome: 1904.) (Nichols 178)
      2. “. . . we are dealing here with what it is that theologians must take as authoritative for their work.” (Nichols 177)
      3. “To a modern sensibility, “authority” has a mainly legal sound [177] about it: we speak of a national legislature as invested with authority, or of the police’s authority to question a citizen on the street. If we are too influenced by these analogies, we shall see theological authori­ties as simply laying down in advance what can or cannot be said in theology . . .” (Nichols 177-78)
      4. “But the sense of authority proper to the monuments of Tradition is [*auctoritas*].” (Nichols 178)
         1. *auctoritas*: “a producing, production, invention, cause.” (Lewis, C.T., and C. Short. *A Latin Dictionary*. Oxford: 1951. 198-99.) (Qtd. in Nichols 178 n. 42)
         2. *auctor*: “he that brings about the existence of any object, or promotes the increase and prosperity of it, whether he originates it, or by his efforts gives greater permanence or continuance to it.” (Lewis, C.T., and C. Short. *A Latin Dictionary*. Oxford: 1951. 198-99.) (Qtd. in Nichols 178 n. 42)
      5. “To say that something has authority in Christian theology is principally to say that it is a perennially valid source from which insight and illumination flow down to us in the life of faith.” (Nichols 178)
      6. “We must not take up a wooden attitude to the texts and objects in which Tradition is expressed, for then they will not be life giving. We must come to them with a certain sensitiv­ity, which can be compared with that of the good listener: the person who not only registers what someone is saying on the surface but hears also the deeper self-communication that is going on in, with, and be­neath the language they are using. There is always more in the sources of revelation than the theologian—or even the magisterium—draws out of them.” (Nichols 178)
      7. “If someone writes a book on the Eucharist, for example, and we are asked what we think of it, we should judge it in the light of the sources, monuments, or criteria that come to us from Tradition. So for instance we should ask, How does the book stand in relation to Scripture’s witness on the Eucharist? How does its sense of the Eu­charist match up to what is found in the texts and rubrics of the [178] Church’s liturgies? In her art and architecture? In the writings of the Fathers? In the teachings of the councils? All of these are expressions of the Church’s life and self-understanding, and so all of them are highly pertinent to judging the Catholicity of a piece of theological writ­ing. No new theory about, say, the Eucharistic sacrifice or the Eucharis­tic presence which could not incorporate all this evidence in some way could count as really acceptable. Without necessarily being able to dis­cover a logical flaw in the author’s reasoning, we could still say that there seems to be something defective in the author’s sense of this par­ticular reality of faith. Naturally, in a matter of this sort, our personal judgment is only of validity to the extent that we have immersed our­selves in the Church’s Tradition, in the entire range of articulations of the life of faith that the past has bequeathed us.” (Nichols 178-79)
   5. primary and secondary sources
      1. “The primary sources [are] Scripture and the unwritten traditions . . .” (Nichols 179)
         1. Yves Congar says that “The primary sources are . . . constitutive *loci* of Tradition: they are the sources which make Tradition what it is, the things without which the life and faith of the Church would be unthinkable.” (*Tradition and Traditions* 426) (Nichols 179)
      2. But the unwritten traditions “come to us in the form of a great plethora of secondary sources: the liturgy, the writings left by the Fathers, and so forth.” (Nichols 179)
         1. Yves Congar says that “The secondary sources [are] Tradition’s declarative *loci*: the places where the reality of the Church declares itself in thoroughly empirical terms.” (Nichols 179)
         2. “These secondary sources are, as it were, the tip of the iceberg. They do not exhaust Tradition, . . . [but] without them we could not get hold of Tradi­tion . . .” (Nichols 179)
         3. “The secondary sources, then, declare their primary counterparts. They do so in a way which is time bound and place bound and therefore contingent. Yet there is no other way to the essential reality of Tradition, which underlies them.” (Nichols 180)
         4. “Thus for instance, a value es­sential to the Church such as the sense of adoration before the triune God is preserved in Tradition in the form of a variety of historic litur­gies. The existence of these liturgies, whether Western or Eastern, is a matter of the sheerest historical contingency. If the main missionary effort of the Church of the first century had been to India and the Far East, rather than to the Greco-Roman world and its Syriac fringe, we [179] should have had a very different liturgical inheritance. Nevertheless, although the concrete form of our liturgies is contingent, through them we have access to the sense of adoration of the one God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—without which the Church’s life is unimaginable. Through the liturgies we have, even though these are not the ones we might have had, we have access to something absolutely primary and fundamental, the theological reality of Tradition itself, revelation in transmission.” (Nichols 179-80)
         5. “Though the concept of declarative *loci* has been worked out in the context of traditions, we could very well see the texts or language of Scripture as comparable declarative *loci* when compared with the meaning of Scripture. For it is the meaning of the texts of the Bible that is constitutive of Tradition; the literary and linguistic ways in which this meaning is embedded is what sets that meaning forth.” (Nichols 180)
   6. “. . . the language of Scripture conveys a meaning (sense) that is authority bearing for Catholic theology.” (Nichols 180)
2. **conclusions**
   1. Sometimes Nichols refers to “scripture and the unwritten traditions,” sometimes to “scripture and traditions.”
      1. an example of the former
         1. The modern view has “a concept of Tradition (now graced with a capital *T*) which [enables] us to include Scripture and the tradi­tions as Tradition’s two primary expressions.” (Nichols 180)
         2. Lower-case “traditions” here refers to Church Fathers, councils, creeds, liturgy, art, and the sense of the faithful. (These are the types of tradition that Nichols mentions in the next chapters; they are not an exhaustive list.)—Hahn
      2. an example of the latter
         1. In addition to scripture, it is in such traditions as Church Fathers, councils, etc. that the “other great source of Tradition—the unwritten traditions which are Scripture’s ambience—makes itself known to us.” (Nichols 180)
   2. So there are three concepts of tradition.
      1. “Tradition” (uppercase)
         1. This is revelation itself, or Christianity itself, or the life of the Church itself.
         2. “Tradition with a capital T is . . . revelation in its transmission.” (Nichols 177)
      2. “unwritten traditions” (lowercase)
         1. “Tradition with a capital T . . . finds two sorts of expression: in the books of the Bible and in the unwritten traditions.” (Nichols 177)
      3. “traditions” (lowercase)
         1. “The unwrit­ten traditions mentioned at Trent are only encountered by us when they become in some way visible and tangible . . .” (Nichols 177)
      4. relation of “unwritten traditions” to “traditions”
         1. “Unwritten traditions” are to “traditions” as “the meaning of Scripture” is to “the texts or language of Scripture.” (phrases from Nichols 180)
         2. “For it is the meaning of the texts of the Bible that is constitutive of Tradition; the literary and linguistic ways in which this meaning is embedded is what sets that meaning forth.” (Nichols 180)
         3. It seems, then, that for “unwritten traditions” one can substitute “the meaning of traditions.”
   3. So the relationships seem to be these.
      1. Tradition is expressed in the meaning of the Bible and in the meaning of traditions.
      2. The meaning of the Bible is expressed in the texts of scripture.
      3. The meaning of traditions is expressed in traditions.
      4. The meaning of the Bible and the meaning of traditions is the same Tradition.

### Tradition, Scripture, and Magisterium

### According to *Dei Verbum*

1. **relation of tradition and scripture**
   1. Vatican II (1962-65)
      1. Vatican II (dogmatic constitution *On Divine Revelation* [*Dei Verbum*, 18 Nov. 1965] § 21): the Church “has always maintained them [the scriptures], . . . together with sacred tradition, as the supreme rule of faith . . .” (ch. 6 art. 21)
      2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 9): tradition “takes the word of God entrusted . . . to the Apostles, and hands it on to their successors in its full purity . . .” (This is *tradition as verb.*)
      3. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 9): Tradition and scripture, “flowing from the same divine well­spring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end.” (This is *tradition as noun.*)
      4. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 10): tradition and scripture “form one sacred deposit of the word of God, commit­ted to the Church. Holding fast to this deposit the entire holy people united with their shepherds remain always steadfast in the teaching of the Apostles, in the common life, in the breaking of the bread and in prayers [Acts 2:42] . . .” (ch. 2 art. 10)
      5. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 9): “Consequently it is not from Sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed.”
2. **relation of tradition and scripture to magisterium**
   1. magisterium: Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 10): “the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office [i.e., the magisterium] of the Church, whose au­thor­ity is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it . . .”
   2. tradition, scripture, and magisterium
      1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 10): Tradition, scripture and the magisterium “are so linked and joined together that one can­not stand without the others . . .”
      2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 10): “all together and each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.”
3. “**Sacred Scripture in the Life of the Church**” (*Dei Verbum*, title of ch. 6)
   1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 21): “The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates the body of the Lord . . .”
   2. preaching
      1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 21): “Therefore, like the Christian religion itself, all the preach­ing of the Church must be nourished and regulated by Sacred Scripture. For in the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven meets His children with great love and speaks with them; and the force and power in the word of God is so great that it stands as the support and energy of the Church, the strength of faith for her sons, the food of the soul, the pure and everlasting source of spiritual life.”
      2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 23): exegesis “should be so done that as many ministers of the divine word as possi­ble will be able effectively to provide the nourishment of the Scriptures for the people of God, to enlighten their minds, streng­then their wills, and set men’s hearts on fire with the love of God.”
   3. translations
      1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 22): “Easy access to Sacred Scripture should be provided for all the Christian faith­ful.”
      2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 22): “the Church from the very beginning accepted as her own that very ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament which is called the Septua­gint; and she has always given a place of honor to other Eastern transla­tions and Latin ones, especially the Latin translation known as the Vulgate.”
      3. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 22): “But since the word of God should be accessible at all times, the Church . . . sees to it that suitable and correct translations are made into different languages, especially from the original texts of the sacred books.”
      4. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 22): “And should the opportunity arise and the Church authorities approve, if these translations are produced in cooperation with the separated brethren as well, all Christians will be able to use them.”
   4. exegetes
      1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 23): “The Church is concerned to move ahead toward a deeper understanding of the Sacred Scriptures so that she may increasingly feed her sons with the divine words. Therefore, she also encourages the study of the holy Fathers of both East and West and of sacred liturgies.”
      2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 23): “Catholic exegetes then and other students of sacred theology, working dili­gently together and using appropriate means, should devote their energies, under the watchful care of the sacred teaching office of the Church, to an ex­plora­tion and exposition of the divine writings. . . . The sacred synod encour­ages the sons of the Church and Biblical scholars to continue energetically, following the mind of the Church, with the work they have so well begun, with a constant renewal of vigor.”
   5. scripture and theology
      1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 24): “Sacred theology rests on the written word of God, together with sacred tradition, as its primary and perpetual foundation. By scrutinizing in the light of faith all truth stored up in the mystery of Christ, theology is most powerfully streng­thened and constantly rejuvenated by that word.”
      2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 24): “the study of the sacred page is, as it were, the soul of sacred theology.” (Leo XIII, encyclical “Providentissmus Deus”; Benedict XV, encyclical “Spiritus Paraclitus”)
      3. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 24): “By the same word of Scripture the ministry of the word also, that is, pastoral preaching, cate­chetics and all Christian instruction, in which the liturgical homily must hold the foremost place, is nourished in a healthy way and flourishes in a holy way.”
      4. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 25): Especially clergy and “catechists who are legitimately active in the ministry of the word” “must hold fast to the Sacred Scriptures through diligent sacred reading and careful study . . . so that none of them will become “an empty preach­er of the word of God outwardly, who is not a listener to it inwardly” [St. Augustine, *Sermons* 179.1] since they must share the abundant wealth of the divine word with the faithful committed to them, especially in the sacred liturgy.”
      5. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 25): “all the Christian faithful, especially Religious, . . . should gladly put themselves in touch with the sacred text itself, whether it be through the liturgy, rich in the divine word, or through devotional reading, or through instructions suitable for the purpose and other aids which, in our time, with approval and active support of the shepherds of the Church, are commendably spread everywhere.”
      6. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 25): “translations of the sacred texts . . . are to be provided with the necessary and really adequate explanations . . .”
      7. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 25): “Furthermore, editions of the Sacred Scriptures, provided with suitable footnotes, should be prepared also for the use of non‑Christians and adapted to their situation. Both pastors of souls and Christians generally should see to the wise distribution of these in one way or another.”
      8. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 26): through “the reading and study of the sacred books “the word of God may spread rapidly and be glorified” (2 Thess. 3:1) . . . Just as the life of the Church is strengthened through more frequent celebration of the Eucharistic mystery, similarly we may hope for a new stimulus for the life of the Spirit from a growing reverence for the word of God, which “lasts forever” (Is. 40:8; see 1 Peter 1:23‑25).”

# Magisterium and Infallibility

## Magisterium

### Forms of Magisterium

magisterium

┌──────────┴──────────┐

extraordinary ordinary

magisterium magisterium

┌─────┴─────┐ ┌─────┴─────┐

ecumenical pope universal non-universal

council defining ordinary ordinary

defining (infallible) magisterium magisterium

(infallible) “defining” (non-infallible)

(infallible) │

┌──┴──┐

bishops pope

*conditions* *conditions* *conditions*

*for infallibility*: *for infallibility*: *for infallibility*:

must be ecumenical must be pope (e.g., must be college

council elected, not heretic) of bishops un-

consults the faith ited to pope

acts as judges exercises universal

of the faith jurisdiction

free from coercion free from coercion

doctrine of faith doctrine of faith doctrine of faith

or morals or morals or morals

intention to define intention to define intention to impose

as “definitively to

be held”

### Indefectibility of the Church

**contents**:

“indefectibility”

indefectibility as permanent existence

indefectibility as permanence in the true faith

indefectibility of the Church, not the Christian

indefectibility in apostolic faith

Indefectibility in true faith requires that the creed be true.

The Church’s faith is normative for any who want to belong to it.

development of doctrine: *Dei Verbum* § 8

*sensus fidei*, *sensus fidelium*, *consensus fidelium*

1. “**indefectibility**”
   1. In ordinary language, “indefectibility” means “Having no . . . defect; perfect.” (*American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*. 4th ed. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2009.)
   2. In theology, indefectibility includes permanent existence. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 6)
2. **indefectibility as permanent existence**
   1. New Testament
      1. “. . . to believe that Jesus is Lord is to believe that he is risen . . . and that no enemy will ever be able to snatch from him the fruits of this glorious victory.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 5)
      2. “. . . belief in the indestructibility of Christ’s Church is a corollary of the far more basic Christian belief that ‘Jesus is Lord’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 5)
      3. “. . . the Christian community was persuaded that nothing could ever destroy his Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 4)
         1. Matt 16:18, “you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.”
      4. It was “the faith of the early Christian community that their risen Lord would never abandon them, and that his Church would enjoy his presence and assistance to the end of time.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 4)
         1. Matt 28:19-20, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
      5. “The New Testament conviction that the Church is Christ’s ‘body’ and his ‘bride’ suggests the utter incompatibility between the triumph of Christ, on the one hand, and any future defeat of the Church . . . how could he ever allow her to be corrupted and lost to him?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 5)
         1. *body*: e.g., Eph 5:25, “. . . Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her . . .”
         2. *bride*: e.g., Eph 5:29, “no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church . . .”
         3. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 9): “the Church is strengthened by the power of God’s grace promised to her by the Lord, so that in the weakness of the flesh she may not waver from perfect fidelity, but remain a bride worthy of her Lord; that moved by the Holy Spirit she may never cease to renew herself until through the cross she arrives at the light which knows no setting.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 5)
   2. Belief in the Church’s indefectibility “is totally a matter of confidence in divine promises and divine grace.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 5)
3. **indefectibility as permanence in the true faith**
   1. “Belief in Christ’s eschatological victory and his universal Lordship is the foundation of our belief that the Church . . . will never be led away from the truth of the Gospel . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 118)
   2. The Church “has a divine assurance of its remaining not only in existence, but also of its being maintained in fidelity to Christ and his Gospel, until the end of time.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 4)
   3. Many non-Catholics (e.g., Lutherans and Anglicans) also believe that “the Church . . . is maintained in the truth of the Gospel by the Holy Spirit.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 2)
   4. reasons for belief in indefectibility in faith
      1. promise of the Paraclete in John
         1. John 14:16-17, “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate [*paraklētos*], to be with you forever. 17This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.”
         2. John 14:26, “But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.”
         3. John 15:26, “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf.”
         4. John 16:7, “if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.”
         5. John 16:13, “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”
         6. “. . . faith in this abiding presence and assistance of the Spirit of truth to the Church . . . founds the Christian conviction of the Church’s indefectibility in the truth.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 6)
      2. 1 Tim 3:15
         1. 1 Tim 3:15, “the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.”
         2. This verse shows “the conviction of the New Testament community that the Church was assured of permanence in the truth.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 6)
      3. Indefectibility includes “permanence in existence, and . . . the Church could hardly be said to persevere in authentic existence if it fell away from the truth of the Gospel.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 6)
4. **indefectibility of the Church**, **not the Christian**
   1. “. . . indefectibility in the true faith is understood as a property of the Church as a body, but not of its members as individuals. Experience, even within the time of the New Testament, was enough to show that [6] individual Christians could indeed fall away from the faith, and even that groups of Christians could apostatise or form heretical sects.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 6-7)
   2. How can the Church as a community have a property not attributable to individual members? Must we think of the Church “as a kind of ‘super-person’, totally distinct from the real persons who are its members?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 7)
   3. Aquinas (*ST* 2-2.l.9 ad 3): “the faith of the Church is faith formed by charity . . .” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 7)
      1. “. . . that is, the faith of the *Church* is not the kind of faith that can persist even without charity or sanctifying grace . . . the faith of the individual member is not always such.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 7)
      2. “St Thomas predicates of the *Church* what is actually true, at any moment, only of those members of the Church who are ‘fully incorporated into it’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 7)
   4. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 14): “They are fully incorporated in the society of the Church who, possessing the Spirit of Christ accept her entire system and all the means of salvation given to her, and are united with her as part of her visible bodily structure and through her with Christ, who rules her through the Supreme Pontiff and the bishops. The bonds which bind men to the Church in a visible way are profession of faith, the sacraments, and ecclesiastical government and communion. He is not saved, however, who, though part of the body of the Church, does not persevere in charity. He remains indeed in the bosom of the Church, but, as it were, only in a “bodily” manner and not “in his heart.”” (Vatican Council II)
   5. Like Aquinas “we attribute indefectible holiness, and indefectibility in the true faith, not to some ideal Church, but to the concrete People of God here on earth, whose properties are actually [7] realised in its members, not in each and every one of them, to be sure, but in those who are fully incorporated in it.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 7-8)
      1. “To say that the Church is indefectibly holy means that it will never lack members who are actually living in the grace of Christ . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 8)
      2. “. . . to say that the Church is indefectible in faith means that it will never lack members who maintain Christian faith in its purity.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 8)
      3. “No individual member—not even the pope, as a private person—has any such guarantee of holiness or perseverance in the true faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 8)
   6. “Does this imply that the Church *consists* only of those members who are actually living in the state of grace, or who maintain the faith in its purity?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 8)
      1. “. . . a person can cease to be a member of the Church by the wilful rejection of its faith or its communion (by a formal sin of apostasy, heresy or schism)—but other kinds of sin, even if they mean the loss of grace, do not mean the loss of membership in the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 8)
      2. “Nor do mere errors in belief have such an effect.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 8)
      3. “So the pilgrim Church will always consist of those living in grace and those without it, of those with orthodox beliefs and those in error.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 8)
   7. “I do not know how one could be sure that [fully incorporated members] will always constitute the numerical majority in the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 8)
      1. Aquinas “does not seem concerned whether such will necessarily be a majority in the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 8)
5. **indefectibility in apostolic faith**
   1. indefectibly “one, holy, catholic and apostolic”
      1. The “Nicene Creed” says the Church is “one, holy, catholic and apostolic.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 9)
      2. “. . . each of these four properties, is an object of our faith. . . . Therefore we believe that the Church is indefectibly one [*Decree of Ecumenism* § 4], holy [*Lumen gentium* § 39], catholic and apostolic. Each of these properties has a divine assurance of permanence . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 9)
      3. “Of course, *indefectibly* does not mean *perfectly*. . . . Each of these four properties is both a gift given and a goal to be striven for; none of them can be lost, but none of them will be perfectly possessed during the Church’s pilgrimage on earth.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 9)
         1. We are far “from perfect unity even within the Catholic Church . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 9)
         2. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 48): “on earth the Church is marked with a genuine though imperfect holiness.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 9)
         3. “The Church is indefectibly catholic, that is, universal, but how far it is from embracing all of mankind . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 9)
         4. “And the Church is indefectibly apostolic: but what a difference between the simplicity of the apostolic community of the New Testament, and the worldly splendour of the Renaissance papacy, to mention but one item of contrast.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 9)
   2. “indefectibly apostolic in faith” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 9)
      1. “. . . when we say that the Church is indefectibly apostolic . . . First and foremost, we mean that the Church is indefectibly apostolic in faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 9)
      2. “The Church accepts the witness of the apostles as normative for Christian belief [9] for all time.” (Sullivan Magisterium 9-10)
         1. “Nothing can ever be accepted as an article of Christian faith which is in contradiction with this original witness . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 10)
         2. “Nothing can ever be accepted as an article of Christian faith which . . . does not in some real sense derive from it [the apostolic witness].” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 10)
   3. post-apostolic tradition
      1. “As the apostolic witness was originally handed on by preaching and by example, as well as in writing, so it continues to be handed on in the Church not only in the form of the written Scriptures, but in the Church’s ‘teaching, life and worship’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 11)
      2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* §§ 7-8): “Now what was handed on by the Apostles includes everything which contributes toward the holiness of life and increase in faith of the peoples of God; and so the Church, in her teaching, life and worship, perpetuates and hands on to all generations all that she herself is, all that she believes. This tradition which comes from the Apostles develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. . . . The words of the holy fathers witness to the presence of this living tradition, whose wealth is poured into the practice and life of the believing and praying Church. Through the same tradition the Church’s full canon of the sacred books is known, and the sacred writings themselves are more profoundly understood and unceasingly made active in her; and thus God, who spoke of old, uninterruptedly converses with the bride of His beloved Son; and the Holy Spirit, through whom the living voice of the Gospel resounds in the Church, and through her, in the world, leads unto all truth those who believe and makes the word of Christ dwell abundantly in them.” (Vatican II) Col 3:16, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom . . .”
      3. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 10): “Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, which is committed to the Church. Holding fast to this deposit, the entire holy people united with their shepherds remain always steadfast in the teaching of the apostles, in the common life, in the breaking of the bread, and in prayers.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 11)
      4. “Whatever may have to be said about the special role of the ‘shepherds’ in the handing on and interpreting of apostolic tradition, the primary fact, clearly stressed in these texts of *Dei Verbum*, is that it is the *Church* as such, the People of God, which has received the apostolic witness, and which unfailingly hands it on. In other words, the Church is indefectibly apostolic in its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 11)
6. **Indefectibility in true faith requires that propositions in the confession of faith be true**.
   1. “The question we must now ask is: how important is it that the propositions in which the Church professes its faith be true propositions, and not erroneous ones? And if this is important, what assurance do we have that the propositions in which the Church professes its faith, are really true ones?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 14)
   2. “. . . the question [is] whether we could still describe the Church as indefectible in true faith, even if it could not express its faith in true propositions, or even if we had no assurance that the propositions in which it expresses its normative confession of faith would always be true ones.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 14)
   3. Is it “possible to express divinely revealed mysteries in human propositions that are [true]”? (Sullivan *Magisterium* 14)
   4. “. . . no human proposition can ever adequately express a divine mystery; it will always fall short of the reality which it tries to express. Human language that tries to speak about God can only speak by analogy. It will always betray the weakness and limitations of the human mind confronted with the unfathomable mystery of God.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 14)
   5. “Similarly, human propositions will always betray the limitation of a particular cultural background, conceptual framework, within which any human proposition has to be expressed. Human propositions will necessarily be historically conditioned; there will always be a particular, limited context in which they have to be understood.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 14)
   6. “. . . do we have to draw the conclusion that there can be no such thing as a *true* proposition where divine revelation is concerned?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 14)
   7. sentence and proposition
      1. “A sentence is a particular verbal expression, in a particular language; the proposition is the *meaning* which the sentence intends to express. The same proposition is capable of various linguistic expressions: otherwise it would be impossible to translate it from one language into another.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 15)
      2. “. . . since, in the course of time, words might change their meanings, a sentence which originally conveyed one meaning, could eventually convey quite another meaning. In such a case, the original proposition remains true, but it now has to be expressed differently, because the sentence in which it was originally expressed no longer conveys the same meaning. So when we speak of ‘true propositions’, we do not identify the propositions, as such, with the sentences in which they have been expressed.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 15)
      3. “. . . *sentences* [might] need to be re-formulated; in a changed cultural setting the sentences might well need to be changed in order to make their meaning intelligible.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 16)
      4. Sentences might be “merely human, partial, limited, capable of more adequate expression, culturally conditioned, etc. . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 16)
      5. “We are talking not about sentences as such but about the truth of the meaning which the sentences intend to express.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 16)
   8. true propositions
      1. “. . . for a proposition to be true, it is not necessary that it be an adequate expression of the reality which it intends to convey: that it say all that could be said, or say it as perfectly as it could possibly be said.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 15)
      2. “. . . there is no reason to deny the very possibility that the Church could express its normative faith in propositions that are really true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 15)
   9. The indefectibility of the church requires that propositions of the creed be true. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 15)
      1. “. . . the indefectibility of the Church in the truth requires that its normative confession of faith be expressed in propositions which, for all their inevitable limitations, are still true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 16)
      2. “In what I have said thus far, I believe that I can count on the agreement of most Christians, for I have purposely limited the question of the indefectibility of the Church in truth to . . . the basic, normative [16] confession of Christian faith, such as . . . the ‘Apostles Creed’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 16-17)
7. **The Church**’**s faith is normative for any who want to belong to it**.
   1. “. . . it has always been recognised that the faith of the Christian community is normative for the faith of its individual members.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
      1. A profession of this normative faith has always been required of candidates for baptism . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
      2. “. . . and perseverance in this faith is a condition for continued membership in the community.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
   2. “No one can be forced to be a Christian against his or her will. But, on the other hand, once the free choice to be a member of the Church has been made, one is not free to choose one’s own confession of faith; or to choose which articles of the Christian faith one will accept, which one will reject. The Christian Church has never understood itself as a collection of individualistic believers, each free to pick and choose among the various items offered for belief. It has always understood itself as a community of faith . . . This in fact is the significance of the recitation of the ‘Apostles Creed’ in the liturgy of baptism.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 12)
8. **development of doctrine**: ***Dei Verbum* § 8**
   1. “It is now time to take up . . . the question [of] the ‘development of doctrine’ in the course of the Church’s life, and with the ‘infallibility’ of the whole Church’s belief that a particular doctrine is contained in revelation, even when this doctrine is not clearly found in Scripture or in documents of early tradition, and has not always been an explicit object of common Christian faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 17)
   2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 8): “This tradition which comes from the apostles develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. . . . the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfilment in her.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 17)
   3. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 8): “there is a growth in the understanding of the realities and the words which have been handed down. This happens through the contemplation and study made by believers, . . . through the intimate understanding of spiritual things they experience, and through the preaching of those who have received through episcopal succession the sure gift of truth.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 17)
      1. “For the present we shall prescind from the question of the ‘sure gift of truth’ which this text attributes to those in ‘episcopal succession’. We are concerned for now with the role which all ‘believers’ are said to have in the development of doctrine.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 17)
   4. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 12): “The body of the faithful as a whole, anointed as they are by the Holy One [1 John 2:20, 27], cannot err in matters of belief. Thanks to a supernatural sense of the faith which characterizes the People as a whole, it manifests this unerring quality when, ‘from the bishops down to the last member of the laity’, it shows universal agreement in [18] matters of faith and morals. For, by this sense of faith which is aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth, God’s People accepts not the word of men but the very Word of God [1 Thess 2:13]. It clings without fail to the faith once delivered to the saints [Jude 3], penetrates it more deeply by accurate insights, and applies it more thoroughly to life.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 18-19)
      1. 1 John 2:20, 27, “you have been anointed by the Holy One, and all of you have knowledge. . . . 27the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and so you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, abide in him.”
      2. 1 Thess 2:13, “We also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as what it really is, God’s word, which is also at work in you believers.”
      3. Jude 1:3, “contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.”
   5. “. . . the terms: ‘the body of the faithful as a whole’, ‘the people as a whole’, and ‘universal agreement’ mean concretely: ‘the body of the Catholic faithful as a whole’, ‘the Catholic people as a whole’, ‘universal agreement among Catholic bishops and laity’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 19)
   6. examples: Immaculate Conception and Assumption of Mary
      1. “It is already explicit in the New Testament that her role was not one of purely biological maternity . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 18)
         1. Luke 1:26-56, “In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to . . . 27Mary. 28And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you. . . . 30Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. . . . 35The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. . . . 37For nothing will be impossible with God.” 38Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her. 39 In those days Mary set out . . . 40and greeted Elizabeth. 41When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit 42and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. 43And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? 44For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. 45And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.” 46And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, 47and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; 49for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.””
         2. Luke 2 *passim*
         3. John 19:26, “When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.”
      2. But “No one nowadays claims that the [Immaculate Conception and Assumption] have always been explicit objects of Christian faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 17)
         1. The doctrines “are not clearly taught in Scripture . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 17)
         2. “. . . nor is it easy to show that they necessarily follow from the scriptural evidence.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 17)
         3. It is “extremely improbable, that there was any explicit oral tradition about either of these doctrines during the first centuries of the Christian era.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 17)
      3. Nevertheless, as *Dei Verbum* § 8 says, “there is growth in the understanding of the realities and words,” and “part of this total reality is the relationship of Jesus to his mother, and her role in the mystery of our redemption.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 18)
         1. Christians “came to see . . . that since the Son of Mary is truly divine, it is correct to speak of her as ‘Mother of God’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 18)
         2. “Further contemplation led them to see . . . that, having been so closely associated with her Son in his incarnation and passion, she must also share in a unique way in the fruits of his death and resurrection. And so, over the course of the centuries, the conviction grew that Mary could never have been alienated from God by original sin, and that she must already share, body and soul, in the glory of resurrection which is his.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 18)
      4. The doctrines “are seen to be contained in the total mystery of Christ, by a kind of intuition, rather than by a process of logical deduction.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 18)
      5. “As contained in this total mystery, they are believed not only to be true, but to be revealed, since it is the whole Christ-event which is God’s word to man.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 18)
      6. “It was only the Catholic bishops who received the papal questionnaires . . . [But] the firm belief of the whole body of the Catholic faithful was taken as sufficient evidence that these doctrines must be contained in divine revelation.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 19)
      7. Thus the Immaculate Conception and Assumption verify “the infallibility [of a] ‘universal agreement in matters of faith and morals’” (*Lumen gentium* § 12). (Sullivan *Magisterium* 19)
9. ***sensus fidei***, ***sensus fidelium***, ***consensus fidelium***
   1. Congar, Yves M.-J., OP. “Toward a Catholic Synthesis.” *Who Has the Say in the Church?* *Concilium* 148.8 (1981): 74.
   2. “Usage of these terms is somewhat fluid, but I find Congar’s treatment of them the most helpful.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 219 n. 13)
   3. *sensus fidei*: “sense of the faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 22)
      1. Congar (“Toward” 74): “the *sensus fidei* . . . is a quality inherent in a *subject*, on whom the grace of faith, charity, the gifts of the Spirit confer a *faculty of perceiving the truth of the faith and of discerning anything opposed to it*.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 219 n. 13)
      2. “. . . the sense of faith (*sensus fidei*) is a supernatural gift, an aspect of the gift of faith itself, a kind of God-given instinct by which believers are able to recognise the word of God for what it is, to discern truth from error in matters of faith, and to have sound insights into what they believe. This then is a subjective quality of the one who believes.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 23)
      3. *Lumen gentium* § 12 “tells us that this infallibility of the whole People of God in its belief, is due to a ‘supernatural sense of faith’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 21)
         1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 12): “The body of the faithful as a whole, anointed as they are by the Holy One, cannot err in matters of belief. Thanks to a supernatural sense of the faith which characterizes the People as a whole, it manifests this unerring quality when, ‘from the bishops down to the last member of the laity’, it shows universal agreement in [18] matters of faith and morals. For, by this sense of faith which is aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth, God’s People accepts not the word of men but the very Word of God. It clings without fail to the faith once delivered to the saints, penetrates it more deeply by accurate insights, and applies it more thoroughly to life.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 18-19)
      4. This “sense of faith” is “supernatural” because it is “aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth.” “In other words, it is a gift of grace, given by the Holy Spirit. It is related to the fundamental grace-gift of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 21)
      5. Since it “characterises the People of God as a whole,” “it is not one of the charisms which the Spirit distributes to whom He chooses, which some receive and others do not; it is a gift of the Spirit which all receive.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 21)
      6. Four “effects of this gift . . . are named . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 21)
         1. First, the faithful accept “not the word of men but the very word of God . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 21)
            1. 1 Thess 2:13, “We also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as what it really is, God’s word, which is also at work in you believers.”
            2. “The first of these effects is to enable people to recognise the word of God for what it is, even though it comes to them through the words of men. . . . The ‘supernatural sense of faith’, then, is a gift of grace to discern the word of God, to recognise it for what it is.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 22)
            3. “Paul was fully aware that it was only by a gift of God that the Thessalonians were able to recognise his message to them as truly a word from God. His was a human witness to the Gospel, but there was needed also the interior witness of the Holy Spirit, by which the hearers would be able to discern the very word of God in what Paul was telling them.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 22)
         2. Second, “the faithful ‘cling without fail to the faith once delivered to the saints’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 22)
            1. “Here we have the basis of that ‘unerring quality’ of the faith of the whole People of God, whereby ‘the body of the faithful as a whole cannot err in matters of belief’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 22)
            2. The sense of faith “must confer a kind of instinct to recognise and cling to the truth, and conversely to discern the presence of error and to reject it.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 22)
         3. “The third effect is that believers ‘penetrate [the object of their faith] more deeply by accurate insights’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 22)
            1. “We have already spoken of the kind of insight by which the Catholic faithful came to see the consequences for Mary of her unique relationship with the Son of God. No mere exegesis or theological reasoning could have arrived at the certitude of faith in her Immaculate Conception or Assumption. This certitude is the fruit of insight guided by the supernatural sense of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 22)
            2. “We can invoke here St Thomas’s idea of a kind of ‘connaturality’, by which a person deeply committed to a virtue will almost instinctively tend to make right judgments in matters that pertain to that virtue.” (*ST* 2-2.45.2) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 22) (“Connaturality”: “1: connected by nature: inborn. 2: of the same nature.” *Merriam*-*Webster*’*s Collegiate Dictionary*. 2000. CD-ROM. Vers. 2.5. 7 Mar. 2010.)
         4. “The fourth effect is that the faithful are led to apply the word of God more thoroughly to life.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 21)
            1. “Perhaps in our day we can recognise the fruits of this gift in the growing realisation that the word of God calls upon people of faith to resist and combat such evils as racial discrimination, unjust economic and social systems, and the like.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 22)
   4. *sensus fidelium*: “supernatural sense of faith,” [21], “sense of the faithful” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 21, 23)
      1. Congar: “The *sensus fidelium* . . . is what can be grasped from outside, objectively, about what the faithful, and especially [219] layfolk, believe and profess.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 219-20 n. 13)
      2. “The term *sensus fidelium* (sense or mind of the faithful) . . . has an objective meaning, referring not to the believer but to what is believed. Thus, if one asks: ‘What is the sense of the faithful on this matter?’, one wants to know what people believe; what is the ‘mind of the faithful’ on an issue.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 23)
      3. Trent’s frequent “term *sensus Ecclesiae* (mind of the Church) is often used with much the same meaning.” (E.g.: in *Decretum de SS*. *Eucharistia* ch. 1, DS 1637; *Decretum de Sacramento Matrimonii*, DS 1800.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 23)
   5. *consensus fidelium*: “agreement of the faithful” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 23)
      1. *Consensus fidelium* “adds the element of universal agreement to the notion of *sensus fidelium*. It refers to the situation in which, on a particular issue of faith, the whole body of the faithful, ‘from the bishops down to the last member of the laity’, share the same belief.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 23)
      2. “. . . it is in such a *consensus* that the Second Vatican Council says that the whole People of God cannot be in error.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 23)

### “Magisterium”

1. “**magisterium**”
   1. bibliography
      1. Congar, Yves M.-J., OP. “A Semantic History of the Term ‘Magisterium.’” *The Magisterium and Morality*. Ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick. Readings in Moral Theology 3. New York: Paulist, 1982. 297-313. (French: *RSPT* 60 (1976) 85-98.)
      2. Dulles, Avery, SJ. “The Two Magisteria: An Interim Reflection.” *Proceedings*, *Catholic Theological Society of America* 35 (1980): 155-69.
   2. classical Latin
      1. *magister*
         1. *Magister* means “master.” (Sullivan Magisterium 24)
            1. schoolmaster, i.e., teacher
            2. master of a ship
            3. master of servants or slaves
            4. master of an art or trade (Sullivan *Magisterium* 24)
         2. *Magister* connotes authority. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 24)
            1. *Magister* is from *magis*, more.”
            2. *Minister* is from *minus*, “less.”
      2. *magisterium*
         1. *Magisterium* is a magister’s “role and authority . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 24)
         2. The closest English equivalent is “mastery.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 24)
         3. Because *magister* often meant “schoolmaster,” *magisterium* “more and more frequently [meant] the role and authority of the teacher.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 24)
   3. medieval Latin
      1. Besides teaching, *magisterium* “continued in late and medieval Latin to be used of other functions which involved some kind of authority. The English word magistrate reflects one such use of the term.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 24)
      2. But for scholastics, “*magisterium* came to mean the authority of one who teaches.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 24)
         1. “The symbol of teaching authority was the ‘chair’, and they knew two kinds of such ‘chairs’: that of the bishop in his cathedral, and that of the professor in the university.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 24)
         2. So Aquinas spoke of two *magisteria*. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 24)
            1. the authority of a bishop

*magisterium cathedrae pastoralis* (*Quodl*. 3.9 ad 3) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 24)

based on being a prelate (*ex officio praelationis*) (*In IV Sent*. 19.2.2.2 ad 4) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 24-25)

* + - * 1. the authority of an exegete or theologian (Sullivan *Magisterium* 29)

*magisterium cathedrae magistralis* (*Quodl*. 3.9 ad 3) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 24)

based on knowledge of theology (*In IV Sent*. 19.2.2.2 ad 4) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 25)

* 1. modern Latin
     1. introduction
        1. Dulles, Avery. SJ. “The Two Magisteria: An Interim Reflection.” *Proceedings*, *Catholic Theological Society of America* 35 (1980): 155-69.
        2. Latin *magisterium* “has come in recent centuries to be used almost exclusively of the teaching office of bishops (what St Thomas called the *magisterium cathedrae pastoralis*). . . . it is hardly used at all except to refer to the teaching office of the hierarchy.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 25)
        3. “No one denies, of course, that theologians continue to have a teaching role in the Church . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 25)
     2. Since Aquinas spoke of two *magisteria*, some want “now also to speak of a twofold *magisterium* in the Church. They argue that to limit the term *magisterium* to the teaching function of the hierarchy seems to imply that only bishops can teach with authority in the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 28)
        1. But “the effort to reclaim the term *magisterium* for the role of theologians is ill-advised.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 29)
           1. Rahner, Karl, SJ. “Lehramt und Theologie.” *Schriften für Theologie* 13. 74.
           2. Brown, Raymond, SS. “The Dilemma of the Magisterium vs. the Theologians: Debunking Some Fictions.” *Chicago Studies* 17 (1978): 291.
           3. McCormick, Richard. “Notes on Moral Theology.” *Theological Studies* 40 (1979): 95.
        2. “Competent scholars can speak with authority in their own field, but they do not have the kind of authority that has come to be associated with the word *magisterium*.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 29)
        3. “. . . *magisterium* has come to be associated exclusively with pastoral teaching authority. To say that theologians and exegetes constitute a second *magisterium* in the Church could create the impression that one is trying to set up a rival pastoral authority.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 29)
     3. *magisterium* as the hierarchy’s teaching office (and not theologians’ teaching authority)
        1. Latin *magisterium* “has come in recent centuries to be used almost exclusively of the teaching office of bishops (what St Thomas called the *magisterium cathedrae pastoralis*). No one denies, of course, that theologians continue to have a teaching role in the Church . . . it is hardly used at all except to refer to the teaching office of the hierarchy.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 25)
        2. Vatican I (dogmatic constitution *On the Catholic Faith* [*Dei Filius* ch. 3, 1869], DS 3011, ND 121) “speaks of doctrine that is taught by the Church, whether by solemn judgment or by its ordinary and universal teaching authority (‘sive solemni iudicio sive ordinario et universali magisterio’).” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 25)
        3. Vatican I (*Pastor Aeternus* ch. 4, D-S 3065) “declares that papal primacy includes the supreme power of magisterium . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 25)
        4. Vatican I (*Pastor Aeternus* ch. 4): “the chapter of this constitution in which papal infallibility is defined is entitled: ‘On the infallible magisterium of the Roman Pontiff’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 25)
        5. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 18) “speaks of the infallible *magisterium* of the Roman Pontiff . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 25)
        6. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 22) “says that the order of bishops is the successor to the college of the apostles in *magisterium* . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 25)
        7. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25) “speaks of the ‘authentic’ and ‘supreme’ *magisterium* of the Roman Pontiff [and] declares that the bishops gathered in an ecumenical council exercise supreme *magisterium* along with the successor of Peter.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 25)
        8. Vatican II (Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops [*Christus Dominus*] § 30) uses *magisterium* “of the teaching role of parish priests as well.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 220 n. 6)
        9. In “extraordinary magisterium” and “ordinary magisterium,” “magisterium” “means the exercise of the teaching authority of the Catholic hierarchy.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 120)
     4. *magisterium* as the hierarchy
        1. An “even more recent development, is that the term *magisterium* has come to mean not only the teaching function [25] of the hierarchy, but also the hierarchy itself as the bearer of this office.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 25-26)
        2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 10): “The task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living *magisterium* of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This *magisterium* is not above the word of God, but serves it . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 26)
        3. Here “magisterium” means “the episcopal college together with its head, the bishop of Rome.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 79)
  2. “defining”: “solemn judgments . . . by an ecumenical council or by the pope speaking *ex cathedra*.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 79)
  3. “dogmas”: “solemn judgments in which . . . council or pope . . . definitively pronounces some truth to have been divinely revealed, and henceforth to be an article of the normative faith of the Catholic community.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 79)

1. “**authentic**” **magisterium**
   1. Vatican II describe the magisterium as *authenticum* and *authentice*
      1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25a): bishops are “authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 26)
      2. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25b): “authentic magisterium of the Roman Pontiff.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 26)
      3. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25c): bishops everywhere may be “teaching authentically on a matter of faith or morals.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 26)
      4. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 10): “the task of authentically interpreting the [26] word of God has been entrusted exclusively to the living *magisterium* of the Church.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 26-27)
   2. “. . . it is unfortunate that the translators of these documents have [used] ‘authentic’ and ‘authentically’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 27)
      1. *Authenticum* is not “authentic” but “authoritative.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 27)
      2. *Authentice* is not “authentically” but “authoritatively.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 27)
      3. English “authentic”
         1. “Authentic” “did once mean ‘authoritative’, ‘entitled to obedience’, but this meaning is now obsolete.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 27)
         2. “Authentic” now means “genuine.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 27)
      4. *Authenticum* “applied to the *magisterium*, is to be understood to mean ‘having hierarchical authority’. It cannot be taken to mean simply ‘authoritative’, and much less can it be taken to mean ‘genuine’ or ‘trustworthy’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 44)
   3. bishops’ authority
      1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 20): “by divine institution bishops have succeeded to the place of the apostles as shepherds of the Church, and that he who hears them, hears Christ, while he who rejects them, rejects Christ and Him who sent Christ.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 27)
      2. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25a): bishops are authoritative teachers (*doctores authentici*) because they are “teachers endowed with the authority of Christ.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 27)
      3. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25a): bishops “are to be respected as witnesses to divine and catholic truth. In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ and the faithful are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with a religious assent of soul.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 27)
      4. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 21): “Episcopal consecration, together with the office of sanctifying, also confers the offices of teaching and of governing.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 27)
      5. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 10): “the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living *magisterium*, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 26)
         1. Here “*authentice* should be translated by ‘authoritatively’ . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 27)
         2. And “‘authoritatively’ here means, ‘with hierarchical authority’” (as opposed to the authority of expertise, exercised by theologians). (Sullivan *Magisterium* 28)
      6. “What the Council attributes exclusively to the ‘living magisterium’ is authority to speak as pastors of the Church, endowed with the mandate to teach the Gospel in the name of Jesus Christ.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 28)
      7. “If this meaning of *authentice* is not kept in mind, one could think that the Council was making the absurd claim that only bishops could give a genuine interpretation of the Word of God, or that they were the only ones who would interpret Scripture or Tradition with any kind of authority at all. The Council surely did not intend to deny that theologians and exegetes speak with the authority which their expertise confers on them.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 28)

### Magisterium

1. **types of teaching authority**
   1. Church members as a whole have a “sense of the faith” (*sensus fidei*).
   2. Theologians “penetrate into the depths of the mysteries of faith (the task of theology) . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 32)
   3. Bishops “safeguard the priceless treasure of the Word of God, and to defend the purity of the faith of the Christian community.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 32)
2. **laity**’**s teaching office**
   1. Parents, teachers of doctrine in schools, and catechists “can be rightly called teachers in the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 45)
3. **theologians**’ **teaching office**
   1. Vatican II
      1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 22): “the order of bishops is the successor to the college of the apostles in teaching authority [*magisterium*] and pastoral rule.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 44)
      2. It does not follow that “bishops are the sole teachers in the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 44)
         1. “. . . Vatican II does actually claim that bishops are the sole authentic teachers . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 44)
         2. But “authentic” “applied to the *magisterium* [means] ‘having hierarchical authority’. It cannot be taken to mean simply ‘authoritative’, and much less can it be taken to mean ‘genuine’ or ‘trustworthy’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 44)
         3. “. . . Vatican II is not making the absurd claim that bishops are the only genuine teachers in the Church . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 44)
   2. “. . . there are at least two distinct charisms of teaching in the Church: the charism of scholarly teaching [45] . . . and the charism of pastoral teaching . . . ” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 45-46)
      1. Aquinas’ *magisterium cathedrae pastoralis* (pastoral teaching office)
      2. Aquinas’ *magisterium cathedrae magistralis* (scholarly teaching office). (Sullivan *Magisterium* 45)
4. **pastoral or hierarchical teaching authority**
   1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25): bishops are “judges of faith . . .” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 30)
   2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 10): “Now this Magisterium is not above the Word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it conscientiously, and explaining it faithfully, by divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit. From this one deposit of faith it draws everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 31)
      1. “not above the Word of God, but serves it”
         1. “The authority of the magisterium is not an authority over the Word of God but over human interpretations of it, especially over those which are in conflict with the faith of the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 31)
      2. “teaching only what has been handed on”
         1. “The term ‘what has been handed on’ is used here [DV 10] with the same inclusive meaning which it had previously in DV 8 . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 31)
         2. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 8): “Now what was handed on by the apostles includes everything which contributes to the holiness of life and the increase in faith of the People of God.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 31)
         3. “In other words, it means the whole ‘sacred deposit of the Word of God, which is committed to the Church’ (DV 10).” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 31)
            1. “. . . it is to the *Church* (and not just to the magisterium) that the whole deposit of the Word of God has been entrusted.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 31)
            2. “This is a salutary corrective of the notion found in earlier treatises on this subject, according to which the deposit of faith was entrusted uniquely to the successors of the apostles, and is handed on primarily, if not exclusively, in the official teaching of the magisterium.” (Congar, Yves M.-J., OP. *Tradition and Traditions*: *An Historical and a Theological Essay*. London: 1966. 201.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 31)
      3. “listening to it devoutly”
         1. “. . . before the bishops can be preachers of the Word they must first be hearers of the Word; before they can belong to the ‘teaching church’ (*ecclesia docens*) they have to belong to [31] the ‘learning church’ (*ecclesia discens*). And since the ‘sacred deposit of the Word of God has been entrusted to the Church’, it follows that the bishops have to listen devoutly to this Word as it is handed on from generation to generation ‘in the teaching, life and worship of the Church’. They cannot isolate themselves from the Church and listen only to themselves.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 31-32)
         2. “An important part of their listening to the Word of God, then, will be to ‘consult the faithful’ as Cardinal Newman put it in his famous article . . .” (Newman, John Henry. *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*. 1859. Ed. J. Coulson. New York: 1961.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 32)
         3. “. . . another important part will be their listening to the exegetes and theologians who spend their lives studying the Word of God.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 32)
      4. “guarding it conscientiously”
         1. “This phrase suggests the special concern of the magisterium, and the reason why it tends to be generally ‘conservative’; its primary function is not to penetrate into the depths of the mysteries of faith (the task of theology), but rather to safeguard the priceless treasure of the Word of God, and to defend the purity of the faith of the Christian community.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 32)
      5. “and explaining it faithfully”
         1. “Here the adverb ‘faithfully’ again suggests that the primary concern of the magisterium is fidelity to the original deposit of faith. Bishops are to explain the Word of God, but they do not take upon themselves the specific function of theologians, whose role it is to seek a deeper understanding of the faith, making use of knowledge gained from philosophy and other human sciences in the process.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 32)
      6. “by divine commission”
         1. “This is a reference to the source of the teaching authority of bishops. Vatican II expresses the Catholic belief that by virtue of their episcopal ordination and their hierarchical communion with the head and other members of the episcopal college, bishops share in the succession of this college to the apostolic college in teaching authority and pastoral rule in the Church (*Lumen gentium* 22). Hence they share the divine command to ‘make disciples of all nations and teach them to observe all that Christ commanded them’ (cf. Mt 28:20).” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 32)
      7. “and with the help of the Holy Spirit”
         1. “While the Holy Spirit dwells in all the faithful, and ‘arouses and sustains the supernatural sense of faith which characterizes the People as a whole’ (*Lumen gentium* 12), Catholics believe that the sacrament of episcopal ordination, which confers on bishops [32] the function of pastoral magisterium, is a divine pledge of a special assistance of the Holy Spirit in the fulfilment of their teaching role.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 32-33)
      8. “it draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed”
         1. “. . . the ‘deposit of faith’ does not consist in a collection of propositions.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 33)
         2. “The word ‘deposit’ suggests the fact that God’s self-revelation to mankind is definitive in the Christ-event, and that this definitive Word of God is a treasure entrusted to the Church, to which nothing further will be added. Whatever the faithful can be called upon to believe as Word of God must be really contained (although not necessarily in explicit terms) in what the apostolic Church received and handed on.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 33)
5. **an objection to hierarchical teaching authority**
   1. “. . . an objection that is sometimes raised . . . is that hierarchical authority is a juridical concept, which has no place where teaching is concerned, since teaching has to do with truth, and only the truth itself has authority over the mind.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 33)
   2. “Of course, if something is not true, no authority can make it to be true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 33)
   3. But for most Christians “it is reasonable to accept the authority of the apostles, since they were commissioned by Christ himself to bear witness to what he had revealed to them.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 34)
   4. And for Catholics “it is also reasonable to accept the authority of the bishops when they declare something to be obligatory for our faith, because we believe that they share in
      1. “the mandate which Christ gave to the apostles” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 34)
      2. “the promise of a special assistance of the Holy Spirit” (Sullivan Magisterium 34)

### Apostolic Succession of Magisterium

1. **introduction**
   1. Fitzmyer, Joseph, SJ. “The Office of Teaching in the Christian Church according to the New Testament.” *Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church*. Ed. Paul C. Empie, T.A. Murphy, and J.A. Burgess. Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue 6. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1978.
   2. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 22): “the order of bishops is the successor to the college of the apostles in teaching authority [*magisterium*] and pastoral rule.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 44)
   3. This handout considers apostolic succession of magisterium.
   4. Bishops are not only pastors but also teachers in the Church.
   5. “. . . it is part of God’s design that in every age of the Church there should be successors of the apostles . . . with authority from Christ to preach and teach his word, and, when necessary, to settle questions that arise concerning the normative faith of the community.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 30)
2. **New Testament**
   1. The apostles were teachers.
      1. Paul
         1. Acts describes Paul as teaching. (11:26; 15:35; 18:11; 20:20; 21:21; 28:31) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 47)
         2. He refers to his ministry as “teaching.” (Rom 6:17, 16:17; 1 Cor 4:17; Col 1:28; 2 Th 2:15) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 47)
         3. Romans shows that an apostle could be both Church leader and teacher. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 46-47)
         4. For “the Pastoral Letters he is *the* teacher . . .” (1 Tim 2:5-7; 2 Tim 1:1; 3:10) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 47)
      2. other apostles
         1. Matt 28:19-20, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, . . . 20teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.”
         2. Acts 2:42, “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching . . .”
         3. Acts 4:1-2, “. . . Peter and John . . . 2were teaching the people . . .”
         4. Acts 5:21, the apostles “went on with their teaching.”
         5. Acts 5:42, “And every day in the temple and at home they did not cease to teach . . .”
      3. In the later New Testament Church, “pastoral leadership and teaching in the same person was looked upon as something quite normal.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 47)
         1. Eph 4:11, “The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers . . .”
            1. Joseph Fitzmyer (“Office of Teaching” 196): teachers are “identified with or at least related to the shepherds (pastors), being linked by one definite article.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 47)
         2. Acts 20:17-18, 28-31, “From Miletus he sent a message to Ephesus, asking the elders [πρεσβυτέρους] of the church to meet him. 18When they came to him, he said to them: “. . . 28Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers [ἐπισκόπους], to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son. 29I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them. 31Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears.”
            1. “. . . the warning . . . in vv. 28-31 suggests that they are to have care for the purity of doctrine, to be alert against those who would spread false teaching, and to speak with authority if need should be.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 47)
      4. Pastoral Letters
         1. Joseph Fitzmyer (“Office of Teaching” 206): “Here the function of the teacher is clearly predicated [47] of the delegates of the apostle and of those whom they appoint as *episkopoi*.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 47-48)
         2. “Timothy and Titus, who are assigned a role of pastoral leadership over the churches of Ephesus and Crete, are also repeatedly reminded of their obligation to teach.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 48)
            1. 1 Tim 4:11, “These are the things you must insist on and teach.”
            2. 1 Tim 4:13, “give attention to the public reading of scripture, to exhorting, to teaching.”
            3. 2 Tim 4:2, “convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching.”
            4. Titus 2:1, “teach what is consistent with sound doctrine.”
         3. “. . . the men whom Timothy and Titus are to appoint as presbyters and *episkopoi* in these churches are also to combine the roles of leadership and teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 48)
            1. 1 Tim 3:2, “Now a bishop must be . . . an apt teacher [*didaktikos*] . . .”
            2. 1 Tim 5:17, “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching . . .”

“While all of the presbyters had a role of leadership, some also had a ministry of teaching . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 48)

* + - * 1. 2 Tim 2:2, “what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well.”
        2. Titus 1:9, an elder or *episkopos* “must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy in accordance with the teaching, so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.”
      1. Joseph Fitzmyer (“Office of Teaching” 207, 206): “In the Deutero-Pauline letters, then, . . . [the] author himself clearly writes as a *didaskalos* guaranteeing the ‘sound doctrine’, and he relates the teaching of it to the office of *episkopos*, who is to be concerned for it and for the judgment and confutation of what is opposed to it.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 48)
      2. “. . . we cannot presume that the kind of church organisation reflected in the Pastoral Letters was [48] found in all the local Christian communities of the same period.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 48-49)
    1. Johannine literature
       1. “Here the stress is on the role of the Holy Spirit, guiding the Church into all the truth (cf. Jn 16:13), and on the anointing which all the faithful receive, which teaches them about everything, so that they have no need that anyone should teach them (cf. 1 Jn 2:26-7). Of course we cannot overlook the fact that the author of 1 John is actually teaching by his letter, so he can hardly have meant that they take too literally his statement that they had no need that anyone should teach them.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)

1. **100s ad**
   1. The Church recognized bishops “as successors of the apostles not only as leaders but also as Church teachers, and indeed as authoritative exponents of the genuine apostolic tradition.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)
      1. c. 150: the presbyters who wrote *The martyrdom of Polycarp* described him as “Polycarp, who in our days was an apostolic and prophetic teacher, bishop of the Catholic Church in Smyrna.’” (*The Martyrdom of St Polycarp* § 16. *The Apostolic Fathers*. Ed. K. Lake. Loeb Classical Library. 2: 335.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)
      2. c. 150: Hegesippus, “visiting the Christian churches on his way from the east to Rome . . . tells us that in each church he found the sound apostolic tradition being handed down by the local [49] bishop.” (Eusebius, *Historia* *Ecclesiae* 4.22) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49-50)
      3. c. 180: Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons. “One of Irenaeus’ major themes is that the true apostolic doctrine is to be found . . . in the sober teaching of the bishops . . .” Irenaeus (*Adversus Haereses* 3.3.1): bishops are “those whom the apostles left as their successors, to whom they handed on their own role of teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
   2. Bishops were not “the only teachers in the second and third century churches.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)
      1. “Justin Martyr was not a bishop, nor were most of the other early Christian apologists.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)
      2. “Neither were such influential teachers as Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen or Lactantius.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)
2. **argument for the divine origin of the magisterium from necessity of authority**
   1. “. . . it has always been recognised that the faith of the Christian community is normative for the faith of its individual members . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
   2. “. . . there must [50] be some authority in the community that can settle disputes about the terms of the creed or its interpretation.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50-51)
   3. “While the apostles were still alive this was evidently their prerogative.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
   4. “It is a matter of historical fact that during the course of the second century this function was taken over by the bishops. . . . [They were] authoritative witnesses to apostolic tradition, who had the authority to judge whether a particular doctrine was in conformity with this tradition or not, and consequently the authority to define the terms in which the community was obliged to profess its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
3. **argument for the divine origin of the magisterium from universal reception**
   1. It is “a matter of historical fact that the whole Christian Church recognised and accepted the bishops as the authoritative witnesses to apostolic tradition . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
   2. We cannot “argue from the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church ‘guiding it into all the truth’ (Jn 16:13), to the conclusion that every historical development in church organisation has necessarily been legitimate or beneficial.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
   3. “On the other hand, when we are talking about the universal reception of bishops as authoritative teachers whose decisions on matters of faith were recognised as binding on the faithful, we are talking about the reception by the Church of a *norm* of its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
   4. “In other words, the whole Church accepted the teaching of bishops as *normative* for its faith. Now I do not see how a Church that is indefectible in its faith could have been mistaken when it determined what was going to be the norm of its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
      1. scripture
         1. “. . . our confidence that the Holy Spirit must have guided the second and third century Church in its discernment of the writings that were going to be normative for its faith, justifies our acceptance of the New Testament as inspired Scripture . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
         2. “We do not know who wrote many of the books of the New Testament, but we believe that the Church could not have been mistaken when it accepted these and not other writings into its canon of Scripture, because we believe that the Church could not have made a mistake in determining the very norm of its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
         3. The argument is that the Church had to have been indefectible “concerning the universal reception of certain writings as normative for Christian faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
      2. bishop
         1. “. . . the argument is just as valid concerning the significance of the universal reception of the teaching of the bishops as normative . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
         2. As with scripture, “we are justified in being equally confident that the Holy Spirit must have guided that second and third century Church in its recognition of its bishops as the rightful and authoritative teachers whose decisions about matters of Christian doctrine would be normative for its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
      3. “I do not see how anyone who denies either of these points could still maintain that the Holy Spirit keeps the Church indefectibly in the truth.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
      4. “An erroneous decision about the very norm of faith would inevitably have led the Church into incalculable errors in particular matters of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)

### Apostolic Succession of Pastoral Rule

1. **introduction**
   1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 22): “the order of bishops is the successor to the college of the apostles in teaching authority [*magisterium*] and pastoral rule.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 44)
   2. This handout considers apostolic succession of pastoral rule.
2. **New Testament**
   1. Sullivan “would label as ‘unhistorical’ a theory of direct apostolic succession according to which either Christ himself explictly [*sic*] instituted the episcopate, or the apostles, before they died, established a single bishop in each of the churches which they had founded, and formally designated such bishops as their successors.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 40)
      1. Vatican II (*Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church* [*Christus Dominus*, 1965] § 20): “The apostolic office of bishops was instituted by Christ the Lord . . .” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 41)
      2. This statement does not have “to be understood as committing the Council to the idea that Christ explicitly instituted the episcopate.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 41)
      3. “. . . Christ did not draw up a ‘blueprint’ for his disciples to follow in the organisation of the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 41-42)
   2. But apostolic succession occurred by a three-step process.
      1. First, “the apostles made decisions about Church structures as the need arose . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 42)
         1. Acts 6:1-6, “Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. 2And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. 3Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, 4while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.” 5What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.”
         2. The apostles “felt guided by the Spirit in such decisions.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 42)
      2. Second, there was succession of pastoral ministry.
         1. “. . . in many respects the original apostles could have no successors, for in many ways their role was unique and untransmissible . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
         2. But “their pastoral ministry was to continue, and that meant that others had to succeed them in this respect.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
         3. Matt 28:19-20, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
      3. Third, provision was made “for the carrying on of the apostles’ ministry by those who would survive them.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
         1. Diotrephes may indicate “a tendency to the emergence of a single leader in each local church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43) 3 John 1:9, “Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority.”
         2. “The role of James in the church of Jerusalem . . . [indicates] a tendency to the emergence of a single leader in each local church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
         3. 1-2 Timothy and Titus witness to development. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
            1. “. . . it would be anachronistic to describe Titus and Timothy as local bishops in the modern sense . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
            2. But “*episkopos* occurs only in the singular in the Pastoral Epistles” (1 Tim 3:1-2; Titus 1:7). (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
            3. So the pastoral epistles “do suggest the beginning of the development from the original founding apostle to the later local bishop.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
3. **100s ad**
   1. by 117 (during the New Testament period): Ignatius’ letters show that “the threefold hierarchy of one bishop, a college of presbyters and a number of deacons, was already established in Syria and parts of Asia Minor.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
   2. by 175: “within a century or so after the death of the apostles, practically every Christian church of which we have any information was being led by a single bishop. . . . by the third quarter of the second century, every church that we have information about, with the exception of Alexandria, had a single bishop.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
4. **arguments for the divine origin of the episcopacy**’**s pastoral rule**
   1. proofs
      1. “. . . this development took place within so short a time . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
      2. “. . . this development took place within . . . the whole Church . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
      3. the “bishops were accepted as the legitimate successors of the apostles . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
         1. “. . . the churches experienced the need of a focal point of unity in each local church: a point of unity that previously had been supplied by the founding apostle or apostolic missionary.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 42)
         2. “. . . this development took place . . . without any resistance on the part of presbyters or people . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
         3. The only “resistance to the system of episcopal leadership [was] from the gnostics and other sects.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 42)
         4. Bishops were “universally recognised as the successors of the apostles in their role of pastoral leadership.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 42)
      4. “. . . their role has undoubtedly been beneficial for the life of the Church” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
   2. “It is in this sense that I would claim that it is of ‘divine institution’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
      1. This is not “a strict exegetical or historical ‘proof’ . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43)
      2. The proof “depends on what one is prepared to believe about the guidance of the Church by the Holy Spirit, [43] and what significance one attributes to universal reception by the Church. My position is that what the whole Church re­ceives, whether doctrine (as Word of God), writings (as canonical Scripture) or bishops (as successors of the apostles) must indeed be what the Church accepts them to be.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 43-44)
   3. Conclusion: therefore, the apostolic succession of bishops is of divine institution: “this development . . . was guided by the Holy Spirit and was part of God’s design for his Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 42)

### Development of the Doctrine

### of Episcopal Teaching Authority

1. **c**. **50-125**: **New Testament**
   1. Apostles were both pastors and teachers.
      1. Paul
         1. Romans suffices to show "that an apostle could have both a charism of teaching and a charism of church leadership. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 46-47)
         2. Paul “speaks of his own ministry as ‘teaching’ . . .” (Rom 6:17, 16:17; 1 Cor 4:17; Col 1:28; 2 Th 2:15) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 47)
         3. Acts describes him as teaching. (11:26; 15:35; 18:11; 20:20; 21:21; 28:31) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 47)
         4. In “the Pastoral Letters he is *the* teacher . . .” (1 Tim 2:5-7; 2 Tim 1:1; 3:10) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 47)
      2. other apostles
         1. Matt 28:19-20, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, . . . 20teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.”
         2. Acts 2:42, “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching . . .”
         3. Acts 4:1-2, “. . . Peter and John . . . 2were teaching the people . . .”
         4. Acts 5:21, the apostles “went on with their teaching.”
         5. Acts 5:42, “And every day in the temple and at home they did not cease to teach . . .”
         6. Acts 20:17-18, 28-31, “From Miletus he sent a message to Ephesus, asking the elders [πρεσβυτέρους] of the church to meet him. 18When they came to him, he said to them: “. . . 28Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers [ἐπισκόπους], to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son. 29I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them. 31Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears.”
            1. The warning “suggests that they are to have care for the purity of doctrine, to be alert against those who would spread false teaching, and to speak with authority if need should be.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 47)
      3. Johannine literature
         1. “The Johannine literature gives us quite a different picture. Here the stress is on the role of the Holy Spirit . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)
         2. The references to the Paraclete as “Spirit of truth” indicate that the apostles are to be concerned with the truth of revelation. (John 14:16-17, 14:26, 15:26, 16:7, 16:13. For texts see “Indefectibility of the Church.”)
   2. The apostles appointed successors by laying on hands (apostolic succession).
      1. Acts 6:6, “They [the Jerusalem congregation] had these men [the seven to become deacons] stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.”
      2. Acts 13:3, “Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.”
      3. 1 Tim 4:14, “Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of elders.”
      4. 1 Tim 5:22, “Do not ordain anyone hastily, and do not participate in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.”
      5. 2 Tim 1:6, “For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands . . .”
      6. Heb 6:1, “Therefore let us go on toward perfection, leaving behind the basic teaching about Christ, and not laying again the foundation: repentance from dead works and faith toward God, 2instruction about baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.”
   3. The apostles’ successors were both leaders and teachers.
      1. Eph 4:11
         1. Eph 4:11, “The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers . . .”
         2. “. . . while each of the other ministries has its own definite article, the ‘pastors and teachers’ are joined by the same article.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 47)
         3. Joseph Fitzmyer (196): the teachers “seem to be identified with or at least related to the shepherds (pastors), being linked by one definite article.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 47)
      2. Pastoral Letters
         1. “Timothy and Titus, who are assigned a role of pastoral leadership over the churches of Ephesus and Crete, are also repeatedly reminded of their obligation to teach.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 48)
            1. 1 Tim 4:11, “These are the things you must insist on and teach.”
            2. 1 Tim 4:13, “give attention to the public reading of scripture, to exhorting, to teaching.”
            3. 2 Tim 4:2, “proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching.”
            4. Titus 2:1, “But as for you, teach what is consistent with sound doctrine.”
         2. “. . . the men whom Timothy and Titus are to appoint as presbyters and *episkopoi* in these churches are also to combine the roles of leadership and teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 48)
            1. 1 Tim 3:2, “Now a bishop must be . . . an apt teacher [*didaktikos*] . . .”
            2. 1 Tim 5:17, “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching . . .”
            3. 2 Tim 2:2, “what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well.”
            4. Titus 1:9, an elder or *episkopos* “must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy in accordance with the teaching, so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.”
         3. Fitzmyer (206): “Here the function of the teacher is clearly predicated [47] of the delegates of the apostle and of those whom they appoint as *episkopoi*.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 47-48)
         4. Fitzmyer (207, 206): “In the Deutero-Pauline letters, the . . . author himself clearly writes as a *didaskalos* guaranteeing the ‘sound doctrine’, and he relates the teaching of it to the office of *episkopos*, who is to be concerned for it and for the judgment and confutation of what is opposed to it. . . . concern and wariness for sound doctrine rest with such appointees.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 48)
         5. “. . . we cannot presume that the kind of church organisation reflected in the Pastoral Letters was [48] found in all the local Christian communities of the same period.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 48-49)
      3. Johannine literature
         1. 1 John 2:27, “the anointing that you received from him [the Son] abides in you, and so you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, abide in him.
         2. “Of course . . . the author of 1 John is actually teaching by his letter, so he can hardly have meant that they take too literally his statement that they had no need that anyone should teach them.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)
      4. There were also teachers who were not apostles.
         1. 1 Cor 12:28, “And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers [*didaskaloi*].”
         2. “. . . the few references in the New Testament to such *didaskaloi* tell us hardly anything about what or how they taught . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 46)
2. **100s ad**
   1. The Church recognized bishops “as successors of the apostles not only as leaders but also as Church teachers, and indeed as authoritative exponents of the genuine apostolic tradition.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)
      1. c. 150: the presbyters who wrote *The martyrdom of Polycarp* described him as “Polycarp, who in our days was an apostolic and prophetic teacher, bishop of the Catholic Church in Smyrna.’” (*The Martyrdom of St Polycarp* § 16. *The Apostolic Fathers*. Ed. K. Lake. Loeb Classical Library. 2: 335.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)
      2. c. 150: Hegesippus, “visiting the Christian churches on his way from the east to Rome . . . tells us that in each church he found the sound apostolic tradition being handed down by the local [49] bishop.” (Eusebius, *Historia* *Ecclesiae* 4.22) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49-50)
      3. c. 180: Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons
         1. “One of Irenaeus’ major themes is that the true apostolic doctrine is to be found . . . in the sober teaching of the bishops . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
         2. “Irenaeus (*Adversus Haereses* 3.3.1): bishops are “those whom the apostles left as their successors, to whom they handed on their own role of teaching.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 50)
   2. Of course bishops were not “the only teachers in the second and third century churches.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)
      1. “Justin Martyr was not a bishop, nor were most of the other early Christian apologists.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)
      2. “Neither were such influential teachers as Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen or Lactantius.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 49)
3. **argument for bishops as authoritative teachers from universal reception**
   1. It is “a matter of historical fact that the whole Christian Church recognised and accepted the bishops as the authoritative witnesses to apostolic tradition . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
   2. We cannot “argue from the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church ‘guiding it into all the truth’ [John 16:13] to the conclusion that every historical development in church organisation has necessarily been legitimate or beneficial.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
   3. “On the other hand, when we are talking about the universal reception of bishops as authoritative teachers whose decisions on matters of faith were recognised as binding on the faithful, we are talking about the reception by the Church of a *norm* of its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
4. **argument for bishops as authoritative teachers from necessity of authority**
   1. “. . . the faith of the Christian community is normative for the faith of its individual members . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50)
   2. “. . . there must [50] be some authority in the community that can settle disputes about the terms of the creed or its interpretation.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 50-51)
   3. “While the apostles were still alive this was evidently their prerogative.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
   4. “It is a matter of historical fact that during the course of the second century this function was taken over by the bishops. . . . [They were] authoritative witnesses to apostolic tradition, who had the authority to judge whether a particular doctrine was in conformity with this tradition or not, and consequently the authority to define the terms in which the community was obliged to profess its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
   5. “In other words, the whole Church accepted the teaching of bishops as *normative* for its faith. Now I do not see how a Church that is indefectible in its faith could have been mistaken when it determined what was going to be the norm of its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
5. **argument for bishops as authoritative teachers from analogy with scripture**
   1. scripture
      1. “. . . our confidence that the Holy Spirit must have guided the second and third century Church in its discernment of the writings that were going to be normative for its faith, justifies our acceptance of the New Testament as inspired Scripture . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
      2. “. . . we believe that the Church could not have been mistaken when it accepted these and not other writings into its canon of Scripture, because we believe that the Church could not have made a mistake in determining the very norm of its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
      3. The argument is that the Church had to have been indefectible “concerning the universal reception of certain writings as normative for Christian faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
   2. bishops
      1. “. . . the argument is just as valid concerning the significance of the universal reception of the teaching of the bishops as normative . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
      2. “. . . we are justified in being equally confident that the Holy Spirit must have guided that second and third century Church in its recognition of its bishops as the rightful and authoritative teachers whose decisions about matters of Christian doctrine would be normative for its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
   3. “I do not see how anyone who denies either of these points could still maintain that the Holy Spirit keeps the Church indefectibly in the truth.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
   4. “An erroneous decision about the very norm of faith would inevitably have led the Church into incalculable errors in particular matters of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 51)
6. **Therefore**, **bishops are both pastors and teachers in the Church**.
   1. Councils provide “proof that there is a genuine kind of teaching in the Church which is distinct from and different from the work of the university professor of theology. [45] . . . Indeed, the success of [Vatican II] was due in large measure to the happy collaboration of these two charisms, each making its own distinctive contribution.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 45-46)

## Infallibility

### Introduction

1. **infallibility**
   1. “Infallibility means that the Holy Spirit sees to it that the magisterium does not solemnly oblige the faithful to believe something as divinely revealed which really is not contained in God’s Word.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 80)
   2. “. . . when an ecumenical council or pope definitively proclaims something to be divinely revealed, the Holy Spirit assists the magisterium in such a way as to guarantee that what is defined is true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 80)
   3. The only difference between “This proposition is true” and “this proposition was spoken infallibly” “is a guarantee, provided by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, that the solemnly defined proposition is true . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 81)
   4. “. . . to say that when certain conditions are fulfilled, a council or pope speaks infallibly, means that, in virtue of the divine assistance attached to such an exercise of their teaching office, there is an *a priori* guarantee that the solemnly defined proposition will be true. I do not see how we could correctly speak of infallibility (as distinct from mere inerrancy) if it did not mean such ‘immunity from error’ . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 106)
   5. “As Vatican I had already said [*Pastor aeternus*, DS 3070], the Holy Spirit is promised to him [the pope] not so that, by the Spirit’s revelation he might proclaim new doctrine, but rather that with the Spirit’s assistance he might guard and explain the revelation handed down from the Apostles.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 104)
   6. infallibility and the truth of propositions and statements
      1. “A proposition is the *meaning* of a statement; to say that a proposition is true is to say that what a statement *means* is true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 80)
      2. “. . . infallibility presupposes the possibility of true propositions concerning matters of divine revelation.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 80)
      3. “Infallibility guarantees the truth of the proposition.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 80)
   7. “Infallibility is correctly predicated not of the propositions as such but of the teaching authority in the exercise of its teaching function. To my way of thinking, a *true* proposition can be *infallibly taught*, if there is a divine guarantee that this teacher, in this exercise of his teaching function, has spoken the truth. The matter is more properly expressed adverbially than adjectivally; not: ‘this kind of proposition is infallible’, but: ‘this teacher has spoken infallibly’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 80)
2. **irreformability**
   1. “Irreformable” means a solemnly defined proposition is always true. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 81)
   2. It “will remain true even when reformulated.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 81)
   3. “In my opinion, a better expression than ‘irreformable’ would have been ‘irreversible’, or ‘irreversibly true’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 81)
3. **limitations of infallible propositions**
   1. Solemnly defined propositions are irreformable. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 81)
   2. But “a proposition in which the magisterium definitively proposes some aspect of revelation for belief . . . remains a human proposition, with the limitations inherent in any human attempt to express divine truth . . . Infallibility does not exempt the defined proposition from any limitation which is compatible with its being true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 80)
4. **limitations of dogmatic statements**
   1. The statements of solemnly defined propositions are reformable. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 81)
      1. “. . . every formulation of a meaning is necessarily conditioned by a historical and cultural context . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 81)
      2. A statement’s “historical and cultural context . . . makes it less well adapt­ed to a different context.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 81)
      3. “. . . it is impossible to formulate a statement about revealed truth which would not be open to different and possibly better formulation.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 81)
      4. “It might become necessary to express this meaning differently, in order to make it intelligible to a new culture or a new mentality . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 81)
   2. Infallibility “does not guarantee that the statement in which the proposition was enunciated was a fully adequate expression of the divine reality which it was intended to express.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 80)
   3. Infallibility “does not guarantee that the statement . . . will always be an appropriate or easily intelligible expression of that meaning.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 80)
5. **manner of expression**
   1. “. . . a definitive judgment can also be expressed negatively, by the solemn condemnation of an opinion as heretical. When it is clear that the term ‘heresy’ is intended to mean that the condemned opinion is in contradiction to a truth of faith, the contradictory of the heresy is thereby defined as a dogma of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)

### Development of the Doctrine of

### the Infallibility of Ecumenical Councils

1. **introduction**
   1. “. . . we are dealing with the controversial problem of the development of doctrine. What makes the problem more complex in this case is that the development of belief in conciliar and papal infallibility presupposes the development [of] ecumenical councils and the Roman papacy. . . . there could be no question of faith in the infallibility of ecumenical councils or the papacy until these institutions themselves had become matters of Christian experience and until their authority to decide questions of faith for the whole Church had become generally recognised.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 83)
   2. “This is not the place to try to justify the Catholic belief that . . . ecumenical councils and the Roman papacy . . . [are] realisations of Christ’s will for his Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 83)
   3. “For the development of this belief during the first millennium I rely on the study which H.J. Sieben has done on the idea of the council in the early Church.” (Sieben, Hermann J., SJ. *Die Konzilsidee der Alten Kirche*. Paderborn: 1979.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 84)
2. **ad 30-150**: **New Testament**
   1. Ecumenical councils and conciliar infallibility are not “obvious in Scripture or early Christian tradition.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 83)
   2. But ecumenical councils “are the . . . actualisation of seminal factors already present in the New Testament.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 83)
      1. Matt 18:18, Jesus says to the twelve, “whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” (In Matt 16:19, Jesus had said to Peter individually, “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”)
      2. Acts 15:1-29, “Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.” 2And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders. . . . 6The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter. 7After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “My brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers.” . . . 12The whole assembly kept silence, and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told of all the signs and wonders that God had done through them among the Gentiles. 13After they finished speaking, James replied, “My brothers, listen to me. 14Simeon has related how God first looked favorably on the Gentiles . . . 19Therefore I have reached the decision that we should not trouble those Gentiles who are turning to God, 20but we should write to them to abstain only from things polluted by idols and from fornication and from whatever has been strangled and from blood. . . .” 22Then the apostles and the elders, with the consent of the whole church, decided to choose men from among their members and to send them . . . 23with the following letter: “The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the believers of Gentile origin in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings. . . . 28For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden than these essentials: 29that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication.”
      3. Gal 2:1-10, “Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. 2I went up in response to a revelation. Then I laid before them (though only in a private meeting with the acknowledged leaders) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure that I was not running, or had not run, in vain. 3But even Titus, who was with me, was not compelled to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. . . . 6And from those who were supposed to be acknowledged leaders (what they actually were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—those leaders contributed nothing to me. 7On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel for the circumcised 8(for he who worked through Peter making him an apostle to the circumcised also worked through me in sending me to the Gentiles), 9and when James and Cephas and John, who were acknowledged pillars, recognized the grace that had been given to me, they gave to Barnabas and me the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. 10They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do.”
3. **ad 100-700**: **patristic period**
   1. “. . . the doctrines of conciliar and papal [82] infallibility . . . are the result of a centuries-long historical development, which we believe to be . . . divinely-guided . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 82-83)
      1. Christians experienced “the salutary effects which conciliar decisions had had in . . . safeguarding the orthodox faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 83)
      2. “In retrospect it was recognised that certain councils, such as those of Nicea and Chalcedon, . . . had brought the Christian faith safely through [84] the crises caused by heresies, and in doing so had clarified the meaning of the basic articles of the creed.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 84-85)
      3. Christians “observed that the councils which had been the most effective . . . manifested the consensus of a very large number of bishops . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 84)
      4. Finally Christians “became convinced that this could only be explained by the assistance of the Holy Spirit.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 84)
      5. And so “there was general recognition of the authority of these great gatherings of bishops to make doctrinal and canonical decisions binding on the whole Church . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 85)
   2. reception
      1. “But Sieben did not find any of the Fathers arguing in an a priori way from the authority of these councils to make dogmatic decisions for the whole Church, to the conclusion that they must enjoy the divine assistance that would guarantee infallibility to their decrees. Rather, it was commonly understood that the claim of a council to have been divinely guided in its decisions was beyond question only when its doctrine had been received by the whole Church, as consonant with Scripture and Tradition.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 85)
      2. “Furthermore, it was observed that the councils which had been the most effective . . . had not only manifested the consensus of a very large number of bishops taking part in them, but had also been most universally received, not only in the East, where they took place, but also in the West, represented by the church of Rome.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 84)
      3. “. . . these ‘ecumenical’ councils [achieved a] consensus in the faith of the whole contemporary Church. . . . no one doubted that what the whole Church accepted as faithful to Scripture and Tradition had to be true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 85)
4. **ad 700-1000**: **early medieval period**
   1. ad 787: Nicea II
      1. The Pentarchy was “the five great patriarchal sees[:] Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 86)
      2. “The consensus of the Pentarchy was undoubtedly the operative criterion of ecumenicity at the Second Council of Nicea (787).” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 86)
      3. “As the consent of the Bishop of Rome had always been taken to signify the consent of the western church, so now the consent of all five Patriarchs was taken to signify the consent of the universal Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 86)
      4. “Agreement at the council itself, or at least subsequent reception of its decisions, by the bishops of the five patriarchal sees . . . was seen as evidence of the consensus of the whole episcopate.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 86)
   2. 800s-900s
      1. “. . . explicit belief in the infallibility of ecumenical councils does not appear in Christian literature until the ninth century . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 82)
      2. Theodore Abū Qurrah (c. ad 750-820/25)
         1. Abū Qurrah (also “Abu-Qurrah,” “Abu Qurra”) was an Arab Christian, bishop of Harran (northern Iraq) 795-812.
         2. Sullivan says he was “a ninth-century monk” (*Magisterium* 85), but *Wikipedia* says: “He has traditionally been thought to have been a monk at the monastery of Mar Saba (the monastery where, earlier, John of Damascus had lived), but this has been shown to be due to a confusion with Theodore of Edessa.” (*Wikipedia* cites: Lamoreaux, John C. “The Biography of Theodore Abū Qurrah Revisited.” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 56 (2002): 25-40.) (“Theodore Abu-Qurrah”)
         3. He “wrote the first systematic treatise on the councils.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 85)
         4. He was also “the first writer explicitly to attribute infallibility to the decisions of ecumenical councils . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 85)
         5. “He argued from Acts 15 that ecumenical councils were a divine, not merely ecclesiastical institution. As the apostles could say of their conciliar decision: ‘It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us’ (Acts 15:28), so could the bishops gathered in ecumenical councils rely on the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, it was the Holy Spirit who sanctioned the authority of these councils, and demanded that the faithful accept their decisions. Now since the Holy Spirit could not require the acceptance of false doctrine, Theodore Abu Qurra concluded that the Holy Spirit must ensure that the doctrine promulgated by ecumenical councils is true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 85)
         6. “Of course, he was aware that a crucial question still remained to be answered: on what grounds are certain councils reckoned as ‘ecumenical’, while others are not?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 86)
            1. “By his day, the answer to this question in the East was that the criterion of ecumenicity was the consensus of the Pentarchy . . . And, as Abu Qurra saw it, the consensus of the episcopate, proposing a doctrine to be believed by all the faithful, enjoyed the assistance of the Holy Spirit that would guarantee the truth of its teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 86)
      3. reception of Nicea II in the West
         1. France
            1. “But this relatively simple criterion of ecumenicity [consensus of the Pentarchy] was challenged by the Frankish theologians of the Carolingian period [Charlemagne, r. 768-814], who insisted on the necessity of consulting and obtaining the consent of all the bishops, and not relying exclusively on the consent of the five patriarchal sees.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 86)
            2. “They also called for a much more rigorous proof from Scripture and Tradition than had been offered by the Second Council of Nicea for its doctrine on the veneration of images.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 86)
         2. Spain
            1. “. . . the bishops of Spain . . . considered themselves qualified to examine and judge the decisions taken at Nicea II in the light of Scripture and previous conciliar doctrine. Only when they had satisfied themselves, in their own synods, that the decisions of Nicea II met these tests, did they ‘receive’ the decrees of the council . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 86)
         3. “From the independent attitude shown by . . . western bishops regarding the decrees of Nicea II, we can see that in the ninth century the idea was still very much alive that a council was truly ecumenical only when it manifested the ‘horizontal’ consensus of the whole episcopate, and that all bishops were entitled to express their judgment whether a conciliar decision met the criterion of ‘vertical’ consensus with Scripture and Tradition.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 86)
   3. c. 1000: conclusions
      1. It is only late in the first millennium “that we find explicit belief in the infallibility of ecumenical councils . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 84)
      2. It is only late in the second millennium “that the doctrine of papal infallibility became universally accepted by Roman Catholics, and then only by them.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 84)
      3. “In none of the great councils [86] of the first millennium had all the bishops actually taken part. The reception of the council’s decrees by the bishops who had not been present at it, was still being seen as an integral element of the ecumenicity of the council itself.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 86-87)
      4. “Of course it was realised that absolute unanimity could not be required, because so often the bishops whose doctrines had been condemned by a council refused to accept its decision. No doubt it was this fact that led to such emphasis being put on the consent of Rome and the other great patriarchal sees.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 87)
      5. “. . . by the end of the first millennium a council’s dogmatic decisions were recognised as infallibly true when it was certain that the council itself was fully ecumenical, and that a council was recognised as fully ecumenical when its decisions had been received by the universal episcopate.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 87)
      6. “The basic supposition, of course, was that the whole Church cannot be led astray in its faith, which it would inevitably be if the whole episcopate could err in what it solemnly obliged all the faithful to believe. Again, this was not a purely *a priori* conviction; it was the fruit of the experience which the Church had had . . . that the councils which actually achieved the consensus of the whole episcopate had performed an incalculable service for the faith of the Church. It was the common conviction that this could only be explained as the effect of a special guidance or even ‘inspiration’ of these councils by the Holy Spirit.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 87)
5. **1000-1500**: **medieval period**
   1. introduction
      1. 1054: Eastern Orthodox and Catholic churches split.
      2. “. . . the idea persisted in the West until the sixteenth century that only those councils could be called ‘ecumenical’ in which the churches of both East and West had taken part . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 88)
      3. “From the time of pope Gregory VII [1073-85] it was accepted that the pope was the supreme legislator for the universal Church, and by now the ‘universal Church’ was identified with western Christendom.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
   2. 1100s-1300s: papal councils
      1. Alberigo, G. “Una cum Patribus. La formula conclusive delle decisioni del Vaticano II.” *Ecclesia a Spiritu Sancto edocta*: *Mélanges philosophiques*, *hommages à Mgr*. *Gérard Philips*. Bibl. Eph. Theol. Lov. 27. Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1970. 291-319.
      2. Congar, Yves M.-J., SJ. “1274-1974. Structures ecclésiales et conciles dans les relations entre Orient et Occident.” *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 58 (1974): 355-90.
      3. Seven general councils “are characterised as the medieval ‘papal councils’, because of the [88] predominant role which the popes played in them.” (Congar 360, 368) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 88-89)
         1. 1123: Lateran I (only 70 years after 1054)
         2. 1139: Lateran II
         3. 1179: Lateran III
         4. 1215: Lateran IV
         5. 1245: Lyons I
         6. 1274: Lyons II
         7. 1311-12: Vienne
      4. “Most of these councils were primarily engaged in enacting legislation for the reform of the Church and the settlement of the outstanding problems of Christian society.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
      5. “The decrees of these councils were promulgated as decisions made by the reigning pope ‘with the approval of the sacred council’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
         1. “. . . the assembled bishops, abbots and other clerics who took part in them seem to have had a consultative rather than a fully deliberative voice in the proceedings . . .” (Alberigo 302-03) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
         2. “. . . the fact that the decisions were made by the pope with the approval of a general council gave them a special solemnity.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
      6. Aquinas had argued (*ST* 2-2.1.9):
         1. “since the universal Church cannot err in faith,”
         2. and since the creed was “promulgated with the authority of the universal Church,”
         3. “nothing in the creed can be incorrect.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
         4. Similarly, it was argued:
            1. “since the universal Church cannot err in faith,”
            2. and since the papal councils were “promulgated with the authority of the universal Church,”
            3. “when such conciliar decrees determined points of faith, they could not be erroneous.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
   3. 1400s: rise of conciliarism
      1. “. . . the only solution available [to] the ‘western schism’ [1378-1417] was the exercise of authority over the rival claimants to the papal throne by a general council acting without the pope.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
      2. “The question raised by the Council of Constance [1414-18] was whether the authority of the universal Church resided in a general council made up of bishops, abbots, doctors of theology and canon lawyers, conceived of as a kind of ecclesiastical parliament, distinct from and ultimately superior to the executive, the pope.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
      3. factors diminishing conciliarism
         1. Conciliarism “had the weight of the tradition of the great councils of the first millennium against it.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
         2. “The evident excesses to which the conciliarist position led at the Council of Basel [1431-49] brought about a reaction in favour of papal authority . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
         3. Papal authority “was firmly asserted at the Council of Florence [1431-49].” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
      4. Since 1449 “there has been no doubt in the Catholic Church” that [89]:
         1. “a general council consists essentially of the pope acting together with the college of bishops”
         2. “such a council can define dogmas ‘with the authority of the universal Church’”
         3. “when it does so, it speaks with infallibility.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89-90)
6. **1500-2000**: **Vatican Councils I and II**
   1. Vatican I (dogmatic constitution *On the Church of Christ* [*Pastor aeternus*, 18 July 1870] ch. 4, D 1839, DS 3074): a pope defines with “that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer wished his Church to be endowed in defining doctrine of faith and morals . . .” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 78)
   2. By “the infallibility of ‘*the Church* in defining doctrine of faith or morals’ . . . undoubtedly was meant the infallibility of ecumenical councils, since otherwise the Church does not ‘define doctrine’ . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 90)
   3. But the statement, “that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer wished his Church to be endowed in defining doctrine of faith and morals,” occurs within the sentence that defines papal infallibility. It is not itself to object of the definition.
   4. Consequently, “At Vatican I the infallibility of [ecumenical councils] was taken to be so undisputed a dogma [sc. “doctrine”] of faith that this council did not bother explicitly to define it . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 90)
   5. Vatican II defined no dogmas.
   6. Consequently, conciliar infallibility is a doctrine, whereas papal infallibility is a dogma.

### Church Councils

All are ecumenical unless in brackets. “Ecumenical” means “worldwide.” All “-isms” are heresies condemned at the council. Nestorians accept ecumenical councils 1-2; monophysites accept 1-3; Protestants accept 1-4; Eas­tern Orthodox accept 1-7; Catholics accept all 21.

**ancient**

1. 325 Nicaea I Arianism (Son is the highest creature, who existed before time)

Father and Son are consubstantial (*homoou­sios*)

[362 Alexandria semi-Arianism (Father and Son are of like substance, *homoiousios*)]

2. 381 Constantinople I Apollinarianism (Son replaces Jesus’ human intellect and will)

Macedonianism (Holy Spirit is a creature)

the Holy Spirit is consubstan­tial with the Father and the Son

3. 431 Ephesus Nestorianism (Christ is two natures in two persons)

Pelagianism (a person, without grace, can avoid sin)

Christ is 2 natures in 1 person

4. 451 Chalcedon Eutychianism (Christ is 1 nature after the incarnation)

hypostatic union: the Logos is the basis of the 2 natures’ union

5. 553 Constantinople II monophysitism (Christ’s divine nature absorbs the human nature)

Origenism (pre-existent souls fell; Son subordinate to Father)

[529 Orange II semi-Pelagianism (a person, without grace, can initially turn to God)

God does not will anyone to hell]

[589 Toledo III *filioque* added to creed]

6. 680 Constantinople III monotheletism (Son’s will replaces Jesus’ human will)

7. 787 Nicaea II iconoclasm (use of images in worship is wrong)

8. 869-70 Constantinople IV Greek schism ended, Photius (patriarch of Constantinople) deposed

**medieval**

9. 1123 Lateran I simony condemned, celibacy demanded; lay investiture agreement

10. 1139 Lateran II papal schism ended; reforms

11. 1179 Lateran III Albigensianism and Waldensianism; papal-election laws

12. 1215 Lateran IV crusade planned; annual communion; Franciscans; reforms

13. 1245 Lyons I crusade planned; Frederick II deposed

14. 1274 Lyons II Greeks reunited; *filioque* reaffirmed; reforms

15. 1311-12 Vienne Beguines and Beghards; Knights Templar abolished; reforms

[1409 Pisa heretical: approved conciliarism (councils have authority over popes)]

16. 1414-18 Constance Wyclif condemned, Huss executed; Great Schism (3 popes) ended

17. 1431-45 Florence Greeks reunited; settlement with Hussites; reforms

18. 1512-17 Lateran V nature of soul; reforms

**modern**

19. 1545-63 Trent Protestantism; reforms

20. 1869-70 Vatican I papal infallibility

21. 1962-65 Vatican II pastoral council

### Vatican Council II

Vatican II (2400 bishops; cf. Nicea I: 220 bishops) was not primarily dogmatic or reforming but pastor­al; it sought to enhance effective reaching out to the world. Based on renewals in biblical and li­turgi­cal stud­ies, it produced 16 documents. The most important theologically are the *Dog­matic Constitu­tion on the Church*, the *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Re­vel­a­tion*, and the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*. It produced:

4 constitutions

*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* (*Lumen gentium*) (November 21, 1964)

*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation* (*Dei Verbum*) (November 18, 1965)

*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (*Sacrosanctum concilium*) (December 4, 1963)

*Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (*Gaudium et spes*) (December 7, 1965)

3 declarations

*Declaration on Christian Education* (*Gravissimum educationis*) (October 28, 1965)

*Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* (*Nostra aetate*) (October 28, 1965)

*Declaration on Religious Freedom* (*Dignitatis humanae*) (December 7, 1965)

9 decrees

*Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church* (*Christus Dominus*) (October 28, 1965)

*Decree on Priestly Training* (*Optatam totius*) (October 28, 1965)

*Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests* (*Presbyterorum ordinis*) (December 7, 1965)

*Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life* (*Perfectae caritatis*) (October 28, 1965)

*Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity* (*Apostolicam actuositatem*) (November 18, 1965)

*Decree on the Catholic Churches of the Eastern Rite* (*Orientalium ecclesiarum*) (November 21, 1964)

*Decree on Ecumenism* (*Unitatis redintegratio*) (November 21, 1964)

*Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church* (*Ad gentes*) (November 18, 1965)

*Decree on the Media of Social Communications* (*Inter mirifica*) (December 4, 1963)

### Conditions for the

### Infallibility of Ecumenical Councils

1. **introduction**
   1. “Vatican I was of course directly concerned with the conditions for papal infallibility . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 99)
   2. “. . . but there are also particular conditions that have to be fulfilled for a conciliar act to be recognised as infallible.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 99)
2. “**conditions concerning the subject**” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 99)
   1. These are “conditions that concern the episcopal college as subject of an infallible dogmatic definition.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 100)
   2. condition 1: assembly
      1. “. . . the pronouncing of a solemn dogmatic definition is an extraordinary exercise of magisterium, in which the episcopal college deliberates upon and judges a question of faith in a strictly collegial way.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 100)
      2. “So, historically, the condition required for the episcopal college to be the subject of an infallible dogmatic definition has been that it be assembled in an ecumenical council.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 100)
      3. “. . . in the future, it might be possible for the episcopal college to exercise such deliberation and judgment in a strictly collegial way, without being physically gathered in one place.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 100)
      4. Elected representatives can exercise the whole college’s authority.
         1. “. . . in the ecumenical councils of the first millennium the whole western episcopate was represented by only two or three bishops, legates of the bishop of Rome . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 101)
         2. The Synod of Bishops (established by Paul VI, 1965), however, is “purely advisory [to] the pope, with merely consultative voice.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 101)
   3. condition 2: judging the faith
      1. “. . . the bishops have to be exercising their function as ‘judges of the faith’ [*Lumen gentium* § 25] in a truly deliberative way.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 101)
   4. condition 3: freedom
      1. Judging the faith “necessarily includes the condition that the bishops be free to express their own judgment: in other words that they not be under such pressure or coercion as would deprive them of genuine freedom in expressing their views.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 101)
      2. Critics of Vatican I “charged that the pressure put on the bishops by Pope Pius IX was such that the deliberations of that council were not truly free.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 101)
3. “**conditions concerning the object**” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
   1. condition 4: doctrine of faith or morals
      1. “Since we are dealing [with] defining dogmas of faith, the object has to be a truth that is capable of being so defined.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
      2. According to Vatican I, “In other words, the object of solemn definition as dogma has to be a ‘doctrine of faith or morals’ which is in itself formally contained in the ‘deposit of revelation’.” (Vatican I, dogmatic constitution *Pastor aeternus* ch. 4, DS 3074) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
      3. According to Vatican II, “only a truth that has been revealed to us by God ‘for the sake of our salvation’ can be defined as a dogma of faith.” (*Dei Verbum* § 11) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
4. “**conditions that concern the act of defining**” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
   1. condition 5: evidence of intention to define
      1. “. . . ‘to define’ in the present context means to give a definitive judgment which . . . decisively establishes some truth as an element of the normative faith of the community. For an act of the magisterium to constitute a dogmatic definition, it must be evident that it is intended as such a definitive judgment, obliging the faithful to give their assent of faith to the doctrine so defined.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
      2. “Such a definitive judgment can also be expressed negatively, by the solemn condemnation of an opinion as heretical. When it is clear that the term ‘heresy’ is intended to mean that the condemned opinion is in contradiction to a truth of faith, the contradictory of the heresy is thereby defined as a dogma of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)

### Development of the Doctrine

### of Papal Infallibility

1. **c**. **ad 50-125**: **New Testament**
   1. Peter has a unique position of leadership within the twelve.
   2. Matt 4:18-20, Mark 1:16-18, Peter is Jesus’ first disciple: “As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. 17And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” 18And immediately they left their nets and followed him.”
   3. Matt 10:2-4, Acts 1:13, Peter is first in lists of the twelve
   4. Matt 16:13-20, “Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” 17And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. 18And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. 19I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.””
   5. Matt 18:18 (said to all of the twelve), “Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”
   6. Matt 14:29, Peter walks on water
   7. Matt 17:1-9, Mark 9:2-10, Luke 9:28-36, spokesman at the Transfiguration
   8. Luke 22:31-32 (at the Last Supper), “Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, 32but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”
   9. Luke 22:33-34, 54-62, Peter’s three denials
   10. John 21:15-17, “When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” 16A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” 17He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.””
   11. P Peter has a unique leadership in Acts.
       1. Acts 1:15, in charge of selecting Judas’ replacement
       2. Acts 2:14-38, speaker at Pentecost
       3. Acts 3:1-12, healing a lame man
       4. Acts 4:1, 8, 13, 19; Acts 5:29, speaking boldly
       5. Acts 5:1-9, upbraiding Ananias and Saphira
       6. Acts 9:34, healing a paralytic (Aeneas)
       7. Acts 9:38-40, resuscitating Dorcas
       8. Acts 10:1-11:18, first to accept Gentiles (Cornelius) without imposing the Mosaic Law
       9. Acts 12:3-19, miraculously freed from prison
       10. Acts 15:7, first to speak at the Apostolic Council
   12. John Henry Newman, reply to Gladstone (*A letter* . . . *to the Duke of Norfolk*. London: 1875. 110): “What has the long history of the contest for and against the pope’s infallibility been, but a growing insight through centuries into the meaning of those three texts to which I just now referred [the “primacy texts,” Matt 16:13-19, Luke 22:32, John 21:15-17], ending at length by the Church’s definitive recognition of the doctrine thus gradually manifested to her?” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 118)
2. **ad 125-1000**
   1. 378: Roman law gives the pope universal ecclesiastical jurisdiction
   2. 400s: “the popes themselves, from the fifth century at least, had no doubt about their definitive teaching role . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 90)
   3. “. . . neither the eastern churches, nor many of the leading bishops of the West, outside of Italy, shared the Roman view during the first millennium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 90)
3. **ad 1000-1500**
   1. 1054: Eastern Orthodox and Catholic churches split. “. . . the infallibility of the pope has never been a matter of faith for the Christians of the Eastern Orthodox tradition . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 82)
   2. “From the time of pope Gregory VII [1073-85] it was accepted that the pope was the supreme legislator for the universal Church, and by now the ‘universal Church’ was identified with western Christendom.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 89)
   3. 1265-73: Aquinas’s *Summa theologiae*
      1. Aquinas (*ST* 2-2.1.10) says the pope has “authority to define dogmas” but does not say such dogmas are infallible. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 90)
      2. But see Yves Congar (“Saint Thomas Aquinas and the Infallibility of the Papal Magisterium.” *Thomist* 38 [1974]: 103): “If the Pope has the power “to decide matters of faith authoritatively, so that they may be held by all with unshaken faith,” then . . . here in article 10 [is] a first statement . . . of the infallibility of the pontifical magisterium.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 90)
      3. “. . . if the pope could err when exercising such authority, the whole Church would inevitably be led into error in its faith. In other words, once the Church had recognised in the pope [90] the same kind of dogmatic authority it already attributed to ecumenical councils, the same reason for believing conciliar definitions to be infallible would also apply to papal definitions.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 90-91)
   4. 1274: Lyons II accepts “papal authority to define dogmas” but does not say such dogmas are infallible. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 90)
   5. 1283 (only 9 years after Aquinas’ death): John Peter Olivi, OFM
      1. Olivi wrote a *quaestio* entitled, *Whether the Roman Pontiff Is to Be Obeyed by All Catholics as an Infallible* [inerrabili] *Standard in Faith and Morals*. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 91)
      2. For the first time “explicit belief in the infallibility of the pope appears . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 82)
      3. But Olivi said later popes were bound by *all* “decisions of previous popes.” So he did not “really anticipate” Vatican I. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 91)
   6. 1330: Guido Terreni (c. 1270-1342, Carmelite, bishop)
      1. Guido’s *quaestio* is entitled, *On the Infallible Teaching Office of the Roman Pontiff*.
      2. Terreni’s argument
         1. major premise: “the Church cannot be led astray in its faith . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 92)
         2. minor premise: “it belongs to the authority of the Roman Pontiff to determine definitively . . . questions about faith so that they may be held by all with unshaken faith . . .” (Terreni quotes this from Aquinas, *ST* 2-2.l.10.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 92)
         3. conclusion: “in such determinations of matters of faith for the whole Church, the pope cannot err.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 92)
      3. “. . . the same Holy Spirit who protects the unerring faith of the Church also prevents the pope from leading it into error in faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 92)
      4. “He admits (with medieval theologians generally) that a pope could fall into heresy in his private opinions, but he insists that the Holy Spirit would prevent a heretical pope from issuing a decision that would oblige the faithful to follow him in his heresy.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 92)
      5. “The word in Terreni’s vocabulary which corresponds to the term *definire* of Vatican I is *determinare* which he sometimes qualifies with the adverb *sententialiter* [“definitively”]. According to Terreni, such a ‘determination’ in a matter of faith involves ‘the authority of the universal Church, which resides in the supreme pontiff’.” (Xiberta 18) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 92)
      6. “. . . questions which the pope can ‘determine’ for the whole Church have to be concerned with the faith . . . He does not use the expression *res fidei et morum* of Vatican I, but it seems likely that he would have included revealed morality among matters of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 92)
      7. “So the dogma of 1870 was already being taught in 1330 . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 93)
   7. conciliarism
      1. Conciliarism is the theory that ecumenical councils have authority over popes.
      2. Papal infallibility received “a major setback with the papacy’s loss of prestige during the western schism [1378-1417] and the triumph of conciliarism at the Council of Constance [1414-18].” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 93)
4. **ad 1500-1800**
   1. 1400s-1600s: defenders of papal infallibility include Juan de Torquemada, OP (1388-1468), Cardinal Cajetan, OP (1469-1534), John Driedo (Louvain theologian, 1480-1535), Thomas Stapleton (Louvain and Douai theologian, 1535-98), Robert Cardinal Bellarmine, SJ (1542-1621), Francisco Suarez, SJ (Salamanca theologian, 1548-1617), and the rest of “the theological faculty of Louvain” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 93-94)
   2. 1600s: Gallicanism (a form of conciliarism)
      1. 1682: *Articles of the Gallican Clergy* (by Jacques-Benigne Bossuet [1627-1704], art. 4 [DS 2284]): “In questions of faith [a pope’s] . . . decision is not irreformable unless it obtains the consent of the Church.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 93)
      2. Louis XIV demanded that all receiving theology degrees sign the *Articles*.
      3. “In the context of Gallicanism, the term ‘the consent of the Church’ means ‘the consent of the episcopate’ . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 93)
   3. 1700s
      1. “. . . most of the defenders of papal infallibility [were] Italians (P. Ballerini, F.A. Zaccaria, A. Muzzarelli, M. Cappellari [later Gregory XVI, 1831-46] . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 94)
      2. This “accounts for the name ‘ultramontane’ given to this current of thought by those living north of the Alps.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 94)
5. **1800s**
   1. c. 1800: “doubt or denial regarding papal infallibility was prevalent not only in France but in much of Northern Europe and North America as well.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 94)
   2. Papal infallibility was “universally accepted in the Roman Catholic Church only when it had been defined by the First Vatican Council in 1870.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 82)
   3. “The remarkable fact is that the nineteenth century witnessed such a rapid and widespread acceptance of ‘ultramontanism’ . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 94)
   4. non-theological factors
      1. These were “at least as important” as theological factors. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 94)
      2. There was a “widely shared hope that a strong affirmation of the spiritual authority of the Holy See would provide a remedy for the many evils of the day that were looked upon as the fruit of the liberalism and free-thinking stemming from Protestantism and the French Revolution.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 94)
      3. “. . . undue pressures were applied, and . . . some of the tactics employed by the leaders of the majority (like the stacking of the *Deputatio de Fide* with ‘infallibilists’) were far from admirable.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 95)
         1. John Henry Newman “publicly deplored the tactics used to get the doctrine solemnly defined . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 95)
   5. ultramontanism
      1. Ultramontanism identified “papal sovereignty with papal infallibility . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 96)
      2. “. . . prior to Vatican I some of the [97] over-zealous promoters of the doctrine of papal infallibility seemed to want the Council to declare that the pope could never make a mistake in the exercise of his official teaching function. They wanted a definition of papal infallibility that would, for instance, have required Catholics to believe that every proposition in Pope Pius IX’s ‘Syllabus of Errors’ [DS 2901-80] had been infallibly [declared].” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 97-98)
   6. “. . . by 1870 the great majority of Catholic bishops were ready to define papal infallibility as a dogma of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 94)
   7. 1869-70: Vatican I
      1. Vatican I (*Pastor aeternus* ch. 4, D 1839, DS 3074): papal definitions are “irreformable of themselves and not from the consent of the Church [i.e., the bishops].” (“. . . ex sese, non autem ex consensu Ecclesiae.”) (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 103)
      2. “. . . the majority of Vatican I intended . . . the definitive repudiation of the fourth of the ‘Articles of the Gallican Clergy’ of 1682, which said that a doctrinal decision made by the pope would be irreformable only if it obtained the consent of the Church [DS 2284]. . . . the ‘Church’ in this Article really means ‘the episcopate’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 103)
      3. “The precise target at which Vatican I aimed was the idea of . . . a legitimate appeal from a papal definition to the judgment of the rest of the episcopal college, which could conceivably reverse the Pope’s decision.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 103)
      4. “To admit such juridical dependence of papal definitions on episcopal approval would amount to denying primacy and infallibility to papal magisterium and attributing it uniquely to the magisterium of the whole episcopate.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 103)
6. **1900s**
   1. “. . . papal infallibility is grounded in two distinctively Roman Catholic beliefs . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 96)
      1. “. . . the Roman Catholic Church, in which the Church of Christ subsists, is indefectible in its faith, and therefore will never be led into contradiction with the truth of the Gospel by those whose definitive judgments on matters of faith Catholics are ready to accept as binding on their faith . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 96)
      2. “. . . while such definitive judgments are normally the fruit of the deliberation of the whole episcopate with the pope, [the pope can pronounce] definitive judgments on matters of faith, which are equally as binding as the decisions of ecumenical councils.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 96)
      3. “. . . the Holy Spirit maintains the Church in the truth. . . . [It] does this both by arousing and sustaining the supernatural sense of faith in the whole People of God [*Lumen gentium* § 12] and by conferring on those called to ministry in the Church the charisms necessary for the effective carrying out of their office.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 97)
      4. “This is a kind of abiding assistance, which comes into play in a particular way to guarantee that the pope will not oblige the faithful to give their assent of faith to a teaching that is alien to the Gospel.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 97)
      5. True, “popes have made mistakes in the exercise of their teaching function . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 97)
         1. But Catholicism distinguishes “between the pope’s personal opinions and [official] teaching . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 98)
         2. And within his “public and official” teaching, it distinguishes “between his solemn definitions and other teaching . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 98)
            1. Without this distinction “papal infallibility would be historically untenable . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 98)
         3. “. . . in no case has a pope ever solemnly defined as a dogma of faith a proposition that was incompatible with the truth of the Gospel.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 97)

### Conditions of Papal Infallibility

Vatican I (dogmatic constitution *On the Church of Christ* [*Pastor aeternus*], 18 July 1870, ch. 4 ¶ 9, D 1839, DS 3074): “we teach and define as a divinely revealed dogma that when the Roman Pontiff speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when, in the exercise of his office as shepherd and teacher of all Christians, in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole Church, he possesses, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, that infallibility which the divine Redeemer willed his Church to enjoy in defining doctrine concerning faith or morals. Therefore, such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are of themselves, and not by the consent of the Church, irreformable.” (Tanner)

**contents**:

presupposition: the definer is a pope, i.e.,

i) is validly elected

ii) hasn’t lost the papacy (by open heresy or schism)

iii) is free (not mentally ill, not coerced)

conditions:

1) consults the faith

2) exercises universal jurisdiction (speaks as head of the universal Church)

3) about a doctrine of faith or morals

4) gives evidence of intention to define

1. **presupposed conditions**
   1. “Other conditions that are not explicitly stated here [in the above quotation] are [101] nevertheless implied.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 101-02)
   2. “. . . the Roman pontiff who defines a dogma of faith must be a pope of whose valid election there is no doubt.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
   3. “He must not have lost the papacy by openly falling into heresy or schism (something that [even] such staunch defenders of the papacy as Torquemada, Cajetan, Bellarmine and Suarez considered a possibility to be reckoned with).” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
   4. “Furthermore, he must make his decision to define while of sound mind and free of coercion. Otherwise he could hardly be said to be truly exercising his supreme teaching authority.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
2. **consults the faith**
   1. Vatican I (*Pastor aeternus*, ch. 4 ¶ 9): papal definitions are “irreformable of themselves and not from the consent of the Church [bishops].” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 103)
   2. But “not from the consent of the Church” does not “rule out a real dependence of papal definitions on the faith of the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 103)
      1. “. . . before he can define anything as divinely revealed, the pope must ‘listen to the Word of God’ [*Dei Verbum* § 10] . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 104)
      2. But “this Word of God has been ‘entrusted to the Church’ [*Dei Verbum* § 10], and is handed on ‘in her teaching, life and worship’ [*Dei Verbum* § 8] . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 104)
      3. “. . . it follows that before the pope can define a dogma he must listen to the Church, and that he can define as dogma only what he finds in the faith of the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 104)
   3. how consultation occurs
      1. “. . . there are as many ways of consulting the faith of the Church as there are ways that the deposit of revelation has been handed on in her teaching, life and worship. These include Sacred Scripture, the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, the sacred liturgy, the decrees of councils, the works of theologians, traditional beliefs and practices, etc.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 104)
      2. The condition of consultation does not “prescribe exactly what form this consultation must take . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 104)
         1. Ascertaining the *consensus episcopii* (agreement of the bishops) is not required.
            1. “. . . one cannot lay down the morally unanimous consent of the episcopate as a condition . . . prior to a papal definition . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 105)
            2. First, “ascertaining the fact of such prior consensus would not in every instance be the only way of consulting the faith of the Church . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 105)
            3. Second, “this would eliminate the possibility of a decisive act of the papal magisterium that might be needed to overcome a threat to the Church’s unity in the faith, and bring about a consensus, or restore one that had been lost.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 105)
         2. Ascertaining the *consensus fidelium* (agreement of the faithful) is not required.
            1. Sometimes “a considerable portion of the faithful has been led into error, usually by erring bishops, and then it has been the role of the supreme teaching authority to pronounce a decisive judgment in order to resolve the dispute and lead the faithful to a consensus in the truth.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 105)
            2. Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (declaration *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, 1973, § 2): “However much the Sacred Magisterium avails itself of the contemplation, life and study of the faithful, its office is not reduced merely to ratifying the assent already expressed by the latter; indeed, in the interpretation and explanation of the written or transmitted Word of God, the Magisterium can anticipate or demand their assent.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 104-05)
            3. “The magisterial role of the pope cannot be reduced to merely announcing the results of a Church-wide opinion poll.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 104)
3. **exercises universal jurisdiction**
   1. Vatican I (quotation above): the pope must be “exercising his supreme apostolic authority as pastor and teacher of all Christians.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 101)
   2. The pope defines dogma “as head of the universal Church . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 101)
   3. The pope can speak without exercising universal jurisdiction.
      1. “. . . the pope can speak as a private theologian . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 101)
      2. He can speak “simply as bishop of Rome . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 101)
4. **a doctrine of faith or morals**
   1. Since a dogma defines a truth of *faith*, the defined truth must be “in itself formally contained in the ‘deposit of revelation’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
   2. Vatican I (quotation above): “a doctrine of faith or morals” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 102)
   3. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* § 11): “that truth God wanted put into the sacred scriptures for the sake of our salvation” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 102)
   4. “Such a definitive judgment can also be expressed negatively, by the solemn condemnation of an opinion as heretical. When it is clear that the term ‘heresy’ is intended to mean that the condemned opinion is in contradiction to a truth of faith, the contradictory of the heresy is thereby defined as a dogma of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
5. **evidence of intention to define**
   1. “For an act of the magisterium to constitute a dogmatic definition, it must be evident that it is intended as such a definitive judgment, obliging the faithful to give their assent of faith to the doctrine so defined.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)

### Development of the Doctrine

### of Universal Ordinary Magisterium

1. **introduction**
   1. Boyle, John P. “The Ordinary Magisterium: Towards a History of the Concept.” *Heythrop Journal* 20 (1979): 380-98; 21 (1980): 14-29. (Good for “the source of this idea . . .” Sullivan, *Magisterium* 226 n. 6)
   2. Magisterial “teaching is exercised in a ‘solemn’ or ‘extraordinary’ way [120] when a doctrine is *defined* by an ecumenical council, or by a Pope speaking *ex cathedra*.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 120-21)
   3. “Any other exercise of the teaching authority of the bishops or the Pope is called ‘ordinary’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 121)
   4. Ordinary magisterium is exercised in two forms. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 121)
      1. universal ordinary magisterium, which can be infallible
         1. “The term ‘*universal* ordinary magisterium’ refers to the concordant teaching of the whole Catholic episcopate together with the Pope, apart from the rather rare occasions when the bishops are gathered in an ecumenical council.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 122)
         2. The “‘ordinary universal magisterium’ of the episcopal college dispersed throughout the world, when it unanimously teaches a doctrine of faith as definitively to be held,” is infallible. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 79)
         3. “. . . the episcopal college . . . throughout the world, can, under certain conditions, teach infallibly . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 100)
      2. non-universal ordinary magisterium, which is non-infallible
         1. This is treated in a separate handout.
2. **Pius IX**
   1. *Tuas libenter* was the first reference to the universal ordinary magisterium in documents of the holy see. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 122)
   2. Pius IX (1846-78) (*Tuas libenter*, private letter to the Archbishop of Munich-Freising, nuncio of Bav­aria, 21 Dec. 1863, D 1682-84, DS 2879): “. . . all Catholics in their learned interpretations should in conscience obey the dogmatic decrees of the infallible Catholic Church. [1683] . . . [Yet] We wish to persuade Ourselves that they [theologians at a recent meeting in Munich] did not wish to confine the obligation, by which Catholic teachers and writers are absolutely bound, only to those decrees which are set forth by the infallible judgment of the Church as dogmas of faith to be believed by all. And We persuade Ourselves, also, that they did not wish to declare that that perfect adhesion to revealed truths, which they recognized as absolutely necessary to attain true progress in the sciences and to refute errors, could be obtained if faith and obedience were given only to the dogmas expressly defined by the Church. For, even if it were a matter concerning that subjection which is to be manifested by an act of divine faith, nevertheless, it would not have to be limited to those matters which have been defined by express decrees of the ecumenical Councils, or of the Roman Pontiffs and of this See, but would have to be extended also to those matters which are handed down as divinely revealed by the ordinary teaching power of the whole Church spread throughout the world, and therefore, by universal and common consent are held by Catholic theologians to belong to faith. [1684] But, since it is a matter of that subjection by which in conscience all those Catholics are bound who work in the speculative sciences, . . . [the theologians] should recognize that it is not sufficient for learned Catholics to accept and revere the aforesaid dogmas of the Church, but that it is also necessary to subject themselves to the decisions pertaining to doctrine which are issued by the Pontifical Congregations, and also to those forms of doctrine which are held by the common and constant consent of Catholics as theological truths and conclusions, so certain that opinions opposed to these same forms of doctrine, although they cannot be called heretical, nevertheless deserve some theological censure.” (Qtd. in Denzinger)
   3. Thus Pius IX said that “. . . Catholic teachers and writers [must] believe not only what has been expressly defined . . . but also what is taught as divinely revealed by ‘the ordinary magisterium of the Church dispersed throughout the world’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 122)
3. **Vatican I**
   1. Vatican I “echoed this statement of Pius IX and gave it the weight of a conciliar definition . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 122)
   2. Vatican I (dogmatic constitution *On the Catholic Faith* [*Dei Filius*, 24 Apr. 1870] ch. 3, DS 3011): “All those things are to be believed with Catholic and divine faith which are contained in the Word of God, written or handed on, and are proposed by the Church either by a solemn judgment or [122] by its ordinary and universal magisterium as divinely revealed and to be believed as such.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 122-23)
   3. “ordinary”
      1. Since “solemn judgment” is “the act by which a doctrine is defined,” “ordinary” must mean “teaching by which doctrines are not defined.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 123)
   4. “universal magisterium”
      1. The *Acta* of Vatican I make clear (Mansi 51: 322) that “universal magisterium” means “the teaching of the whole episcopate with the pope, [not] the teaching of the pope alone, even when this is directed to the universal Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 123)
   5. infallibility
      1. Vatican I does not explicitly define the infallibility of the universal ordinary magisterium. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 123)
      2. Probably Vatican I also did not intend “to define it implicitly in this Constitution, since questions about the magisterium were still to be treated in the Constitution on the Church [*Pastor aeternus*, 18 July 1870].” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 123)
      3. But infallibility is “a theological conclusion . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 123)
         1. “. . . the whole Church cannot err in its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 123)
         2. Vatican I obliges Catholics to believe what the universal ordinary magisterium teaches “as divinely revealed and to be believed as such . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 123)
         3. Therefore, “what is taught by this magisterium” as divine revealed is certainly true. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 123)
4. **Vatican II**
   1. Vatican II affirmed the infallibility of the universal ordinary magisterium. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 123)
      1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25b): “Although the individual bishops do not enjoy the prerogative of infallibility, they can nevertheless proclaim Christ’s doctrine infallibly. This is so, even when they are dispersed around the world . . .” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 119)
      2. “Since the first clause denies to individual bishops the prerogative of infallibility, the ‘they’ who can speak infallibly are evidently the bishops taken collectively: in other words, it is the *episcopal college as such* which enjoys the prerogative of infallibility.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 123)
      3. “Now if the individual bishops are not infallible, the mere sum of them would not be infallible either. So in some real way, any infallible teaching by the bishops must involve a *collegial* exercise of their teaching authority. This of course requires the participation of the pope as head of the college.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 123)
   2. Vatican II, however, did not define the universal ordinary magisterium’s infallibility. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 123)

### Conditions for the Infallibility

### of Universal Ordinary Magisterium

1. **introduction**
   1. The first question here is “the conditions under which a doctrine can be said to have been infallibly taught without being solemnly defined . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 119)
   2. The second question here is how fulfillment of the conditions can be verified in any given case.
2. **Vatican II**
   1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25b): “the individual bishops . . . proclaim Christ’s doctrine infallibly . . . when they are dispersed around the world, provided that
      1. [1] “while maintaining the bond of unity among themselves and with Peter’s successor,
      2. [2] “and while teaching authentically [authoritatively] on a matter of faith or morals,
      3. [3] “they concur in a single viewpoint as the one which must be held conclusively.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 119)
   2. “bond of unity”
      1. The Latin is *communionis nexum*, “bond of communion.” “This undoubtedly refers to what is elsewhere in *Lumen gentium* called the ‘bond of hierarchical communion’ [*Lumen gentium* §§ 21, 22] which links bishops with one another and with the pope. According to LG 22 this bond of hierarchical communion is a requisite for membership in the episcopal college. Since this involves acceptance of the authority of the pope as head of the college, it follows that the episcopal college to which Vatican II attributes infallible magisterium is the Roman Catholic episcopate. This is consistent with the position that such councils as Trent and Vatican I spoke infallibly when they defined dogmas of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 124)
   3. “teaching authentically”
      1. “. . . ‘authentically’ would be better rendered as ‘authoritatively’, or ‘with their pastoral authority’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 124)
      2. “It is a question not of what bishops might hold as private opinions, but of what they do when, as ‘teachers endowed with the authority of [124] Christ, they preach to the people committed to them the faith they must believe and put into practice’ (LG 25).” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 124-25)
   4. “on a matter of faith or morals”
      1. This describes “the object about which the magisterium can teach authoritatively and, in some instances, infallibly.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 125)
   5. “they concur in a single viewpoint”
      1. “This ‘concurring in a single viewpoint’ is evidently what gives a *collegial* character to the teaching of the dispersed bishops.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 125)
      2. “. . . the bishops [must show] agreement through exercising their function as ‘judges of faith and morals’ [*Lumen gentium* § 25b].” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 125)
   6. “as definitively to be held”
      1. The Latin is *tamquam definitive tenendam*. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 125)
      2. Sullivan translates “which must be held conclusively,” but *Lumen gentium* at *vatican*.*va* translates “as definitively to be held.”
      3. “This phrase was not in the original draft of *Lumen gentium*, and is a very significant addition to the text.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 125)
         1. Karl Rahner (*Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*. Vol. 1. New York: 1967. 210-11): “The draft of 10 November 1962, no 30, pp. 29-31, did not contain the clause *tamquam definitive tenendam*, which is very important in judging the intention of the final text.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 126)
      4. Since the phrase “has the ring of a technical theological term, it is helpful to see how this term is used in the standard manuals of ecclesiology. The manual which was probably most widely used in the decades prior to Vatican II was that of J. Salaverri, S.J.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 125)
      5. Joachin Salverri (“De Ecclesia.” In *Sacrae theologiae summa*, vol. 1. 3rd ed. Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos. Madrid: 1955. 674 § 543): “The bishops teach a doctrine as definitively to be held when, with the [125] highest degree of their authority, they oblige the faithful to give irrevocable assent to it.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 125-26)
      6. “Karl Rahner gives to this phrase the same meaning . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 126)
         1. Karl Rahner (*Commentary* 210-11): “The text states explicitly that there can be . . . infallible teaching of the ordinary magisterium . . . only when the unanimous teaching of the whole episcopate proposes a matter of faith or morals ‘to be held definitively’ (*tamquam definitive tenendam*). An absolutely strict and irreformable assent must be explicitly called for. . . . Hence not every doctrine taught unanimously by the whole episcopate is of itself infallible, even when it deals with faith or morals or intends to do so. . . . Only unanimity thus determined is a criterion which we can use of the infallibility of the doctrine proposed.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 126)
         2. Karl Rahner (“Magisterium.” *Sacramentum Mundi*: *An Encyclopedia of Theology*. Ed. Karl Rahner. 6 vols. New York: Herder and Herder, 1968‑70. 3: 356): “When a dogma is to be taught by the ordinary magisterium of the whole episcopate, . . . it is not enough that a doctrine be propounded with moral unanimity by the whole episcopate. It is further required that the doctrine be explicitly propounded ‘tamquam definitive tenendam’ (LG 25). Hence mere *de facto* universality of Church doctrine related to the faith is not enough.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 126)
      7. “. . . therefore it is only when the magisterium obliges the faithful to give irrevocable assent to its teaching that it can be said to teach infallibly.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 127)
3. **verifying the infallibility of a teaching of the universal ordinary magisterium**
   1. One question “that arises is: how can it be demonstrated that on some point of doctrine which has never been solemnly defined or been the subject of a conciliar vote, the whole Catholic episcopate is authoritatively teaching the same thing?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 125)
      1. Karl Rahner (*Commentary* 211): “The text does not, of course, take up the difficult question, which can be of practical consequence at times, of how this specially qualified unanimity is to be ascertained by the faithful who are bound to believe.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 126)
      2. “It would not seem to be enough to say that Roman Catholic bishops do not contradict the official teaching of the pope, and that therefore it can be presumed that they are all teaching whatever the pope has taught (e.g. in his encyclicals). For it is possible that some ordinary papal teaching, while not openly contradicted, might be given a rather passive reception or might even be qualified by a significant number of bishops.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 125)
      3. “Hence, to be able to say that the whole episcopal college concurs in a single viewpoint in its authoritative teaching, it is necessary to show that the bishops have come to agreement through exercising their function as ‘judges of faith and morals’ [*Lumen gentium* § 25b].” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 125)
   2. There is also an “important distinction between what are merely commonly held opinions in the Church, and beliefs to which the Church is irrevocably committed. It is only with regard to the latter that there are solid grounds for maintaining that the Church is infallible.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 127)
      1. Karl Rahner (“Magisterium.” *Sacramentum Mundi*: *An Encyclopedia of Theology*. Ed. Karl Rahner. 6 vols. New York: Herder and Herder, 1968‑70. 3: 356): “It has often been assumed in the past, with practical effects, that a doctrine is irreformable in the Church simply because it has been generally taught without clearly notable contradiction over a considerable period of time. This view runs counter to the facts, because many doctrines which were once universally held have proved to be problematic or erroneous, and is fundamentally unsound.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 126)

### Moral Unanimity

1. “**moral unanimity**”
   1. “Unanimity” is from *unus*, “one,” and *animus*, “mind.”
   2. “Moral” usually refers to principles of right and wrong behavior. Here it perhaps means (*Merriam*-*Webster*’*s Collegiate Dictionary* 2000):
      1. “probable though not proved: virtual ([as in the phrase] a moral certainty)” or
      2. “having the effects of such on the mind, confidence, or will (a moral victory) (moral support)”
2. **conciliar unanimity in history**
   1. “In none of the great councils [86] of the first millennium had all the bishops actually taken part. The reception of the council’s decrees by the bishops who had not been present at it, was still being seen as an integral element of the ecumenicity of the council itself.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 86-87)
   2. “Of course it was realised that absolute unanimity could not be required, because so often the bishops whose doctrines had been condemned by a council refused to accept its decision. No doubt it was this fact that led to such emphasis being put on the consent of Rome and the other great patriarchal sees.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 87)
3. **statements on** “**moral unanimity**”
   1. John Henry Newman (*Letter* 303-04)
      1. “We all know that ever since the opening of the Council [i.e., Vatican I], there has been a strenuous opposition to the definition of the doctrine; and that, at the time when it was actually passed [by the pope and c. 500 bishops], more than eighty Fathers absented themselves from the Council, and would have nothing to do with its act. But, if the fact be so, that the Fathers were not unanimous, is the definition valid? This depends on the question whether unanimity, at least moral, is or is not necessary for its validity? As at present advised I think it is; certainly Pius IV. lays great stress on the unanimity of the Fathers in the Council of Trent. . . .
      2. “Far different has been the case now,—though the Council is not yet finished. But, if I must now at once decide what to think of it, I should consider that all turned on what the dissentient Bishops now do.
      3. “If they separate and go home without acting as a body, if they act only individually, or as individuals, and each in his own way, then I should not recognize in their opposition to the majority that force, firmness, and unity of view, which creates a real case of want of moral unanimity in the Council.
      4. “Again, if the Council continues to sit, if the dissentient [302] Bishops more or less take part in it, and concur in its acts; if there is a new Pope, and he continues the policy of the present; and if the Council terminates without any reversal or modification of the definition, or any effective movement against it on the part of the dissentients, then again there will be good reason for saying that the want of a moral unanimity has not been made out.
      5. “And further, if the definition is consistently received by the whole body of the faithful, as valid, or as the expression of a truth, then too it will claim our assent . . .”
   2. Karl Rahner
      1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25): “the individual bishops [can] proclaim Christ’s doctrine infallibly . . . when they are dispersed around the world, provided that, while maintaining the bond of unity among themselves and with Peter’s successor, and while teaching authentically [authoritatively] on a matter of faith or morals, they concur in a single viewpoint as the one which must be held conclusively [*tamguam definitive tenendam*, “as definitively to be held”].” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 119)
      2. Rahner, commenting on “which must be held conclusively” (“Magisterium.” *Sacramentum Mundi*: *An Encyclopedia of Theology*. Ed. Karl Rahner. 6 vols. New York: Herder and Herder, 1968‑70. 3: 356): “When a dogma is to be taught by the ordinary magisterium of the whole episcopate, . . . it is not enough that a doctrine be propounded with moral unanimity by the whole episcopate. It is further required that the doctrine be explicitly propounded ‘tamquam definitive tenendam’ (LG 25). Hence mere *de facto* universality of Church doctrine related to the faith is not enough.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 126)
      3. Karl Rahner (“Magisterium”): “The text does not, of course, take up the difficult question, which can be of practical consequence at times, of how this specially qualified unanimity is to be ascertained by the faithful who are bound to believe.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 126)
   3. Francis Sullivan
      1. “. . . one cannot lay down the morally unanimous consent of the episcopate as a condition absolutely to be fulfilled prior to a papal definition, because ascertaining the fact of such prior consensus would not in every instance be the only way of consulting the faith of the Church, and secondly, because this would eliminate the possibility of a decisive act of the papal magisterium that might be needed to overcome a threat to the Church’s unity in the faith, and bring about a consensus, or restore one that had been lost.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 105)
      2. “If infallible magisterium required the unanimity of all validly ordained bishops, the Church would have lacked such a magisterium since 1054.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 124)

### Unanimous Consent of the Fathers

Ray, Steve. “Unanimous Consent of the Fathers.” *Catholic Dictionary of Apologetics and Evangelism*. San Francisco: Ignatius, forthcoming. *Catholic Convert*. N.d. Web. 12 Dec. 2006. <www.catholic-convert.com/documents/UnanimousConsent.­doc>

The Unanimous Consent of the Fathers (*unanimem consensum Patrum*) refers to the morally unanimous teaching of the Church Fathers on certain doctrines as revealed by God and interpretations of Scripture as received by the universal Church. The individual Fathers are not personally infallible, and a discrepancy by a few patristic witnesses does not harm the collective patristic testimony.

The word “unanimous” comes from two Latin words: *únus*, one + *animus*, mind. “Consent” in Latin means agreement, accord, and harmony; being of the same mind or opinion. Where the Fathers speak in harmony, with one mind overall—not necessarily each and every one agreeing on every detail but by consensus and general agreement—we have “unanimous consent”. The teachings of the Fathers provide us with an authentic witness to the apostolic tradition.

St. Irenaeus (ad c. 130-c. 200) writes of the “tradition derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient, and universally known Church founded and organized at Rome’ [*Against Heresies* 3.3.2] and the “tradition which originates from the apostles [and] which is preserved by means of the successions of presbyters in the Churches” [*Against Heresies* 3.2.2] which “does thus exist in the Church, and is permanent among us” [*Against Heresies* 3.5.1]. Unanimous consent develops from the understanding of apostolic teaching preserved in the Church with the Fathers as its authentic witness.

St. Vincent of Lerins explains the Church’s teaching: “In the Catholic Church itself, all possible care must be taken, that we hold that faith which has been believed everywhere, always, by all. For that is truly and in the strictest sense “Catholic,” which, as the name itself and the reason of the thing declare, comprehends all universally. This rule we shall observe if we follow universality, antiquity, consent. We shall follow universality if we confess that one faith to be true, which the whole Church throughout the world confesses; antiquity, if we in no wise depart from those interpretations which it is manifest were notoriously held by our holy ancestors and fathers; consent, in like manner, if in antiquity itself we adhere to the consentient definitions and determinations of all, or at the least of almost all priests and doctors” (*Commonitory* 2). Notice that St. Vincent mentions “almost all priests and doctors”.

The phrase *Unanimous Consent of the Fathers* had a specific application as used at the Council of Trent (Fourth Session), and reiterated at the First Vatican Council (Dogmatic Decrees of the Vatican Council, chap. 2). The Council Fathers specifically applied the phrase to the interpretation of Scripture. Biblical and theological confusion was rampant in the wake of the Protestant Reformation. Martin Luther stated “There are almost as many sects and beliefs as there are heads; this one will not admit Baptism; that one rejects the Sacrament of the altar; another places another world between the present one and the day of judgment; some teach that Jesus Christ is not God. There is not an individual, however clownish he may be, who does not claim to be inspired by the Holy Ghost, and who does not put forth as prophecies his ravings and dreams.”

A fine definition of Unanimous Consent, based on the Church Counccils, is provided in the Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary, “When the Fathers of the Church are morally unanimous in their teaching that a certain doctrine is a part of revelation, or is received by the universal Church, or that the opposite of a doctrine is heretical, then their united testimony is a certain criterion of divine tradition. As the Fathers are not personally infallible, the counter-testimony of one or two would not be destructive of the value of the collective testimony; so a moral unanimity only is required” (Wilkes-Barre, Penn.: Dimension Books, 1965), pg. 153.

The Council Fathers at Trent (1554-63) affirmed the ancient custom that the proper understanding of Scripture was that which was held by the Fathers of the Church to bring order out of the enveloping chaos. Opposition to the Church’s teaching is exemplified by William Webster (The Church of Rome at the Bar of History [Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1995]) who misrepresents the Council Fathers by redefining and misapplying “unanimous consent”. First in redefining, he implies that unanimous consent means each Father must have held the same fully developed traditions and taught them clearly in the same terms as used later in the Church Councils. This is a false understanding of the phrase and even in American law unanimous consent “does not always mean that every one present voted for the proposition, but it may, and generally does, mean, when a [verbal] vote is taken, that no one voted in the negative” (Black’s Law Dictionary). Second he misapplies the term, not to the interpretation of Scripture, as the Council Fathers intended, but to tradition. His assertions are not true, but using a skewed definition and application of “unanimous consent”, he uses selective patristic passages as proof-texts for his analysis of the Fathers.

As an example, individual Fathers may explain “the Rock” in Matthew 16 as Jesus, Peter, Peter’s confession or Peter’s faith. Even the Catechism of the Catholic Church refers to the “Rock” of Matthew 16 as Peter in one place (CCC 552) and his faith (CCC 424) in another. Matthew 16 can be applied in many ways to refute false teachings and to instruct the faithful without emphasizing the literal, historical interpretation of Peter as the Rock upon which the Church has been built his Church. Webster and others emphasize various patristic applications of a biblical passage as “proof” of non-unanimous consent.

Discussing certain variations in the interpretations of the Fathers, Pope Leo XIII (The Study of Holy Scripture, from the encyclical Providentissimus Deus, Nov., 1893) writes, “Because the defense of Holy Scripture must be carried on vigorously, all the opinions which the individual Fathers or the recent interpreters have set forth in explaining it need not be maintained equally. For they, in interpreting passages where physical matters are concerned have made judgments according to the opinions of the age, and thus not always according to truth, so that they have made statements which today are not approved. Therefore, we must carefully discern what they hand down which really pertains to faith or is intimately connected with it, and what they hand down with unanimous consent; for ‘in those matters which are not under the obligation of faith, the saints were free to have different opinions, just as we are,’ according to the opinion of St. Thomas.”

Referred works:

St. Irenaeus’ quotation: Ante-Nicene Fathers. Roberts and Donaldson, Eerdmans, 1985, vol. 1, p. 415, 417).

St. Vincent’s quotation: Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd series, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, Eerdmans, 1980, vol. 11, p. 132.

Luther quotation: (Leslie Rumble, Bible Quizzes to a Street Preacher [Rockford IL: TAN, 1976], 22).

Maryknoll quotation: (Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary, pg. 154).

William Webster’s quotation: (The Church of Rome at the Bar of History, 31).

Black’s Law Dictionary: Black’s Law Dictionary, Henry Campbell Black, St. Paul, MN: West Publ. Co., 1979, p. 1366.

Pope Leo XIII quotation: Henry Denzinger, The Sources of Catholic Dogma [London: B. Herder Book Co., 1954], 491-492).

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Congar, Yves, OP. “Unanimous Consent of the Fathers.” *Tradition and Traditions*. London: Burns and Oates; New York: Macmillan, 1966. Rpt. Basilica Press.

“The unanimous consensus of the Fathers or of the Ecclesia clearly indicates a “locus” of the divine action” taken from Traditions and Tradition: An Historical and a Theological Essay (New York: Macmillan Company, 1966), pgs. 397-400. A new edition has just been published by Basilica Press. “In every age the consensus of the faithful, still more the agreement of those who are commissioned to teach them, has been regarded as a guarantee of truth: not because of some mystique of universal suffrage, but because of the Gospel principle that unanimity and fellowship in Christian matters requires, and also indicates, the intervention of the Holy Spirit. From the time when the patristic argument first began to be used in dogmatic controversies-it first appeared in the second century and gained general currency in the fourth-, theologians have tried to establish agreement among qualified witnesses of the faith, and have tried to prove from this agreement that such was in fact the Church’s belief. As a matter of fact, a few testimonies sufficed, even that of one single man if his particular situation or the consideration accorded him by the Church were such as to give to what he said the value of coming from a quasi-personification of the whole Church at that time. The decisive factor was not mere quantity but the representative quality of the testimony: “Non numerentur, sedponderentur!” “Unanimous patristic consent as a reliable locus theologicus is classical in Catholic theology; it has often been declared such by the magisterium and its value in scriptural interpretation has been especially stressed. “Application of the principle is difficult, at least at a certain level. [It is here where Bill is no surgeon. Rather than understanding the concept in its complexities, he swings the axe and slashes through the whole concept with the precision of wood chopper, not a surgeon or theologian.] In regard to individual texts of Scripture total patristic consensus is rare. In fact, a complete consensus is unnecessary: quite often, that which is appealed to as sufficient for dogmatic points does not go beyond what is encountered in the interpretation of many texts. But it does sometimes happen that some Fathers understood a passage in a way which does not agree with later Church teaching. One example: the interpretation of Peter’s confession in Matthew 16.16-18. Except at Rome, this passage was not applied by the Fathers to the papal primacy; they worked out an exegesis at the level of their own ecclesiological thought, more anthropological and spiritual than juridical. “This instance, selected from a number of similar ones, shows first that the Fathers cannot be isolated from the Church and its life. They are great, but the Church surpasses them in age, as also by the breadth and richness of its experience. It is the Church, not the Fathers, the consensus of the Church in submission to its Saviour which is the sufficient rule of our Christianity. This instance shows too that we may not, at the doctrinal as distinct from the purely historical level, take the witnesses of Tradition in a purely material sense: they are to be weighed and valued. The plain material fact of agreement or disagreement, however extensive, does not allow us to speak of a consensus Patrum at the properly dogmatic level, for the authors studied in theology are only “Fathers” in the theological sense if they have in some way begotten the Church which follows them. Now, it may be that the seed which will be most fruitful in the future is not the most clearly so at present, and that the lifelines of faith may not pass through the great doctors in a given instance. Historical documentation is at the factual level; it must leave room for a judgement made not in the light of the documentary evidence alone, but of the Church’s faith. We shall come back, in the next chapter, to this problem which we have already, in fact, encountered: that is, the question of the precise distinction to be made between material (historical) and formal (dogmatic) Tradition. “It can, however, be seen that as regards the explanation of a particular text, or a particular article of doctrine, the theological weight of the consensus Patrum is subject to so many conditions’ that it cannot be easily assessed. Students and devotees of the Fathers-among whom I should wish to number myself-might well feel disappointed if they had no other guidance. But, for a start, there are the foundations of faith, the articles on which the whole structure rests; there are the directions, meanings and spiritual climate in which the content and implications of our covenant relation, as attested in Scripture, have been lived, developed, specified and defended. As far as the reading of Scripture is concerned, there has been built up in that way something more valuable than an interpretative exegetical consensus on some individual verse, I mean the total framework, inside which and starting from which all Catholic reading of written revelation has been formed and educated. This is the most important element, the essential contribution of the Fathers to the formation of an exegetical Tradition. “When we see the Fathers in this way, as those who have formed the milieu of the Church’s historical growth (see the next chapter), we find that they are unanimous, we are at the heart of their real consensus. We have seen that Tradition is for a Christian almost what the educational milieu is for man in general; the child needs to form its own conclusions in a milieu which provides him with security; it is fundamentally the role of the consensus of the Fathers to provide such an element in the Church.”

### Verification of Infallibility

1. **verification of the conditions**
   1. “. . . how can we know, in a particular case, that all these conditions [required for an infallible definition] have been fulfilled?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 106)
   2. *Code of Canon Law* (1983, canon 749 § 3): “No doctrine is understood to have been dogmatically defined unless this is manifestly the case” . . .” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 106)
   3. Avery Dulles (*A Church to Believe In*. New York: 1982. 142): “For some the very essence of infallibility consists in the *a priori* assurance that if certain easily verifiable conditions are fulfilled, the definition may be regarded as unquestionably true.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 107)
      1. “I agree with his judgment that this is an oversimplification.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 107)
      2. “. . . the attitude he describes is mistaken on two points . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 107)
         1. It assumes “that the conditions for an infallible definition are always easily verifiable . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 107)
         2. It assumes “that we can always have an *a priori* assurance that they are fulfilled.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 106-07)
   4. “. . . conditions required for infallible definitions have [not] been easily verifiable, and they certainly were not always so *a priori*.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 108)
   5. One condition for an infallible conciliar definition is that the council has to be ecumenical. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 107)
      1. “. . . historically the recognition of certain councils as ecumenical, and the non-recognition of others, has been *a posteriori*: i.e. on the basis of their reception by the whole Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 107)
   6. Another condition: bishops or pope act without coercion. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 107)
      1. “This might not always be easily verifiable.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 107)
   7. Another condition: council or pope has to “clearly intend . . . a definitive judgment . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 107)
      1. Fransen, Piet. “The Authority of the Councils.” *Problems of Authority*. Ed. J.M.Todd. Baltimore and London: 1962. 43-78.
      2. “. . . one of the most difficult tasks which positive dogmatic theology has to perform is to determine precisely which statements of ecumenical councils have fulfilled all the conditions required to constitute such definitions of dogmas of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 107)
      3. Piet Fransen’s study of “‘faith’, ‘dogma’, ‘heresy’, ‘*anathema sit*’ etc., in the Tridentine decrees, [shows that] such terms at Trent [are not] certain proof of the intention to define something as a dogma of faith in the modern sense of that term.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 107)
      4. “Fransen rightly insists that it calls for careful historical research to identify dogmatic definitions in the *acta* of past councils.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 107)
   8. “What about the future exercise of conciliar and papal magisterium? Can we say that at least from now on, the presence of all the conditions required for an infallible definition will always be easily verifiable, so that we can have an *a priori* assurance that the defined proposition will be true?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 108)
   9. “It is likely enough that the intention to define will be more easily verifiable in future statements of the magisterium than it has been in many statements of the past.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 108)
   10. “But the crucial question here is: will the intention to define, explicitly stated by a council or a pope, provide *of itself* the evidence that all the conditions required for an infallible definition are fulfilled? [I.e.,] when the pope says: ‘I define . . .’, does he implicitly define, with the same infallibility, that all the conditions required for a dogmatic definition are fulfilled? For example, does he thereby define the fact that he is of sound mind, free of coercion, and that the question falls within the proper sphere of infallible magisterium? Does the fact that the pope has used an *ex cathedra* formula in making a particular statement, absolutely rule out any question as to whether all the conditions objectively required for an *ex cathedra* definition of faith were actually fulfilled in that act?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 108)
       1. Many theologians say no. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 108)
          1. Bacht, H. “Von Lehramt der Kirche und in der Kirche.” *Catholica* 25 (1971): 166-67.
          2. Chirico, Peter. “Infallibility: Rapprochement between Küng and the Official Church?” *Theological Studies* 42 (1981): 531-34.
          3. Congar, Yves. “Après *Infaillible?* de Hans Küng, bilans et discussions.” *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 58 (1974): 245.
          4. Dulles, Avery. *A Church to Believe In*. New York: 1982. 142.
          5. Fries, H. “Das missverständliche Wort.” *Zum Problem Unfehlbarkeit*. Ed. Karl Rahner. Freiburg, Basel, and Vienna: 1971. 216-32.
          6. Kasper, Walter. “Zur Diskussion um das Problem der Unfehlbarkeit.” *Stimmen der Zeit* 188 (1972): 368
          7. Ratzinger, Joseph. *Das Neue Volk Gottes*. Düsseldorf: 1969. 144.
          8. Tavard, G.H. “Infallibility: A Structural Analysis.” *Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church*. 183-84.
       2. “. . . when a pope clearly expresses his intention to define a question, there is a good *presumption* that all the conditions objectively required for an *ex cathedra* statement are present. But . . . one cannot rule out the possibility that this presumption might have to yield to contrary evidence.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 108)
   11. “What would constitute evidence that some necessary condition for an *ex cathedra* definition had been lacking” would be lack of reception by the Church. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 108)
       1. “. . . eventual (‘in the end’) non-reception of a conciliar or papal statement is evidence that an infallible definition has not actually taken place . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 109)
       2. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25c): “To these [i.e., infallible] definitions the assent of the Church can never be wanting . . .” (Vatican II)
       3. Bishop B.C. Butler (“Authority in the Church.” *Tablet* 231 (1977): 479): “It follows, of course, though Vatican II does not say so, that if a definition failed in the end to enjoy such a “reception” on the part of the Church, this would prove that the definition [108] had not in fact met the stringent requirements for an *ex cathedra* pronouncement.’” (See also: Butler, B.C. “The Limits of Infallibility.” *Tablet* 225 (1971): 400.) (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 108-09)

### Primary and Secondary Objects of Infallibility

1. **introduction**
   1. “. . . there are two ways in which something can pertain to this object of pastoral magisterium: either directly, as formally contained in the Gospel message; or indirectly, as something in itself not revealed, but necessary for the defence and explanation of Gospel truth.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 129)
2. **Vatican I**
   1. “One of the problems which that council had to face in preparing the definition of papal infallibility was how to define the object about which the pope could speak infallibly. It was commonly admitted that this was not limited to revealed truth, and that there was a secondary object. . . . The solution adopted was simply to say that the object of papal infallibility was the same as that of the infallibility of the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 133)
   2. Vatican I (dogmatic constitution *On the Church of Christ* [*Pastor aeternus*, 18 July 1870] ch. 4, D 1839, DS 3074): a pope defines with “that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer wished his Church to be endowed in defining doctrine of faith and morals . . .” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 78)
3. **Vatican II**
   1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25c): “This infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed His Church to be endowed in defining a doctrine of faith and morals extends as far as extends the deposit of divine revelation, which must be religiously guarded and faithfully expounded.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 127)
   2. “In this sentence we find first a generic description of the object of infallibility as ‘doctrine of faith and morals’; this is then distinguished into a *primary object*: ‘the deposit of revelation’, and a *secondary object* . . . intended by the clause: ‘which must be religiously guarded and faithfully expounded’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 127)
   3. “. . . this is not immediately obvious, and some commentators have been misled into taking this text to mean that infallibility is strictly limited to what is in the deposit of revelation: in other words, that Vatican II intends to say that the magisterium can speak infallibly only about what is formally revealed.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 131)
      1. Oeing-Hanhoff, L. “Ist das kirchliche Lehramt für den Bereich des Sittlichen zuständig?’ *Theologische Quartalschrift* 161 (1981): 56-66.
      2. Gutwenger, E. “The Role of the Magisterium.” *Concilium* 1.6 (1970): 51.
      3. Pendergast, Richard S. “Some Neglected Factors of the Birth Control Question.” *Sciences Eccl*. 18 (1966): 218-19.
   4. But the Theological Commission three times makes clear that, in the sentence quoted above from *Lumen gentium* § 25c, it is referring to the secondary object of revelation.
      1. Here is “the official explanation of this text given to the Council Fathers . . .” Theological Commission (*Acta Synodalia Conc*. *Vat*. *II* III/1: 251): “The object of the infallibility of the Church thus explained, has the same extension as the revealed deposit; hence it extends to all those things, and only to those, which either directly pertain to the revealed deposit itself, or are required in order that the same deposit may be religiously safeguarded and faithfully expounded . . .” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 132)
      2. “The previous draft had said that the bishops could speak infallibly ‘in revelata fide tradenda’ (in handing on the revealed faith); this was changed to: ‘res fidei et morum docentes’ (in teaching matters of faith and morals) . . . That the Theological Commission had in mind the distinction between a primary and a secondary object of infallibility is confirmed by their explanation of [this] emendation . . .: ‘. . . lest the infallibility of the episcopal body seem to be restricted to that only which is proposed to be believed as divinely revealed . . .’. [*Acta Synodalia Conc*. *Vat*. *II* III/1: 251] Clearly, the intention of this emendation was to avoid using an expression which might have seemed to exclude the secondary object of infallibility.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 132)
      3. “A third indication of the intention of the Theological Commission lies in the reply given to the complaint of four Council Fathers that nothing was said in the text about the infallibility of the Church with regard to things connected with [as opposed to being part of] the deposit of revelation. The Commission replied that this had been equivalently mentioned in the lines of the text which contained the clause: ‘which must be religiously guarded and faithfully expounded’.” (*Acta Synodalia Conc*. *Vat*. *II* III/8: 89) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 132)
4. ***Mysterium Ecclesiae*** (24 June 1973)
   1. Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (declaration *In Defense of the Catholic Doctrine of the Church against Certain Errors of the Day* [*Mysterium Ecclesiae*, 24 June 1973] ch. 3): “According to Catholic doctrine, the infallibility of the magisterium of the Church extends not only to the deposit of faith, but also to those things, without which this deposit cannot be properly safeguarded and explained. However, the extension of this infallibility to the deposit of faith itself, is a truth which the Church has, from the beginning, held for certain to be revealed in the promises made by Christ.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 134)
   2. “. . . while the infallibility of the magisterium with regard to its primary object is described as revealed truth, infallibility with regard to the secondary object is merely said to be ‘according to Catholic doctrine’. This term is used of doctrines which are commonly held by Catholic theologians to be certain, but are not necessarily revealed truths, and are not dogmas of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 134)
   3. “. . . that there is a secondary object of infallibility is held by most Catholic theologians to be certain . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 134)
5. **condemnations**
   1. “When the Magisterium condemns theological assertions, it does not claim to be a philosophical magisterium . . . nor a censor of human thought. It safeguards the faith which runs the risk of being belittled because of misunderstanding.” (Liégé “Believer” 279)
   2. Vatican I (session 3, ch. 4, D 1798): “The Church, which, together with the apostolic office of teaching, has received a charge to guard the deposit of faith, derives from God the right [279] and the duty of proscribing false science, lest any should be deceived by philosophy and vain deceit. Therefore, all faithful Christians are not only forbidden to defend as legitimate conclusions of science such opinions as are known to be contrary to the doctrines of faith, especially if they have been condemned by the Church, but are altogether bound to account them as errors which put on the fallacious appearance of truth.” (Trans.: *Dogmatic Canons and Decrees*. New York: Devin-Adair, 1912. 230-31.) (Liégé “Believer” 279-80)
   3. A condemnation may condemn a proposition that contradicts the primary object.
      1. “. . . a definitive judgment can also be expressed negatively, by the solemn condemnation of an opinion as heretical. When it is clear that the term ‘heresy’ is intended to mean that the condemned opinion is in contradiction to a truth of faith, the contradictory of the heresy is thereby defined as a dogma of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
   4. Or a condemnation may condemn a proposition that contradicts the secondary object.
      1. Vatican I (constitution *On the Catholic Faith*, DS 3018): “The Church, which along with its apostolic teaching office received the mandate to safeguard the deposit of faith, has the divinely conferred right and duty of condemning what is falsely called knowledge [1 Tim 6:20, “Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the profane chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge”], lest anyone be led astray by empty deceit [Col 2:8, “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit”]. Therefore all the Christian faithful are not only forbidden to defend as legitimate conclusions of science, such opinions as are recognized to be contrary to the doctrine of the faith, especially if they have been condemned by the Church, but they are moreover strictly obliged to hold them as errors which put on the false appearance of truth.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 135)
      2. “. . . Vatican I does not explicitly claim that the Church speaks infallibly when it condemns such propositions . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 135)
      3. But “one could defend its capacity to do so, on the grounds that this might be strictly necessary for the defence of revealed truth.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 135)
      4. “This would clearly be the case if the propositions in question were such as would exclude the very possibility of a reasonable act of faith—such, for instance, as that empirical verification is the only reasonable basis for certitude.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 135)
      5. Sullivan refers to condemned secondary-object propositions as “propositions contrary to revealed truth.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 135, emphasis deleted)

### Primary Object of Infallible Magisterium

1. **introduction**
   1. “. . . whatever has been revealed for the sake of our salvation, whether explicitly or implicitly, whether written or handed on, is the primary object of the teaching of the magisterium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 131)
   2. “Nothing is of faith except what the Church recognizes as contained in the revealed Word. . . . It may happen that theological reflection may throw light upon the fact that a minor aspect of the mystery is contained in a major one, but this minor aspect will be proposed as being of faith only in its capacity as revealed and not because of the theological connection involved.” (Liégé “Believer” 277)
2. “**deposit of faith**”
   1. “Matters of Christian belief and practice which are formally revealed constitute what is called the ‘deposit of faith’; this is the *primary* object of the magisterium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 129)
   2. Vatican II (dogmatic constitution *On Divine Revelation* [*Dei Verbum*, 1965] § 10): “Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred *deposit* of the word of God, which is committed to the Church.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 129, emphasis added)
3. “**doctrine of faith or morals**” (*res fidei et morum*)
   1. “. . . the object of solemn definition as dogma has to be a ‘doctrine of faith or morals’ which is in itself formally contained in the ‘deposit of revelation’.” (Vatican I, *Pastor aeternus* ch. 4) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
   2. Trent (1545-63)
      1. Bevenot, Maurice, SJ. ““Faith and Morals” in the Council of Trent and Vatican I.” *Heythrop Journal* 3 (1962) 15-30.
      2. Trent (*Decree on the Canonical Scriptures* [*Decretum de cononicis scripturis*, 8 Apr. 1546], D 783, DS 1501): the gospel is “the source of all saving truth and teaching about practices” (*fontem omnis et salutaris veritatis et morum disciplinae*, Hahn translation).
         1. “This clearly . . . indicates that while some matters of faith are simply to be believed, others are to be both believed and put into practice.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
         2. This description of the gospel is “A primary source for the distinction between matters of ‘faith’ and matters of ‘practice’ . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
         3. Here “gospel” means “the whole Christian revelation . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
         4. The gospel is “the source of all saving truth . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
         5. The gospel is also “the source . . . of the practically untranslatable *disciplina morum* . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
            1. The phrase does not mean “moral discipline.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
            2. “In the language of Trent, *disciplina* means instruction or teaching . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
            3. In the language of Trent, *mores* “includes everything that the Gospel reveals about the Christian way of life: how to live, how to pray, how to worship God . . .” The best English translation is “practices.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
         6. So *veritatis et morum* should be translated “faith and practice.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
      3. Trent (*Decree on the Canonical Scriptures*, DS 1507): the Church judges the interpretation of scripture “in matters of faith and practice which pertain to the upbuilding of Christian doctrine” (*in rebus fidei et morum ad aedificationem doctrinae christianae pertinentium*). (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
         1. “This clearly presumes that not everything found in the Bible falls into this category.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
   3. Vatican I (1869-70)
      1. Vatican I (dogmatic constitution *On the Church of Christ* [*Pastor aeternus*], 18 July 1870, ch. 4 ¶ 9, DS 3074): when a pope “defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole Church, he possesses . . . that infallibility which the divine Redeemer willed his Church to enjoy in defining doctrine concerning faith or morals.” (Tanner)
      2. This applies to papal infallibility; but since the objects of conciliar and papal infallibility are the same, it applies to conciliar infallibility also.
   4. Pius XII (1939-58)
      1. Pius XII (encyclical *Inspired by the Holy Spirit* [*Divino afflante Spiritu*, 1943] § 1): “This heaven-sent treasure [the Bible] Holy Church considers as the most precious source of doctrine on faith and morals.” (*Vatican*.*va*)
      2. Pius XII (*Inspired by the Holy Spirit* § 47, DS 3831): “in the rules and laws promulgated by the Church there is question of doctrine regarding faith and morals; and . . . there are but few texts whose sense has been defined by the authority of the Church, nor are those more numerous about which the teaching of the Holy Fathers is unanimous. There remain therefore many things, and of the greatest importance, in the discussion and exposition of which the skill and genius of Catholic commentators may and ought to be freely exercised . . .” (*Vatican*.*va*)
         1. Here Pius XII “speaks of the broad areas of Scripture in which Catholic exegetes enjoy complete freedom of research, in view of the fact that ‘the norms given by the Church have to do only with matters of faith and morals’.” (DS 3831) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
         2. Not everything in scripture is “a matter of Christian faith or practice.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 128)
   5. Vatican II (1962-65)
      1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 12): “The entire body of the faithful, anointed as they are by the Holy One [1 John 2:20, 27], cannot err in matters of belief. They manifest this special property by means of the whole peoples’ supernatural discernment in matters of faith when “from the Bishops down to the last of the lay faithful” [Augustine, *On the Predestination of the Saints* [*De praedestinatione sanctorum*, 428/29] 14.27] they show universal agreement in matters of faith and morals. That discernment in matters of faith is aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth.” (Vatican II)
      2. “This generic description [“faith and morals”] of the object of pastoral teaching authority is used no less than five times in *Lumen gentium* 25 . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 127)
         1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25a): “In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ . . .” (Vatican II)
         2. Vatican II (on universal ordinary magisterium, *Lumen gentium* § 25b): “Although the individual bishops do not enjoy the prerogative of infallibility, they nevertheless proclaim Christ’s doctrine infallibly whenever, . . . authentically teaching matters of faith and morals, they are in agreement on one position as definitively to be held. This is even more clearly verified when, gathered together in an ecumenical council, they are teachers and judges of faith and morals for the universal Church . . .” (Vatican II)
         3. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25c): “this infallibility with which the Divine Redeemer willed His Church to be endowed in defining doctrine of faith and morals, extends as far as the deposit of Revelation extends, which must be religiously guarded and faithfully expounded. And this is the infallibility which the Roman Pontiff, the head of the college of bishops, enjoys . . . [when] by a definitive act he proclaims a doctrine of faith or morals.” (Vatican II)
      3. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25) “also gives us an illuminating paraphrase of it, when it [127] says that the role of bishops is to ‘preach to the people committed to them the faith they must believe and put into practice’. This clearly . . . indicates that while some matters of faith are simply to be believed, others are to be both believed and put into practice.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 127-28)
   6. “The important conclusion to be drawn from the consistent description of the proper object of pastoral magisterium as *res fidei et morum*, is that the bishops and the pope cannot claim to speak authoritatively, much less infallibly, unless the matter about which they speak pertains to Christian belief or to the practice of the Christian way of life. In some real way, the *doctrina de fide vel moribus* [“doctrine of faith and morals” (Vatican I, *Pastor aeternus* ch. 4)] has to go back to the Gospel as its source.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 129)
4. **biblical truths** “**for the sake of our salvation**”
   1. Vatican I (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith* [*Dei Filius*] 1870, ch. 2 § 7): the books of scripture “contain revelation without error . . .” (*Vatican*.*va*)
   2. Vatican II (dogmatic constitution *On Divine Revelation* [*Dei Verbum*, 1965] § 11): “the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching solidly, faithfully and without error that truth which God wanted put into sacred writings for the sake of salvation.” (Vatican II)
   3. “. . . the *primary* object of the magisterium . . . embraces everything that God has revealed to us ‘for the sake of our salvation’ (DV 11).” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 129)
   4. Hence, “only a truth that has been revealed to us by God ‘for the sake of our salvation’ can be defined as a dogma of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)

### Secondary Object of Infallible Magisterium

1. **introduction**
   1. “. . . things which are not in themselves formally revealed, but still pertain to the Christian faith and practice insofar as they are required for the defence and explanation of the Gospel, constitute the *secondary* object of the magisterium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 129)
   2. The “secondary object of infallible magisterium” is non-revealed propositions which the magisterium can define infallibly. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 79)
   3. The secondary object of infallibility was sometimes called “Catholic truths.”
      1. The magisterium’s “primary object [is] immediately revealed truths and facts. The infallible doctrinal power of the Church extends, however, secondarily to all those truths and facts which are a consequence of the teaching of Revelation or a presupposition of it . . . [Truths] intrinsically connected with the truths of Revelation so that their denial would un­der­mine the revealed truths are called *Catholic Truths* [or] Ecclesiastical Teachings . . . to distinguish them from the *Divine Truths* . . .” (Ott 8)
2. **infallibility and the secondary object**
   1. Vatican II asserted the magisterium’s ability to define infallibly a proposition of the secondary object.
      1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25c): “This infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed His Church to be endowed in defining a doctrine of faith and morals extends as far as extends the deposit of divine revelation, which must be religiously guarded and faithfully expounded.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 127)
      2. The “*secondary object* [is] intended by the clause: ‘which must be religiously guarded and faithfully expounded’.” (For discussion, see above, “Primary and Secondary Objects of Infallibility.”) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 127)
   2. But Vatican II did not define the magisterium’s ability. “The Church has never defined the infallibility of the [79] magisterium with regard to non-revealed truths . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 79-80)
3. **limits of the secondary object**
   1. The Church has also never defined “what kind of matter would be included in such a secondary object . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 79)
   2. Vatican I
      1. Vatican I did not determine “the limits of such a secondary object of infallibility.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 80)
      2. “One of the problems which [Vatican I] had to face in preparing the definition of papal infallibility was how to define the object about which the pope could speak infallibly. It was commonly admitted that this was not limited to revealed truth, and that there was a secondary object. The question was, how to define this secondary object.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 133)
         1. “Some wished to use the term: ‘things connected with the deposit of revelation’, but others feared that this was too vague and could be used to justify a claim of infallibility for statements that the pope might make on practically any issue.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 133)
         2. “The commission which drew up the draft of the Constitution on the Church at Vatican I chose a much more restrictive term to describe the secondary object: ‘veritates quae necessario requiruntur, ut revelationis depositum integrum custodiatur’ (truths which are necessarily required, in order that the deposit of revelation may be preserved intact). [*Schema Primum de Ecclesia* canon 9; Mansi 51: 552] As is well known, conciliar discussion on this Constitution had to be left unfinished . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 133)
      3. “. . . when the Council came to define papal infallibility, it was decided not to try at that time to settle the question how to describe the secondary object. The solution adopted was simply to say that the object of papal infallibility was the same as that of the infallibility of the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 133)
         1. “As Bishop Gasser, spokesman for the *Deputatio de Fide* has explained the matter, since it is a dogma of faith that the Church is infallible concerning the primary object, it will also be a dogma of faith that the pope is infallible when he defines something that is contained in the primary object. On the other hand, it is not a dogma of faith, but is ‘theologically certain’, that the Church is infallible about the secondary object; hence it will also be theologically certain that the pope is infallible when he defines something in this secondary object.” (Mansi 52: 1226-27) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 133)
         2. “It should be noted that in this official explanation of the terms of the definition, Gasser described the secondary object of infallibility as truths which are not merely ‘connected with revelation’, but are *required* for the defence and explanation of the deposit of revelation: ‘quatenus sine his depositum fidei custodiri et exponi non posset’.” (Mansi 52: 1226) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 226 n. 21)
      4. “The exact determination of the limits of this secondary object was left to the Constitution on the Church, which of course was never completed.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 133)
   3. Vatican II
      1. Vatican II did not determine “the limits of this secondary object . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 133)
   4. *Mysterium Ecclesiae* (24 June 1973)
      1. “Since the close of Vatican II there has been one official statement on this issue . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 133)
      2. Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (declaration *In Defense of the Catholic Doctrine of the Church against Certain Errors of the Day* [*Mysterium Ecclesiae*, 24 June 1973] ch. 3): “According to Catholic doctrine, the infallibility of the magisterium of the Church extends not only to the deposit of faith, but also to those things, without which this deposit cannot be properly safeguarded and explained.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 134)
      3. For “the secondary object of infallibility, it does not use the broad term ‘connected with revelation,’ but the more restrictive ‘things without which the deposit cannot be properly safeguarded and explained’. This is equivalent to the ‘necessario requiruntur’ of the schema of Vatican I.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 134)
   5. There remains no “unanimity with regard to what is contained in this object.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 134)
      1. “. . . many manuals of ecclesiology prior to Vatican II reflected the broad description of the secondary object as ‘truths connected with revelation’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 134)
      2. “The current trend would be to limit this object to what is strictly required in order that the magisterium might be able to defend and explain the Gospel. Such a limitation is certainly supported by the official documents we have cited.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 134)
4. **examples**
   1. Here are “examples of what the theological manuals have included in the secondary object of infallibility . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 136)
   2. “condemnation of propositions contrary to revealed truth” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 135)
      1. “The Church has the right and the duty [of] proscribing philosophic teachings which directly or indirectly endanger dogma [Vatican I, D 1798].” (Ott 9)
      2. See further discussion at the end of “Primary and Secondary Objects of Infallibility.”
   3. truths of reason associated with revealed truth
      1. A truth of reason that is not revealed may be “intrinsically associated with a revealed truth . . .” (Ott 9)
      2. example: “those philosophic truths which are presuppositions of the acts of Faith (knowledge of the supersensual, possibility of proofs of God, the spirituality of the soul, the freedom of will) . . .” (Ott 9)
      3. example: “philosophic concepts, in terms of which dogma is promulgated (person, substance, transubstantiation, etc.).” (Ott 9)
   4. theological conclusions (see separate handout)
   5. dogmatic facts
      1. bibliography
         1. Bacht, H. *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*. Ed. J. Hofer and K. Rahner. 2nd, new ed. Freiburg: Herder, 1957-65. 10 vols. 3:456-457.
         2. Journet, Charles. *The Church of the Word Incarnate*. Trans. A.H.C. Downes. New York: 1955. 1: 341.
         3. Salaverri, I. *Sacrae theologiae summa*. Ed. Fathers of the Society of Jesus, Professors of the Theological Faculties in Spain. Madrid: 1.3: 702. 4 vols.
      2. definition
         1. A dogmatic fact is “A judgment of fact by which the deposit of revealed truth is applied to contingent realities, i.e., to particular persons, objects, and occurrences . . .” (Green, “Dogmatic Fact” 811)
         2. historical facts
            1. “Certain kinds of historical facts which are not revealed are very closely connected with the exercise of the teaching office of the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 136)
            2. Dogmatic facts are “historical facts, which are not revealed, but which are intrinsically connected with revealed truth, for example, the legality of a Pope or of a General Council, or the fact of the Roman episcopate of St. Peter. The fact that a defined text does or does not agree with the doctrine of the Catholic Faith is also, in a narrower sense, a “dogmatic fact.” In deciding the meaning of a text the Church does not pronounce judgment on the subjective intention of the author, but on the objective sense of the text (D 1350 . . .).” (Ott 9)
         3. “Another kind of dogmatic fact is the compatibility or incompatibility of published opinions with revealed truth. This involves the determination of the objective meaning of what has been published, and the orthodox or heterodox character of this meaning. It is possible that in order to defend the faithful against error, the magisterium might have to issue a peremptory decision about some such published opinion. If the infallibility of such a decision were required for the defence of the faith, the issue could be said to fall within the secondary object of infallibility.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 136)
      3. examples (Green 811)
         1. “the reigning pontiff is the authentic successor to St. Peter” (Green 811)
         2. “Vatican II was an ecumenical council” (Green 811)
            1. “. . . the validity of conciliar definitions depends on the ecumenicity of the council. Hence, while the fact that a council was ecumenical is not a revealed truth, it might become necessary for the magisterium to settle the question of its ecumenicity infallibly.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 136)
         3. “the Canon of the Mass is free from doctrinal error” (Green 811)
         4. “the propositions contained in a particular book concerning the faith are in error” (Green 811)
         5. “this version of the Bible faithfully reproduces the sacred writings” (Green 811)
      4. degrees of certitude
         1. noninfallible
            1. “A dogmatic fact is distinguished from a particular fact. The latter is a proposition of a religious truth that does not involve or demand the faith of the whole church: e.g., this host is consecrated; this marriage is valid. In judging such facts the church may be mistaken, since a judgment depends upon fallible elements: e.g., one party to the marriage may have falsified his intention.” (Green 811)
         2. infallible
            1. “The magisterium may define infallibly such propositions, since it falls within its competence infallibly to guard as well as to explain the revealed deposit for the whole church.” (Green 811)
            2. “Those facts that are necessarily connected with the fulfillment of this office may be infallibly declared as true.” (Green 811)
   6. solemn canonization of saints
      1. “It has been commonly taught that the pope cannot err when he solemnly canonises a saint, declaring that person to have practised heroic virtue, to enjoy the vision of God, and to be worthy of veneration and imitation by the faithful.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 136)
      2. “It is not clear to me that infallibility on such a question is necessarily required in order for the magisterium to be able to safeguard and explain the deposit of revelation.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 136)
   7. principles of the natural moral law (see separate handout) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 136)

### Infallibility and Reception by the Church

1. **Prior approbation by the Church is not a condition of infallibility**.
   1. “. . . one can hardly lay down the consent of the whole Christian community as a condition necessarily to be fulfilled before a dogma can be defined.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 225 n. 37)
   2. “When the magisterium expresses the Church’s faith in new terms, the role of the Holy Spirit is to assist the faithful to recognise their traditional faith in the new formulation given it by the dogmatic definition.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 112)
2. **Reception by the Church is not a condition of infallibility**.
   1. “. . . reception means the recognition of one’s traditional faith in the newly defined dogma . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 112)
   2. “. . . to maintain the infallibility of the teaching authority of the Church ‘in defining doctrine’ [Vatican I, *Pastor aeternus* ch. 4 ¶ 9] [i.e., at the moment of defining] . . . one has to hold that when all the conditions required for a dogmatic definition are fulfilled, the defined dogma is infallibly true, *prior to* its reception by the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 106)
   3. It follows that infallibility “cannot depend on conditions that can be fulfilled only after the fact. . . . subsequent reception of a dogma by the Church [cannot be] a condition on which the infallibility of the magisterium” depends. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 106)
   4. “. . . approbation is not needed to *confer* infallibility on a definition . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 225 n. 37)
3. **Reception by the Church confirms that the conditions were fulfilled**.
   1. “Subsequent reception does not confer infallibility on the act of the magisterium, but it provides infallible confirmation of the fact that an infallible definition has taken place.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 111)
   2. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25): “To the resultant definitions the assent of the Church can never be wanting, on account of the activity of the same Holy Spirit, whereby the whole flock of Christ is preserved and progresses in unity of faith.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 109)
   3. “First, hardly any council called to settle a doctrinal dispute has had its decision accepted by all the parties to the dispute. In most instances some portion of the Church has refused to accept the condemnation of its views, and has separated itself from the main body of the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 109)
   4. “Secondly, . . . general reception of the new dogma has sometimes taken a considerable length of time.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 109)
      1. “For instance, it took about fifty years for the Nicene dogma of the consubstantiality of the Word to be generally accepted by those who rejected the Arian heresy.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 109)
   5. “Thirdly, the ‘whole flock of Christ’ which is said to be preserved in unity of faith, has to be understood in a rather limited sense. Historically, it can only mean that portion of the Christian community which, after each crucial doctrinal decision, has actually accepted the definition and stayed in communion with the bishops who made it. When this idea is applied to such councils as Trent and Vatican I, it becomes obvious that here it is the Roman Catholic Church alone that is being described as ‘the whole flock of Christ.’” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 109)
      1. This way of speaking is “not fully consonant with the attitude expressed elsewhere in the documents of Vatican II with regard to the ecclesial status of other Christian communities.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 110)
      2. But if the Catholic Church is not “‘the whole flock of Christ’, can we any longer consider the reception of a dogma by the Catholic Church, sufficient proof that the magisterium has spoken infallibly . . .?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 110)
      3. “. . . a truly ecumenical consensus would be the most satisfying basis for a judgment that all the conditions for infallibility have been fulfilled . . . in the future it is probable that more attention will be paid to the beliefs of other Christians in the preparation of dogmatic definitions . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 110)
      4. But “. . . I do not see how, consistently with the teaching of Vatican II, one could require ecumenicity of reception as a requirement for infallibility.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 110)
         1. “. . . some theologians now do [hold] that ecumenicity of reception should be recognised as a requirement for infallibility of teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 110)
            1. Lindbeck, George. “The Reformation and the Infallibility Debate.” *Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church*. Ed. Paul C. Empie, T.A. Murphy, and J.A. Burgess. Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue 6. Minneapolis: 1978. 111.
            2. McBrien, Richard. *The Infallibility Debate*. Ed. J. Kirvan. Paramus: 1971. 49-51.
            3. McSorley, H. “Some Forgotten Truths about the Petrine Ministry.” *Proceedings of the College Theological Society of America* 29 (1974): 196.
         2. But “hardly any important dogmatic decision taken by the great councils of the first millennium was received by all sectors of the Christian Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 110)
         3. “Secondly, [when Vatican II] says that the Church of Christ ‘subsists in the Catholic Church’, it means to affirm that the inalienable properties of the Church of Christ also ‘subsist’ in the Catholic Church. But among such properties is indefectibility in the true faith. I do not think there can be any doubt about the fact that when Vatican II speaks of the ‘unerring quality’ of ‘universal agreement in matters of faith and morals’ (LG 12), it intends to attribute such infallibility to the universal consensus of the Catholic bishops and faithful on such doctrines as the Immaculate Conception and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 110)
         4. “If one [110] believes that the Holy Spirit maintains the Church of Christ in the true faith, and if one further believes that the Church of Christ ‘subsists in the Catholic Church’, then [reception of a dogma] by the Catholic bishops [and] the Catholic faithful generally, [is] final confirmation of the fact that an infallible definition [has] taken place.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 110-11)
            1. Newman, John Henry. *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*. 1859. Ed. J. Coulson. New York: 1961. 96-100.
            2. “. . . reception of the dogmas of Vatican I by the Catholic Church can rightly be taken as the ultimate confirmation of the truth of these dogmas.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 110)
            3. Infallible evidence, yielding infallible certitude, “that all the conditions required for an infallible definition are present in any particular case [is] the reception of the defined dogma in the faith-consciousness of the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 111)
4. **how the Holy Spirit brings about the Church**’**s assent**
   1. Bacht, H. “Vom Lehramt der Kirche und in der Kirche.” *Catholica* 25 (1971): 144-67 (esp. 157-67).
   2. Congar, Yves. “Reception as an Ecclesiological Reality.” *Concilium* 7.8 (Sept. 1972): 43-68. (“La “reception” comme réalité ecclésiologique.” *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 56 (1972): 369-403.)
   3. Grillmeier, Alois. “Konzil und Rezeption.” *Theol*. *u*. *Phil*. 45 (1970): 321-52.
   4. “In the past century, treatises on this question generally spoke of the ‘passive infallibility’ of the ‘learning Church’, in contrast to the ‘active infallibility’ of the ‘teaching Church’”: the Spirit inspired “in the faithful attitudes of docility and trusting obedience, with the formal authority of the office-holders as the principal motive for assent to their definitions.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 111)
   5. “More recent studies [emphasize the Spirit’s] stirring up and maintaining the ‘supernatural sense of the faith’, by which believers recognise the truth-content of what is authoritatively proposed for their belief. The role of the faithful is . . . an active sharing in the process by which the whole People of God ‘clings without fail to the faith once delivered to the saints, penetrates it more deeply by accurate insights, and applies it more thoroughly to life’ (LG 12).” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 111)
   6. *relatio* on *Lumen gentium* 25 (*Acta Synodalia Conc*. *Vat*. *II* III/1, 253): “definitions of a Council are also irreformable of themselves, and do not need the approbation of the people, as some in the East mistakenly hold, but rather they carry with them and express the consent of the whole community.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 225 n. 37)
   7. “The reception of magisterial decisions by the faithful is a logical consequence of the fact that the magisterium can only define as dogma what it finds in the deposit of faith [*Dei Verbum* § 10] which . . . is handed on in the ‘teaching, life and worship’ of the Church [*Dei Verbum* § 8]. The magisterium has to draw from the faith-consciousness of the Church whatever it proposes as revealed truth. So the response of the faithful [is] closing a circle: from the faith of the Church, to the official teaching, back to the faith of the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 111)
   8. “‘Reception’, then, is not a matter of blind obedience to formal authority, but of the divinely-assisted recognition of the truth of what is taught.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 112)

### Non-Universal Ordinary Magisterium

**contents**:

ordinary magisterium

bishops teaching in their dioceses

bishops in regional synods

conciliar non-definitive teaching

papal non-definitive teaching

reformable yet authoritative

1. **ordinary magisterium**
   1. Magisterial “teaching is exercised in a ‘solemn’ or ‘extraordinary’ way [120] when a doctrine is *defined* by an ecumenical council, or by a Pope speaking *ex cathedra*.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 120-21)
   2. “Any other exercise of the teaching authority of the bishops or the Pope is called ‘ordinary’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 121)
   3. Universal ordinary magisterium—bishops in their dioceses all teaching the same thing— can be infallible. This is treated in a separate handout above. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 121)
   4. Non-universal ordinary magisterium is non-infallible.
   5. “non-infallible”
      1. Obviously, “if the non-definitive teaching of the magisterium is not infallible, it can be erroneous . . .” Yet it is not called “fallible.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 157)
      2. “Fallible” means “capable of making a mistake (all men are fallible).” (*Merriam*-*Webster*’*s Collegiate Dictionary*. 2000. CD-ROM. Vers. 2.5. 7 Mar. 2010.)
      3. But it can also mean “liable to be erroneous (a fallible generalization).” (*Merriam*-*Webster*’*s Collegiate Dictionary*. 2000. CD-ROM. Vers. 2.5. 7 Mar. 2010.)
      4. The non-definitive teaching of the magisterium is fallible in the first sense; it is not in the second.
      5. To avoid the implication that non-infallible teachings are “liable to” (tend toward) error, teachings that are not infallible are called, not “fallible,” but “non-infallible.”
2. **bishops teaching non-infallibly in their dioceses**
   1. Bishops in their dioceses teach infallibly (exercise universal ordinary magisterium) when, as a college, they unanimously teach a doctrine of faith or morals “as definitively to be held” (*Lumen gentium* § 25b). (Sullivan *Magisterium* 79)
   2. Bishops in their dioceses teach non-infallibly (exercise non-universal ordinary magisterium) when
      1. not all teach the same thing or
      2. all teach the same thing but not as definitively to be held.
3. **bishops in regional synods**
   1. “An increasingly important exercise of such ordinary magisterium of bishops is seen in the doctrinal statements which are issued by episcopal conferences.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 121)
   2. The *Code of Canon Law* (1983), canon 753, “attributes authoritative magisterium to Catholic bishops, whether they are teaching individually, or together in episcopal conferences and particular councils.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 122)
   3. Archbishop James Hickey of Washington, DC (at a meeting of the American bishops at Collegeville, June 1982; qtd. in “The Bishop as Teacher.” *Origins* 12.9 (29 July 1982): 142): “The council speaks of the magisterium of the whole college (either joined with the pope in council or teaching as one body dispersed in the world) and it speaks of the magisterium of the individual bishop in his local church. But the council does not speak of any magisterium of episcopal conferences. However, . . . the conference offers the most effective vehicle nationally for our teaching office. . . . Our collective exercise of the teaching office is [121] necessary to answer specific challenges that arise for us from the collective life of the nation.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 121-22)
   4. “If an episcopal conference takes a position which does not express the unanimous view of the participating bishops, the conference does not have the authority to require assent on that position from all the Catholics of the region which the conference represents. Perhaps Cardinal Ratzinger had this in mind when he raised the question whether episcopal conferences have a mandate to teach.” (Reported in: “A Vatican Synthesis.” *Origins* 12.43 (7 Apr. 1983): 692.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 122)
   5. “Prominent among such statements since Vatican II have been the documents issued by the combined conferences of the bishops of Latin America at Medellín and Puebla . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 121)
   6. Also prominent: “the recent pastoral of the conference of the bishops of the United States on nuclear warfare.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 121)
4. **conciliar non-definitive teaching**
   1. example: Vatican II documents
      1. The Vatican II documents are “‘ordinary’ teaching, since this council chose not to . . . define any new dogma . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 121)
      2. “In his opening speech on the first day of the Second Vatican Council (11 October 1962), Pope John XXIII called upon this council to exercise a teaching authority that would be predominantly pastoral in character.” (Abbott, Walter, ed. *Documents of Vatican II*. 715. *Acta Synodalia Conc*. *Vat*. *II*, I/1, 172.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 153)
      3. “In response to this papal invitation, the council chose not to exercise its authority to condemn any propositions as heretical or to define any new dogmas of faith. In other words, it chose not to [set] more precise limits to the communion of Catholic faith, and exclude from this communion those who refused to accept such solemn decrees.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 153)
      4. But “the Theological Commission [said] the teaching of this Council, even though not defined, is still ‘doctrine of the supreme teaching authority of the Church’, which ‘each and every member of the faithful is obliged to accept and embrace according to the mind of the Sacred Synod’.” (Abbott, Walter, ed. *Documents of Vatican II*. 98. *Acta Synodalia* III/8, 10.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 153)
5. **papal non-definitive teaching**
   1. The pope has ordinary magisterium, but it is not universal if it is not defining.
      1. “. . . the pope can propose doctrine to be held by the faithful without intending to define the issue [62] . . . . [This is the] ‘ordinary magisterium’ of the pope.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 62-63)
      2. “. . . in this case there is the same kind of obligation to adhere to [62] his teaching as there is to the teaching of Vatican II.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 62-63)
   2. encyclicals
      1. Encyclicals are “the most familiar examples of the non-definitive exercise of papal teaching authority . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 154)
      2. 15 Aug. 1832: Gregory XVI is “the first pope to use an encyclical letter as the vehicle of his pastoral teaching authority [*Mirari vos*].” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 154)
      3. “Successive popes, especially Pius IX, Leo XIII, Pius XI and Pius XII used this teaching instrument with increasing frequency and with an increasing emphasis on its obligatory force.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 154)
      4. “Especially during the pontificate of Pius XII, there was a tendency in some circles of Catholic theology to attribute infallibility to the ordinary magisterium of the [154] pope, and to require a response to it that hardly differed from the response required by a solemn dogmatic definition.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 154-55)
         1. Ciappi, L. “Il magistero vivo di SS. Pio XII, norma prossima e universale di verità.” *Sapienza* 7 (1954): 125-51.
         2. Fenton, Joseph C. “Infallibility in the Encyclicals.” *American Ecclesiastical Review* 128 (1953): 177-98.
         3. Salaverri, J. “De Ecclesia.” In vol. 1 of *Sacrae theologiae summa*. Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos. Madrid: 1952. 692ff. nos. 647ff.
      5. Pius XII, *Humani generis* (1950)
         1. “While no pope went so far as to claim infallibility for his ordinary teaching, the high point” was *Humani generis* § 20. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 154-55)
         2. Pius XII (encyclical *On Humankind* [*Humani generis*, 12 Aug. 1950] § 20, DS 3885): “Nor is it to be thought that what is set forth in Encyclical Letters does not of itself demand assent, on the grounds that in them the Pontiffs do not exercise the supreme power of their magisterium. For these things are taught with their ordinary teaching authority, of which the saying also holds: ‘He who hears you, hears me’ [Luke 10:16]. And for the most part what is set forth and inculcated in Encyclical Letters already belongs to Catholic doctrine on other accounts. And if the Supreme Pontiffs, in their official documents, deliberately pass judgment on a matter hitherto controverted, it is evident to all that, in accordance with the mind and intention of the same Pontiffs, that question can no longer be considered a subject for free debate among theologians.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 155)
      6. Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae* (25 July 1968)
         1. Since 1968 “there has been a lively [discussion] about the obligatory force of such teaching . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 155)
         2. “While in some respects this public debate has been painful, it has also served to bring out some important truths about this kind of teaching which were surely not unknown to the framers of *Lumen gentium*, but which they chose not to mention in the conciliar text.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 156)
      7. “. . . treating papal encyclicals as though they were practically infallible, has, I believe, been largely responsible for the fact that many people, when they learn that encyclicals are not infallible after all, jump to the conclusion that one need pay no attention to them. If people have been led to think of the infallibility of the pope as the basic motive for giving their assent to his teaching, it is not surprising that when this motive is no longer available, their assent will fail as well.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 172)
6. **reformable yet authoritative**
   1. “. . . can teaching which does not claim to be infallible, and may be in fact erroneous, still be authoritative?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 158)
   2. “. . . the German bishops [pastoral letter of 22 Sept. 1967] have given a sound reply to this question. . . . It is incumbent on the magisterium to give directives to the faithful in matters of faith and morals, and the concrete situation can call for the issuing of such directives even when it is not yet possible to arrive at an irreformable decision. . . . When there is confusion or doubt concerning matters pertaining to Christian belief or practice, it is up to the bearers of the pastoral magisterium to provide the authoritative guidance that is needed at the time. Obviously they can only provide the answer which they are convinced is true, and they are obliged to make every effort to be sure that what they will say is true. But it will not always be possible to provide an answer that could not possibly be seen eventually to need correction.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 158)
   3. “There are a great many problems facing human society today about which it is hardly possible to make absolutely certain, irreformable, judgments, and yet about which Catholics, and indeed many other thinking people, look to the pope and the Catholic bishops as reliable spokesmen of a Christian point of view.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 173)

### Infallibility of the Universal Ordinary Magisterium

### and the Natural Moral Law

**contents**:

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“authority of the magisterium on questions of natural moral law”

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Ford and Grisez’s arguments for infallible Church teaching on contraception

majority teaching: particular norms of natural law are not objects of infallible teaching

Paul Gerard Horrigan disagrees with Sullivan.

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      3. Reed, John J. “Natural Law, Theology and the Church.” *Theological Studies* 26 (1965): c. 55.
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   2. Grisez-Hallett debate (in chronological order)
      1. Hallett, Garth. “Contraception and Prescriptive Infallibility.” *Theological Studies* 43 (1982): 629-50.
      2. Grisez, Germain. “Infallibility and Contraception: A Reply to Garth Hallett.” *Theological Studies* 47 (1986): 134-45.
      3. Hallett, Garth. “Infallibility and Contraception: The Debate Continues.” *Theological Studies* 49 (1988): 517-28.
   3. Grisez-Sullivan debate (in chronological order)
      1. Sullivan, Francis A., SJ. *Magisterium*: *Teaching Authority in the Catholic Church*. New York: Paulist, 1983. 143-52.
      2. Grisez, Germain. “Infallibility and Specific Moral Norms: A Review Discussion.” *The Thomist* 49 (1985): 248-87. Rpt. (abridged): “Infallibility and Specific Moral Norms: A Reply to Francis A. Sullivan, S.J.” *Proceedings of the Eighth Convention of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars* (1985): 81-94. Rpt. (unabridged) in Curran, Charles E., and Richard A. McCormick, SJ, eds. *Dissent in the Church*. Readings in Moral Theology 6. New York: Paulist, 1988. 58-96.
      3. Sullivan, Francis A., SJ. “The ‘Secondary Object’ of Infallibility.” *Theological Studies* 54 (1993): 536-50.
      4. Grisez, Germain. “The Ordinary Magisterium’s Infallibility: A Reply to Some New Arguments.” *Theological Studies* 55.4 (Dec. 1994): 720-32.
      5. Sullivan, Francis A., SJ. “Reply to Grisez.” *Theological Studies* 55.4 (Dec. 1994): 732-37.
      6. Grisez, Germain. “Response to Francis Sullivan’s Reply.” *Theological Studies* 55.4 (Dec. 1994): 737-38.
      7. Sullivan, Francis A., SJ. *Creative Fidelity*: *Weighing and Interpreting Documents of the Magisterium*. New York: Paulist, 1996.
   4. those who say particular norms of natural law cannot be defined infallibly (Sullivan *Magisterium* 227-28 n. 46)
      1. moralists
         1. Bückle, F. “Unfehlbare Normen?” *Fehlbar? Eine Bilanz*. Ed. Hans Küng. Zurich: 1973. 280-304.
         2. Curran, Charles E. “Pluralism in Catholic Moral Theology.” Readings in Moral Theology 3. Ed. Charles Curran and Richard McCormick, SJ. New York: 1982. 364-87.
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         2. Boyle, John P. “The Natural Law and the Magisterium.” *Proc*. *CTSA* 34 (1979) 189-210.
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         9. Thils, Gustav. “Truth and Verification at Vatican I.” *Concilium* 3.9 (1973) 27-34.
2. **introduction**: **assumptions**
   1. “. . . there is such a thing as the natural moral law . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 136)
   2. “. . . this law is of divine origin . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 136)
   3. The natural law generally “has to be discovered by human intelligence reflecting on experience . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 165, see 136)
   4. But some aspects of the natural law are “naturally knowable but also revealed”:
      1. “the [136] existence of such a law,
      2. “our obligation to live according to it,
      3. “and some of its basic norms . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 136-37)

How much of the natural law is revealed?

1. **introduction**
   1. Are the general norms of the natural law revealed?
   2. If so, “are not only the general principles, but also the particular applications of the natural law to specific kinds of human behaviour, contained in the deposit of revelation?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 137)
2. **position 1**: **Both general and particular norms are formally revealed**.
   1. “Some Catholic theologians of the past century asserted that the whole of the natural law is revealed, without making any distinction between the basic principles and more particular norms.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 137)
   2. Kleutgen, J. *Die Theologie der Vorzeit verteidigt*. 2nd ed. Innsbruck: 1878. 1: 146.
   3. Franzelin, J.B. *De divina traditione et scriptura*. Rome: 1870. 110, 547-51.
3. **position 2**: **General norms are revealed**, **particular norms are virtually revealed**.
   1. Some theologians “hold that the particular norms are contained at least obscurely, implicitly or virtually in the deposit of revelation . . .” (Reed 55) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 137)
   2. objections
      1. “To say that [particular norms] are virtually revealed is to claim that they can be somehow deduced from the revealed principles . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 137)
      2. objection 1: even if they could be deduced, “what is only virtually revealed is not really part of divine revelation . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 137)
      3. objection 2: but they can’t be deduced.
         1. But “most theologians now do not agree that we can arrive at the concrete determinations of the natural law by such a process of deduction from revealed premises.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 137)
         2. “. . . the strong trend in current moral thinking is to deny that the particular norms of the natural law are virtually revealed.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 137)
      4. “. . . most Catholic theologians agree that . . . The concrete determinations of the natural law with regard to the complex problems facing people today are neither formally nor virtually revealed. That is to say, they are not among the truths which God has revealed to us for the sake of our salvation, nor can they be strictly deduced from any such truths. It is now generally agreed that the process by which we arrive at the knowledge of the concrete norms of the natural law is through shared reflection on human experience; it is rather an inductive process than a deductive one. Christians seek the answers to concrete moral problems in the light of the Gospel, but these answers are not conclusions that follow with metaphysical certitude from revealed premises.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 150)
4. **position 3**: **General norms are revealed**, **particular norms are not**.
   1. General norms are revealed.
      1. primary object
         1. “. . . insofar as the natural moral law is also revealed, it belongs to the primary object of the magisterium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 137)
         2. The natural law within the primary object can be taught infallibly.
         3. “Hence the magisterium could infallibly define propositions of this law if they are clearly confirmed by revelation.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 137)
      2. “I believe that the majority of Catholic moral theologians today would [say that] At least some of the basic principles of the natural law are also formally revealed, and as such, belong to the primary object of infallible magisterium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 149)
      3. “Catholic moralists generally agree that those basic norms of the natural law which have also been revealed to us ‘for the sake of our salvation’ could be infallibly taught, either by solemn definition or by the universal ordinary magisterium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 149)
      4. “It does not seem that any such moral principle has ever been solemnly defined . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 149)
   2. Particular norms are not.
      1. “. . . what is only virtually revealed is not really part of divine revelation, and could pertain only to the secondary object of infallibility: and this only if it were necessary for the magisterium to speak infallibly about it in order to safeguard or adequately explain revealed truth.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 137)
      2. “. . . few, if any, Catholic theologians would now claim that the particular applications of the natural law to the concrete moral issues of modern society, [137] are contained in the deposit of revelation, whether formally or virtually.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 137-38)
      3. “The question then, is whether, from the authority with which the magisterium teaches particular norms of the natural moral law, the conclusion necessarily follows that it must be able to speak infallibly on these issues.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 138)
      4. “Some would say: if the magisterium can speak authoritatively, it must also be able to speak infallibly on these issues. Others, and I believe the majority today, would say that from the fact that the magisterium can speak with pastoral authority on particular applications of the natural moral law, it does not follow that it can speak infallibly about them.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 138)

Can particular norms of the natural law be taught infallibly

as propositions of the secondary object of infallibility?

1. **The magisterium has a right and a duty to teach particular norms of the natural law**.
   1. It is “generally accepted . . . that the magisterium has the right and duty to speak with authority on particular issues of the natural moral law.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 138)
      1. Most “agree that it is part of the role of the magisterium to speak with authority on such particular moral issues.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 138)
      2. “. . . most Catholic theologians agree that the magisterium does have the right to speak with authority on such issues.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 139)
      3. The magisterium “has the duty to give authoritative guidance to the faithful for the formation of their moral judgments.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 158)
      4. “. . . theologians agree that the magisterium speaks with pastoral authority when it determines particular norms of the natural law . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 158)
   2. Pius XII (1939-58)
      1. Pius XII (allocution *Magnificate Dominum* [2 Nov. 1954], *The Pope Speaks* 1 (1954): 380): “The power of the Church is not bound by the limits of ‘matters strictly religious,’ as they say, but the whole matter of the natural law, its foundation, its interpretation, its application, so far as their moral aspect extends, are within the Church’s power. For the keeping of the natural law, by God’s appointment, has reference to the road by which man has to approach his supernatural end. But on this road the Church is man’s guide and guardian in what concerns his supreme end. The apostles observed this in times past, and afterward from the earliest centuries the Church has kept to this manner of acting, and keeps to it today, not indeed like some private guide or adviser, but by virtue of the Lord’s command and authority.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 139)
   3. Vatican II (1962-65)
      1. Vatican II on “judgments which parents have to make about bringing more children into the world” (pastoral constitution *On the Church in the Modern World* [*Gaudium et spes*, 7 Dec. 1965] § 50): “The parents themselves should ultimately make this judgment [but] must always be governed according to a conscience dutifully conformed to the divine law itself, and should be submissive toward the Church’s teaching office, which authentically [i.e., authoritatively] interprets that law in the light of the gospel.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 138)
         1. “There is every reason to believe that when the Council speaks of the ‘divine law’ in this context, it means the natural law, which of course is divine in its origin.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 138)
      2. Vatican II (declaration *On Religious Freedom* [*Dignitatis humanae*, 7 Dec. 1965] § 14): “In the formation of their consciences, the Christian faithful ought carefully to attend to the sacred and certain [138] doctrine of the Church. The Church is, by the will of Christ, the teacher of the truth. It is her duty to give utterance to, and authoritatively to teach, that Truth which is Christ Himself, and also to declare and confirm by her authority those principles of the moral order which have their origin in human nature itself.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 138-39)
   4. encyclicals
      1. “. . . many papal encyclicals [too] have affirmed and exercised such teaching authority on concrete moral issues.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 139)
   5. “I believe that the majority of Catholic moral theologians today would [say that] The magisterium is competent to exercise its ordinary teaching authority by applying the natural law, in the light of the Gospel, to the particular and concrete moral issues facing individuals and society today.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 149)
      1. “. . . one Catholic moralist, Jakob David, invokes a distinction between ‘magisterial’ and ‘pastoral’ authority, and denies that the competence of the hierarchy regarding concrete issues of natural law can be called ‘magisterial’ authority.” (David, Jakob. “Kirche und Naturrecht. Versuch einer neuen Grenzziehung.” *Orientierung* 30 (1966): 129-33.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 149)
      2. “But it seems to me that he is identifying magisterial authority with the capacity to teach infallibly. He explains ‘pastoral authority’ regarding the natural law as the competence of the bishops and pope to guide the faithful in the formation of their consciences. Following St Thomas, who speaks of the *magisterium cathedrae pastorales* of the bishops, I see no reason not to [149] speak of the teaching function of the bishops, especially in its ordinary exercise, as ‘pastoral magisterium’. It is this magisterium which they exercise when they help the faithful to form their consciences on concrete problems of the natural law.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 149-50)
   6. remaining questions
      1. “. . . this claim of the magisterium to teach with authority on questions of the natural moral law raises a number of questions . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 139)
      2. One question is “the obligation on the part of the faithful to form their consciences in conformity with such teaching . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 139)
      3. Another question is “the possibility . . . of legitimate dissent from such teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 139)
      4. Another question is whether the magisterium can teach particular norms infallibly. Catholic theologians “differ on whether one can rightly argue from its authority to its infallibility on this kind of question.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 139)
2. “**arguments for the infallibility of the magisterium on questions of natural law**” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 140)
   1. argument 1
      1. “I shall begin with an argument that is rather simplistic, but is still sometimes heard: namely, that the magisterium is infallible in matters of faith and morals: but particular norms of the natural law are matters of morals; therefore the magisterium can speak infallibly about them.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 140)
      2. Sullivan’s rebuttal
         1. This argument “ignores the difference between what is revealed and what is not revealed with regard to morals. It presumes that the term ‘matters of faith and morals’ is rightly understood to include all moral issues, regardless of their relationship to the deposit of revelation. But this is certainly not the case.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 140)
         2. “An illuminating proof of this is found in a response made by Bishop Gasser, the spokesman for the *Deputatio de Fide* of Vatican I, to a proposal to substitute the term ‘principles of morals’ for the more usual term: *res morum*. One of the reasons this proposal was rejected was given by Gasser as follows . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 140)
         3. Gasser (Mansi 52: 1224): “Moreover, principles of morals can be other merely philosophical principles of natural morality, which do not in every respect pertain to the deposit of faith.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 140)
         4. “This is striking evidence that the term *res fidei et morum* was not understood at Vatican I to embrace all possible questions of natural morality.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 140)
   2. argument 2
      1. An “argument for infallibility [was advanced] in the report of the minority of the commission of experts appointed by Pope Paul VI to study the question of birth control, prior to the encyclical *Humanae vitae*. The argument is based on the grave consequences of erroneous moral teaching by the Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 141)
      2. advisory commission to Paul VI on contraception (minority report, qtd. in Ford and Grisez 302): “there is no possibility that the teaching itself [on contraception as sinful] is other than substantially true. It is true because the Catholic Church, instituted by Christ to show men the sure road to eternal life, could not err so atrociously through all the centuries of its history. The Church cannot substantially err in teaching a very serious doctrine of faith or morals through all the centuries—even through one century—a doctrine constantly and insistently proposed as one necessarily to be followed in order to attain eternal salvation. The Church could not substantially err through so many [141] centuries—even through one century—in imposing very heavy burdens under grave obligation in the name of Jesus Christ as it would have erred if Jesus Christ does not in fact impose these burdens. The Catholic Church could not in the name of Jesus Christ offer to the vast multitude of the faithful, everywhere in the world, for so many centuries an occasion of formal sin and spiritual ruin on account of a false doctrine promulgated in the name of Jesus Christ.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 141-42)
      3. This argument “draws its conclusion, that the Church cannot err in its moral teaching, from two assertions . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 142)
         1. “. . . error in the Church’s moral teaching would be the occasion of formal sin and spiritual ruin of the faithful . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 142)
         2. “. . . it is impossible that the Church should be the cause or occasion of such harmful consequences.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 142)
      4. Sullivan’s rebuttal
         1. “One problem [is that] it would also have to be true that the Church has never erred when it has taught something to be gravely sinful. The argument would have to be able to stand up to the test of history. As I am not a historian of moral theology, I leave this question to those who are competent in the field.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 142)
         2. “Another problem is that this argument seems to suppose that we know how much spiritual harm God is prepared to allow the leaders of the Church to be the occasion of. How can it be shown that erroneous moral teaching would cause more spiritual harm than has been caused by the scandalous conduct of which Church leaders have certainly been guilty? If God has permitted the latter, why could He not permit the former as well?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 142)
3. **arguments against** “**the infallibility of the magisterium on questions of natural law**” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 140)
   1. The more common opinion of theologians is that particular norms of natural law are not objects of infallible teaching.
   2. argument 1
      1. “There is no officially promulgated document of the magisterium which makes such an explicit claim to infallibility in interpreting the natural law.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 141)
      2. Consider “the draft of the Constitution on the Church [later *Lumen gentium*] . . . by the Preparatory Theological Commission and submitted to the first session of Vatican II in 1962 . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 140)
         1. Theological Commission (*schema* ch. 7 § 29: *Acta Synodalia Conc*. *Vat*. *II*, I/4: 48): “Since this same magisterium is the ministry of salvation by which men are taught [140] the way they must follow in order to be able to attain to eternal life, it therefore has the office and the right of interpreting and of infallibly declaring not only the revealed law but also the natural law, and of making judgments about the objective conformity of all human actions with the teaching of the Gospel and the divine law.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 140-41)
         2. This statement supposes “that the magisterium could not fulfil its ministry of teaching men the way to salvation unless it could interpret and declare the requirements of the natural law not only with pastoral authority but also with infallibility. But this is what needs to be proven.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 141)
         3. “. . . this *schema* was found so unsatisfactory that it was withdrawn without ever being put to a vote.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 140)
         4. The claim that the magisterium can infallibly declare non-revealed natural-law principles and applications “was not retained in the new draft of the Constitution on the Church . . ., nor was any such claim subsequently introduced in any document of Vatican II.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 141)
         5. “The omission of this claim to infallibility regarding the natural law, in the treatment of the magisterium in *Lumen gentium*, suggests that the bishops were not convinced of this argument.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 141)
   3. argument 2
      1. Maguire, Daniel C. “Morality and Magisterium.” *Cross Currents* 18 (1968): 41-65.
      2. Daniel C. Maguire “seems to rule out the possibility that the magisterium could speak with infallibility on any moral issue whatever . . .” (Maguire 47) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 148)
      3. “However, it seems that what he has in mind as the ‘function of the moral magisterium’ is ‘to apply the moral vision of the Gospel to complex natural law questions such as are presented by medical ethics, genetics, business ethics, international law, social reconstruction, and war and peace.’” (Maguire 47) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 149)
      4. “In this case, his position, while more radically stated, would not differ substantially from the more common view, which distinguishes between the more general principles of the natural law, and the determination of the requirements of the natural law when it is applied to the concrete moral problems that face people in the modern world.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 149)
   4. argument 3
      1. It cannot “be shown that the magisterium would not be able to defend and explain the moral principles and values of the Gospel unless it could infallibly determine the correct application of the natural law to the concrete and complex problems of modern man.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 150)
      2. “No doubt these are moral issues, and they are connected with the moral values of Christian revelation.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 150)
      3. “But, as we have seen, in order for something which is neither formally nor virtually revealed to fall within the ‘secondary object’ of infallibility, it has to be so necessarily connected with revealed truth that the magisterium would be unable to defend or explain revelation itself if it could not speak infallibly about this also. Since ‘nothing is to be considered infallibly defined or declared unless this is manifestly the case’ [*Codex Iuris Canonici* [1917] canon 1323 § 3, [1983] canon 749 § 3], the burden of proof is on those who would claim that the magisterium could not defend or explain some revealed truth unless it could infallibly determine some particular application of the natural law.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 150)
   5. argument 4
      1. “Finally, to say that a proposition has been infallibly taught is to say that it must be irreversibly true. From this it follows that for a moral norm to be the proper object of infallible teaching, it must be a norm which, at some point in history, can be so irreversibly determined that no future development could possibly call for the substantial revision [150] of this determination of what the natural law requires.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 150-51)
      2. “It is the more common opinion of Catholic moralists today that the concrete norms of the natural law simply do not admit of such irreversible determination.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 151)
      3. “This judgment is based on an understanding of the very process by which we arrive at our knowledge of the natural law as it applies to concrete moral issues. This understanding involves the following elements: (a) the moral problems facing mankind today tend to be particularly complex; (b) while the Gospel sheds light on these problems, it does not provide their solution; (c) an indispensable role in the process of finding answers to concrete moral problems is played by human intelligence, reflecting on human experience; (d) Christians share this arduous search along with all other men of good will.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 151)
      4. “Several passages of *Gaudium et Spes* suggest that this was the approach of Vatican II to this issue.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 151)
         1. Vatican II (*Gaudium et spes* § 16): “Through loyalty to conscience Christians are joined to other men in the search for truth and for the right solution to so many moral problems which arise both in the life of individuals and from social relationships (GS 16).” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 151)
         2. Vatican II (*Gaudium et spes* § 33): “The Church is guardian of the heritage of the divine Word and draws religious and moral principles from it, but she does not always have a ready answer to every question. Still, she is eager to associate the light of revelation with the experience of mankind in trying to clarify the course upon which mankind has just entered (GS 33).” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 151)
         3. Vatican II (*Gaudium et spes* § 46): “Having set forth the dignity of the human person and his individual and social role in the universe, the Council now draws the attention of men to the consideration, in the light of the Gospel and of human experience, of some more urgent problems deeply affecting the human race at the present day (GS 46).” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 151)
      5. “Now if the process by which we have to arrive at our knowledge of the concrete norms of the natural law is by the exercise of human intelligence, reflecting on human experience, it must be admitted that there are elements in this process which militate against the possibility of reaching an absolutely irreversible determination of a concrete norm of the natural law.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 151)
         1. “One is the fact that human experience is an [151] on-going, open-ended reality. We can never exclude the possibility that future experience, hitherto unimagined, might put a moral problem into a new frame of reference which would call for a revision of a norm that, when formulated, could not have taken such new experience into account.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 151-52)
         2. “Another factor is that human nature itself is not a static, closed reality, but a dynamic, evolving one. As Karl Rahner explains it, the immediate norm of natural morality is man himself in his concrete nature. But this concrete nature of man in all its dimensions (biological, social, etc.) is itself precisely subject to a most far-reaching process of change. While some universal moral norms may be said to flow from the metaphysical nature of man, the particular norms are based on human nature as it exists in history, as subject to change. Such norms cannot lay claim to any absolute or permanent validity.” (Rahner, Karl. “Basic Observations on the Subject of the Changeable and Unchangeable Factors in the Church.” *Theological Investigations* 14. 1976. 15.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 152)
      6. “It is the consideration of such factors as these in the process by which we come to know the particular norms of the natural law, which has led most of the Catholic theologians who have written on this question in recent years, to the conclusion that such norms are not proper matter for irreformable teaching. This judgment rules out not only the possibility of the infallible definition of such a norm, but also the claim that such a norm has ever been, or could be, infallibly taught by the ordinary universal magisterium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 152)
      7. “However, this judgment would not at all rule out the exercise of that ordinary, non-infallible magisterium by which the pastors of the Church offer their authoritative guidance to the faithful for the formation of their conscience on complex moral issues. It is to this ordinary magisterium that we must now turn our attention.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 152)

a case study: Küng, Ford, and Grisez’s arguments

for infallible Church teaching on contraception

1. **Küng**’**s argument against infallible Church teaching on morals**
   1. Hans Küng (*Infallible?* 34-68) believes that “the sinfulness of artificial contraception has been infallibly taught” by the ordinary universal magisterium. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 120)
   2. But he thinks it is “self-evident . . . that this teaching of *Humanae vitae* is erroneous . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 120)
   3. “. . . he concludes that the official Catholic doctrine about the infallibility of the magisterium must be erroneous too.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 120)
2. **Ford and Grisez**’**s arguments for infallible Church teaching on contraception**
   1. introduction
      1. A “currently controverted question [is] whether the sinfulness of artificial contraception has been infallibly taught by the ordinary universal magisterium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 119)
      2. Ford and Grisez, and Zalba too, contend “that all the conditions required for the infallibility of the ordinary universal magisterium have been fulfilled in the case of the Church’s teaching on the sinfulness of contraception.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 142)
   2. principal argument
      1. premise 1: “this moral norm falls within at least the secondary object of infallibility . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 142)
         1. “. . . the morality of birth-control, even if it is not in itself formally revealed, still falls within at least the secondary object of infallible Church teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 120)
      2. premise 2: “it has been taught for a long time by the whole Catholic episcopate as a norm definitively to be held.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 142)
         1. “. . . for at least a century prior to 1962 the Catholic bishops throughout the world, in their authoritative teaching on morals, concurred on the grave sinfulness of artificial contraception as a viewpoint which all Catholics were bound to hold conclusively.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 120)
      3. Therefore “it has actually been infallibly taught . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 142)
         1. “. . . the grave sinfulness of artificial contraception has been infallibly taught by the ordinary universal magisterium of the Catholic Church.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 120)
         2. “Hence, . . . Pope Paul VI had no choice but to confirm this infallible teaching in his encyclical *Humanae vitae*.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 120)
      4. premise 1: contraception is within the secondary object (Sullivan *Magisterium* 143)
         1. argument 1: inference from infallibility to secondary object
            1. Ford and Grisez (286): “We do not assert that the norm is divinely revealed.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 286)
            2. Ford and Grisez (286): but the norm is “a truth required to guard the deposit as inviolable and to expound it with fidelity.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 286)
            3. Ford and Grisez (287): the only “way to establish [this] *conclusively* . . . [is] the fact that the ordinary magisterium has proposed the teaching in the manner in which it has, and the faithful as a whole until recently have accepted the norm as binding.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 143)
            4. So their argument is:

“. . . the magisterium has consistently taught it [the sinfulness of artificial contraception] as . . . grave sin . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 143)

“. . . the faithful have accepted it as such . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 143)

Therefore “the magisterium has taught it infallibly.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 143)

Since the magisterium has taught it infallibly, it must be part of the secondary object of infallibility. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 143)

“. . . their argument seems to be: if the magisterium speaks in a definitive way about something, it must necessarily be the case that what they speak about is a proper object of infallible teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 144)

I.e., “whenever the magisterium speaks in a definitive way it must be speaking infallibly, because the very fact that it speaks in a definitive way would guarantee that what it speaks about would be a proper matter for infallible teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 145)

* + - 1. Sullivan’s rebuttal
         1. counter-argument 1

“My major difficulty with the argument . . . is that it would eliminate the possibility of challenging any magisterial act that was claimed to be infallible by questioning whether the subject-matter of that act fell within the limits of the proper object of infallibility.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 144)

“The question of the object would no longer be an independent criterion by which it could conceivably be judged that the magisterium had not really spoken infallibly, on the grounds that the matter on which it spoke was not a proper object of infallible teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 144)

* + - * 1. counter-argument 2

“. . . there would be no point at all in the insistence of Vatican I and Vatican II that the magisterium can speak infallibly only on [144] matters of faith and morals. . . . [What] would have been the point of mentioning the limits of the matter about which the Church can teach infallibly?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 144-45)

* + - * 1. counter-argument 3

Ford and Grisez’s “supposition . . . would open the door to absolutism in the exercise of magisterium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 145)

* + - 1. argument 2: analogy with the Assumption
         1. Ford and Grisez (287): “a similar state of affairs has been used as a basis for solemnly defining at least one dogma: that of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.” [143] Ford and Grisez (287 n. 65): “In defining the dogma of the Assumption, Pius XII argues . . . from the universality of the acceptance of the doctrine as a matter of faith to its objective status as a truth pertaining to divine revelation.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 143-44)
      2. Sullivan’s rebuttal
         1. “What justified the conclusion that the doctrine of the Assumption must be a revealed truth was the fact that for centuries it had been a matter of universal Christian *faith*. The major premise there was the infallibility of the whole People of God in its faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 144)
         2. “On the other hand, the fact that the faithful accepted the Church’s teaching on contraception as binding does not prove that they accepted it as revealed or even as necessarily connected with revealed truth. Indeed, it seems likely that many of them accepted it simply as a binding law of the Church, which they had to observe whether they were convinced of its truth or not.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 144)
         3. “. . . the differences between these two issues are so great as to rule out the conclusion that Ford and Grisez wish to draw from the analogy between them. . . . I do not see the parallel with the dogma of the Assumption as convincing.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 144)
    1. premise 2: contraception as sinful is “definitively to be held” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 145)
       1. introduction
          1. “As we have just seen, the only argument which Ford and Grisez think would conclusively prove that the morality of contraception is a proper matter for infallible teaching is based on their contention that it has actually been infallibly taught. And their case that it has been infallibly taught is based on their contention that for many centuries it was taught by the universal Catholic episcopate as a moral norm *to be held definitively*. This brings us to the crucial question: how do they understand what it means to teach something as to be held definitively?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 145)
          2. Sullivan agrees with Salaverri and Rahner that “to propose a teaching to be held definitively means to oblige the faithful to give it their irrevocable assent. This is quite different from the way that Ford and Grisez explain what it means to teach something as to be held definitively.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 145)
       2. argument 1
          1. Ford and Grisez (276): “A point of teaching surely is proposed as one to be held definitively if a bishop proposes it in the following way: not at his option but as part of his duty to hand on the teaching he has received; not as doubtful or even as very [145] probable but as certainly true; and not as one which the faithful are free to accept or to reject but as one which every Catholic must accept.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 145-46)
          2. Ford and Grisez base their “claim primarily on the fact that the magisterium condemned contraceptive behaviour as gravely sinful. And, in their view, ‘to propose a norm excluding some kind of act as mortally sinful is to propose a teaching to be held definitively’.” (Ford and Grisez 295) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 147)
       3. Sullivan’s rebuttal
          1. counter-argument 1: “certainly true” does not equal “infallible”

There is a “difference between authoritative teaching which calls upon the faithful to give their assent to it as certainly true, and the kind of teaching which proposes a doctrine as irreformably true and calls for an irrevocable assent.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 146)

John Reed

John Reed (“Natural Law, Theology and the Church” 55): “Besides infallible teachings of the magisterium, . . . there is that exercise of its authority which, while not infallible, is still authentic and binding. This is perhaps even more important in matters of natural law than in other areas of Catholic doctrine. In this connection it is important to distinguish the notions of infallibility and certainty. In matters of conduct, a doctrine which is not taught with the plenitude of infallibility may still be taught with certainty, in the sense of moral, practical, certitude, so as to exclude any solidly probable opinion to the contrary here and now, i.e. with the effect that at a given time a particular mode of conduct is certainly licit or certainly illicit, without the abstract question of its relation to right order being definitively closed. Infallibility excludes the absolute possibility of error. Certitude, in the sense of moral, or practical, certitude, excludes the prudent, proximate fear of error. While such a teaching does not altogether close the question from a speculative point of view, it does normally preclude the possibility of acting in contradiction of the doctrine, relying on the principle of probabilism.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 146)

“. . . Reed speaks of teaching that an act is ‘certainly illicit’ [which surely includes Ford and Grisez’s “gravely sinful”]. And yet he insists that such teaching does not necessarily mean that the speculative question is definitively closed.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 147)

Karl Rahner

“Karl Rahner takes the same position in his reply to Hans Küng, who argued, as Ford and Grisez do, from the fact that the bishops taught that contraception was gravely sinful, to the conclusion that they must have been teaching this as a doctrine to be held definitively.” (Küng, Hans. “To Get to the Heart of the Matter.” *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* 71 (June 1971): 21.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 147)

Karl Rahner (“Reply to Hans Küng.” *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* 71 (Aug.-Sept. 1971): 19-20): “The only question is whether the teaching of Pius XI [in the encyclical *Casti connubii*] and *Humanae vitae* is proclaimed as a teaching that must be ‘definitively’ affirmed . . . Küng has not at all proven that such an absolute assent was demanded—which is something completely different from a very urgent claim on an assent which is not qualified as absolutely definitive (even over a long period of time and under the appeal to Church teaching authority.) [*sic*] It is also something completely different from the assertion that such a theoretical teaching implies a serious moral obligation before God.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 147)

* + - * 1. counter-argument 2: “if the argument proposed by Ford, Grisez and Küng were valid, it would mean that the Church could not declare any mode of conduct gravely wrong unless it were prepared to make an irreversible judgment on the matter. This would practically rule out any ordinary, noninfallible exercise of the Church’s teaching authority on moral issues.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 147)
      1. argument 1
         1. “The other argument which Ford and Grisez use to show that the doctrine on contraception was being taught as to be held definitively is that it was often proposed as a divinely revealed moral norm.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 147)
         2. Ford and Grisez (282): “The teaching on the morality of contraception often was [147] proposed as a moral norm divinely revealed. Since it was proposed as revealed, a fortiori it was proposed as a teaching *to be held definitively*. We prescind from the question whether the evidence alleged to show that the condemnation of contraception is divinely revealed does or does not show this. The point we wish to make is simply this: when one who is proposing a teaching appeals to divine revelation to confirm the truth of what he proposes, he implicitly calls for an assent of divine faith, and thus proposes the teaching as one to be held definitively.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 147-48)
         3. Ford and Grisez (284-85): “If one considers the explicit appeals made to Gen 38: 9-10 together with the implicit appeals made to the same passage, to Rom 1:26-27, and to the Ten Commandments, one realizes that most who handed on the Catholic teaching on contraception claimed the authority of Scripture, which they believed to be the authority of divine revelation, in support of this teaching. Whether one thinks this claim was valid or not—a question we are not considering here—no one can deny that those who made it proposed the teaching on behalf of which they made it as a moral norm *to be held definitively*.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 148)
      2. Sullivan’s rebuttal
         1. “. . . whenever any appeal was made to Scripture in support of what was being taught, this would automatically become definitive teaching. Are we to conclude that the popes, who regularly appeal to Scripture in their encyclicals, have in all such cases been proposing their doctrine as definitively to be held?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 148)
         2. Once again, “if this argument were valid, it would eliminate practically all ordinary, non-definitive teaching by the magisterium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 148)
  1. other arguments
     1. “With regard to the other arguments which they offer in support of their view that the question of the morality of contraception falls within at least the secondary object of infallibility, I will say only that I believe that at most they would suffice to show that this moral teaching is connected with revelation; however, I do not think they show that it is so necessarily connected with revelation that the magisterium could not safeguard and expound revelation if it could not teach this particular norm with infallibility.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 145)
  2. conclusion
     1. “[Most] Catholic theologians . . . do not agree that . . . the sinfulness of artificial contraception has been infallibly taught.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 120)

The Church has never made an infallible declaration on morals.

1. **faith and morals**
   1. The Catholic Church claims the ability to speak infallibly on “matters of faith and morals.”
   2. In that phrase, however, “morals” means “practices,” i.e., rituals as well as moral behavior.
   3. The Church has never made an infallible declaration on morals, in the sense of moral behavior. (Sullivan *Creative Fidelity* 81, 83)
      1. “It does not seem that any moral truth has actually been defined as a dogma.” (Sullivan *Creative Fidelity* 81)
      2. “I agree . . . in denying that popes have defined dogmas . . . in their teaching concerning moral matters.” (Sullivan *Creative Fidelity* 83)
   4. For that matter, “no dogma has ever been solemnly defined in a papal encyclical.” (Sullivan *Creative Fidelity* 159)

### Responses to Magisterial Teachings

**contents**:

assent required to definitive teaching

assent required to non-definitive teaching

“*obsequium*” (“submission”)

“*adhaerere*” (“adhere”)

obedience of the judgment

1. **assent required to definitive teaching**
   1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25b): “in an ecumenical council, they [bishops] are teachers and judges of faith and morals for the universal Church, whose definitions must be adhered to with the submission of faith [*obsequium fidei*].” (Vatican II)
   2. “a definitive judgment . . . puts an end to freedom of opinion on a question and decisively establishes some truth as an element of the normative faith of the community.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
2. **assent required to non-definitive teaching**
   1. Vatican II
      1. Butler, [Bishop] B.C., OSB. “Infallible: Authenticum: Assensus: Obsequium. Christian Teaching Authority and the Christian’s Response.” *Doctrine and Life* 31 (1981): 77-89.
      2. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25a): “In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ and the faithful are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with a religious assent [*obsequium religiosum*]. This religious submission [*obsequium religiosum*] of mind and will must be shown in a special way to the authentic magisterium of the Roman Pontiff, even when he is not speaking ex cathedra; that is, it must be shown in such a way that his supreme magisterium is acknowledged with reverence, the judgments made by him are sincerely adhered to . . .” (Vatican II)
   2. statement of the Theological Commission
      1. “. . . the Secretary General of the Council officially promulgated a statement of the Theological Commission concerning the obligatory force of the non-definitive teaching of Vatican II. According to this statement, the teaching of this Council, even though not defined, is still ‘doctrine of the supreme teaching authority of the Church’, which ‘each and every member of the faithful is obliged to accept and embrace according to the mind of the Sacred Synod’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 153)
      2. “Each of them [Theological Commission and Vatican II itself] speaks of the teaching authority involved (whe­ther of the council or the pope) as ‘supreme’, and each insists on the obligation on the part of the faithful to ‘accept and embrace’ or to ‘adhere to’ what is taught, ‘according to the mind’ of pope or council.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 154)
      3. “. . . these statements [focus] on the obligatory force of this non-definitive exercise of the magisterium. . . . other aspects of this ‘ordinary’ magisterium [such as possible dissent from it] . . . are left unmentioned in the conciliar documents.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 154)
   3. German bishops, pastoral letter of 22 Sept. 1967
      1. English version (of the “pertinent section”): Rahner, Karl. “The Dispute concerning the Church’s Teaching Office.” *Theological Investigations*. 14: 85-88.
      2. Another English version (of the “pertinent section”): Rahner, Karl. “Magisterium.” *Sacramentum Mundi* 3: 356-57.
      3. This was “One of the most significant contributions to the postconciliar discussion of the ordinary papal magisterium . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 156)
      4. German bishops (pastoral letter of 22 Sept. 1967): “in the exercise of its official function this teaching authority of the Church can, and on occasion actually does, fall into errors. The fact that such a thing is possible is something of which the Church has always been aware and which she has actually expressed in her theology. Moreover she has evolved rules of conduct to cater for the kind of situations which arise from this. . . . Now let us consider the possibility or the fact of error in non-defined statements of doctrine on the part of the Church, recognising that these themselves may differ very widely among themselves in their degree of binding force. The first point to be recognised resolutely and realistically is that human life, even at a wholly general level, must always be lived ‘by doing one’s best according to one’s lights’ and by recognised principles which, while at the theoretical level they cannot be recognised as absolutely certain, nevertheless command our respect in the ‘here and now’ as valid norms of thinking and acting because in the existing circumstances they are the best that can be found. This is something that everyone recognises from the concrete experience of his own life. . . . [The Church] cannot always and in every case allow herself to be caught in the dilemma of either arriving at a [156] doctrinal decision which is ultimately binding or simply being silent and leaving everything to the free opinion of the individual. In order to maintain the true and ultimate substance of faith she must, even at the risk of error in points of detail, give expression to doctrinal directives which have a certain degree of binding force, and yet, since they are not *de fide* definitions, involve a certain element of the provisional even to the point of being capable of including error. Otherwise it would be quite impossible for her to preach or interpret her faith as a decisive force in real life or to apply it to each new situation in human life as it arises. In such a case the position of the individual Christian in regard to the Church is analogous to that of a man who knows that he is bound to accept the decision of a specialist even while recognising that it is not infallible.” (Translation from: Rahner, Karl. “Magisterium.” *Sacramentum Mundi*. 3: 356-57.) (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 156-57)
      5. “As the German bishops have pointed out, there are a great many instances in the course of human life when it is obviously reasonable, and indeed necessary, to base important decisions on judgments made by ‘authorities’ whom one has reason to respect as reliable, even though one knows they are not infallible.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 172)
      6. “It seems impossible to fault the reasoning of the German bishops: if the non-definitive teaching of the magisterium is not infallible, it can be erroneous; if it is not irreformable, it can stand in need of correction. Indeed, they honestly recognise that such non-infallible teaching not only can be erroneous, but actually has been so; not only can need correction, but historically has been corrected.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 157)
3. “***obsequium***” (“**submission**”)
   1. “. . . *obsequium* is used three times in *Lumen gentium* 25:
      1. “first of the response due to the teaching of one’s own bishop,
      2. “then of the response due to the teaching of the Roman Pontiff,
      3. “and finally of the *obsequium fidei* to be given to the dogmatic definitions of an ecumenical council.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 159)
   2. “Obviously, different degrees of *obsequium* are called for by these three levels of teaching authority.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 159)
   3. What does *obsequium* mean?
   4. Butler
      1. Butler, B.C., OSB. “Infallible: Authenticum: Assensus: Obsequium. Christian Teaching Authority and the Christian’s Response.” *Doctrine and Life* 31 (1981): 77-89.
      2. He thinks “submission” is too strong a translation. “Butler insists on the ‘variable’ sense of the term . . .” (Sullivan Magisterium 159)
      3. He “concludes that when it is used of the response due to papal teaching, *obsequium* means no more than ‘due respect’.” (Butler 84) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 159)
   5. Sullivan
      1. “The English translations edited by Abbott and by Flannery render *obsequium* by ‘submission’ . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 159)
      2. The “. . . English translations are correct in using the word ‘submission’ when they render the phrase: ‘religiosum voluntatis et intellectus obsequium’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 159)
         1. “First of all, according to the authoritative Latin Dictionary of Lewis and Short, the word *obsequium*, from *obsequi*, ‘to follow’ or ‘to yield to’, means ‘compliance, yielding, consent, obedience, allegiance’, and not mere ‘respect’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 159)
         2. “Secondly, it is really difficult to see what would be meant by ‘religious respect of will and mind’; whereas this phrase makes good sense when *obsequium* is translated by ‘submission’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 159)
         3. “Thirdly, while there are certainly different degrees of *obsequium* required by the three kinds of magisterium that are mentioned in *Lumen gentium* 25, they can all be understood as degrees of ‘submission’ . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 159)
      3. “. . . ‘due respect’ is certainly not the meaning of *obsequium* in the term *obsequium fidei*.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 159)
4. “***adhaerere***” (“**adhere**”)
   1. “This verb [*adhaerere*] is also used three times: of the response due to the teaching of the local bishop, the non-definitive teaching of the pope, and the [159] definitions of ecumenical councils. In each case the text speaks of an obligation to ‘adhere’ to the judgments made.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 159-60)
   2. “. . . the phrase: ‘et sententiis ab eo prolatis sincere adhaereatur’ [“the judgments made by him are sincerely adhered to”], which refers to the response due to the ordinary magisterium of the pope, is . . . translated in the Flannery edition of the documents by: ‘and sincere assent be given to decisions made by him’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 160)
   3. Butler
      1. “It is Butler’s view that the phrase: ‘et sententiis ab eo prolatis sincere adhaereatur’ . . . is incorrectly translated in the Flannery edition . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 160)
      2. “His objection is to the use of the English word ‘assent’, and is based on Newman’s idea that assent must always be unconditional. Arguing that only infallible teaching can command unconditional assent, Butler concludes that ‘non-infallible teaching cannot, taken by itself, generate assent.’” (Butler 83) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 160)
   4. Sullivan
      1. “. . . I maintain that the Latin: ‘et sententiis ab eo prolatis sincere adhaereatur’ is correctly translated: ‘and sincere assent be given to decisions made by him’ . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 161)
      2. “First, I do not know what the phrase: ‘sententiis sincere adhaerere’ can mean if it does not mean to give one’s sincere assent. What other translation would do justice to the Latin words used here?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 160)
      3. “Secondly, the Theological Commission also spoke of the response called for by the non-definitive teaching of the council itself. The terms used in that instance were: ‘doctrinam excipere et amplecti’ [*Acta Synodalia Conc*. *Vat*. *II*, III/8 10], which can hardly be understood except as meaning ‘to give one’s assent to the doctrine.’” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 160)
      4. “Thirdly: . . . Newman” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 160)
         1. Newman, John Henry. *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*. Ed. N. Lash. Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 1979.
         2. “. . . while it is true that according to Newman, genuine assent is always unconditional, it seems quite alien to Newman’s thought to interpret him to mean that one can give one’s assent to a proposition only if it has been infallibly arrived at. Does he not rather insist, in his *Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*, that one can rightly give an ‘unconditional’ assent to a proposition, even though the process by which one arrived at that proposition could not be described as ‘infallible’?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 160)
         3. Newman (148): “Treating the subject then, not according to *a priori* fitness, but according to the facts of human nature, as they are found in the concrete action of life, I find numberless cases in which we do not assent at all, none in which assent is evidently conditional;—and many, as I shall now proceed to show, in which it is unconditional, and these in subject-matters which admit of nothing higher than probable reasoning. . . . Now let us review some of those assents, which men give on evidence short of intuition and demonstration, yet which are as unconditional as if they had that highest evidence.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 228 n. 13)
         4. “The question, then, is: what does Newman mean when he says that assent must be ‘unconditional’? His own reply to this question [145] is that ‘assent is an adhesion without reserve or doubt to the proposition to which it is given. [“Assent”] stands for an undoubting and unhesitating act of the mind.’ In other words, what Newman excludes from assent is any present *doubt* about the truth of what one affirms.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 160)
         5. “Now, as I see it, an assent which excludes present doubt about the truth of what one affirms, does not necessarily exclude the recognition of the *possibility* that one might be in error. All that is required to justify undoubting assent is that one sees no *probability* that the proposition is erroneous: no grounds for prudent *fear* that one is making a mistake in affirming it.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 161)
         6. “I conclude that Newman’s ‘unconditional assent’ can coexist with the recognition that one is not *infallible* in judging this proposition to be true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 161)
      5. “For these reasons, I maintain . . . that while the assent given to non-infallible teaching does not exclude the possibility that the proposition which one affirms might be erroneous, it can still be ‘unconditional’ in the sense that it is given without present doubt as to the truth of what is affirmed.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 161)
      6. “If such an assent should not be described as ‘conditional’, how should it be named, so as to distinguish it from the kind of assent that is given to what is infallibly taught? I suggest that it could be called a ‘morally certain assent’, since ‘moral certitude’ excludes the prudent fear of being in error, but not the recognition of the possibility that one might be in error.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 161)
   5. “An important conclusion to be drawn from this discussion is that I cannot really give my assent to a proposition while retaining serious doubt in my mind as to whether or not it is true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 161)
5. “**obedience of the judgment**” (*obsequium religiosum*) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 164)
   1. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25a): “In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ and the faithful are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with a religious assent [*obsequium religiosum*]. This religious submission [*obsequium religiosum*] of mind and will must be shown in a special way to the authentic magisterium of the Roman Pontiff, even when he is not speaking ex cathedra; that is, it must be shown in such a way that his supreme magisterium is acknowledged with reverence, the judgments made by him are sincerely adhered to . . .” (Vatican II)
   2. For non-infallible magisterial teachings, “The so-called “silentium obsequiosum,” that is, “reverent silence,” does not generally suffice.” (Ott 10)
   3. “. . . the Council calls for ‘religious submission of will and mind’ and ‘sincere assent’ to the ordinary magisterium of the Roman pontiff. In the same context, this non-infallible teaching is described as *authenticum* [“authoritative,” not “authentic”]. So we must now consider in what way ‘authority’, and ‘submission of will’ can [161] enter into [assent].” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 161-62)
      1. “Assent” means “an act of the mind judging a proposition to be true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 162)
      2. “. . . how can authority, and submission of will, enter into the giving of the assent of one’s mind to truth?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 161)
   4. a contrast between responses to legislation and to magisterial decisions
      1. “Legislative acts call for obedience, which simply means doing what is prescribed or refraining from doing what is forbidden. Obedience to law does not require an act of the mind approving the law as wise or appropriate. It suffices that it sees no conflict between this and some higher obligation.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 162)
      2. “On the other hand, the authoritative exercise of the magisterium calls for religious submission of the mind as well as of the will; it calls for sincere assent, which is an act of the judgment.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 162)
   5. “Let us apply this distinction to . . . *Humanae vitae*.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 162)
      1. “If this were an example of Church law, the only persons called upon to obey it would be those who engage in marital intercourse, and their obedience would consist simply in refraining from the forbidden methods of birth control.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 162)
      2. “But the fact is that *Humanae vitae* is not Church law; it is an exercise of papal teaching authority, which calls upon all Catholics (married or not) to conform their judgment about the morality of contraception to the judgment expressed by the Pope. Obedience in this case means not merely not doing what is forbidden; it means bringing one’s thinking about birth control into line with the teaching of Pope Paul VI on this question. What this means is that the response called for by the authoritative magisterium is not the relatively simple obedience of the will, but the complicated business of ‘obedience of the judgment’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 162)
   6. “The notion of obedience of the judgment is based on the fact of experience that the attitude of our free will can have considerable influence on the formation of our judgment about a question, when our minds are not compelled to embrace some particular judgment because its truth is evident to us. [162] . . . we are talking about situations in which our free will can actually bring its influence to bear on our judgment, so that our assent to authoritative teaching, while an intellectual assent, is also in some real sense free.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 162-63)
      1. “Our minds are not free to deny what is evidently true; truth is the proper object of the mind, and truth that is evident to us has compelling force upon our assent.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 162)
         1. “. . . obedience of the judgment . . . requires that what is taught not impress our mind as so evidently false that our mind is compelled to reject the teaching. I think this would be a rare case.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 162)
         2. “. . . it is simply impossible to assent to a proposition while retaining serious doubt in one’s mind whether it is true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 165)
      2. But most people lack certain knowledge in “a great many matters in the natural order, and even more in the area of revealed religion . . . the free choice of our will can have a strong, even decisive, influence on the formation of our judgment.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 163)
   7. “. . . our act of faith is meritorious for salvation, which it could not be if it did not depend on the free choice of our will.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 163)
      1. “The act of faith is an assent of our mind, and therefore it has to be a reasonable act, befitting a person endowed with a mind focused on truth.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 163)
      2. “But since the intrinsic truth of what God has revealed to us is in most cases not so evident as to be compelling to our mind, our free will, responding to God as to our ultimate Good, brings its influence to bear upon our judgment in such a way that we can speak of the act of faith itself as free. . . . it can rightly be called a free act, because of the influence which our will has brought to bear on our mind to induce it to make this assent.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 163)
      3. “This does not mean, of course, that the act of faith is purely and simply an act of our will. It is an intellectual assent, and our mind has to be satisfied that what it assents to is true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 163)
   8. *Humanae vitae* “no doubt” caused many Catholics to say: “. . . I have already formed my opinion in a certain way, and find that I am now called upon to embrace the contrary view, as proposed to me by the ordinary papal magisterium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 163)
   9. “. . . what the free will is called upon to do [is] to renounce any attitude of *obstinacy* in my own opinion, and to adopt an attitude of *docility* toward the teaching of the pope. . . . these are attitudes of my will, which can have a powerful influence on the forming and maintaining of my opinions.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 164)
   10. renouncing obstinacy
       1. “What is involved in the renunciation of an attitude of obstinacy?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 164)
       2. “My free will can oblige me to look honestly at my own opinion, to see whether it really is a case of the truth being so evident to me that I have no choice but assent to it, or rather a case where my preferences have inclined me to embrace an opinion whose truth is really not evident to me. Renouncing obstinacy would mean rejecting a tendency to close my mind to the official teaching, to refuse even to give it a fair hearing, to adopt the attitude: ‘I’ve already made my mind up; don’t bother me.’” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 164)
   11. adopting docility
       1. “Positively, what would an attitude of docility involve?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 164)
       2. “Docility is a willingness to be taught, a willingness to prefer another’s judgment to one’s own when it is reasonable to do so. Docility calls for an open attitude toward the official teaching, giving it a fair hearing, doing one’s best to appreciate the reasons in its favour, so as to convince oneself of its truth, and thus facilitate one’s intellectual assent to it.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 164)
   12. “The effort involved in working to renounce an attitude of obstinacy and to adopt one of docility towards the teaching of the magisterium is the response of one’s free will that justifies speaking of this as ‘obedience of the judgment’ . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 164)
   13. “. . . the term used by the Council [is] *obsequium religiosum*. It is ‘religious’ submission, because it is an exercise of virtue whose motive is ultimately directed to Christ, from whom the pastors of the Church have received their authority and in whose name they teach.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 164)
   14. “. . . to give the required *obsequium religiosum* to the teaching of the ordinary magisterium means to make an honest and sustained effort to overcome any contrary opinion I might have, and to achieve a sincere assent of my mind to this teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 164)
6. **dissent**: see next handout.

### Dissent

**contents**:

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1. **proper reception of infallible and non-infallible teachings**
   1. infallible magisterial teachings
      1. A definitive judgment . . . puts an end to freedom of opinion on a question . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
      2. decisively establishes some truth as an element of the normative faith of the community.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
   2. non-infallible magisterial teachings
      1. Here one must “make an honest and sustained effort to overcome any contrary opinion . . . [and] to achieve a sincere assent . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 164)
      2. But sometimes “people who have made such an honest and sustained effort, still find themselves unable to give their sincere assent . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 164)
   3. Thus, legitimate dissent is possible for non-infallible teachings, but not for infallible. This handout deals only with dissent to non-infallible teachings.
2. **Vatican II**’**s recognition of legitimate dissent**
   1. drafts of *Lumen gentium* (21 Nov. 1964)
      1. Pius XII had said (*Humani generis* of Pius XII [12 Aug. 1950] § 20, DS 3885): “if the Supreme Pontiffs, in their official documents, deliberately pass judgment on a matter hitherto controverted, it is evident to all that, in accordance with the mind and intention of the same Pontiffs, that question can no longer be considered a subject for free debate among theologians.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 155)
      2. “The draft of the Constitution on the Church prepared for Vatican II by the Preparatory Commission echoed this statement of Pope Pius XII, with one modification: in the final sentence it substituted ‘public debate’ for ‘free debate’, perhaps with the intention of recognising the liceity of some discussion among theologians, provided it was not ‘public’.” (*Acta Synodalia Conc*. *Vat*. *II*, I/4 50.) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 155)
      3. “. . . the exclusion of debate among theologians, whether ‘free’ or ‘public’, concerning what had been taught in papal encyclicals, does not appear in the final Constitution on the Church ratified by Vatican II.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 155)
   2. contradicting popes
      1. “. . . in its treatment of the ordinary papal magisterium it spoke only of its obligatory force and said nothing about the possibility of . . . needing to be corrected . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 157)
      2. But “In this respect, it is more fruitful to consider what the Second Vatican Council did than what it said.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 157)
      3. “. . . on several important issues the council clearly departed from previous papal teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 157)
         1. The decree *On Ecumenism* departs from Pius XI’s encyclical *Mortalium animos*. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 157)
         2. The declaration *On Religious Freedom* departs from “Leo XIII and other popes on the obligation binding on the Catholic rulers of Catholic nations to suppress Protestant evangelism . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 157)
      4. “. . . the deepest divisions at Vatican II were between those bishops who saw the council as bound to affirm what had already been taught by the popes, and those who recognised the need for the Council . . . in some cases . . . to correct such teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 157)
   3. Theological Commission of Vatican II
      1. “While the text of *Lumen gentium* makes no mention of this possibility, the Theological Commission of Vatican II, in its reply to an emendation proposed by three bishops, made a remark that clearly indicates that the members of this commission were aware of the possibility of legitimate dissent from ordinary papal teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 166)
      2. Theological Commission (*Acta Synodalia Conc*. *Vat*. *II*, III/8, 88 n. 159): “Three Fathers invoke a particular case, which is at least theoretically possible, in which a certain learned person, in the face of a doctrine that has not been infallibly proposed, cannot, for well-founded reasons, give his internal assent. [166] *Resp*. On this case the approved theological treatises should be consulted.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 166-67)
      3. “It is obvious from this response that the members of the Theological Commission knew that the manuals of theology in use in Catholic seminaries treated the question of dissent from the non-infallible teaching of the magisterium.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 167)
   4. Post-Vatican II: see Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. *Regulations for Doctrinal Examination* (*Ratio agenda*). 2 Sept. 1997. *Vatican*.*va*. Web. 2 May 2010.
3. **dangers of downplaying legitimate dissent**
   1. “. . . *Lumen gentium* speaks only of the obligation to give ‘religious submission’ to [non-infallible teaching], with no mention of the possibility that it could be erroneous, or that dissent from it could be justified.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 171)
   2. Catholics must “be aware of the difference between infallible and non-infallible teaching by the magisterium, and of the corresponding difference between the kinds of assent that each of them calls for [to avoid] several unhappy consequences.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 171)
      1. Catholics who have practiced docility “and have been really unable to give their interior assent to it, may still feel themselves guilty of disobedience to the pope . . .” (Sullivan Magisterium 171)
      2. “. . . Catholics who do accept such teaching may judge all others who do not, to be disobedient or disloyal . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 172)
      3. Catholics who fail to distinguish infallible and non-infallible teachings “may be scandalised to know that even some priests or theologians have reservations about certain points of ordinary papal teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 172)
4. **dissent by the faithful**
   1. Ludwig Lercher
      1. Lercher, Ludwig. *Theologiae fundamentalis*. Vol. 1 of *Institutiones theologiae dogmaticae*. 5th ed. Barcelona: 1951.
      2. The Theological Commission at Vatican II referred bishops “the manuals of theology in use in Catholic seminaries [for] the question of dissent from the non-infallible teaching of the magisterium. As a typical example of such an ‘approved treatise’, I shall quote the widely-used manual of Lercher . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 167)
      3. Ludwig Lercher (297): “If the Roman Pontiff, using his authority but not to its highest degree, obliges all to give their assent to something as true (whether as revealed or as connected with revelation), it does not seem that in principle he is infallible, nor must we say that the Holy Spirit will never permit him to issue an erroneous decree. Certainly, the Holy Spirit will never permit it to happen that by such a decree the Church would be led into error. The way in which the error would be excluded more probably consists in the assistance of the Holy Spirit given to the head of the Church, by which such an erroneous decree would be prevented. However, it is not unthinkable that the error (on the part of the Church) should be excluded by the Holy Spirit in this way: that the subjects recognize the decree to be erroneous and cease to give their assent to it.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 167)
      4. “Now, while the question raised by the three bishops at Vatican II spoke of the case in which a ‘learned person’ would find himself unable to assent to some ordinary papal teaching ‘for well-founded reasons’, Lercher does not restrict the possibility of such dissent to the learned, but speaks [167] simply of the ‘subjects’ withholding their assent to doctrine which they recognise to be erroneous, and being led to do this by the Holy Spirit! Perhaps in such a case one should attribute their dissent to the ‘supernatural sense of the faith’ by which the faithful are inclined in an almost instinctive way towards what is consonant with their faith, and away from what does not resonate with it.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 167-68)
      5. “The way Lercher treats this issue suggests the importance of the reception of the teaching of the magisterium on the part of the faithful. He recognises the possibility that dissent of the faithful to non-infallible teaching could be a sign that the teaching is erroneous.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 168)
   2. “But this raises some difficult questions.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 168)
      1. “How general would such dissent have to be to justify drawing the conclusion that the teaching is in error?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 168)
      2. If “the faithful are divided, . . . how can one be sure that the Holy Spirit is on the side of the dissenters?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 168)
      3. “And would not one have to take into account the quality of faith and practice that is otherwise manifested by those who dissent from this teaching?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 168)
   3. “Several considerations occur to me at this point.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 168)
      1. “First: history shows that it has sometimes taken a rather long time for even the decrees of an ecumenical council to obtain universal reception. Therefore it would be risky to base a judgment on the phenomenon of dissent until a sufficient period of time had elapsed to show whether the teaching was going eventually to obtain more general assent.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 168)
      2. “Secondly: besides actual dissent, there is also the possibility that the teaching of the magisterium may meet with an attitude of indifference or apathy. In my opinion, this could be an even more serious matter than dissent.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 168)
      3. “Thirdly: both dissent and indifference, if they are at all widespread, deserve to be studied with careful attention, to see what might be their cause. It is possible that it is not the doctrine itself, but the way the decision was reached, or the unconvincing arguments with which it was proposed, that are largely responsible for the negative reaction to the decree.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 168)
5. **dissent by individual experts**
   1. Dissent may “manifest a lack of the *obsequium religiosum*” (*Lumen gentium* § 25: “*religiosum voluntatis et intellectus obsequium*,” “submission of mind and will”). (Sullivan *Magisterium* 169)
      1. Not “all dissent, and every way of expressing it, is objectively without blame.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 169)
      2. “. . . Catholics have to have made a serious effort to achieve assent to the teaching of the [168] magisterium, renouncing obstinacy and practising the virtue of docility in its regard, and to have found themselves really unable to give their sincere assent, before their dissent can be called justified . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 168-69)
   2. But sometimes “people who have made such an honest and sustained effort, still find themselves unable to give their sincere assent . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 164)
      1. For non-infallible teachings, “reverent silence [*silentium obsequiosum*] . . . does not generally suffice. By way of exception, the obligation of inner agreement may cease if a competent expert, after a renewed scientific investigation of all grounds, arrives at the positive conviction that the decision rests on an error.” (Ott 10)
      2. “. . . it is unjust to treat all dissent from the teaching of the ordinary magisterium as disobedience, or to turn agreement with this non-infallible teaching into a test of loyalty to the Holy See.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 169)
         1. “No doubt there are Catholics whose respect for the teaching authority of the pope is so great that the simple appeal to his formal authority is enough to convince them that his teaching must be true, so that no reasons that present themselves to the contrary would have any effect on their ability to give their assent.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 169)
         2. “But such persons should resist the temptation to think ‘disloyal’ other Catholics in whose minds the reasons against the teaching make so strong an impression that the formal authority of the magisterium is not enough to overcome their doubts and make it possible for them to give their internal assent.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 169)
6. **reasons for dissent**
   1. “. . . interior assent to a proposition is not an act of the free will but a judgment of the mind. And the proper object of the mind is truth. The mind cannot assent to a proposition unless it can accept it as true. This does not mean that it must necessarily grasp the intrinsic reasons why the proposition is true; on a great many matters we have to take things to be true on the authority of others. But in any case, it must be reasonable to judge the proposition to be true. And authority cannot *make* a proposition to be true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 165)
   2. “. . . I cannot really give my assent to a proposition while retaining serious doubt in my mind as to whether or not it is true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 161)
   3. convincing reasons
      1. “Since assent is an act of judgment, it follows that the magisterium cannot be content to appeal to the will of the faithful, it must also appeal to their mind, by presenting its teaching with reasons that are clear and convincing.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 165)
      2. “Perhaps an appeal to formal authority will be enough for those who have no opinion of their own on the question, or who feel themselves incompetent to judge the reasons involved.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 165)
      3. “But it is quite a different matter when the magisterium pronounces its judgment on an issue like birth control, about which a great many people already had formed their opinion, and many were competent to judge the question on its merits.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 165)
      4. “Indeed it would be inconsistent for the magisterium to propose a moral norm as a requirement of the natural law (i.e. law which has to be discovered by human intelligence reflecting on experience) and not offer convincing reasons that would appeal to the intelligence of those to whom this teaching is directed. When the norm itself is said to be discoverable by human reasoning, it would be a mistake to rely too heavily on merely formal authority in proposing it for acceptance by thinking people. In such a case it would surely not be surprising if for many of the faithful the formal authority of the magisterium did not suffice to overcome the doubt that remained in their minds concerning the truth of the official teaching. . . . it is simply impossible to assent to a proposition while retaining serious doubt in one’s mind whether it is true.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 165)
      5. “. . . I do not mean to say that the teaching of the magisterium has no more claim on our assent than the strength of its arguments would warrant. If that were true, [165] papal teaching would have no more claim on the assent of Catholics than it does on the assent of anyone else who might happen to read an encyclical. In that case, I do not see how the notion of *obsequium religiosum* would have any meaning whatsoever.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 165-66)
      6. But “if the magisterium fails to offer convincing arguments for its teaching, and relies too heavily on merely formal authority, it will not be offering to the faithful the help that many of them will need to rid themselves of their doubts about the truth of the official teaching, and achieve a sincere assent to it.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 166)
   4. “The second conclusion I would draw is that if, in a particular instance, Catholics have offered their ‘religious submission of mind and will’ to the authority of the magisterium, by making an honest and sustained effort to achieve internal assent to its teaching, and still find that doubts about its truth remain so strong in their minds that they cannot actually give their sincere intellectual assent to it, I do not see how one could judge such non-assent, or internal dissent, to involve any lack of obedience to the magisterium. Having done all that they were capable of doing towards achieving assent, they actually fulfilled their obligation of obedience . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 166)
7. **dissent from moral teaching**
   1. “Dissent from the moral teaching of the Church raises some special questions, because of the direction which the faithful are expected to receive from the magisterium for the formation of their conscience, or moral judgments.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 169)
   2. Vatican II (declaration *On Religious Freedom* [*Dignitatis humanae*] § 14): “In the formation of their consciences, the Christian faithful ought carefully to attend to the sacred and certain doctrine of the Church.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 169)
      1. “During the council debate on this document, an emendation of the text was proposed, according to which, instead of saying: ‘ought carefully to attend to’, the text should say: ‘ought to form their consciences according to’. The response of the Theological Commission in charge of this text was: ‘The proposed formula seems excessively restrictive. The obligation binding on the faithful is sufficiently expressed in the text as it stands.’” (*Acta Synodalia Conc*. *Vat*. *II*, IV/6, 769) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 169)
      2. “As far as I know, there was no outcry raised at the Council against the view of the Commission that it would be ‘excessively restrictive’ to say that the faithful are obliged to form their consciences *according to* the moral teaching of the magisterium. In any case, the Council approved the text which simply calls on them, in the formation of their consciences, *carefully to attend* to this teaching.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 170)
      3. “. . . this way of expressing the obligation of the faithful in the face of the moral teaching of the magisterium leaves a certain amount of room for them to exercise their personal judgment in the formation of their consciences. This, I take it, is an expression of respect for the moral sense of the faithful.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 170)
      4. “No mention is made in the conciliar text of the possibility that this moral sense might lead someone to dissent from the official teaching. But this must surely be reckoned with as a possibility.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 170)
   3. “Dissent from the moral teaching of the magisterium has special consequences, since it means that Catholics are forming their consciences [“i.e. their personal judgment”] as to the moral rightness or wrongness of particular kinds of conduct, in a way that conflicts with the judgment of the teaching authority of their Church. In the hypothesis that they have ‘carefully attended to the official teaching’, but have really been unable to ‘form their consciences according to it’, despite serious and sustained effort to do so, I do not see how one could accuse them of moral fault in the way that they have formed their consciences. At least they cannot be accused of a lack of religious submission to the teaching authority of the Church, because they have actually exercised the virtue of docility in its regard, without being able to rid themselves of serious doubt as to the correctness of a particular doctrine and achieve internal assent to it.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 170)
   4. “Now the question inevitably arises: can they in practice follow their own judgment in this matter without moral fault? Or would it be imprudent for Catholics to decide to follow their own judgment about the morality of a way of acting, when they know that their judgment conflicts with the official teaching of their Church?” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 170)
      1. “Now this is a problem for the moral theologian, not the ecclesiologist, to solve, so the prudent thing for me to do is [170] to refer the reader to the approved treatises of moral theology.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 170-71)
      2. “But I shall venture one observation: that the question of the prudence or imprudence of following one’s own judgment would certainly have to take account of the degree to which one’s opinion was shared by other Catholics, especially by those whose opinion deserved special consideration, by reason of their exemplary Christian lives, or their theological expertise.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 171)
      3. German bishops (pastoral letter of 22 Sept. 1967): “The Christian who believes he has a right to his private opinion, that he already knows what the Church will only come to grasp later, must ask himself in sober self-criticism before God and his conscience, whether he has the necessary depth and breadth of theological expertise to allow his private theory and practice to depart from the present doctrine of the ecclesiastical authorities. The case is in principle admissible. But conceit and presumption will have to answer for their wilfulness before the judgment-seat of God.” (Translation in: Rahner, Karl. “Magisterium.” *Sacramentum Mundi* 3: 356-57.) (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 171)
8. **general reliability of non-infallible teaching**
   1. “. . . the possibility of legitimate dissent to non-infallible teaching [does not] rule out the reasonableness of respecting the teaching of the magisterium as an authoritative and generally reliable witness to the ‘mind of the Church’ on matters of faith and morals.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 34)
   2. “. . . our faith in the guidance of the Church by the Holy Spirit justifies our confidence in the general reliability of the ordinary teaching of the magisterium, even when this guidance does not actually guarantee the infallibility of such teaching, so as to exclude the possibility that on some particular points it might eventually be seen to need correction.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 172)
   3. “Now that so many Catholics have come to realise that ordinary papal teaching is not infallible, it is all the more important that they should understand the reasons which they have to respect this kind of teaching as generally reliable, as enjoying the presumption of truth, as deserving their attitude of docility, and their sincere effort to give it their intellectual assent.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 172)
   4. “The bishop of Rome and the other Catholic bishops are called upon to exercise a prophetic role in the world today, as spokesmen of a well-informed Christian conscience. If even non-believers listen with respect to their voice, there is all the more reason for Catholics to do so, even without the mistaken belief that every pronouncement they make must be infallible.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 173)

# Fundamentals of Theology

## Introduction

### “Theology”

“theology”

1. **classical Greek**
   1. “Theology is the Greek word θεολογία [*theologia*] . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   2. Θεολογία is “nowhere used in the Bible.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   3. Plato used θεολογία (*Rep*. 379A) “In the sense of the rationale (λόγος) of the gods . . . for demythologizing the Greek poets . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
      1. Plato (*The Republic of Plato*. 1968. 2nd ed. Trans. Allan Bloom. N.p.: Basic Books, 1991. § 379A): Adeimantus asks “what would the models for speech about the gods [θεολογία] be.” Socrates replies, “The god must surely always be described such as he is, whether one presents him in epics, lyrics, or tragedies.” (Plato 56)
   4. Aristotle used θεολογία (*Meta*. 1026a) “for the part of philosophy that explains the cosmos in terms of an unmoved mover.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   5. Greeks and Romans applied it “to the civic cult of pagan gods of Greece and Rome, [so] the term was repugnant to early Christians.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
2. **early Church**
   1. When *gnosis* “acquired more dangerous connotations, Origen turned to *theologia* to express the Christian *understanding* of God as distinguished from Christian faith.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   2. “In the struggle with Arianism, this “explanation of God” (*theologia*) came to be used for Christian knowledge about the Persons of the Trinity (Athanasius, *Oratio 1 contra Arianos* 18; *Patrologia Graeca* 26:49) as distinct from what refers to God’s plan of salvation through Christ (οἰκονομία; *see* Economy, Divine).” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   3. “Pseudo-Dionysius used *theologia* for mysticism.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   4. “The Western Fathers scarcely used the word.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
      1. “Augustine (*Civ*. 6.5) made critical use of the Stoa’s threefold division into physical, mythic, and civic-cult theology [see also Tertullian, *Nationes* 2.1] and regarded the (meta-) physical as true.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
      2. “But he used the name “Christian doctrine” for all Christian knowledge and understanding of God.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
3. **middle ages**
   1. “After 1100 Abelard was the first to apply the term “theology” to methodical (dialectical) investigation of the whole Christian teaching (*Sic et Non*).” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   2. “The great theologians of the 13th century preferred such terms as “sacred doctrine” or “erudition,” “Scripture,” or the “Sacred Page.”” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
      1. “Even St. Thomas Aquinas rarely used the word *theologia* and then restricted it to the scientific function within sacred teaching (*sacra doctrina*), a broader term he used for the subject of his *Summa theologiae*.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
      2. “It was chiefly St. Thomas who worked out the theory of theology as a science of revealed truth, carefully distinguishing it from philosophy.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
4. **modern period**
   1. “Since then the term as used by Christians of their doctrine has meant the methodical elaboration of the truths of divine revelation by reason enlightened by faith; briefly, the science (in some sense) of Christian faith.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
      1. Theology “is the ferment within tradition where both laity and clergy reflect on the truths of revelation as they have been progressively understood in the Church in order to achieve under the guidance of the magisterium an understanding that is fuller, more accurate, and more suited to the current age.” (van Ackeren 13: 893)
      2. Theology is “the effort of God’s people . . . trying to understand in a reflective and orderly way what has been revealed to them in Him. It is the endeavor of the Church to understand itself ever more fully . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 893)

“theology” in the wide sense

1. **definition**
   1. “Theology” in the wide sense means “the *knowledge of God*.” (Latourelle 3)
   2. “. . . theology is the science of the object of faith . . .” (Latourelle 61)
   3. “Theology,” or “knowledge of God,” has two senses, a subjective sense and an objective sense. (Latourelle 3)
2. **subjective sense**: **God**’**s knowledge**
   1. This is “the *primary sense* of the word theology . . .” (Latourelle 6)
   2. “In the *subjective* sense, theology is the knowledge which God has of himself and of the created universe. God, Subsistent Being, infinite and perfect, has as his proper and connatural object himself. He knows himself intuitively, and other objects in himself and through himself, as participations of himself.” (Latourelle 3)
   3. The subjective sense is “the knowledge which God has of himself in his Word, in whom he knows all things . . .” (Latourelle 6)
   4. The subjective sense is “the knowledge which God himself possesses, and which he communicates to men by grace.” (Latourelle 3)
      1. This statement raises the question of the relation between the knowledge that God intends to communicate (as it is in himself—“before” he communicates it, so to speak) and the knowledge once communicated (as it is in us).—Hahn
3. **objective sense**: **our knowledge of God**
   1. Through grace, God communicates to humans “This consciousness which he has of himself . . .” (Latourelle 3)
      1. He communicates it imperfectly “through revelation and through faith.” (Latourelle 3)
      2. He communicates it perfectly in the beatific vision, “in insofar as this is possible to a creature, and according to different degrees . . .” (Latourelle 3)
   2. “In the *objective* sense theology is the knowledge which has God for its object.” (Latourelle 6)
      1. “This knowledge can . . . be conceived as the sum of human learning about God . . .” (Latourelle 6)
      2. Or it can be conceived “as man’s assimilation and understanding of this *ensemble* of learning about God.” (Latourelle 6)
4. **three types of our knowledge of God** (“**theology**” **in the objective sense**)
   1. Aquinas (on “the sources of our knowledge of divine things,” *SCG* 50.4c): “There exists a threefold human knowledge of divine things. In the first, man, thanks to the natural light of reason, *raises himself* to the knowledge of God by means of creatures; in the second, divine truth, which lies beyond the limits of our intelligence, *comes down* to us through revelation, not as a proof to be followed but as a word to be believed; in the third, the spirit will be *lifted* so that it may see perfectly what God has revealed to it.” (Qtd. in Latourelle 7)
   2. “*Natural* theology attains to God through the works of his creation and by the natural light of reason.” (Latourelle 6)
   3. “*Supernatural* theology [is] theology proper . . . ” (Latourelle 7, emphasis added)
      1. “Theology *proper* attains [6] to God through God’s word and witness to himself and by the light of reason illumined by faith.” (Latourelle 6-7)
      2. “Theology, as a science, is one. It has its own object, its own finality, its own method.” (Latourelle 93)
      3. Theology is “one science, whose end is to understand and contemplate the saving mystery of the living God [93] . . . the one design of God.” (Latourelle 93-94)
      4. God communicates his knowledge “to men through revelation. While in creation the Wisdom of God is, as it were, imprisoned in things, in revelation this Wisdom is humanized in the word of the prophets; then it becomes incarnate in Jesus Christ.” (Latourelle 6)
   4. “The theology of *homecoming* knows God in his essence and by the light of glory.” (La­tourelle 7)
   5. Each differs “in its way of attaining God. [6] . . . To each . . . there corresponds a knowledge of God increasingly profound.” (Latourelle 6-7)
      1. “In natural theology God is known as the source and end of the universe . . .” (La­tourelle 7)
      2. In “theology proper we know the mysteries of his inmost life, but by report . . .” (La­tourelle 7)
      3. In “the theology of homecoming we know the unveiled mystery, face to face.” (Latourelle 7)

“theology” in the strict sense

1. **definition**
   1. Of the three types of objective knowledge of God (natural theology, supernatural theology in this life, and the beatific vision), “theology” in the strict sense is the second, “theology proper . . .” (Latourelle 7)
   2. It “attains [6] to God through God’s word and witness to himself and by the light of reason illumined by faith.” (Latourelle 6-7)
   3. Theology “is the science of God, but a science which sets out from revelation. It speaks of God, but of God as he is known to us through his revelation . . . Theology’s point of departure then is the living God, in the free witness which he gives of himself.” (Latourelle 7)
      1. “To put it in another way, since faith and revelation are correlative notions, [7] it could be said that theology is the *science of the object of faith*, that is to say the science of what is revealed by God and believed by man.” (Latourelle 7-8)
      2. “While the natural sciences are built upon the *données* (data) of experience, theology is built upon the *données* of revelation received by faith.” (Latourelle 8)
   4. elementary theology
      1. “There is . . . in every Christian an inherent reflection upon faith, a spontaneous reflection born of the shock of events and the pressure of environment . . .” (Latourelle 8)
      2. “. . . this is elementary theology, accessible to everybody, a theology in which faith tries to understand the why and how of what it believes.” (Latourelle 8)
      3. “. . . every believer is virtually a theologian. As a man he reflects in a spontaneous if not a scientific fashion on his situation as a believer. In our day especially, when the majority of Christians, thanks to the press, to radio and to television, are in possession of a relatively extensive human and religious culture, questions and reflections upon matters of faith arise of themselves from the concrete situations of life.” (Latourelle 9)
   5. scientific theology
      1. “The theologian tries, by reflection, to arrive at a deeper understanding of the mysteries to which he already adheres by faith. What is, for the believer pure and simple, an object of assent, the theologian attempts to comprehend; what the believer pure and simple affirms as *true*, the theologian tries to see as *intelligible*.” (Latourelle 8)
      2. “Scientific theology is the prolongation of this spontaneous reflection. It becomes a reflection *conscious of itself* (of its principles, its process, its status as a science, its conclusions), and it seeks to penetrate the object of faith in a methodical fashion. Theology, as a science, is the work of the believer who uses his reason in order to understand better what he already possesses by faith. Theology is faith . . . scientifically elaborated. It is faith “in a scientific state.”” (Latourelle 8)
      3. “Theology is faith assuming the language of reason in order the better to understand its object. For the very perfecting of Christianity it is important that there should exist in the Church this scientific reflection upon the object of faith. Christianity indeed permeates and orders the whole of human reality at so deep a level that it must be not only a making sacred of the secular world, not only a transformation of the inner life, but also a lighting up of the whole intelligible world itself. This influence on the intelligible world the Church at its outset, [*sic*] exercised with considerable discretion and even timidity, [*sic*] but in the course of time, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the understanding of faith has come to be pursued so resolutely and so continuously that no one now would question its legitimacy and necessity.” (Latourelle 9)
      4. Theology “is making faith intelligible; it is the quest of the mind in its desire to understand. Into the mystery which it possesses through faith, theology seeks to penetrate more deeply . . . The prospect is a never-ending one, for the mystery reveals new depths the further the mind ventures within.” (Latourelle 61)
   6. “Theology proceeds from the fact of God and of his manifestation of himself to man. It tries to penetrate and reconstitute the divine design setting out from the elements which have been communicated to us by revelation.” (Latourelle 43)

### Continuity from the History of Salvation to Theology

1. **theology and revelation**
   1. Theology “is a branch of learning in which a Christian, using his reason enlightened by divine faith, seeks to understand the mysteries of God revealed in and through history . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   2. Theology “has its external source in divine revelation and its internal source in reason enlightened by divine faith.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   3. The source of theology is “revelation heard in faith . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   4. Theological knowledge “differs radically from philosophical knowledge about God because its object is revealed mystery and because it engages not reason alone but reason enlightened by faith.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   5. Theological knowledge “is not faith but an understanding of faith . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   6. “. . . the mysteries of God revealed . . . so excel the created intellect that even after being revealed and accepted by faith, they remain veiled in obscurity.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
   7. But “It is an understanding that although imperfect will continue to grow until faith is dissolved in the vision of God Himself.” (van Ackeren 13: 892)
2. “**There is no break between theology and the history of salvation** . . .” (Latourelle 27)
   1. Theology “must meditate upon the history of salvation. It is talk about God, but about God known through economy.” (Latourelle 26)
      1. “. . . God manifests himself in . . . a history, so that we can know him only by setting out from the economy of salvation.” (Latourelle 26)
         1. “In order to know the goodness, the justice, the mercy of the God of the Old Testament we have to examine the history of Israel which recounts the experiences of God’s people with their God, where the ways of God with regard to his people manifest something of his inner being.” (*Dei Verbum* § 14) (Fenton 26)
         2. “In order to know the Father’s love for his Son and for men we have to meditate upon the manifestations of his love in the life and actions and death of Christ.” (Latourelle 26)
      2. “We can say nothing of God unless we take, as our point of departure, the history of salvation in which he has revealed himself. The way which leads to the inner mystery of God is the history of salvation . . .” (Latourelle 26)
   2. “Theology recognizes that God transcends the history of salvation and that the life of the Trinity is sufficient to itself. But it recognizes at the same time that we know nothing of this inner life of God except through the economy of salvation. . . . Theology is reflection upon God, manifested in Jesus Christ. Its object is God known through the history of salvation.” (Latourelle 27)
      1. Bourassa, F. “Sur le traité de la Trinité.” *Gregorianum* 47 (1966): 254-85.
      2. Latourelle, René. *Theology of Revelation*. New York: Alba House, 1966. 343-58.
      3. Schillebeeckx, Eduard. *Revelation and Theology*. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967. 109-13, 325-39.
3. **salvation history without theology**
   1. “. . . reducing theology to the history of salvation [means] refusing to penetrate to the inner mystery of God . . .” (Latourelle 26)
4. **theology without salvation history**
   1. “. . . constructing a pure theology without reference to [salvation] history [risks] forgetting that God reveals himself within an economy.” (Latourelle 26)
   2. “Theology would not fulfill the demands of its object if it [22] neglected the aspect which manifests the word of God as the word of salvation. It would no longer be theology but rather a sterile metaphysic.” (Latourelle 22-23)
   3. “The [12] God of whom theology speaks is not an abstract concept, or a God who is dumb, but the living *God* whose words and actions fill the two Testaments.” (Latourelle 12-13)

### The Subject Matter of Theology

1. **material object**
   1. “The sum total of conclusions, teachings, or theses which sacred theology presents to the student constitutes what is known technically as the *material object* of the science.” (Fenton 26)
      1. Billuart says “that the adequate material object of faith is all that which falls under virtual or mediate divine revelation. There is no question about the meaning of this term.” (Billuart, Carolus Renatus, OP. *Summa Sancti Thomae Hodiernis Academiarum Moribus Accomodata*, *sive Cursus Theologiae juxta Mentem Divi Thomae*. Paris: 1904. 1: 13.) (Fenton 26 n. 1)
   2. “Strictly speaking, these conclusions or theses which are characteristic of the science are expressed in that portion of it which we know as scholastic theology. All that is studied in the other departments of science, relative to its history and development, to Sacred Scripture, the councils, and the Fathers, is treated in so far as it is requisite for a proper understanding of the content of scholastic theology.” (Fenton 26)
   3. “The message which God has revealed . . . constitutes an organized body of doctrine. It must not be considered as a collection of disparate and unconnected statements, but as a real teaching, offered to accomplish a definite function and possessed of a definite organic unity.” (Fenton 26)
   4. Heb 11:1 defines “the faith by which we accept this revelation . . .” (Fenton 26)
      1. Heb 11:1, “faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”
      2. Fenton’s translation: “the substance of the things for which we hope, the [26] conviction about that which we do not see.” (Fenton 26-27)
      3. Aquinas says (*ST* 2-2.4.1; *De Veritate* 14.2) that “substance” here “signifies a beginning. In other words, the faith is a very real beginning in the sense that the same object, the essence of God, the intuitive vision of which constitutes the eternal and ineffable joys of heaven actually is accepted on faith during the time of our pilgrimage in this world.” (Fenton 27)
2. **formal subject of attribution**
   1. “The things treated in the science of sacred theology naturally comprise those realities about which we are instructed in that divine revelation which we Catholics accept with the assent of divine faith.” (Fenton 26)
   2. “Since the happiness of heaven consists in the vision of God Himself, the revelation which God gives us in order to prepare us for the life of heaven deals primarily with the same subject matter.” (Fenton 27)
   3. *obiectum formale quod* (“formal subject of attribution”)
      1. definition: “that object which is known primarily in a science, which is studied for its own sake and because of which all other matters treated by the science are considered . . .” (Fenton 27)
      2. “. . . God in His intimate life is the *obiectum formale quod*, or the formal subject of attribution in the science of sacred theology.” (*ST* 1.1.7; commentaries of John of St. Thomas, Francis Sylvius, and Billuart on this article.) (Fenton 27)
      3. “. . . we mean God as He is known naturally to Himself alone, and not merely in so far as He can be known naturally by intellectual creatures, that is, known as the First Cause of the created universe.” (Fenton 27)
   4. “Now, it is axiomatic that a man will appreciate the content and the procedure of sacred theology only in the measure in which he realizes the verification of the teaching about its object.” (Fenton 27)
   5. “Actually in sacred theology God Himself is alone considered for His own sake. All the other subjects dealt with in [27] this science are treated in so far as they contribute toward that knowledge of God which He wishes us to possess by way of faith in this world. . . . [A] successful theologian . . . sees each section of the science contributing toward an enrichment of his concept of God. In sacred theology a man learns about God, not only when he studies those sections on the unity and trinity of God and on the incarnation, but whenever he considers any portion of the sacred discipline.” (Fenton 27-28)

### The Object of Theology

the object of theology as God *qua* God

(Thomism)

1. **definition**
   1. “Object of theology” means “the subject of which it treats . . .” (Latourelle 11)
   2. God *qua* God (“God as God”) means “. . . God as he knows himself to be and as he communicates himself to us through revelation [*ST* 1.1.7].” (Latourelle 25)
      1. “Theology studies God in the mystery of his inner life and in his design for our salvation.” (Latourelle 12)
      2. “All theology, for St. Thomas, returns to the double mystery of the Trinity and the Incarnation, that is to the mystery of God in his inner life and to the mystery of the structure of means which lead us to him.” (*ST* 2-2.1.8, 1-2.1.5.) (Latourelle 12)
      3. “In terms still more personalist, we may say that theology treats of God himself and of Christ, as the efficacious sign of salvation.” (Latourelle 12)
      4. Theology is “theological in its object” but “Christological in its process . . .” (Latourelle 26)
2. **material and formal objects**
   1. “The *material* object of theology is obviously God.” (Latourelle does not define “material object.”) (Latourelle 11)
   2. “The *formal* object of a science is the particular aspect under which it envisages its material object. Thus man can be the material object of several sciences: philosophy, sociology, psychology, anthropology, medicine for instance. Each of these sciences, however, envisages man under a different aspect.” (Latourelle 11)
   3. “In order to indicate the formal object of theology, or its *subject* according to the terminology of his times, . . . Thomas uses the expression, *Deus sub ratione Deitatis*, God under the [11] very aspect of his Godhead, God as God.” (Latourelle 11-12)
   4. Aquinas (*ST* 1.1.7c): “In sacred science everything is treated in relation to God, either because it is itself God” (the essence, the attributes, the persons of God), “or else because it is ordered to God as to its source and end” (creatures, human acts, laws, grace, virtues, sacraments).” (Qtd. in Latourelle 11-12)
   5. “Theology treats also of creatures, but it considers them in their relationship to God, as effects of God, or images of God, called to share his inmost life or to enter into the movement of cosmic renewal initiated by Christ’s victory over sin and death.” (Latourelle 13)
      1. “The attention which present day theology is paying to man and to the human condition as such is not a contradiction of this . . . the preoccupation and desire of theology is to *fulfill* man, by showing him his humanity renewed in Christ. . . . God remains theology’s object.” (Latourelle 13)
3. **new formulations**
   1. “The expression *God under the aspect of his Godhead*, or *God as God*, used by St. Thomas to indicate the object of theology, can be interpreted in different ways. Here are the two interpretations most common today . . .” (Latourelle 13)
   2. “The formal object of theology, some say, is the *God of salvation*. Theology indeed is the science of the object of faith. . . . If we ask what the truth is that God wished chiefly to reveal to us, [13] . . . it consists in this: *God is our salvation*; *God saves us through Christ*. Even the mystery of the Trinity is revealed to us only in this perspective of salvation, in order to make us understand that the Father loves us and saves us through Christ in the Spirit of love.” (Latourelle 13-14)
      1. “Thus the dominating idea which directs the progress of revelation from the beginning of the Old Testament to the end of the New, and which gives the two Testaments their unity, is this: God saves us through Christ.” (Latourelle 14)
      2. “We can have no conception of God other than that which he has revealed to us. . . . [And] the gospel is called “the word of salvation” (Eph 1, 13), “the message of salvation” (Acts 13, 26), “the gospel of grace” (Acts 20, 24), “the word of life” (Phil 2, 16).” (Latourelle 14)
   3. “Other theologians propose a formulation whose axis is the divine life. The formal object of theology, they say, is *the living God*, *source of life*. In practice this aspect of God is to be found athwart the whole of theology and in every theological treatise.” (Latourelle 14)
      1. “Each of these treatises studies an aspect of the divine life.” (Latourelle 15)
         1. “The inner dynamic of the divine life is fulfilled in the generation of the Word and the spiration of the Spirit—hence the treatise *de Deo uno* and *de Deo trino*.” (Latourelle 14)
         2. “But there is also in [14] God an external activity, in virtue of which the divine life is communicated to creatures: God creates man and raises him to a participation in his own *life*—hence the treatises *de Deo creante et elevante*.” (Latourelle 14-15)
         3. “Through original sin this life has been destroyed in man but through the Incarnation of the Word and the sacrifice of Christ new life has come into the world—hence the treatises *de Christo legato*, *de Verbo Incarnato*, *de Deo Redemptore*.” (Latourelle 15)
         4. “The divine life is diffused within the members of Christ’s Body—hence the treatises *de Ecclesia*, *de Sacramentis*, *de Virtutibus*.” (Latourelle 15)
         5. “There is a special treatise whose province is the study of the nature of this divine life communicated to men, the treatise *de Gratia*.” (Latourelle 15)
         6. “Finally theology discusses man’s last end, that is the everlasting possession or the everlasting loss of this life—the treatise *de Novissimis*.” (Latourelle 15)
      2. “Indeed it is always a matter of the mystery of the divine life, which takes its source in the Trinity, is communicated to men, destroyed by sin, restored by Christ and diffused within the Church.” (Latourelle 15)
4. **position of theology**
   1. “That a science should thus have as the object of its inquiry the living and saving God cannot but affect profoundly its status . . .” (Latourelle 15)
   2. “Theology [takes] revelation as its point of departure. . . . It tries to understand God better, but it sets out from his own testimony. It follows that theology can never become an autonomous science. [15] Like the Church, of whom it is the function, it is “at the service of the word of God.”” (*Dei Verbum* § 10) (Latourelle 15-16)
   3. “Since theology has as its object the living and saving God, it is characterized in certain ways . . .” (Latourelle 16)
      1. “It is *historical* in character. Since it has as its object God revealing himself in history and through history, theology is constantly related to the history of salvation. It reflects not upon a system of abstract propositions but upon the free intervention of [16] God in history. Theology must, therefore, remain centered upon the history of salvation.” (Latourelle 16-17)
      2. “It is *christological* in character. Christ is the axis of the history of salvation.” (Latourelle 17)
      3. “It is *ecclesial* in character. It is within the Church that theology hears and receives the word of God: it is within the Church, and as an auxiliary of the Church and its magisterium, that theology seeks to understand and interpret the word of God . . .” (Latourelle 17)
      4. “It is *anthropological* in character.” (Latourelle 17)
         1. Schillebeeckx, Eduard. “Ecclesia in mundo hujus temporis.” *Angelicum* 43 (1966): 346-47.
         2. “The revelation of God is, at the same time, a revelation to man of his own mystery [because] man is called by love Itself to share in the divine life. This is the secret of his being. Consequently theology cannot speak of God without speaking of man . . .” (Latourelle 17)
         3. “Moreover since God has chosen to manifest himself by means of the Incarnation, that is to say through the words, gestures and actions of the man Jesus, it follows that theology cannot understand the mysteries of the divine life without deepening its knowledge of man and of human experience. For it is man who has been assumed by the Son of God to express the Absolute.” (Latourelle 17)
         4. “Finally, since the message of Christ is addressed not only to man, but to man *en situation-historique*, theological reflection cannot be constructed *in abstracto* [17] . . . theology must speak . . . *in each generation*’*s terms*.” (Latourelle 17-18)

### The Task of Theology

1. **three negative** “**definitions of the theologi­cal task that I cannot accept**” (Nichols 27)
   1. “. . . many good defini­tions are arrived at by ruling out what things are not.” (Nichols 27)
   2. “. . . each of the rejected defi­nitions [has] an element of value [that can be] disengaged and used afresh in a positive definition . . .” (Nichols 27)
   3. first negative definition
      1. “. . . theology is the misguided attempt to turn into a science something that is strictly mysterious: the dogmas, or as we say more precisely, the mysteries of the Christian religion.” (Nichols 27)
      2. pro
         1. “Since these mysteries by defi­nition transcend the scope of the human mind, what is the point of trying to work them out intellectually?” (Nichols 27)
         2. “If we have accepted a re­vealed religion we must take the consequences. The consequences are that we cannot theorize about a revelation. We can only reform our own attitudes and feelings on the basis of it. In other words, one can have a spirituality but not a theology.” (Nichols 27)
         3. This is “the attempted transposition of theology into spirituality . . .” (Nichols 28)
         4. “A conviction of the superfluity of theology often [27] accompanies periods of spiritual revival . . . classically, in the *devotio moderna* of the Netherlandish Middle Ages.” (Nichols 27-28)
      3. con
         1. “However, if faith contains, as Thomas Aquinas insists [*ST* 2-2.1-7; *Compendium theologiae* 1.2], an inbuilt tendency toward the vision of God, being the inchoate form of that vision, this first defi­nition will not do. Though, to begin with, while faith is less perspicu­ous, less clear, than are other kinds of knowledge, it is in fact moving toward a state of total clarity, intellectual union with Truth himself. . . . . . . faith must permit continuous growth in the under­standing of what it believes . . .” (“For Thomas’ account of faith and its intellectuality, *see* St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, vol. 31: Faith, ed. T. C. O’Brien (London: 1974) *passim*.” 28 n. 3) (Nichols 28)
         2. “. . . in claiming for theology a continuity with the vision of God on the grounds that it is an intellectual habit rooted in the act of faith, we are accepting that it is a science—in the special, and now archaic, sense [*ST* 1.1.2 corpus].” (Nichols 28)
            1. “For Thomas, theology is a science insofar as it draws its own first principles from an utterly cer­tain and transparent or self-evident kind of knowing, namely God’s own knowing of himself.” (Nichols 28)
            2. “Theology cannot be reduced to spirituality because it is a way of knowing and understanding and not just a way of feeling.” (Nichols 28)
      4. the element of truth in this negative definition
         1. “The element of truth [in this negative definition is] that the fire of spirituality should be burning in all theology. Faith, together with its necessary attendants, hope and charity, is the foundation of all spirituality, all lived relation­ships with God, while at the same time, by entering into union with studiousness, faith is also the foundation of the theologian’s work.” (Nichols 28)
   4. second negative definition of the task of theology
      1. The task of theology is “transcribing in a more intelligible, or rationally acceptable, form whatever the divinely guided voice of Church authority may determine.” (Nichols 29)
      2. pro
         1. “Here the idea is that the starting point of all theology is the pronouncements of pope and bishops in both their ex­traordinary and ordinary magisterium, theology’s job being to prove authorized ecclesiastical pronouncements by a regressive method which seeks arguments in the sources, Scripture and Tradition, as well as in reason, for their truth.” (Nichols 29)
         2. Support was “given by Pope Pius XII to this picture of theology in his encyclical *Humani generis* [1950] . . .” (Nichols 29)
      3. con
         1. Pius’s support “was rightly criticized by Fr. (now Cardinal) Joseph Ratzinger in his essay on the Second Vatican Council’s dogmatic constitution on revelation, *Dei verbum*.” (*Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*. Ed. H. Vorgrimler. Trans. New York: 1969. 3: 197.) (Nichols 29)
         2. “Theology is something wider than the direct assistance the theologian can afford the magisterium. The . . . *fides quae*, doctrine, the objective con­tent of the Christian creed . . . is the heritage of every believer who, on the basis of theological wonder, explores the riches of this shared faith by putting ever-new questions to it and about it. There is no reason to think that episcopate and papacy have ever thought of all these questions, much less of the answers to them. The [29] role of Church authority is to say when a given theology has detached itself from the *fides quae*. It is not to prescribe in advance what the theo­logian’s work shall be.” (Nichols 29-30)
         3. “. . . the *fides quae* does not come to us simply from learning what the ecumenical councils or the popes when teaching *ex cathedra* have defined, nor by listening to what the bishops and pope are teaching today. It also comes to us, and in more ample fashion, from Scripture, and from Tradition—of which the past teachings of Church authority are only one element, one set of “monuments.”” (Nichols 30)
         4. “. . . theology does not so much echo the present-day teaching of bishops and pope as make it possible—by providing the Church’s pastors with an informed and circumstantial grasp of what the sources of revelation contain.” (Nichols 30)
      4. the element of truth in this negative definition
         1. “Because of theology’s dependence on the Church’s life of faith, it can­not ignore what the pastors of the Church are saying at any given time. By the sacrament of orders, the bishops, and preeminently the Roman bishop, are set over the Church by the Church’s Lord. Through their distinctive activities of preaching the gospel to the unconverted, catechizing the faithful, explaining the mysteries celebrated in the Church’s liturgy, and caring for the lives of Christians from the cradle to the grave, the bishops, and those other ministers—notably, priests—whom they co-opt to assist them, are in a good position to see the Chris­tian faith as a lived totality. They can help the theologian to see the *fides quae* in its complete outline rather than to concentrate on some one aspect of it that may happen to be of particular interest in a given culture.” (Nichols 30)
         2. “Conversely, the pope and bishops may also, through their reading of what the Second Vatican Council called the “signs of the times,” specifically encourage theologians on behalf of the whole Church to devote their attention to some aspect of theological research deemed likely to be especially helpful at some given time.” (Nichols 30)
            1. “For the mutual aid which should mark the relations of episcopate and theologians, *see* the International Theological Commission’s “Theses on the interrelationship between the ecclesiastical magisterium and theology” (Rpt. with commen­tary: Sullivan, Francis A. *Magisterium*: *Teaching Authority in the Catholic Church*. Dublin: 1983. 174-218.) (Nichols 30 n. 8)
            2. “For the concept of the “signs of the times””: Chenu, M.-D. “Les signes du temps.” *Nouvelle revue théologique* 90 (1965): 29-39. (Nichols 30 n. 8)
         3. “Finally, in those unresolved disputed questions, which from time to time mar the unity of the Church’s life of faith, the theologian may, by and large, have confidence in the rightness of that side of a case to which pope [30] and bishops lean—since the charism of truth bestowed on the apostolic ministry will naturally have its effect on the expression of that minis­try, both in the local Church and in the Church universal.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 172) (Nichols 30-31)
   5. third negative definition of the task of theology
      1. “For some, theol­ogy consists in the acquisition of a very large number of facts about the Bible and the Church. Fundamentally, on this view, theology is an exercise in the memorizing of data . . .” (Nichols 31)
      2. “The emergence of historical theology in the sixteenth cen­tury as a mode of theological practice created the possibility of mistak­ing for the theological task the registering of what others have thought of God.” (Nichols 31)
      3. “It may be that Anglican theology has been peculiarly subject to this temptation, as such different voices in the Church of England as Dr. E.L. Mascall and Prof. S.W. Sykes have suggested.” (Nichols 31)
         1. Mascall, E.L. *Theology and the Gospel of Christ*: *An Essay in Reorientation*. 2nd ed. London: 1984. xvi.
         2. Sykes, S.W. *The Integrity of Anglicanism*. London: 1978. 79ff.
      4. “In Catholi­cism, . . . Cornelius Jansen (1585-1638) . . . roundly declared that theology was an affair of the memory and not of the reasoning faculty . . .” (Nichols 31)
         1. He was followed in this “by his French dis­ciple Antoine Arnauld (1617-94).” (Nichols 31)
         2. “This must surely have had its effect in their reading of Augustine’s achievement as Jansenism.” (Nichols 31 n. 11)
      5. con
         1. This identifies theology with the “purely factual or, in the technical word, “positive” . . . theology.” (Nichols 31)
         2. “The trouble with this picture of theology is that just heaping up facts and references does not in itself give one a coherent account of the Christian faith. Christian curiosity about the revelation received and the urge to connect its various facets, something that mir­rors the ultimate unity of God and the mind of man, cannot rest satis­fied with this . . .” (Nichols 31)
      6. element of truth
         1. “. . . without positive theology, without a knowledge of facts about the Bible and Church tradition, the con­tent of systematic theology would be extemely [*sic*] thin gruel.”
         2. “In the open­ing question of his *Summa theologiae* [*ST* 1.1.2 ad 1], Thomas gives the impression at one point that the only materials theology has to go on are the articles of the Creed. Were this true, theology would be mightily diminished. In point of fact, Thomas had an impressive familiarity with Scripture, the Fathers, and the early medieval divines as well as with the teach­ings of councils and popes, the texts of the Roman liturgy, and the [31] principles of canon law. The quality of his factual or positive resources concerning the *fides quae* is one major reason for the quality of his the­ology as a whole. [Chenu, M.-D. *Toward Understanding Saint Thomas*. Trans. Chicago: 1964. 150-55.] The same could be said of the work of more modern writers like Matthias Josef Scheeben (1835-88) or Hans Urs von Baltha­sar (1905-88).” (Nichols 31-32)
            1. Introduction to Scheeben: Fritz, G. “Scheeben, Matthias Joseph.” *DTC*. 1939. 14.1 cols. 1270-74.
            2. Full study of Scheeben: Paul, E. *Denkweg und Denkform der Theologie von Matthias Joseph Scheeben*. Munich: 1970.
            3. Introduction to von Balthasar: MacKinnon, D. “[Prefatory essay].” In: von Balthasar, Hans Urs. *Elucidations*. London: 1972.
            4. Also on von Balthasar: Nichols, Aidan. “Balthasar and his Christology.” *New Blackfriars* 66.781-82 (1985): 317-24.
            5. Full study of von Balthasar: Moda, A. *Hans Urs von Balthasar*. Bari: 1976.
2. **Nichols**’**s definition**
   1. “The task of theology is the disciplined explora­tion of what is contained in revelation.” (Nichols 32)
   2. “Each of the main component terms of this definition, “disciplined,” “exploration,” “revelation,” must now be unpacked.” (Nichols 32)
   3. revelation
      1. “. . . we would not be interested in theology without an acceptance of revelation. If we regarded Catholic Christianity as one religion among many, . . . we would not wish to study it from inside, as participators. [32] . . . Theology is, there­fore, essentially concerned with revelation.” (Nichols 32-33)
      2. “Theology may be termed, indeed, a ministry carried out in the serv­ice of revelation.” (Nichols 33)
      3. relation of theologians and bishops
         1. Theologians “are servants of the divine Word, the Logos, just as much as are the bishops or the pope, though in a different mode. Theologians consecrate them­selves to the meaning of revelation, and this suggests a more intimate relation with revelation than that possessed by the Church hierarchy, who are its guardians more than they are its interpreters.” (Nichols 33)
         2. “Unfortu­nately, the Holy Spirit has not been vouchsafed to theologians *qua* theo­logians, whereas the Spirit *has* been vouchsafed to the guardians of revelation, the Church hierarchy. The reason for this is simple. If the deposit of faith has not been successfully guarded, there will be noth­ing there to interpret. If the deposit of faith has not been successfully interpreted theologically, it will still be there for someone else to in­terpret in another age.” (Nichols 33)
      4. Since theology “is bound up with revelation . . . it must follow that the primary sources of theology will not be found in the world around us as with other disciplines, but in the revelation to which the Church is the witness. These primary sources, therefore, will be Scripture and Tradition. . . . Scripture and Tradition are the font of theo­logical knowledge.” (Nichols 34)
         1. “This means, in turn, that in order to be theologians we must have a good knowledge of, on the one hand, the Old and New Testaments, and on the other, of the Tradition of the Church . . .” (Nichols 34)
         2. And “we must have a good knowledge of . . . the Tradition of the Church . . .” (Nichols 34)
      5. In studying scripture and Tradi­tion, the theologian has two “aids to discern­ment” that help. (Nichols 34)
         1. “In the first place, we have our own Christian experience. The gift of faith makes possible for each of us our own Christian sense of reality. Through the sensibility which faith gives, each of us can to some degree recognize what is an exaggeration in theology, what is a deviation in theology, and what, on the contrary, sounds right in theology.” (Nichols 34)
         2. “In the second place, we have the . . . contemporary day-to-day teaching of the [34] pope and bishops, what is termed technically the “ordinary magiste­rium.”” (Nichols 34-35)
   4. exploration
      1. “Theology is “the disciplined exploration of revelation. First of all, then, theology is an exploration.” (Nichols 35)
      2. “It is not simply the reassertion of something that is obvi­ous to all believers. The statement that, for instance, God is our Creator is a straightforward statement of a truth of faith such as might be found in a catechism or a prayer book. It is not in itself a theological state­ment, or perhaps a better way of putting this would be to say that the ability to make this statement does not yet prove that one is a theo­logian.” (Nichols 35)
      3. “The exploratory role of theology takes many different forms. . . . theology finds itself moving out into a whole host of subdisciplines.” (Nichols 35)
         1. “For example, in order to understand the context of the life of Jesus, . . . the theologian may want to learn more about the geographical sites involved in the minis­try of Jesus. Thus arises biblical archaeology as an offshoot of theologi­cal exploration.” (Nichols 35)
         2. Or “one may wish to know more about the way the Gospels were written . . . So a new theological subdiscipline joins the club, historical-critical exege­sis.” (Nichols 35)
      4. “. . . answers to questions about what exactly happened in the ministry of Jesus . . . are going to be quite complex and detailed. A catechism answer would hardly suffice. So theology is not just *any* expression of revealed truth. It is different from the expression of revelation that we find in preach­ing or in catechizing or in devotion. It differs from these by being an exploration of what is not at first obvious, even to someone who knows and accepts the faith of the Church.” (Nichols 35)
   5. discipline
      1. In “this exploration which is theology . . . elements of order [35] and structure should be present. The question as to what these ele­ments of order and structure ought to be is the question of theological methodology, method in theology.” (Nichols 35-36)
      2. “. . . method [is] from Greek, *meta ton hodon*, which means “along the way” . . .” (Langan 372)
      3. “It seems to me that the structural or ordering element in theology is twofold.” (Nichols 36)
         1. “First, there is a principle of order in all theologies which derives from outside of theology. In a broad sense, this pre-theological principle of order may be said to come from philosophy, assuming that we take the word “philosophy” in a sufficiently general kind of way. Many people have what are in ef­fect philosophical convictions or philosophical questions without realiz­ing that these are in fact philosophical. Every culture carries with it one or more basic ways of interpreting the world . . . we come to the exploration of revelation with a cer­tain agenda, a certain list of priorities, a certain number of already formed convictions about the nature of reality.” (Nichols 36)
         2. “The second structural element in theology derives not from out­side revelation but from inside it.” (Nichols 36)
            1. Nichols, Aidan. “Unity and Plurality in Theology: Lonergan’s *Method* and the Counter-claims of a Theory of Paradigms.” *Angelicum* 62 (1985) 30-52. “Also, ch. 20 in this book.” (Nichols 36 n. 16)
            2. “Every theology takes as its central axis some facet of revelation and tries to relate everything to that. It selects one item within revelation and arranges all the others around it . . .” (Nichols 36)

“. . . Augustine’s theology revolves around the theme of grace . . .” (Nichols 36)

“. . . Thomas’ theology revolves around the idea of the coming forth of crea­tures from God and their return to him . . .” (Nichols 36)

“. . . Rahner’s theology [revolves] around a version of the doctrine that people are the image of God . . .” (Nichols 36)

1. **organization of *The Shape of Catholic Theology***
   1. “So far as this theological principle of order is concerned, I want to defer [36] consideration of it until, having mastered the other elements of theology, we come to look at the history of theology in Part 6 of this book. The reason for this is that until we have some idea of the enormous vari­ety of writings that have counted as Catholic theology in past and present, what I might have to say about the theological ordering prin­ciple would be somewhat rootless, and abstract.” (Nichols 36-37)
   2. “. . . I plan to take the other three elements we have identified—sources, aids to discernment, and philosophical principle of order—[first.]” (Nichols 37)
   3. But “. . . I propose to deal with the role of philosophy in theology first, and only then to go on to look at the sources and the aids to discernment. The reason for this is that, really, philosophy has two roles to play in theology, and one of these two roles is logically prior to a consideration of the sources and how we might be helped to interpret them.” (Nichols 37)
   4. “So this is the order we will be fol­lowing:
      1. “the role of philosophy, both as rational foundation of theology [37] and as principle of order within theology;
      2. “the roles of Scripture and Tradition as sources;
      3. “the roles of experience and magisterium as forms of illumination of those sources;
      4. “and, finally, the theological principle of order in the context of the history of Catholic theology, its plural­ity, and its unity.” (Nichols 37-38)

### Theology as a Discipline

Paul Hahn

Each discipline in a university investigates some portion of reality. Biology studies organisms; geology, the earth; astronomy, the stars. History, sociology, auto mechanics: each discipline carves out for itself some portion of reality to study.

The same is true for theology. It studies ultimate reality, the portion of reality that frames all the rest. Theology is concerned with the ultimate questions: is there a God? a soul? life after death? a purpose to life? And, most mysterious of all: why does anything exist, i.e., why is there anything rather than just nothing?

These are religious questions. As Vatican Council II said in 1965,

Men look to the various religions for answers to those profound myster­ies of the human condition which, today even as in olden times, deeply stir the human heart: What is a man? What is the meaning and the purpose of our life? What is goodness and what is sin? What gives rise to our sorrows and to what intent? Where lies the path to true happiness? What is the truth about death, judgment, and retribution beyond the grave? What, finally, is that ultimate and unutterable mystery which engulfs our being, and whence we take our rise, and whither our journey leads us? (*Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* § 1)

The council calls these questions “mysteries,” but there are different kinds of mysteries. Some things you already know for certain: water boils at 32° Fahrenheit. That is not mysterious. Some truths you do not know but can find out. What year did Samuel Richardson write *Pamela*, the first modern English novel? It’s a mystery only until you look it up: 1740. These mysteries are like murder “mysteries,” mysteries that have a knowable solution. Still other truths, though they have a definite answer, will always remain mysteries. How many shrimp were in the Pacific at 12:02 a.m. EST on March 4, 1990? There *is* an exact answer to that question. If we had had the right equipment in place, we could have known it (maybe a thousand years from now, we will have the right equipment and will track the exact shrimp population every moment). But we will never know the number for that moment in 1990; that answer will always be a mystery. Finally, some truths we apparently *cannot* know, not because we lack the technology, but because they pertain to realities that are inherently unknowable. These are the “mysteries” the quotation refers to. No one really knows what happens after death (near death experiences do not tell us: they are *near* death experiences and at any rate may be subjective rather than objective). No one really knows why we exist. No one really knows why there is evil. No one really knows for certain whether God exists. These are *religious* mysteries, because religions give answers to them. The portion of reality that theology carves out for itself to study is the answers that a particular religion gives.

If theology studies the answers of a particular religion, then theology must be something different from religion.

According to its etymology, theology is the study of God (*theos*, God + *logos*, discourse about). Aquinas (ad 1225-74) said theology is the study of God and of everything else in relation to God; even the chair you are sitting on is part of theology’s subject matter, insofar as it exists in relation to God. A classic definition of theology is that of Anselm (ad 1033-1109): theology is *fides quaerens intellectum*, literally, “faith seeking to reach the intellect,” but usually translated “faith seeking understanding.” This definition makes two valuable points about theology.

One is that faith precedes understanding. Theology is not a person using reason to determine the truth of a religion, then believing that religion because it has been proven to the person’s satisfaction. No: in theology one uses reason to investigate the faith one already believes. That is why theology can only be done “from the inside,” from within a faith community. A nonbeliever can engage in philosophy about religious questions, or can study comparative religions, or sociology of religion, or psychology of religion, and so on. Such disciplines do not require a commitment to a religion’s beliefs. A theologian, on the other hand—Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, or whatever—presupposes the truth of a particular religion’s assertions.

This raises the question whether it would not be better to stand outside all religions, so as to view them all objectively. After all, to commit to a particular religion is to affirm that one religion is superior to the others, and such an affirmation goes against the prevailing liberal tenor of modern western societies. But a scholar who deliberately refrains from personal commitment to a traditional religion is still asserting the superiority of one religious stance over all others. That scholar is asserting that agnosticism is the proper stance (agnosticism is the belief that one cannot know whether God exists; by extension it means that all religious questions are unanswerable) or that atheism is the proper stance (atheism is the belief that God does not exist; by extension it means that all religious realities do not exist). One who chooses to refrain from commitment is committing himself to a choice: everyone holds *some* position concerning religious questions. Not to commit is just as much a commitment to one possible belief system as is commitment to a traditional belief system.

### Theology as a Science

1. **the scientific character of theology**
   1. “. . . theology is a true science, because it uses as principles the securely founded basic truths of Divine Revelation and draws from these new knowledge (theological conclusions) by a strict scientific method and unites the whole in a closed system.” See *ST* 1.1.2. (Ott 1)
   2. “The questions posed by the Schoolmen were exclusively those pertaining to speculative theology. The development of historical research at the beginning of the modern era led to an extension of the concept of “science” which permits its application to positive theology [i.e., scripture and Church history] also. . . . Theology possesses a unitary object, uses a methodical process adapted to the object, and unites its results in a closed system. The dependence of theology upon Divine authority and that of the Church does not derogate from its scientific character, because [that dependence] cannot be dissociated from the object of theology.” (Ott 2)
   3. “Theology transcends all other sciences by: the sublimity of its object [and] by its practical purpose which is eternal bliss, i.e., the ultimate destination of mankind (cf. S. th. I i, 5).” (Ott 2)
   4. “According to St. Thomas theology is both a speculative and a practical science . . .” See *ST* 1.1.4. (Ott 2)
2. **theology as a science of faith**
   1. “It [theology] is concerned with faith in the *objective sense* (fides quae creditur) that which is believed, and in the *subjective sense* (fides qua creditur) that by which we believe. Theology like faith accepts, as the sources of its knowledge, Holy Writ and Tradition (remote rule of faith) [2] and also the doctrinal assertions of the Church (proximate rule of faith). But as a science of faith it seeks by human reason to penetrate the content . . . of the supernatural system of truth . . .” (Ott 2-3)
   2. classic expressions of theology as a science of faith
      1. Augustine (ad 354-430): “Believe that you may understand” (*Sermo* 43.7.9). (Ott 3)
      2. Anselm (ad 1033-1109): “I believe that I may understand” (*Proslogion* 1). (Ott 3)
      3. Anselm: theology is *Fides quaerens intellectum*, “Faith seeking to reach the intellect” but usually translated “Faith seeking understanding.” (Ott 3)
      4. Richard of St. Victor († ad 1173): “Let us hasten from faith to knowledge. Let us endeavour so far as we can, to understand that which we believe.” (*De Trinitate*, prologue). (Ott 3)
3. **Newman on systematic theology**
   1. John Henry Cardinal Newman (*Lectures on the Doc­­trine of Justification*. 6th ed. 1st ed., 1838. Lon­don: Long­­mans, Green, 1892. 31): “All theological definitions come short of concrete life. Science is not devotion or literature. If the Fathers are not cold, and the Schoolmen are, this is be­cause the former write in their own persons, and the latter as logicians or disputants. St. Athanasius or St. Augustine has a life, which a system of theology has not. Yet dog­matic theology has its use and its importance notwithstanding.”
4. **John Paul II on systematic theology**
   1. John Paul II (Address to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith at the end of its 1995 plenary meeting. *L*’*Osservatore Romano* [English ed.] [29 Nov. 1995]: 3. Qtd. in: Bertone, Tarcisio. “Theological Observations by Archbishop Bertone: Ma­gis­terial Documents and Public Dissent.” *L*’*Osservatore Romano* [29 Jan. 1997]): “Theology, in its task of making explicit the intelligible content of the faith, expresses the intrinsic orientation of human intelligence to the truth and the believer’s irrepressible need rationally to explore the revealed mystery.”

### Epistemology of Theology

1. **theology as understanding the faith**
   1. apprehension and judgment
      1. “Since Aristotle it has been customary to distinguish two operations of the human intellect . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 893)
      2. apprehension (understanding)
         1. Apprehension “corresponds to the question “What is it?” or “Why is it?” It grasps the meaning or reason or cause of a thing or of a truth and strives to conceive and formulate a definition or hypothesis about it.” (van Ackeren 13: 893)
         2. Understanding is the “first operation of human intellect. . . . All understanding takes place in the first operation of the mind.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
         3. “Understanding itself is the fruit of the first operation of the mind. It can be more or less adequate or complete, but of itself it is neither true nor false. Understanding is true or false only when in the second operation one affirms on sufficient evidence that it is so or not so.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
         4. “Understanding in the first operation spontaneously [893] tends toward judgment . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 893-94)
      3. judgment
         1. “The second operation, called judgment, corresponds to the question “Is it so?” It considers the evidence, evaluates it, and finally affirms on the basis of evidence that “it *is* so” or “it *is not* so.” Only in this second operation is there found properly human knowledge, for only in this operation is existence affirmed.” (van Ackeren 13: 893)
         2. “The second operation does not produce understanding but only decides whether understanding is true or not.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
         3. “. . . judgment invites to further understanding because man naturally desires to understand better what he already knows to exist or to be true.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
      4. “Both apprehension and judgment are concerned with existing reality or being. Just as the being that is the proportioned object of man’s intellect is one, although it is composed of structure (essence) and its actuality (act of existence), so the act of human knowledge is one but is composed of apprehension (understanding) and an act of judgment, by which the understanding is known to be true. And it is one and the same being that is understood by apprehension and affirmed to be by judgment.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
   2. apprehension and judgment in theology
      1. catechesis and theology contrasted
         1. Aquinas (*Quodl*. 4.9.3): in theology “Some discussions aim at resolving doubts as to whether a thing is so; and in this type of theological discussion, those authorities should be used who are accepted by those with whom one is discussing. But there is another type of discussion used by the masters in the schools that aims not at the removal of error but at the instruction of the listeners, that they may be led to an understanding of the truth in question; and in this type, one ought to employ reasons which penetrate to the roots of the truth and make known how the proposition is true; otherwise, if the master answers the question merely by appealing to authorities, the listener will be certain that the thing is so, but he will not have gained any knowledge or understanding, and will go away with nothing in his head.” (Qtd. in van Ackeren 894)
      2. the process of theology
         1. “It is in [a] continued cyclic process that understanding grows.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
         2. The theologian presupposes a judgment: “In trying to understand the mysteries believed by faith, the question is not whether the mysteries are true (Christians believe that) . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
         3. In a first step, the theologian seeks understanding: “why or how they [the mysteries] are true. One strives for insight to conceive ways of understanding it as well as possible.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
            1. Step one is speculative theology: “speculative theology is concerned with understanding what is true.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
         4. In a second step, the theologian judges the understanding: “Each new insight into the mystery, however, brings up the question “Is it a true insight?” And this question is answered only in a judgment based on sufficient evidence. . . . Theology, of course, wants understanding that is true.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
            1. Step three uses positive theology as evidence: “positive theology is concerned with the truth of understanding . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 894)

“. . . the sources of revelation as handed on by the Church contain many certain truths from which as premises theology can determine with certainty the truthfulness of theological conclusions.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)

* + - * 1. Step three also uses other knowledge as evidence.

“. . . the more fully the implications of any theological conception or hypothesis agree with all that the theologian knows from faith (analogy of faith) . . ., the more certain he can be of the truth of his hypotheses.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)

“. . . the more fully the implications of any theological conception or hypothesis agree with all that the theologian knows from . . . other sources of knowledge, the more certain he can be of the truth of his hypotheses.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)

* + - * 1. So “theology does attain truth.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
      1. “If true, then further questions arise in the first operation of the mind, “How, why?”” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
    1. synthesis
       1. “. . . because human intelligence . . . strives always to find some unity and order in what it knows, theological understanding will tend toward synthesis . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
       2. But “Because human understanding is conditioned by its history, . . . theological understanding too is historical, continually evolving and growing. [Consequently,] any synthesis it achieves will itself be . . . evolving.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)

1. **levels of understanding**
   1. “Unlike the natural sciences, which are ever closer approximations to truth . . ., theology begins with absolutely certain truths of faith, and, as understanding develops, it constantly adheres to the same truths.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
   2. “As with all human knowledge, theology can know the same object better and better, and this evolution in no way denies the identity of the object or truth that is known.” (van Ackeren 13: 894)
      1. “For example, in reading a foreign language a person may understand the meaning of each word in a sentence but still not understand the meaning of the sentence. Or he may have some understanding of . . . every [894] individual sentence in a paragraph and still not understand the meaning of the whole paragraph. In each rereading of the paragraph he brings questions about what he does not understand. Eventually he can understand the whole paragraph as a unity, seeing in one act of understanding the whole and all its parts in relation to the whole. It is the same thing he is understanding from start to finish, but his way of understanding has been changing . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 894-95)
      2. “The understanding of revelation likewise evolves from one way of understanding (e.g., catechetical understanding) to a more exact way of understanding the same truths (with careful exegesis) to a way of understanding many truths together (in biblical themes, for example) to ever more exact and comprehensive ways of understanding discovered in positive and speculative and historical theology. Thus, understanding the faith can be pursued on different levels: e.g., catechetical, humanistic, scientific. The term “theology” has generally been reserved for the scientific level, but with the development of “college theology” at mid-20th century, it has been applied widely to the humanistic level.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
      3. “Scientific theology takes a reflectively critical stance toward its work.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
         1. “It is usually divided into positive and speculative theology.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
         2. Exegesis, “as well as biblical, liturgical . . ., conciliar, and kerygmatic theology refer to parts of, or approaches used in, this twofold division.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
2. **truth**’**s transcendence**
   1. “Truth is transcendent.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
      1. “ . . . it is not relative to or dependent on any finite subject who knows it.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
      2. “The very same truth can be known by many, or known by one and believed on his authority by another.” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
      3. “Moreover, truth is in a sense independent of the context in which it was first uttered.” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
         1. “. . . although a statement is never without a context and its meaning can be determined only by the context in which it is uttered, still once the meaning in its original context is determined, the same meaning, the same truth, can be expressed in another context in which understanding of the realities involved is much more developed.” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
         2. “For example, the truth enunciated by Christ at the Last Supper, “This is my body,” is the same truth that is expressed in terms of a more developed understanding of reality in another age by the Council of Trent, when it said that the whole substance of the bread is changed into the substance of the body of Christ and that this change is properly called transubstantiation.” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
   2. development of doctrine
      1. Truth’s transcendence makes possible “the development of doctrine—a transference, a transposition, that takes truths in the sense that they have in one context (in one mode of apprehension, one set of images or concepts) and expresses the same truths, the same meanings, in another context wherein understanding has undergone development.” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
      2. “An important fundamental task of the dogmatic theologian is to show how the truths that have been defined by the Church, the dogmas believed in the contemporary context, have evolved from their original expression in revelation. (Pius XII; cf. H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion symbolorum* 3886) . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
      3. Example: “the truth that one confesses in the Credo at Mass, that the Son of God is consubstantial with the Father (originally defined at Nicaea I), is the same truth that is expressed, but less clearly, in the Scriptures . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
      4. Example: “the truth about the Trinity that one professes each Sunday in the Preface of the Mass, “unity in essence, distinction in Persons, and equality in majesty,” is contained in the deposit of faith. In showing the relation between this contemporary expression of faith and its sources in revelation, the dogmatic theologian is elucidating in a meaningful way the content of the contemporary dogmatic-theological context.” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
      5. process of thematization
         1. The process of thematization is “a transference from one type of apprehension and expression of truth to another type of apprehension and expression of the same truth.” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
         2. “This process of itself neither changes the thing that is known nor does it make one’s previous knowledge false, but it adds further knowledge, further clarification in a new mode of apprehension.” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
         3. “Thematization is a universal human phenomenon; it occurs in all the human sciences.” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
            1. An example “of this process [is] the doctor’s examining his patient . . . It is the same illness that the patient experiences and the doctor is investigating. The questions the doctor puts to the patient arise out of the context of the doctor’s knowledge of medicine. As he listens to the patient describing his experience in the categories of common sense, the doctor interprets this description, translating and transposing it into the categories of medicine. The final result is that the doctor knows the illness of the patient better than the patient himself does. Evident here are two contexts: the experiential context of the patient expressed in the language of common sense, and the context of medical knowledge. The doctor must reconceive what is going on in the patient from the viewpoint of his own medical knowledge and translate this into the terms of his science. This example illustrates how one and the same reality and truths about the same reality can be transposed from one context and mode of apprehension to another.” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
            2. Other examples: “the psychologist’s examining his client, the judge’s examining the accused.” (van Ackeren 13: 896)
         4. “The positive dogmatic theologian studies this process as it is operative in the development of doctrine.” (van Ackeren 13: 896)

## Philosophy and Theology

### Logic: A Summary

1. **origin of logic**
   1. The concept of logic probably arose early in the study of geometry (*geos* + *metros*, “land measurement”).
   2. But the systematic study of logic probably arose with Pythagoras († c. 500 bc).
2. “**truth**” **and** “**falsity**”
   1. Aristotle (*Metaphys­ics* *B* 2, 996b26-30): “it is true to say of that which is that it is or of that which is not that it is not.” So truth is an assertion’s correspondence with reality.
   2. Aristotle (*Metaphys­ics* *B* 2, 996b26-30): “it is false to say of that which is that it is not or of that which is not that it is . . .” So falsity is an assertion’s lack of correspondence with reality.
   3. Notice that these definitions presuppose a distinction between assertions (things that exist mentally) and realities (things that exist ex­tra­men­tally).
3. **types of utterance**
   1. There are many types of utterance: exclamations, prayers, implor­ings, exhortations, wishes, questions, commands, etc.
   2. But only one type of utterance can be true or false: an assertion, i.e., a de­clar­ative sen­tence.
   3. An assertion need not be said out loud to be an assertion; thoughts are still assertions.
   4. A speaker’s degree of confidence in a declarative sentence’s truth does not affect its classification; beliefs or opinions are still assertions.
4. **sentences and propositions**
   1. It is not the sentence as a form of words which is true or false, but what is ex­pressed by it, its meaning. The meaning of a sentence is called a “proposition.”
   2. If “The snow is white” is true, then “Der Schnee ist weiß” is also true. Both sen­tences express the same proposition, and only the proposition (not the sentences expressing it) is true or false.
   3. A person makes a true statement when uttering a sentence that expresses a true pro­posi­tion. (The person need not be sincere: one can make a true statement by mistake, be­lieving one­self to be lying.)
   4. Thoughts and beliefs or opinions are true when they express true propositions.
5. **three theories of truth**
   1. *correspondence theory*: Truth is a relation between an assertion and the reality it refers to.
   2. *pragmatic theory*: The usefulness of an assertion is evidence of its truth. (The pragmatic theory builds on the correspondence theory, though it is sometimes erroneously thought to mean that whatever is useful to believe is therefore true.)
   3. *coherence theory*: The coherence of an assertion with a system of propositions known to be true is evidence of its truth. (The coherence theory builds upon the correspondence theory, though it is sometimes erroneously thought to mean that any system of beliefs that cohere is there­fore true.)

**three self-evident truths**

1. **the law of noncontradiction**
   1. Plato (*Repub­lic* 436b, to prove the soul has parts): “Do we learn with one part, get angry with another, and with some third part desire the pleasures of food[?] . . . It is obvious that the same thing will not be willing to do or undergo oppo­sites in the same part of itself, in relation to the same thing, at the same time. So, if we ever find this happening in the soul, we’ll know that we aren’t dealing with one thing but many.”
   2. Aristotle (*Meta­physics* *B* 2, 996b26-30): “it is impossible simultaneously to be and not to be.”
   3. Aristotle (*Meta­physics* *Γ* 3, 1005b19-23): “it is impossible simultaneously to be and not to be”; “it is impossible for the same thing to belong and not to belong to the same thing at the same time in the same respect.”
   4. Immanuel Kant said we are born with a knowledge of the law of noncontradiction. John Stuart Mill said we infer it from our earliest experiences.
   5. the law of excluded middle
      1. Aristotle defines a “contradiction” as “a pair of state­ments in which the same thing is respective­ly asserted and denied of the same thing.” He then states the law of excluded middle: “It is not possible that there should be anything between the two parts of a con­tra­­dic­tion, but it is necessary either to affirm or deny one thing of any one thing.”
      2. In other words: “Either P or not-P,” where “P” stands for a proposition.
   6. the law of identity
      1. Aristotle: “Only to things that are indistinguishable and one in being is it general­ly ag­reed that all the same attrib­utes belong.”
      2. In other words: A is A, where A is any thing.
      3. Leibniz put it this way: if everything which is true of A is true of B, then A and B are identical. In other words, if A and B refer to the same thing, then everything one says of A can equally be said of B.
2. **validity and syllogisms**
   1. Whereas “truth” is a characteristic of a proposition, “validity” is a characteristic of a chain of reasoning (a chain of reasoning reduced to its simplest form is called a “syllogism,” where a conclusion is drawn from two premises).
   2. Some proofs (chains of reasoning) are valid (yield a true conclusion if the premises are true), and some are not. Here are three common valid syllogisms ( means “therefore” and ~ means “not”).
      1. the categorical: A = B. B = C.  A = C. (Or: A is in B. B is in C.  A is in C. Etc.)
      2. the conditional: If A, then B. A.  B.
      3. the disjunctive: Either A or B. A.  ~ B. (Or: Either A or B. ~ A.  B.)
   3. Two condi­tions are necessary for a proof (chain of reasoning) to yield a true conclusion: true premises and a valid syllogism.
3. **propositions and judg­ments**
   1. Propositions are “true” or “false,” but judgments about them are “correct” or “in­cor­rect.”
   2. Propositions are unchangeably true or false; but judg­ments about them some­times change.
   3. Example: “Atoms are indi­visi­ble.”
      1. This proposition was always false.
      2. It was judged correct before c ad 1900.
      3. It has been judged incorrect since c 1900.
4. **the unicity of truth**
   1. the theory of double truth
      1. To avoid contradictions between a religious truth and a factual truth, Averroës put them in “logic-tight compart­ments . . .” (Ad­ler 28) In *The Destruction of the Destruction*, he “proclaimed that there were two different bodies of truth . . . [He] as­signed a superior status to the truths of reason and an inferior status to the truths of faith . . .—the one belonging to the sphere of intellect, the other to the sphere of the imagination.” (Ad­ler 24)
      2. Against Latin followers of Averroës, Aquinas (in *The Trinity and the Unicity of the Intellect*) “condemned as false the claim that a propo­sition could be factually true in philosophy or science and at the same time factually false in religious faith.” (Ad­ler 25)
   2. the theory of single truth
      1. According to Aquinas, “truth is one comprehensive, integral, and coherent whole in which there are many parts, each part differing in the methods by which truth is pursued and also in the aspects of reality with which that pursuit is con­cerned.” (Ad­ler 27)
      2. “For Aquinas, the truths of faith, coming from God, were superior to the truths of reason . . .” (Ad­ler 26)
      3. “The crucial and indispensable premise in this line of reasoning [is] the unity of truth. In the realm of all truths consisting of propositions that can be affirmed or denied, incom­patible truths cannot coexist.” (Ad­ler 32)

### Philosophical Principles in Theology

1. **definition of philosophy**
   1. “. . . some kinds of philosophy have little or no relevance to theology be­cause they define themselves too narrowly to get in touch with the­ology’s subject matter.” (Nichols 41)
      1. “philosophy as an analysis of ordinary language” (Nichols 41)
         1. “However, if one understands “ordinary language” as including the (ordinary) use of language in religious practice, one might well find a philosophical connecting point with theology . . .” (Nichols 41 n. 1)
            1. Ramsey, I.T. *Religious Language*: *An Empirical Placing of Theological Phrases*. London: 1957.
            2. TeSelle, S. McF. *Speaking in Parables*: *A Study in Metaphor and Theology*. London: 1973.
            3. Soskice, J.M. *Metaphor and Religious Language*. Oxford: 1985.
      2. philosophy “as a study of the logical status of propositions” (Nichols 41)
         1. “. . . for an attempt by a Polish philosopher to argue that the desired connecting point *should* be found in a study of the logical status of religious proposi­tions, see”: Lubian, W. “Father Innocent Bocheński, or the Intensity of Experience.” *Chris*­*tian Life in Poland*. 1989/1. 109-19. (Cites: Bocheński, Innocent. “Logic and the Philosophy of Religion.” Delivered at Cracow, 24 Oct. 1987.) (Nichols 41 n. 1)
   2. Nichols’s definition: “Philosophy is the attempt to say who we are and what kind of a world we live in, drawing on the resources of human experience as clarified by reflection.” (Nichols 42)
      1. “The kinds of philosophy that do have a point of contact with theology are all in a broad sense metaphysical. That is, they regard the task of philosophy as an attempt to throw light on human life, and on the wider realm of reality in which life is set, by looking at these within the widest possible context of interpretation. Such a definition of phi­losophy covers nearly all the principal schools or movements that phi­losophy has known, not only in the West but also in, for example, India and China . . .” (Nichols 41)
      2. For philosophy as broadly metaphysical:
         1. Walsh, W.H. “Metaphysics, Nature of.” *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*. Vol. 5 New York: 1967.
         2. Gilson, Etienne. *Being and Some Philosophers*. 2nd ed. Toronto: 1952.
         3. Pears, D.F., ed. *The Nature of Metaphysics*. London: 1957.
   3. “Roughly speaking, philosophy so defined covers three questions.” (Nichols 42)
      1. “First, What is man? or Who am I? This is the problem of human exist­ence and the nature of the self: philosophical anthropology and its ex­tension, ethics.” (Nichols 42)
      2. “Second, What is the world? or What is this whole interconnected reality of which I form part? This is the problem of cosmology: of nature and the extension of nature, history.” (Nichols 42)
      3. “Third, and fi­nally, What are the fundamental terms on which the world exists? What are its conditions of possibility? This is the problem of ontology . . .” (Nichols 42)
         1. Martin Heidegger (*An Introduction to Metaphysics*. Trans. New Haven and London: 1959. 1): “Why are there essents (“existents,” “things that are”) rather than nothing?” (Qtd. in Nichols 42 n. 3)
   4. “. . . philosophy is an almost inescapable part of all human life. . . . Everyone at some point asks in some form these questions . . . There is no culture which has not made some attempt to pose and answer such questions, not necessarily in formal philosophy or even in writing at all, but perhaps in art, in music, or even in the way people bury their dead.” (Nichols 42)
2. **negative attitudes toward the relation of philosophy to theology**
   1. “. . . if theology has answers to these ques­tions, why not just listen to theology and forget about philosophy? . . . surely we can dispense with the more lowly science of philosophy.” (Nichols 42)
   2. Protestantism
      1. Luther
         1. On Luther’s rejection of philosophy, see: Link, W. *Das Ringen Luthers um die Freiheit der Theologie von der Philosophie*. 2nd ed. Munich: 1955.
         2. On severe wounding as cause of Luther’s rejection of philosophy, see: Kramm, H.H.W. *The Theology of Martin Luther*. London: 1949.
         3. “. . . a major reason for the distrust of philosophy by classical Protestant thinkers lies in the tendency of the Reformers to see human nature as totally corrupt after the Fall.” (Nichols 45)
            1. “If human nature is totally cor­rupt and grossly unreliable, then human reason, as an integral part of human nature, is unlikely to be in a much better state. And if human reason is radically corrupt, then the philosophy it produces is not likely to be of much service to the gospel.” (Nichols 45)
            2. Trent “repudiated this extreme pessimism about nature after the Fall.” (Nichols 45)
         4. “. . . the rejection of philosophy by theology . . . is much sharper in Luther than in Calvin.” (Nichols 43)
         5. But one can “present Luther’s thought as providing an interpretation of concrete, historical existence and so of philosophical in­terest . . .” (Nichols 43 n. 4)
      2. “Philipp Melanchthon (1497-1560) provides an interesting contrast to Luther by his much more positive estimate of philosophy . . .” (Copleston, F.C. *A History of Philosophy*. London: 1967. 3: 227-28.) (Nichols 43 n. 4)
      3. “As for Calvin, while he can be bitter against humanists, as in his *Treatise upon Scandals*, he retained a good deal of the humanist—especially Stoic—heritage, most clear in his presentation of the themes of natural law and of Providence.” (Wendel, F. *Calvin*. Trans. London: 1963, 1965. 2.) (Nichols 43 n. 4)
      4. In Protestantism “the rejection of philosophy by theology has been a fairly frequent occurrence . . .” (Nichols 43)
         1. “Partly, this has been based on the idea just mentioned, that philosophy is superfluous once you have revelation.” (Nichols 43)
         2. “But predomin­antly, philosophy has been [seen] as a dangerous competitor to theology . . . If philosophers have their own concept of God and their own view of human life, is there not a danger that they will alter or suppress the concept of God and the view of life found in revelation?” (Nichols 43)
   3. Catholicism
      1. “In Catholi­cism, similar views have found a more low-key expression in feelings of anxiety or unease in the presence of philosophy, or whenever phi­losophy has had a marked influence on theology.” (Nichols 43)
      2. “. . . when some of the early Fathers of the Church called Christianity “the true philosophy”—and in early Christian art Christ is often portrayed dressed as a philosopher—they meant to imply that Christianity an­swered the questions set by philosophy better than the philosophers themselves. Thus, they felt, Christian revelation had rendered [43] philosophy out of date.” (Nichols 43-44)
         1. Lactantius. *Divinae institutions* 3.30 (Christianity as the “true philosophy”). (Nichols 43 n. 6)
         2. Grabar, A. *Christian Iconography*: *A Study of Its Origins*. London: 1969. 138. (See “Bres­cia lipsanotheca,” an iconic example.) (Nichols 43 n. 6)
         3. Peter Brown (*Augustine of Hippo*: *A Biography*. London: 1967. 42): “On the sarcophagi of the age, he (Christ) is always shown as a Teacher, teaching His Wisdom to a coterie of budding philosophers.” (Qtd. in Nichols 43 n. 6)
         4. “. . . the third-century African writer Tertullian once declared [*De praescriptione* 7] that Athens “had nothing to do with Jerusalem”: in other words, that there is no common ground between philosophy and revelation.” (Nichols 44)
         5. Blaise Pascal in the *Pensées* “drew a sharp contrast be­tween what he called the “God of the philosophers” and the “God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”: by which he meant the biblical God, the God disclosed in Scripture.” (Nichols 44)
         6. Yet Tertullian and Pascal use philosophical concepts that “do not stem from revelation it­self.” (Nichols 44)
            1. Shortt, Charles de Lisle. *The Influence of Philosophy on the Mind of Tertullian*. London: Elliot Stock, 1933.
            2. Webb, Clement C.J. *Pascal*’*s Philosophy of Religion*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1929.
            3. “Tertullian even has arguments for the existence of God of a rather simple sort, based on the fact that even atheists when they are in trouble exclaim, “Oh God!” [*De testimonio animae* 2; *Apologia* 17] Actually, Tertullian’s argument is more sophisticated than this reference might suggest. He held that the soul was “naturally Christian” and only overlaid by a superficial carapace of ideology in the case of atheists and agnostics.” (Nichols 44)
      3. “So even the theologian who wants to get away from philosophy finds it hard to do so. Prob­ably the only way of doing so entirely would be to make theology con­sist in a repetition of the language of the Bible. But this would hardly be theology at all but rather a mere rearrangement of the biblical text.” (Nichols 44)
      4. Suspicion of philosophy is also “found in writers influenced by the great neo-orthodox Swiss Protestant theologian, Karl Barth.” (Barth’s attitude toward theology: *Die kirchliche Dogmatik* 1.2: *Die Lehre vom Wort Gottes*. Zurich: 1938. 818-25, 865-67.) (Nichols 43)
3. **positive attitudes toward the relation of philosophy to theology**
   1. “Because philosophy tries to give a universal answer to these fun­damental questions, it necessarily comes into relation with theology . . ., since these are just the kind of questions theology itself deals with, on the basis of revelation . . . Theology has its own answers to the questions, What is man? What is the good life for all people? What is their final destiny? (an­thropology and ethics); What is reality like? What meaning does his­tory hold? (cosmology and the philosophy of history); What is the ultimate ground of reality? What is not only the source but also the goal of the world (ontology).” (Nichols 42)
   2. “The scholastics are in the habit of saying that philosophy is the servant of theology, meaning that philosophy is an aid to theology in trying to understand the divine mystery. It obviously does not follow that this auxiliary role is the only one exercised by philosophy. For philosophy is queen in her own province, not a simple servant. The expression means that theology, in order to fulfill its task as the science of the living, self-revealed God, makes use of philosophic reasoning and of the data of philosophy, and in this context philosophy is auxiliary to theology. Besides all the sciences are in turn principal sciences and auxiliary sciences. In their own sphere they are principal; outside it they are at the service of other sciences and become auxiliary.” (Latourelle 44 n. 9)
   3. Philosophy is “the supreme science of wisdom in the natural order . . .” (Latourelle 44)
      1. “In philosophy, criticism or epistemology has as its function the study of the objective value of our knowledge and of our natural certainties.” (Latourelle 44)
   4. Theology is “the supreme science and wisdom in the order of revelation . . .” (Latourelle 44)
      1. Theology “reflects upon its own principles . . . [It has] a reflective function whose task is to study the basis of our knowledge and certainty in matters of faith. This task is fulfilled by apologetics, which establishes the fact of revelation [and] the rationality of the choice of faith.” (Latourelle 44)
   5. “. . . it is the position of the Catholic Church that the theologian should *not* want to get away from the philosopher.” (Nichols 44)
      1. In Vatican I’s *Dei Filius* (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith*, 1870, Church. 4, D 3015-20), “A relation between theol­ogy and philosophy is implied . . . because a relation between [44] faith and reason is explicitly presented, and presented as based on the Church’s understanding of the relation between grace and nature.” (Nichols 44-5)
      2. “. . . there is an essential differ­ence between nature and grace—between our human nature with its own inherent powers and capabilities and . . . the “second nature” [from] grace. The grace of God transforms human nature so that it is capable of behaving in ways not native to it. We can see this at its fullest in the saints. The saints are atypical human beings, but this is not simply because they are statisti­cally unusual. More than this, some of the things they do are not deriva­tive from ordinary human nature as such: giving one’s life in continuous self-sacrifice for others, for example, or enjoying the friend­ship of the Blessed Trinity. Our understanding of this transformation by grace comes from revelation and when formally expressed is theol­ogy. . . . [But this presupposes] an understanding of the nature that is thus trans­formed by grace. This understanding derives from ordinary human experience and when formally expressed is called philosophy. So the distinction between nature and grace in Catholic teaching has a mirror effect in a distinction of two kinds of understanding, one possessed by reason and the other by faith, and crystallizing out in philosophy and theology.” (Léonard, A. *Pensées des hommes et foi en Jésus-Christ*. Paris: 1980. 23-31.) (Nichols 45)
      3. Trent said human nature “has not been totally corrupted. Its powers, and thus its activities, have been seriously damaged by sin, but its deepest foundation is still what God made it. This will mean, then, that human reason will be fallible [45] [but] still capable of apprehending truth and so philosophy is too. [Reason gives] access to reality, to truth, and so, ineluctably, in some degree to God.” (Alfaro, J. “Nature and Grace.” *Sacramentum mundi*. Trans. Bangalore: 1968. 4: 176-81.) (Nichols 45-46)
      4. The Church needs some people who “investigate the world philosophically. Just as grace requires nature to build on, so theology requires philosophy as a necessary infrastructure. Christ came to save the world. This presupposes that there was already a world worth sav­ing. In a similar way, theology is the Christianizing of human think­ing, and this implies that human thinking is a worthwhile pursuit in its own right.” (Nichols 46)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| redemption | = | grace | = | faith | = | theology |
| creation | nature | reason | philosophy |

* 1. Which philosophy?
     1. “. . . somebody’s philosophy should play a part in theology, but . . . *Which* phi­losophy?” (Nichols 46)
     2. “. . . theologians have drawn on now one, now another philosophy in order to state the faith of the Church.” (Nichols 46)
     3. First answer: “Which philosophy one is going to adopt is for students of philosophy them­selves to decide. . . . It is not for theologians to dictate what Christians should think philosophically, nor even how they are to do their philosophical thinking.” (Nichols 46)
        1. “. . . philosophy does enjoy a certain autonomy [46] vis-à-vis theology, just as nature does in relation to grace.” (Nichols 46-47)
        2. But “a theologian has the [duty] to say whether, in his or her view, a particular philosophy is com­patible with revelation or not . . . , just as, analogously, the Church’s magisterium had the duty to come to a judgment about philosophical theses relevant to the truth of Christian doctrine—at least in those cases where such theses are currently commended by an intelligentsia for wide-scale adoption in the community of faith.” (Nicolosi, C. *Fede cristiana e riflessione filosofica*. *Il problema della filosofia cristiana*. *Teoria e storia di un dibattito*. Rome: 1973. 437.) (Nichols 47)
        3. Also, “theologians can certainly report on the use their predeces­sors have made of different philosophies and can say whether they think the results are a success.” (Nichols 47)
     4. Second answer: “theology needs philosophy [but can] generate its own phi­losophy. This is the idea, much supported in Catholic circles in the period from the First World War to the Second Vatican Council, that there can be such a thing as a purely Christian philosophy.” (Nichols 47)
        1. “. . . a philosophy which has selected its main interests in the light of revelation (a Christian philosophy).” (Nichols 93)
        2. pro
           1. Gilson, Etienne. *Christianisme et philosophie*. Paris: 1936.
           2. Gilson, Etienne. “What Is Christian Philoso­phy?” *A Gilson Reader*. Ed. Anton C. Pegis. New York: 1957.
           3. Nedoncelle, M. *Is There a Christian Philosophy?* Trans. New York: 1960.
           4. Shook, L.K. *Etienne Gilson*. Toronto: 1984.
           5. Aquinas (*ST* 2-2.2.4) suggested “that some of the truth we get from revelation can be restated in philosophical terms. Theo­logians have often held that some revealed truths are completely be­yond reason but others are just difficult for reason to grasp with sureness. The second set of truths might be, so to speak, detached from revelation and erected into a philosophy in their own right: a Chris­tian philosophy.” (Nichols 47)
           6. “For instance, it is clear from revealed religion that there is a God, that this God satisfies our deepest needs, that we as persons reflect in some way the life of this God, that there is a moral law writ­ten in our hearts. All of these ideas could be allowed to set up shop and do business under their own name. Although in fact they came from revelation (at least in a given culture this may well be so), in prin­ciple they could be defended by reason alone and so make their own way in philosophical history. Furthermore, the reflection which Chris­tian philosophers would carry out on them would develop and enrich their content. So the Church would have its own philosophy—a genu­ine philosophy, not a theology—yet one that would avoid the risks that [47] people like Tertullian and Pascal identified because this philosophy would come from within revelation itself.” (Nichols 47-48)
           7. “. . . a great deal of the phi­losophy written by Christians has emerged in exactly this way. The great historian of medieval philosophy Etienne Gilson showed that the main thematic differences between Western philosophy and the phi­losophy of the ancient world (notably, of course, Greek philosophy) derive from the influence of Christianity during the late antique and medieval periods.” (Gilson, Etienne. *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*. New York: 1940. 1-41, 403-26.) (Nichols 48)
        3. con
           1. “On the other hand, Gilson’s case could easily be overstated. It would not be true to say that the entire philosophical outlook of a medieval theologian like St. Bonaventure or St. Albert was a precipitate of revelation. Some of it was indebted to a philosophical tradition that antedated the arrival of Christianity on the scene.” (Nichols 48)
           2. “In any case, while historians may show that philosophy has been influenced by revelation in its choice of themes and even in the way that it has dealt with them, this does not oblige us to draw the prescriptive con­clusions to which the supporters of the idea of a Christian philosophy subscribe. That is, we need not necessarily conclude that what the Church allows to happen, she positively expects to happen.” (Nichols 48)
     5. Third answer: “the orders of phi­losophy and theology are utterly distinct, with different departure points and ways of arguing. Although revelation has the right to pass judgment on a philosophical conclusion, it has no right to declare a preference for one way of reaching it rather than another. . . . there can be no halfway house between supernatural truth and a search for natural truth based simply on evidence seen in the light of rationally defensible first principles.” (Nichols 48)
        1. “This has been the position taken up by, among others, the devotees of neo­-Scholasticism over against those of the Christian philosophy school.” (Quinn, J.M. *The Thomism of Etienne Gilson*: *A Critical Study*. Villanova: 1971. 3-4.) (Nichols 48)
     6. Fourth answer (Nichols’s preference): there is “a mediating position between the last two tendencies . . .” (Nichols 48)
        1. Formally, “a good philosophy (from the point of view of theo­logical fruitfulness) will consist of . . . the best purely natural reasoning available . . .” (Nichols 48)
           1. Revelation will not direct philosophical “methods or ideas.” (Nichols 48)
        2. Materially (“content-wise”), “revelation can . . . identify the areas to which natural reason­ing could most profitably be directed.” (Nichols 48)
           1. Revelation will direct philosophical “interests . . .” (Nichols 48)
        3. “. . . the form of philosophy [48] as practiced by Christians would have no reference to revelation, but its content would.” (Nichols 48-49)
        4. A philosophy’s “theological fruitfulness . . . will be evaluated by asking how helpful it has been in the work of our theological predecessors . . .” (Nichols 49)
           1. “. . . this criterion would not be of much use if some highly original philosophy were to be worked out in our lifetime. Thus, for instance, the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas, a philosophy of divine transcen­dence disclosed in the human face, though still in the process of being written, is already being utilized by theologians.” (Nichols 49)
        5. “This was the view adopted by such students of Scholasticism as P. Mandonnet, S. Ramirez, and F. van Steenberghen.” (Nichols 49)
           1. “For the internal variety of the Thomist school on this as on other points”: John, H.J. *The Thomist Spectrum*. New York: 1966. (Nichols 49 n. 20)

1. **philosophies used in the history of theology**
   1. Which philosophies have actually been theology’s “handmaid” (*ancilla* [“servant,” “maid”] *theologiae*)?
   2. “Something like what I have called the “mediating position” has been actualized in” several periods. (Nichols 49)
   3. 100-700: patristic Platonism
      1. “. . . in the early Church philosophy most commonly took the form of some variety of Platonism, supplemented by Stoic ethics, and peppered with pieces of the Aristotelean corpus. . . . [Platonism] in its later antique forms [became] spacious enough to accommodate elements of these other philosophical traditions . . .” (Nichols 49)
         1. von Ivanka, E. *Plato Christianus*: *Übernahme und Umstaltung des Platonismus durch die Väter*. Einsiedeln: 1954.
         2. Spanneut, M. *Le Stoicisme des pères de l*’*Eglise de Clément de Rome à Clément d*’*Alexandrie*. Paris: 1957.
         3. On the Fathers’ use of Aristotle: Lilla, S. “Aristotelismo.” *Dizionario patristico e di antichità cristiane*. Vol. 1. Ed. A. di Beradino. Casale Monferrato: 1983.
         4. This eclectic Platonism “was the favored phi­losophy of the patristic period because of its clear doctrine of transcen­dence, the idea that there is a single (divine) principle on which all things depend.” (Nichols 49)
   4. 1000-1400: medieval Aristotelianism
      1. “In the medieval West, philosophy took a turn toward Aristotle, because his analysis of the structure of finite beings (humans included) seemed to provide a good account of nature to complement revela­tion’s account of grace.” (Nichols 49)
      2. “This was the dominant position of the great Scholastics, though the Aristoteleanism [*sic*] of a figure like Thomas Aquinas [49] was also heavily indebted to the Platonic tradition.” (Nichols 49-50)
         1. “. . . the second historical epoch, that of Chris­tianized Aristoteleanism [included] a fairly hefty dose of Platonism also.” (Nichols 51)
      3. Simon Tugwell (“Albert the Great: Introduction.” *Albert and Thomas*: *Selected Writings*. Ed. Simon Tugwell. New York: 1988. 10): “It was largely through the Arabs that Aristotle had been brought back to the West, and their Aristotle was part of an essentially Neoplatonist package. He brought with him the pseudo-Aristotelean *Liber de causis*, [49] derived from the *Elements of Theology* by Proclus, one of the last great pagan Neoplatonists, and he was accompanied by the works of the Arab commentators, especially Avicenna, and, slightly later, Averroes. And in addition to this wealth of supposedly Aristotelean learning, which was often in fact more Platonist than Peripatetic, a veiled Platonism was also exercising a considerable influence through the writings of ‘Dionysius the Areopagite,’ which had begun to enjoy a new vogue in the twelfth century.” (Qtd. in Nichols 49 n. 22)
      4. Albert the Great (*Metaphysica* 1.5.15, qtd. in Tugwell, ed., *Albert and Thomas* 31): “You cannot be a complete philosopher without knowing both philosophies, Aristotle’s and Plato’s.” (Qtd. in Nichols 49 n. 22)
   5. 1400s-1500s: Renaissance Platonism
      1. Platonism was revived “by such Christian humanists of the Renaissance as Marsilio Ficino [1433-99] and Pico della Mirandola [1463-94].” (Nichols 49)
      2. “As in the patristic period, they liked “its clear . . . idea that there is a single (divine) principle on which all things depend.” (Nichols 49)
   6. 1600s-1700s: rationalism
      1. Campo, M. *Christian Wolff e il razionalismo precritico*. Milan: 1939.
      2. Collins, J.D. *God in Modern Philoso*­*phy*. Chicago: 1959. 55-89.
      3. Gouhier, H. *La Pensée religieuse de Descartes*. Paris: 1924.
      4. Iwanicki, J. *Leibniz et les démonstrations mathématiques de l*’*existence de Dieu*. Paris: 1934.
      5. “. . . philosophy as practiced by Christians in the early Modern period (the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) moved more in the direction of a rational metaphysics attentive to the natural sciences: in the line of Descartes, through Leibniz, to Christian Wolff. These writers were admired for the coherence, or close conceptual interrelatedness, of their systems. They showed the systematic intelligibility of a world which springs from the Logos, or Reason of God.” (Nichols 50)
   7. 1800s: idealism
      1. Copleston, Frederick C. *A History of Phi*­*losophy*. Vol. 7. London: 1963. 1-31.
      2. Gross, H. *Der deutsche Idealismus und das Christentum*. Munich: 1927.
      3. Christians drew on “F.W.J. von Schelling and G.W.F. Hegel. The principal attraction here was a doctrine of history. For the Ger­man idealists, history is the self-manifestation of the Absolute, or God. The nature of the historical process was a major concern of the Ger­man Catholic theology of the first half of the nineteenth century, un­derstandably so since Catholic Christianity regards the salvific process as taking historical form.” (Nichols 50)
   8. earlier 1900s: existentialism and personalism
      1. MacQuarrie, John. *Twentieth Century Religious Thought*: *The Frontiers of Philosophy and Theology 1900-1960*. New York: 1963.
      2. “In the middle years of the twentieth century, existentialism and personalism were the two main preferred philosophies of innovative theologians: existentialism because it raises the religiously relevant question of a meaning to life, and personalism because it takes per­sonality to be the most important phenomenon in the world. In addi­tion, an interest in sociological thought corrected the somewhat individualistic tendencies of much existentialist- and personalist-influenced writing and stressed the corporate nature of human life.” (Nichols 50)
      3. “All three contributions are of great interest to those investigating Christian [50] doctrine, especially, perhaps, theological anthropology and ec­clesiology, the doctrine of the person and in particular of the “ecclesial person.”” (Nichols 50-51)
   9. later 1900s: metaphysics
      1. Forthomme, B. *Une philosophie de transcendance*: *La métaphysique d*’*Emmanuel Levinas*. Paris: 1979.
      2. “The need to contextualize the particular realities that form the subject matter of these theological areas within the wider realm of being as a whole has also sustained interest in philosophies concerned to look with fresh eyes at the traditional ontology of Western metaphysics . . .” (Nichols 51)
      3. “. . . here the later thought of Heidegger and such dissident disciples of Heidegger as Levinas may be singled out for mention.” (Nichols 51)
   10. later 1900s: hermeneutics
       1. Holmes, R.C. *Reception Theory*: *A Critical Introduction*. London: 1984.
       2. Kerr, F. *Theology after Wittgenstein*. Oxford: 1987.
       3. Weinsheimer, J.C. *Gadamer*’*s Hermeneutics*. New Haven and London: 1985.
       4. “Concern with the manner in which Christian truth descends through time has since been enlivened by the stimulus of hermeneu­tical philosophy—the philosophical investigation of the process of in­terpretation . . .” (Nichols 51)
       5. Most notable were Paul Ricoeur and Hans-Georg Gadamer. (Nichols 51)
       6. “. . . the importance of reflection on language in [Ricoeur’s French writings and Gadamer’s German writings] has been taken further in the English-speaking world, thanks to the achieve­ment of Ludwig Wittgenstein.” (Nichols 51)
       7. “These philosophies are clearly perti­nent to Christian theology, since that theology can be thought of as the continuous interpretative reappropriation of a religious tradition, a tradition which sees itself as the carrier of a divine revelation, for which our primary metaphor is the Word, precisely, of God.” (Nichols 51)
2. **Thomism**
   1. Gilson, Etienne. *The Christian Philosophy of St*. *Thomas Aquinas*. Trans. London: 1961. (“A good guide,” Nichols 51 n. 29.)
   2. Quinn, J.M. *The Thomism of Etienne Gilson*: *A Critical Study*. Villanova: 1971. (“For Gilson’s own place on the Thomist spectrum,” Nichols 51 n. 29.)
   3. “For Thomists, the philosophy of St. Thomas perfectly expresses the mediating position mentioned above. The philosophical elements in Thomas’ thought are rationally cogent, and they reflect areas of concern close to the heart of the Christian faith. For the most militant Thomists, the philosophical part of Thomism con­stitutes a sort of eternal philosophy, *philosophia perennis*, a system of philosophical thought which cannot really be bettered except in de­tails.” (Nichols 51)
   4. “At least five features of Thomist philosophy ren­der it particularly attractive to Catholic theologians.” (Nichols 52)
      1. “. . . Thomism begins from sense experience. [The] Thomist adage puts it, “Nothing is in the mind that was not first in the senses.” This means that Thomists share common ground with the ordinary person . . .” (Nichols 52)
      2. “Second, . . . Thomism [proves]—at least to its own satisfaction—that the mind is immaterial and so immortal.” (Nichols 52)
      3. “Third, from a consideration of certain general features of the world as perceived in ordinary experience, Thomism hopes to show that this world is de­pendent on an unlimited source, which “all men call God.”” (Nichols 52)
      4. “Fourth, Thomism regards all realities save God as a unity of form and matter, that is, of a communicative intelligibility and an individuating prin­ciple of identity. This matter-and-form or hylomorphic analysis of things is highly suitable to a sacramental religion like Christianity. The Church sees the presence of God as expressed through material realities—the humanity of Jesus, the sacraments, which are his ex­tended action, and so forth—and thus as having an incarnational struc­ture which lends itself to hylomorphic description.” (Wallace, W.A. “Hylomorphism.” *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. 7: 284-85.) (Nichols 52)
      5. “Finally, because of the Thomist principle that an effect must resemble in some way what caused it, Thomism has worked out a theory of analogy whereby cer­tain qualities found in the world are ascribed to God, though in a way that quite surpasses our conceptual understanding. Thomist philoso­phy can thus build up a picture of the divine nature by describing the perfections—goodness, unity, beauty, and so on—which belong ulti­mately and supremely to God but which are also found in various limited ways in this world.” (Nichols 52)
         1. Mascall, E.L. *Existence and Analogy*. London: 1949.
         2. Penido, M. T.-L. *Le rôle de l*’*Analogie en théologie dogmatique*. Paris: 1931.
      6. “Thomism, in sum, claims to be able to speak to all people on the basis of shared experience, to prove to them that they have immortal souls, and that there is a God on whose existence this world depends. Furthermore, it encourages them to *see* material things as expressing meaning and so prepares them for the idea of the incarnation and for its corollary, the sacramental principle in the life of the Church. Finally, its God is not simply an unknown God but can to some extent be spoken of in terms of perfection. [52] In all these ways, Thomism seems manifestly a good thing.” (Nichols 52-53)
   5. objection: eclecticism
      1. “. . . many people . . ., especially over the last thirty years, have become discontented with the Thomist dominance of Catholic thought . . . The objection is not so much to any particular conclusion that Thomists may come up with but to the very idea of a *philosophia perennis*, a once-for-all philosophy that will remain forever the chosen handmaid of theology.” (Nichols 53)
      2. “And this objection seems to be partly correct. All philosophies take their rise from meditation on some particular aspect of experience. To the degree that Thomism is Christianized Aristoteleanism [*sic*], this would be, primarily, our ex­perience of the natural order; in other philosophies, it might be our experience of historical change, or of ourselves and each other as per­sons. On the basis of such a slice of human experience, a philosophy tries to come to a universal statement about reality. But the likelihood is that in this a given philosophy will be to some degree selective. Pre­cisely because of its (necessarily) limited starting point, it will see some things better than others, be strong on some aspects of the real and weak on others.” (Nichols 53)
         1. “If this is true, then theologians should welcome a cer­tain philosophical eclecticism. They should be happy to draw on more than one philosophical tradition, so long, of course, as this does not lead them into plain self-contradiction and so into nonsense.” (Nichols 53)
         2. “If it is to be fully co­herent, philosophical activity must be able to unify what it says . . . However, we may reasonably doubt whether this is not asking too much of any one philosophy . . . as theological students we are not re­quired to nail our colors to any one philosophical mast. We can afford to have a degree of eclecticism.” (Nichols 93)
            1. “We may well judge that one philosophy will throw light on the nature of salvation, for instance, while not noticeably illuminating the nature of revelation. Thus, for example, the sociological ideas used by liberation theology may help us to un­derstand what God as Redeemer is likely to do in and with this world but be comparatively useless if we ask instead about people’s capacity to receive revelation. Social categories can specify evils in the world, but they cannot say anything about the noetic relation of the world to God.” (Nichols 93)
         3. “Hence the importance for theologians of acquaintance with the history of phi­losophy, which is a storehouse of concepts that may well be of great use to them in their work. In this, theological students will need the same kind of historical sensitivity that the investigation of their strictly theological resources also asks of them . . .” (Nichols 53)
            1. Copleston, Frederick. *A His*­*tory of Philosophy*. London: 1946-75.
            2. Edwards, P., ed. *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*. New York and London: 1967.
            3. Fabro, C., ed. *Styria della filosofia*. Rome: 1954.
            4. Hamlyn, D.W. *A History of Western Philosophy*. New York: Viking; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987. Rpt. *The Pelican History of Western Philosophy*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988. Rpt. *The Penguin History of Western Philosophy*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990.
            5. Hirschberger, J. *Geschichte der Philosophie*. 2nd ed. Freiburg: 1954-55.
         4. “. . . because of this historical variety with its built-in possibility that something missed in one age or milieu will be un­derstood in another, the objection to a *philosophia perennis* turns out to be, in one sense, quite justified . . .” (Nichols 54)
   6. rebuttal
      1. “On the other hand, . . . we must not let our eclecticism run riot, or we shall end up with a hodgepodge of bits and pieces of philosophy from different and probably incompat­ible systems or approaches.” (Nichols 93)
      2. “. . . the objection to a *philosophia perennis* . . . is surely misplaced. We cannot be totally eclectic. We have to choose some fundamental way of reading the structure of the universe. Into this fundamental pattern we can then go on to insert extra elements drawn from alter­native philosophies. . . . And in the choice of such a skeletal structure, Thomism still has much to com­mend it.” (Nichols 54)
      3. “In fact, . . . by disengaging the notion of “being” as the central notion, whether explicitly or implicitly, of all philosophical thinking, Thomism has provided us with the key to the unity in plu­rality of the philosophical history which the theologian should study. The history of philosophy is the history of the different ways in which “being” is conceived and encountered.” (O’Farrell, F. “Is There a History of To Be?” *Gregorianum* 68.3-4 (1987): 671-703.) (Nichols 54)
      4. “Further, the fundamental way of reading the universe which we select must have some kind of fam­ily resemblance to Thomism in that it must satisfy certain demands, implied by divine revelation and met in Thomism in an exemplary way.” (Nichols 54)
         1. Kern, W. *Die Einheit des Glaubens und der theologische Pluralis*­*mus*. Einsideln: 1973.
         2. “I have in mind such notions as”:
            1. “the transcendence of . . . human beings vis-à-vis the physical world”
            2. “the correlate of this tran­scendence in the absolutely infinite being, God”
            3. “the creative free­dom of this transcendent universal cause of the world and thus the nondivinity of the world’s own being”
            4. “the independence of human beings in their moral agency, a self-determina­tion which ex­tends beyond death”
            5. “the unity of all human beings as a single order within the world.” (Nichols 54)
      5. “Theologians may use philosophies whose affirmations fall short of these exigencies in limited aspects of their work; but the total infrastructure of a Catholic theology must, in its sum of elements, do justice to such requirements as these.” (Nichols 54)
3. **how philosophy interacts with theology**
   1. “. . . philosophy has two roles to play in theology . . .” (Nichols 37)
      1. fundamental theology
         1. The first “role of philosophy in theology is . . . its part in fun­damental theology, in establishing the foundations of faith.” (Nichols 91)
         2. Philosophy “has a vital part to play in laying the foundations for acceptance of reve­lation and so in providing the essential groundwork for theological ac­tivity. Philosophy is vital to what is called the “preamble of faith,” in other words, to the way in which we justify our acceptance of reve­lation in the first place. Philosophy has to help theology to get started by showing the basic compatibility of revelation with human ration­ality. Obviously, if revelation were basically incompatible with human rationality, then there would be no point in doing theology . . . In the preamble of faith, theology calls on philosophy to help deal with such issues as the existence of God, the problem of evil, the possibility of revelation, and the nature of the claim that the actual revelation we have is historically well grounded. But this role of philosophy vis-à-vis theology is obviously prior to anything else in theology, because without it theology could not get off the ground at all. Consideration of the task of philosophy in the preamble of faith then leads naturally to looking at philosophy as a principle of order in theology, since many of the ideas philosophy uses in the preamble of faith—ideas about God, for instance—are still relevant when one comes to theology proper. Another way of putting this would be to say that philosophy has two contributions to make to the­ology: one is to fundamental theology, to an account of the founda­tions of the act of faith; the other is to systematic theology, to an explication of the content of faith.” (Nichols 37)
      2. A second “role of philosophy in theology is” [91] as “a principle of order in theology . . .” [37] (Nichols 37, 91)
         1. “Philosophy also has a vital task in systematic theology, and more especially in the latter’s conceptual organization.” (Nichols 91)
4. **when philosophy interacts with theology**
   1. Philosophy interacts with theology at two times.
   2. Fundamental theology, philosophy’s first role in theology, “is logically prior to a consideration of the sources” of theology (scripture and Tradition). (Nichols 37)
   3. But “The role of philosophy in theology is not confined to its part in fun­damental theology, in establishing the foundations of faith.” (Nichols 91) The order of investigations is:
      1. fundamental theology
      2. a consideration of the sources of theology in general
      3. dogmatic theology
         1. “Philosophy also has a vital task in systematic theology, and more especially in the latter’s conceptual organization.” (Nichols 91)
         2. “. . . philosophy can help us organize the materials of theology, the content of the act of faith . . .” (Nichols 90)

### The Philosophical Principle of Order in Theology

1. **introduction**
   1. “Natur­ally, Scripture and Tradition will come to play an increasingly ample role from this moment on. In fact, they will be playing the preponder­ant role as is only right and proper, since they are, after all, the sources for what is contained in revelation.” (Nichols 91)
   2. “But this does not mean that philosophy will fall silent completely.” (Nichols 91)
      1. “The role of philosophy in theology is not confined to its part in fun­damental theology, in establishing the foundations of faith. Philosophy also has a vital task in systematic theology, and more especially in the latter’s conceptual organization.” (Nichols 91)
      2. “. . . philosophy can help us organize the materials of theology, the content of the act of faith . . .” (Nichols 90)
      3. Systematics “is concerned with the content of revelation and so with the transcrip­tion of that content in the individual mind in the form of faith.” (Nichols 91)
   3. “. . . many of the concepts, questions, and ways of looking at things which we have found to be helpful in fun­damental theology will travel with us into systematic theology. There are four principal areas in which this is so.” (Nichols 91)
      1. God
         1. “First, there is the concept of God. Three sets of rational notions drawn from the preamble of faith will remain important in dogmatics.” (Nichols 91)
         2. “To begin with, there are the ele­ments in the concept of God which reflect our arguments for God’s existence. As we have seen, no argument for the existence of God can fail to suggest something about the concept of God. One cannot pro­vide an argument for the existence of absolute transcendence which does not at the same time give some inkling of what that absolute tran­scendence might be.” (Nichols 91)
         3. “Then again, there is what I called the “root metaphysical notion,” which we must choose in order to organize our materials for the concept of God, materials that follow from our argu­ments for God’s existence. To remind you, it is not good enough just to lay side by side such divine attributes as an investigation of the [91] grounds for God’s existence may suggest. We must arrange them in a way which exhibits their coherence. Otherwise, we shall have in ef­fect half a dozen concepts of God, internally unrelated to each other, rather than a single, coherent, unified concept of God.” (Nichols 91-92)
         4. “Finally, we saw that if revelation is to be possible from the side of God, certain things about God must be the case: for instance, genuine distinction from the world, personality, and freedom. If these ideas are not already part of our concept of God, then they must be integrated and rationally justified.” (Nichols 92)
         5. “The sum of these three elements, then, provides us with a philosophical principle of ordering as we come to look at what the Bible and Tradition have to say about the divine Being.” (Nichols 92)
      2. salvation
         1. “Next, we already have from philosophy some idea of what might be meant by salvation. As we saw when we looked at theodicy, those major defects in the world which cannot be rationally justified remain *eo ipso* inexplicable and insuperable elements of evil. If the Creator is to deal with the evil in the world, it will be with these elements that he must deal. We listed them as the potency of evil in its fundamental ground, the need for finite spirits to have a new inner principle of act­ing, provision for the harmonization of nature with human happiness, and the overcoming of the ambiguity or absence of sufficient meaning in life as we know it.” (Nichols 92)
         2. “Just as the philosophical principle of order fur­nishes us with elements of a concept of God that will help us to write a theological treatise on God . . ., so here a philosophical principle of order will help us to write a theological treatise on soteriology, on the doctrine of redemption.” (Nichols 92)
      3. humankind
         1. “Third, we have found some elements in philosophy to help us write a theological anthropology, an account of humanity in theological terms. When we looked at the subjective conditions of possibility of revelation from the side of humans, we saw that they must be a cer­tain type of being if they are to receive revelation. In a word, they must be open to transcendence in such a way that the transcendent, God, is the fulfillment of the life of mind and will. Reductionist theories of humanity will have been shown to be inadequate: though each per­son is a sexual person and an economic person, these are not the whole truth about them. They have an inner orientation to transcendence which indicates their final destiny. So the theological doctrine of the human being at large is already partially organized in advance in terms of these philosophical categories.” (Nichols 92)
      4. revelation
         1. “Fourth and last, we already have a valuable preunderstanding of the formal structure of revelation. This derives from what we have seen about the objective criteria of the actual revelation, the content of the [92] “old” apologetics. Divine truth is mediated by a history, the biblical narrative, which has to be constantly repossessed by human minds reflecting on the significance of its central events, following the story with understanding. This history is marked by a constant recurrence of miracle, evidence of a gracious divine eruption into a world itself defined as orderly in terms of the reliability of God’s goodness. The biblical story is, then, a story of both human and divine agency. Its structural center is found in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ . . .” (Nichols 92-93)
         2. “From this we gather that revelation is found in the witness to a genuine history (Scripture) mediated by a continual process of representation (Tradition). This history, which is both human and di­vine, reaches its high point in a person in whom the divine and the human in some sense coincide. Here we have a basic framework for our investigation of the sources of the Church’s faith . . .” (Nichols 93)
   4. “In these four areas—God, salvation, man, revelation—philosophy can do much to help us organize our materials.” (Nichols 93)
   5. “An introduction to Catholic theology should, to a certain extent, abstract from the distinguishing [93] features of particular Catholic theologies so as to present the basic fea­tures of all theologies, or at any rate those features desirable in them all. It would be useful for the student to take one theologian, Augustine, say, or Thomas, and ask what philosophical principle of ordering is involved in his theology and how that principle contributes to his achievement. Augustine would be an easier choice than Thomas, as his philosophical principle of order is derived from the Platonist tradi­tion in a fairly straightforward way. It would not be difficult to show that Platonism has entered into the very structure of what Augustine has to say about God, humankind, revelation, and redemption. Platonism does not only help Augustine to argue for the truth of the Christian religion, although it does do that. It also helps him to organ­ize the materials he has received from the Church’s faith: to get them into perspective—one kind of perspective, not the only perspective, or we should all be Augustinians.” (Nichols 93-94)
2. “**inherent limitations of the philosophical principle of order in theology**” (Nichols 94)
   1. Divine revelation limits philosophical principle of order.
      1. “Philosophy is reckoned quite a high card in theology: let us call it the jack, the fourth-highest card the pack possesses. This card can be trumped by three other cards. First, it can be trumped by the king, which is divine revelation itself. Obviously, if a philosophical prin­ciple of order is tending in some way to distort revelation or leads to our leaving out of count things that are manifestly important to the faith of the Church, then the king will trump the jack.” (Nichols 94)
   2. A theo­logical principle of order trumps a philosophical principle of order.
      1. But in between the king and the jack is the queen. Between divine revelation and the philosophical principle of order in theology there is always some theo­logical principle of order. As I mentioned in the course of roughing out a definition of theology, no one theology can ever present divine revelation in its totality. It will always take up a particular standpoint, choosing one theme as its preferred point of entry and considering all the other theological themes in relation to this (for it) central motif.” (Nichols 94)
      2. “Because a theological principle of order is equally necessary to the­ology and yet is derived from within revelation and not (as is the case with the philosophical principle of order) from outside it, it must be regarded as more important than the philosophical principle and so have the right to depart from it if and when it so wishes.” (Nichols 94)
   3. The mystery of God trumps a philosophical principle of order.
      1. “The ace is the mystery of God in himself. We cannot assume that divine revelation tells us everything there is to know about God’s being and purposes. It tells us enough [94] for our needs and more than enough. Behind historic revelation there lie the unknown depths of the divine essence.” (Nichols 94-95)
      2. “Certainly, we believe that the divine essence cannot be in contradiction to anything God has made known in revelation. As Christians, we approach the mystery of that essence from the disclosure, in the self-emptying of the Son of God made man, of that self-emptying’s transcendent pattern, the eternal event of the divine processions. As von Balthasar has written, “That essence [of God] is forever ‘given’ in the self-gift of the Father, ‘rendered’ in the thanksgiving of the Son, and ‘represented’ in its character as absolute Love by the Holy Spirit.” [von Balthasar, Hans Urs. “Pref­ace to the Second Edition.” *Mysterium Paschale*. Trans. Edinburgh: 1989.] Nonetheless, there is no reason to think that in the revelation to *Homo sapiens*, to the inhabitants of this planet, the total divine mystery has been laid bare.” (Nichols 95)
      3. “Beyond even revelation there lies the vision of God, which is not for wayfarers but for those who have arrived in the assembly of the angels. Not for us now, even with divine revelation, is that perfectly unified, complete, and luminous intuition of God and beings . . .” (Nichols 95)
         1. Dante (*Paradiso*. Vol. 3 of *The Divine Comedy*. 3 vols. Italian with prose trans. J.D. Sinclair. London: J. Lane, 1946. Rev. ed. London: J. Lane, Bodley Head, 1948. Rpt. New York: OUP, 1961. 483 [canto 33.1.82-90]): “O abounding grace, by which I dared to fix my look on the Eternal Light so long that I spent all my sight upon it! In its depth I saw that it contained, bound by love in one volume, that which is scattered in leaves through the universe, substances and accidents and their relations, as it were fused together in such a way that what I tell of is a simple light.” (Nichols 95)
      4. “We must have a proper reverence for the mys­tery of God—founded on a just sense of the limitations of the human mind and heart, as of God’s excess, in his being and plan, of all our concepts and imaginings. Such reverence is not simply also necessary for theological students. It is particularly necessary in their case—since their little knowledge, as that of their teachers, may be a dangerous thing.” (Nichols 95)

## Divisions of Theology

### Arrangement of Theology

1. **inventory of data**
   1. The Church presents certain data: “Holy Scripture, the liturgy, the texts of the Councils and the Fathers of Church, etc.” (Henry “Theology” 258)
   2. “The first thing we have to do is draw up an inventory of what the Church presents to the believer and which the theologian must assume into an intelligible synthesis. . . . The first function of the theologian [is] to make an inventory of all this doctrinal capital . . .” (Henry “Theology” 258)
   3. Then the theologian must “arrange its [the inventory’s] component elements in a hierarchical fashion which befits them.” (Henry “Theology” 258)
      1. “Everything does not have the same value . . . The foundations upon which the theologian builds do not all possess equal clarity for our faith.” (Henry “Theology” 258)
      2. First there is “what we must believe without question as, for example, that there are three persons in God, the divinity of Christ, His birth of the Virgin Mary, His death and resurrection . . .” (Henry “Theology” 258)
      3. Then “there are other truths drawn from the former ones or having a close connection with them, but which are less clear-cut and less luminous for us.” (Henry “Theology” 258)
      4. “It resembles a halo of light becoming gradually more blurred as it goes from “the truths of faith” down to affirmations which are not controlled by the magisterium and which are doubted by a certain number of Christians.” (Henry “Theology” 258)
      5. “. . . we do not have to give the same degree of assent to the conciliary texts concerning the punishments of Purgatory or of Limbo, for example, or concerning the revelation of the divine maternity.” (Henry “Theology” 258)
      6. “It is important that the theologian be aware of this variety of levels in the items he receives. His theological conclusions themselves will be affected by the place of their premises in the light of faith.” (Henry “Theology” 258)
2. **subjective or objective approach to theology**
   1. “After having made an inventory of the data and arranged all its component elements in order, the theologian’s task is to construct his synthesis in such a fashion that it offers the profoundest understanding possible of all the revealed data, so that it be able to help believers to understand the truths of faith and to enter little by little into God’s light.” (Henry “Theology” 258)
   2. “In reality, however, to put things in order is already to construct. The very arrangement of one’s data already brings out a certain amount of intelligibility.” (Henry “Theology” 258)
   3. “At the basis of theological work there is a kind of definite stand to be taken . . . The theologian must choose his point of view.” (Henry “Theology” 259)
      1. “Saint Augustine’s point of view in his *Confessions* was different from his point of view in *The City of God*; Hugh of Saint Victor’s point of view differed from that of Abelard’s; Saint Bonaventure’s point of view in his *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* differed from that of Saint Thomas in his *Summa Theologiae*; the point of view of Pascal’s *Pensées* differed from that of Bossuet in his *Exposition de la foi catholique*; and that of a recent theologian like Scheeben differs from that of a modern one like Guardini. And, yet, all these works belong to theology. They are all efforts of believers in search of understanding.” (Henry “Theology” 259)
   4. “This variation of points of view is possible because the faith can be considered under two different aspects.” (Henry “Theology” 259)
      1. “It is a personal act, the act of the subject who believes. . . . The theologian who wants to deepen his faith and communicate his efforts to his fellows can work on the first level. We then say that his doctrine is one of personal commitment. His methods of investigation and construction are affected by this choice. He must make use of introspection, psychology, especially religious psychology, and study religious sentiment in all its forms. Even his style will be affected, for the warmth of his personal commitment is easily transferred into his style and at times even produces certain literary characteristics. Novels like *The Heart of the Matter* by Graham Greene, for example, belong to theology in certain respects. The choice of literary style is significant of the course taken by the theologian.” (Henry “Theology” 259)
      2. “But it [faith] is also an objective set of facts, and this is what we mean when we speak of “the Church’s faith.” . . . nothing hinders us from studying even the foregoing aspect of personal commitment in an objective and in some way metaphysical fashion. It is then that theology becomes a true science. It has its principles, its method, and like every science, it utilizes not only its own data but also the whole capital of human reason—which thus becomes a theological *locus*—philosophy, epistemology, criticism, as well as history, and the history of history which is historical criticism. this scientific, objective [level is,] insofar as possible, [a] depersonalized level . . .” (Henry “Theology” 259)
      3. It is on this scientific . . . level that we want to place this present work, so that it will be of use to all persons. This is one first way of taking our stand. It is an objective stand.” (Henry “Theology” 259)
   5. “There will soon be other points of view to be considered. But hence forth we can try to make order, that is, to draw up a plan.” (Henry “Theology” 260)
      1. “We want to remark immediately that there is nothing absolute in this plan, it has no intrinsic value in itself. Its purpose is to make us better understand the data under consideration, but it itself must be constantly outgrown. It must give us the desire to return to Sacred Scripture, the means of understanding it more thoroughly and of finding new flavor in it each time. The continual exchanges going between the “*given*” and the *theology* which is in the process of being constructed force the theologian to adjust the latter little by little in order not to lose anything of the former. His theology will be a success if it knows how to interpret all the conditions of the “given,” and if it takes all its constituents into account as far as possible.” (Henry “Theology” 260)
3. **diachronic or synchronic**
   1. There are “two contrary and yet equally necessary demands on theology, namely, the order of the divine economy as presented in Sacred History, and the order of reason reconstructing all the data of Revelation into an intelligible synthesis.” (Henry “Theology” 270)
      1. “God alone, in fact, by whose wisdom history itself is conceived, possesses this equilibrium. The theologian never approaches it except in a clumsy manner.” (Henry “Theology” 270)
   2. “In effect, either the work of the theologian unfolds according to the historical perspective of Sacred Scripture . . . Or the work of the theologian is entirely speculative.” (Henry “Theology” 270-71)
   3. “. . . the work of the theologian [that] unfolds according to the historical perspective of Sacred Scripture . . . is highly enjoyable and full of life; it is very sensitive to the development [270] of the divine Economy, to the concrete advances of God, and to the incessant drama of human response. It is living, straining, often even panting after the goal of its hopes, namely, life everlasting in company with the risen Christ. Its grandeur lies in its not letting escape anything of the dramatic character of salvation. It is like Jacob wrestling with the kind of God who breaks in on human affairs; it represents the whole life of humanity in all its sinfulness and yet aching desire for God.” (Henry “Theology” 270-71)
      1. “Its weakness, however, lies in the fact that it is not a wisdom. Remaining too closely in contact with the facts, the prophetic oracles, or the words of the gospel, it does not draw forth the intelligible principles which govern the divine Economy. It is in contact with the word which develops in sacred history, but it fails to penetrate within that word and to ascend as far as possible towards God who pronounces it, to see things as He sees them, to participate in His light, and to translate this unity of the divine vision into a science.” (Henry “Theology” 270-71)
   4. “. . . the work of the theologian [that] is entirely speculative . . . appears as a science having its object, principles, and method, its technical means of documentation and construction, its hierarchical and organized parts. Because man is endowed with intelligence, he can take the liberty of reconstituting God’s knowledge on his own level and to suit his own needs.” (Henry “Theology” 271)
      1. “But this grandeur costs him dearly. Fascinated by his own constructive powers such a theologian little by little loses contact with the sources of the faith. His theology becomes cold, tasteless, lifeless, without conviction. The soundness which he manifests in his systematic rationalization is merely apparent if it is no longer founded upon the rock of the Word. The theologian has then let himself be caught in his own net. He is captivated by the beauty of his own construction and no longer by that of the Word. *Flatus vocis*: what remains are only words and concepts, “hot air!”” (Henry “Theology” 271)
   5. “But is it possible to assume the relativity of history into the absolute nature of a wisdom?” (Henry “Theology” 271)
      1. “. . . is not the former [i.e., history] the slave of the contingent and transitory flux of events?” (Henry “Theology” 271)
      2. “Must not the latter [i.e., wisdom] stop at the necessary causes in order to contemplate and arrange them in order?” (Henry “Theology” 271)
      3. “Equilibrium is to be found in an ever relative compromise between the exigencies of reason and the exigencies of life and historical reality.” (Henry “Theology” 271)
4. **arrangement in many catechisms and manuals**
   1. “Our modern catechisms . . . and many manuals divide theological matter into three parts which they entitle: truths to be believed, commandments to be practiced, sacraments to be received.” (Henry “Theology” 274)
   2. “Now anybody can see that this is an entirely material division. It takes things, not from God’s point of view, but from the point of view of the disciples who must believe certain truths, practice certain commandments, and receive the sacraments.” (Henry “Theology” 274)
   3. “In addition, to put things in this way is to falsify them. The Christian life cannot be reduced to that.” (Henry “Theology” 274)
      1. “Where would we put life eternal and the resurrection of the body in such a scheme? The happiness that God promises us is decidedly something more than just a “truth to be believed,” it is a living reality to be hoped for. What is there in such a scheme to arouse the hopes or desires of the believer or to give him a longing for life?” (Henry “Theology” 274)
      2. “Besides, morality cannot be reduced to the practice of certain commandments.” (Henry “Theology” 274)
         1. “. . . how can we give a reasonable account of the commandments themselves?” (Henry “Theology” 274)
         2. “. . . what do we do with the morality of intention . . .?” (Henry “Theology” 274)
      3. “Finally, . . . Sacred History . . . cannot be found in this scheme.” (Henry “Theology” 274)
         1. “. . . there is no place for the divine drama recounted by Sacred Books to be explained, commented upon, and relished.” (Henry “Theology” 274)
         2. “Theology founded on such a framework . . . has not even the merit of being living by being based in history. It is necessarily cold and static.” (Henry “Theology” 275)
   4. “Theology founded on such a framework admits of no intelligibility . . .” (Henry “Theology” 275)
5. **kerygmatic theology**
   1. “Today there is a great deal of talk about kerygmatic theology. Perhaps there is a precious leaven to be found in it which will renew theological inspiration. But will such a theology, living as it is, be wise enough to fix itself in the contemplation of what is eternal?” (Henry “Theology” 275)
   2. “The method used by Father Mersch . . . in his theology of the Mystical Body is certainly better [than many recent catechisms and manuals]. But let the mere title suffice for our comparison. For Saint Thomas the subject of theology is neither Christ nor His Mystical Body, but God Himself in whom are to be found the ultimate reasons of things . . . The Incarnation and the Mystical Body belong to the accidental and contingent. Only God first and last can satisfy the theologian in quest of understanding.” (Henry “Theology” 275)

### Traditional Organizations of Theology

1. **introduction**
   1. An early compendium of theology is Origen’s *De Principiis*. (Fenton 54)
   2. Somewhat later is John of Damascus’ *De Fide Orthodoxa*. (Fenton 54)
   3. “The order of the *Four Books of Sentences* and that of the *Summa Theologica* are manifestations of a perennial tradition in the field of Catholic thought. They follow along the general lines set down centuries before in the *De Fide Orthodoxa* [and] *De Principiis* . . .” (Fenton 54)
2. **Peter Lombard**’**s organization in *Four Books of Sentences***
   1. “Utilizing the terminology of St. Augustine, [Peter the Lombard] made the basic division of his work follow upon the distinction between “things” and “signs.” This division was to remain classical in the university world for generations after Peter the Lombard had died.” (Fenton 28)
      1. “. . . “things” were those objects not used to manifest something distinct from themselves. They comprised those realities which were to be known for their own sakes and in themselves.” (Fenton 28)
      2. “. . . “signs” were those objects which were meant to bring to the mind a knowledge of realities distinct from themselves.” (Fenton 28)
   2. “The first three of the *Four Books of Sentences* dealt with the “things” . . .” (Fenton 28)
      1. “. . . Peter the Lombard pointed out that
         1. “some are to be enjoyed,
         2. “others are meant to be used,
         3. “and still others are supposed to be [28] used and enjoyed.” (Fenton 28-29)
      2. things to be enjoyed
         1. “. . . “things” which are meant to be enjoyed are those things which actually make us blessed. These are the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Thus the Three Divine Persons, or God considered in His intimate life, as He is at once the Author and the End of the entire supernatural order, constitutes the center of sacred theology as this science was expounded by Peter the Lombard.” (Fenton 28-29)
         2. “The actual theological literature of medieval and modern times was intimately dependent upon the work of the Lombard. Thus a science which centered around God as the One who is to be enjoyed, the One who is to be sought above all others and for the sake of whom all other agencies are expected to act, is the sacred theology of our tradition.” (Fenton 29)
         3. “All the rest of the matter of sacred theology is actually gathered about the concept of God . . .” (Fenton 29)
      3. things to be used
         1. The world and the created things which enter into it constitute the things which we are meant to use for the attainment of God as our ultimate end.” (Fenton 29)
      4. things to be enjoyed and used
         1. “Our fellow men are . . . brothers who are meant to live with us in the eternal light of heaven, and at the same time as forces and workers whose aid we are to enlist in our own struggle toward salvation.” (Fenton 30)
         2. enjoyed
            1. “Ourselves and the holy angels of heaven are the things which are meant to be both used and enjoyed. The men . . . in this world [who live a] life of habitual grace . . . and the saints and the angels in heaven, together with those souls who expiate their faults in the cleansing fires of purgatory are to be loved . . . We are meant to enjoy their society in heaven . . .” (Fenton 29)
         3. used
            1. “. . . the saints and the men with whom we are associated in this world constitute means which we are enabled to use for the attainment of God’s glory and our own salvation.” (Fenton 29)
            2. “For Peter the Lombard, . . . theology should consider all the realities of this world only with reference to God, our ultimate End. All the forces and resources of the world were looked upon as means to be employed and wealth to be expended for the attainment of the ultimate and perfect human happiness.” (Fenton 30)
   3. signs
      1. “Actually some of these material things are constituted by God Himself as “signs” or sacraments, to signify the great mysteries of our redemption, and then endowed by Him with the strength to bring about the grace which they manifest.” (Fenton 30)
3. **Aquinas**’ **organization of *Summa Theologiae* shows God is the primary object of theology**.
   1. “The theocentric character of sacred doctrine is even more strikingly manifest in the master division of the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas, the book which replaced the *Sentences* as the standard text for the theological schools of the west.” (Fenton 30)
   2. “All the content of his *Summa Theologica* centers about the concept of God . . .” (Fenton 30)
      1. Aquinas (*ST* “Prologue”): “Because the principal intention of this sacred doctrine is to give a knowledge of God, not only as He is in Himself, but also in so far as He is the Principle and the End of all things, and especially of the rational creature . . . we shall treat first of God, then of the movement of the rational creature toward God and third of Christ, who, as man, is the Way by which we go to God.” (Qtd. in Fenton 30)
      2. “. . . in the order of the *Summa Theologica* . . . each individual treatise, question, and article keeps to this . . . concern with God . . .” (Fenton 54)
   3. “Within these three divisions are grouped all the conclusions which St. Thomas taught as the dicta of sacred theology. In his explanation, then, God is actually the formal object of attribution for the science in the very real sense that every statement put forward in the science contributes toward a more perfect grasp of that concept of God which He has offered to the world in the content of divine revelation. St. Thomas developed his division in such a way that the master idea was never overlooked. His order is calculated to make every part of sacred theology contribute to the elaboration of the idea of God.” (Fenton 31)
4. **organization according to faith**, **hope**, **and charity**
   1. One “ordering of the content of this science [is] along the lines of the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. This order is found in the *Enchiridion* of St. Augustine and in the remarkable *Compendium Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas.” (Fenton 54)
   2. “This division is mentioned at the beginning of the *Enchiridion* although the matter of the book is not arranged very strictly in function of this division.” (Fenton 55 n. 52)
   3. “The *Compendium Theologiae* is [like the *Summa Theologiae*] another of the unfinished masterpieces of St. Thomas. The second section, on hope, which is arranged according to the nature and the petitions of the Lord’s Prayer is not complete. The third section was never begun.” (Fenton 55 n. 52)
5. **five divisions**
   1. Saint Paul Seminary Press, at The Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity of the University of Saint Thomas in Saint Paul, Minnesota, is publishing a “Catholic Theological Formation Series.” To describe the series, the Press says: “Most often, it [the series] will draw from the more traditional specializations of historical, systematic, moral, and biblical scholarship. Homiletics and pastoral ministry are anticipated venues as well.” (Genung and Zilverberg *The Word of Truth* iv) This suggests that theology has five basic divisions: biblical, historical, systematic, moral, and practical theology.

### Synopsis of the *Summa Theologiae*

Henry, A.M., OP, et al. *Introduction to Theology*. Theology Library 1. Ed. A.M. Henry, OP. Trans. dir. Louis J. Putz, CSC. Cork: Mercier; Chicago: Fides, 1954. 6 vols. Qtd. from *The Rosary Magazine* (Sept. 1893).

Punctuation and capitalization are modernized. The 38 treatises into which the *Summa* is traditionally divided are the sections with question numbers (“qq.” numbers) after them.

1. **Part 1**: **theology and God**
   1. theology (q. 1)

Sacred doctrine, what it is and to what it extends. All things are treated in it under the idea of God, either because they are God Himself or because they have relation to God.

* 1. God
     1. things which pertain to the divine essence (qq. 2-26)
     2. things which pertain to the distinction of persons (qq. 27-43)
     3. things which pertain to the production of creatures by God
        1. production of creatures
           1. creation (qq. 44-45)
        2. distinction of creatures
           1. distinction of things in general (qq. 47)
           2. distinction of things in particular

distinction of good and evil (qq. 48-49)

distinction of corporeal and spiritual creatures

angels (qq. 50-64)

creatures purely corporeal (qq. 55-74)

man (qq. 75-102)

* + - 1. preservation and government of creatures
         1. conservation and government of creatures (qq. 103-19)

1. **Part 2**: **the advance of the rational creature to God**

Since the principal end of sacred doctrine is to give a knowledge of God, not only as He is in His own nature but also as he is the beginning and end of all things, and especially of the rational being, we propose to treat of the end of man and the means, human acts.

But because singular things are the object of operations and acts, therefore every operative science is perfected by the consideration of things in particular. Therefore a moral consideration of human acts must be given.

* 1. the end of man and beatitude (qq. 1-6)
  2. the means by which man attains to or deviates from his end, i.e., human acts
     1. in general
        1. the acts themselves

Some acts are peculiar to man; some are common to man and other living creatures; and since beatitude is the peculiar good of man in as much as he is rational, the acts which are peculiar to him have a more intimate connection to that good than those that are common to man and living creatures.

* + - * 1. acts which are peculiar to man (qq. 5-21)
        2. acts which are common to man and other animals (qq. 22-48)
      1. the principles of acts
         1. intrinsic principles

The intrinsic principles are powers of the soul and habits; we have already treated of powers in the first part. Therefore we come to the consideration of habits.

habits in general (qq. 49-54)

habits in particular

good habits, i.e., virtues (qq. 55-70)

bad habits, i.e., vices, and on sins (qq. 71-89)

* + - * 1. extrinsic principles

The extrinsic principle of good is God, who instructs us by his law, and moves us by his grace. The extrinsic principle of evil is the Devil. But we treated of him in the first part.

on laws (qq. 90-108)

on grace (qq. 109-14)

* + 1. in particular
       1. acts which pertain to all conditions of life (the virtues and vices affecting all men)
          1. theological virtues

in the intellect: faith (qq. 1-16)

in the will

hope (qq. 17-22)

charity (qq. 23-46)

* + - * 1. cardinal virtues

prudence (qq. 47-56)

justice (qq. 47-122)

fortitude (qq. 123-40)

temperance (qq. 141-70)

* + - 1. acts which pertain in a special manner to some men
         1. grace gratuitously given (*gratiae gratis datae*) (qq. 171-78)
         2. active and contemplative life (qq. 179-82)
         3. the various effects and conditions of man (qq. 183-89)

1. **Part 3**

Christ, who, in as much as he is man, is the way by which we tend to God. Since our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, redeeming his people from their sins, has shown to us in himself the way of truth, by which we, arising from the dead, are able to arrive at the happiness of immortal life, it is necessary, in order to attain the scope of all theology, after the consideration of the final end of man and of the virtues and vices, that we should consider the Saviour of all and the benefits that he has conferred on us.

* 1. the Saviour himself, i.e., the mystery of the incarnation, what he did and suffered
     1. the incarnation (qq. 1-59)
  2. sacraments, which have their efficacy from the incarnate Word
     1. in general (qq. 60-65)
     2. in particular
        1. baptism (qq. 66-71)
        2. confirmation (qq. 72)
        3. Eucharist (qq. 73-83)
        4. penance (qq. 84-90 Supplement) (qq. 1-28)
        5. extreme unction (qq. 29-33)
        6. orders (qq. 34-40)
        7. matrimony (qq. 41-68)
  3. immortal life, the end to which we attain through Christ, both God and man, suffering, dying, and arising from the dead
     1. the resurrection and four last things (qq. 69-99)

### Arrangement of Theology

### in Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae*

1. **Aquinas**’ **arrangement**
   1. “Saint Thomas found the central idea of his construction in the Dionysian tradition; it is that of *Exitus* and *Reditus*, of emanation (or procession) and conversion (or return). God launches natures into being, and these natures exist only in order to rejoin by their very act of existing the divine exemplar upon which they were modeled.” (Henry “Theology” 272)
      1. “The first part of the *Summa* therefore considers God in Himself, then in His act of creation, and then the beings that He created in His image or in some distant likeness.” (Henry “Theology” 272)
      2. “The second part considers God as the final End of these beings who, by their activity or their very existing, strive to return to God.” (Henry “Theology” 272)
      3. “The remaining third part treats of “re-creation,” that is, the new creation that Christ brings about within a creation [which new creation is] already accomplished by the mystery of His death and resurrection.” (Henry “Theology” 272)
   2. “Saint Thomas thus distinguishes two histories (or, if you wish, a history on two different levels) . . .” (Henry “Theology” 272)
      1. There is “the history of creation, . . . creation which is already established and developing historically, . . . history which creates *natures* (first part); [*sic*] and leads them to their end (second part) . . .” (Henry “Theology” 272)
      2. There is, “within this creation . . ., the history of God repairing the foundations of His work during the very course of its evolution . . ., history in which God takes the initiative of entering into relation with the free persons who evolve within the first history, in order to help them to refind the order of grace and of happiness for which they were created (third part).” (Henry “Theology” 272)
   3. “The extraordinarily well constructed architecture of the *Summa* . . . satisfies a variety of demands.” (Henry “Theology” 272)
      1. “First of all, it satisfies theological reasoning. Everything is seen from God’s point of view; it [everything] is a participation in the divine vision of things as they are.” (Henry “Theology” 272)
      2. “It is a design which is open to history.” (Henry “Theology” 272)
         1. “In the first and second parts are to be found the whole history of the divine activities whose purpose was the creation of natures: the work of the six days, the creation of angels, of the first man, the study of the human soul, material creation, a study of acts, passions, virtues, original sin, grace.” (Henry “Theology” 272)
         2. “In the third part there is to be found the whole history of Christ, both head and members, from the Incarnation to the Parousia.” (Henry “Theology” 273)
      3. “It is a design which satisfies the humanist.” (Henry “Theology” 273)
         1. Because “everything is centered upon God . . ., the framework of the *Summa* opens up for us the maximum of intelligibility on each nature and each destiny: all the natures are considered in themselves in the first two parts.” (Henry “Theology” 273)
         2. “Sometimes Saint Thomas is accused of being naturalistic. Certain people fear to let themselves be drawn by him into a theology which appears to them to be tainted with Aristotelian paganism.” (Henry “Theology” 273)
         3. But Aquinas affirms “the consistency and the value of the natures created by God as a basis for all supernatural work and history. There is nothing pagan in doing that, for it is not the natures which are of prime consideration but God who created them. They only appear in the light of God who produced them and who summons them to return to Him by imitating Him in their own way.” (Henry “Theology” 273)
      4. “Finally, it is a design which satisfies the demands of both contemplation and action.” (Henry “Theology” 273)
         1. “The contemplative, whose essential task is to consider God and all things in the light of God, finds a precious help in this theology since it is conceived precisely along these lines.” (Henry “Theology” 273)
         2. “The man of action, who needs norms of morality and principles of conduct, finds the purpose of all obligations, whether natural or positive, and the meaning of all action in the consideration of nature received from God and in which is inscribed the destiny of man.” (Henry “Theology” 273)
   4. seeming and real anomalies in Aquinas’ arrangement
      1. Why “are the questions on the mission of the Holy Spirit, on the new Law, and on grace inserted in the first two parts rather than in the third?” (Henry “Theology” 273)
         1. “Original sin and grace are studied in the first two parts: [272]
            1. “original sin, because it forces itself upon man, because it is passed on to him like a nature;
            2. “grace, because, no matter what Economy were chosen by God, it [grace] possesses the same essence, the same principal cause, the same end, the same effects.” (Henry “Theology” 272-73)
         2. “. . . no matter what economy were chosen by God [does Henry mean no matter what means (rather than the Incarnation?) God chose by which to repair creation?], grace, the new law, and the mission of the Holy Spirit are all tied in with [273] justification and divinization. The fact that grace is a quality of the soul is not what is gratuitous in it, that is not its essence; what scholastics call the formal cause of grace carries with it a certain necessity since it is a participation in the absolute necessity of God. What is gratuitous in grace is the fact that God gives it to us although we have no right whatsoever to it. Saint Thomas emphasizes this distinction by placing its necessary aspect—even if it were only necessary on a secondary level—in the first two parts and by assigning to the third what depends on the absolute good pleasure of God.” (Henry “Theology” 273-74)
         3. In God “are to be found the ultimate reasons of things, whether they be necessary or whether they depend upon his gratuitous good pleasure. The Incarnation and the Mystical Body belong to the accidental and contingent.” (Henry “Theology” 275)
         4. “. . . there is nothing arbitrary about this position. Saint Thomas just pushes to its logical extreme the bold choice he made about seeing things from God’s point of view.” (Henry “Theology” 273)
         5. “Let us make no mistake, however: these parts [grace in part 2, Christ in part 3] cannot be detached from one another at will, they form an indivisible whole. The theologian has not said everything that the grace of God is for us when he has not yet spoken of God’s divine activity in the Incarnation.” (Henry “Theology” 273-74)
      2. “In defending Saint Thomas, however, we do not say that certain groupings are not open to criticism. Everything is not equal in rigor. Only when looked upon as a whole are all the divisions justified.” (Henry “Theology” 274)
      3. “The work [the *Summa*] was never completed. The last question St. Thomas wrote in the *Summa* was the ninetieth of the third part. What was to follow according to the order already described by him was taken from his Commentary on the *Fourth Book of Sentences* and added as a Supplement to the third part of the *Summa*. This Supplement, arranged by Reginald of Piperno, contains the rest of the treatise on penance and the other sacraments which are treated subsequent to this and all of the doctrine on the last things.” (Fenton 53 n. 51)
   5. “. . . the choice of a “system” [need not] close our mind to certain aspects of the truth which may be better realized in other systems . . . The theologian must [275] remain very humble in his work and remember the relativity of the arguments he uses as contrasted with the faith that everyone holds.” (Henry “Theology” 275, 277)
2. **why Aquinas**’ ***Summa* is the best choice**
   1. “. . . we should like to put a sort of theological classic into everybody’s hands. And that is why . . . we have chosen the school of thought and the plan of Saint Thomas’ *Summa Theologiae*. [Here are] the reasons for our choice . . .” (Henry “Theology” 270)
   2. “First of all, the work of Saint Thomas represents a point of maturity in the history of theology which seems never to have be surpassed.” (Henry “Theology” 270)
   3. “In addition, it is neither a theology of affective, nor psychological, nor subjective, nor “humanist” inspiration, but simply intellectual and, in the best sense of the term, scientific. As a result it is entirely depersonalized and, as far as possible, possesses universal value. It is not the reflection of any particular spiritual temperament.” (Henry “Theology” 270)
   4. “Finally, among all the theological syntheses, the *Summa Theologiae* seems to achieve the most balanced equilibrium between . . . the order of the divine economy as presented in Sacred History, and the order of reason reconstructing all the data of Revelation into an intelligible synthesis. [270] . . . It seems to us that the architecture of the *Summa* presents the most balanced equilibrium that we can hope for.” (Henry “Theology” 270-71)
   5. “. . . therefore, we have chosen the plan of the Summa for this Theology Library. It is our judgment that this plan provides the best understanding of the whole of Revelation.” (Henry “Theology” 275)
   6. “Our work, nevertheless, remains an initiation, and although Saint Thomas addressed his *Summa* to beginners, his development was more extensive than ours will be; we shall touch upon only fundamental questions . . .” (Henry “Theology” 275)
   7. “From Saint Thomas we draw the plan and the inspiration . . . [But] each author for his part has tried to rethink the questions and to present them under a form and in terms, nay even in categories, which are accessible to the modern reader.” (Henry “Theology” 275)
   8. “For example, we have not kept the literary style of the *Summa*, that is, the division into articles, objections, *sed contra*, which are everywhere out of date in our universities and which would be excessively foreign to modern students. The work therefore is simply divided into chapters.” (Henry “Theology” 275)
3. **authority of Aquinas**
   1. “. . . the Church accords a place of unique authority to Saint Thomas. But it is as a theologian first of all; only in a subsidiary fashion, and inasmuch as he is included in the theologian, as a philosopher.” (Liégé “Believer” 280)
   2. The Church “recognized him as the common theologian in the same sense in which we spoke above of the common theology, namely, as he whose reflection remained most faithfully under the influence of the Word of God, as he who introduced the smallest amount of purely systematic thought into his theology. It is always her solicitude for a living safeguard of the data of faith which pushes the Church to recommend the thought of Saint Thomas to her faithful and to impose it upon her clerics.” (Liégé “Believer” 280)
   3. “Now this does not mean that every part of the theology of Saint Thomas is equally covered by this official recognition, nor that systems manifesting certain incompatibilities of thought in regard to his as concerns secondary matters are declared erroneous, nor that no theological progress can take place after Saint Thomas. It means only that in following his great theological positions we can be assured of finding a faithful and truly Catholic understanding of the Word of God. It seems to us that the theological synthesis of Saint Thomas, to the extent that its rational contribution, [*sic*] is situated upon a truly metaphysical and universal plane, remains open to perpetual enrichment, first, by a return to the sources of living faith, and then through an acceptance of contributions from different theological systems or attempts. But a theological system would certainly cease to be true to the degree in which it was elaborated in using intuitions and elementary principles radically different from those used by Saint Thomas.” (Liégé “Believer” 280)
   4. Henri Lacordaire, OP (1802-61): “Saint Thomas is not a boundary but a beacon.” (Qtd. in Liégé “Believer” 280)

### Divisions of Theology: Latourelle

1. **introduction**
   1. “One can consider theology under different aspects (from the point of view of its end, its matter, or its method) and consequently divide it up in different ways, and recognize different departments in it.” (Latourelle 53)
2. **theology**’**s end as basis of division**
   1. “. . . the end to which it [theology] is directed [is] the purpose of theological work . . ., its fundamental intention.” (Latourelle 53)
   2. speculative and practical ends
      1. “A science which is theoretical or speculative in the scholastic sense of the word is directed to the knowledge of truth. It applies itself to knowing for the sake of knowing.” (Latourelle 53)
      2. “A practical science has as its end the regulation of our actions, the ordering of our mode of life.” (Latourelle 53)
   3. Is theology’s end theoretical or practical? (Latourelle 53)
      1. No doubt “theology can help to make us better . . . [But does it] pursue . . . this end before everything else”? (Latourelle 53)
      2. Four answers have been given. (Latourelle 53-54)
   4. *First*: “theology is quite simply a practical science . . .” (Latourelle 54)
      1. Theology “rekindles devotion and stimulates the will to move towards its ultimate good.” (Latourelle 54)
      2. Thus Alexander of Hales, Albert the Great, and Duns Scotus. (Latourelle 54)
         1. “Alexander of Hales calls theology an “affective science.”” (Latourelle 54)
         2. “Albert the Great calls it “a knowledge which disposes to piety.”” (Latourelle 54)
   5. *Second*: “theology is at the same time theoretical and practical, but principally practical . . .” (Latourelle 54)
      1. “Theology “seeks first to make us better. Its primary end is not to speculate but to teach us to live as Christians.” (Latourelle 54)
      2. Thus Bonaventure. (Latourelle 54)
         1. “Theology is at the immediate service of Christian life.” (Latourelle 54)
         2. Bonaventure (“Preface,” *Commentary on the Sentences* [*I Sent*., prooemium q. 3]): “Does one engage in theology from the desire to see or in order to become good? . . . this knowledge is an aid to faith; and faith is in the intellect in such a way that the more it conforms to its own nature the more it moves the heart. The thing is clear; for to know that Christ died for us, and other truths of this kind, cannot but evoke love, unless a man is a hardened sinner.” (Qtd. in Latourelle 54)
         3. Bonaventure (*Itinerarium mentis ad Deum*, Prol. n. 4): “Let not one believe that learning will be enough for him without grace, speculation without devotion, research without wonder, observations without joy, work without religion, science without love, understanding without humility, zeal without the divine life, or reflection without the wisdom which comes from God.” (Qtd. in Latourelle 55)
   6. *First and second*: adherents stress “the aspect of salvation and the affective character of theology. They are in the line of St. Augustine and St. Bernard. From this point of view it is [54] not so much the truth in itself with which we are concerned in theology, as the value of the truth for life. This is a legitimate point of view and a sublime one.” (Latourelle 54-55)
   7. *Third*: “theology is purely and simply a theoretical science . . .” (Latourelle 54)
      1. Thus Henry of Ghent. (Latourelle 54)
      2. “. . . it aims at the knowledge and contemplation of God.” (Latourelle 54)
   8. *Fourth*: “We engage in theology with the additional intention of becoming better and of leading others to sanctity, but theology is principally a theoretical science.” (Latourelle 55)
      1. “. . . theology seeks above all to know and understand the divine mystery. It wishes to understand first, and then to “edify,” to build the mystery within us. It is by thinking about the truths of salvation that we discover their value for life; the truth of the mystery is its being ordered to our salvation. Theology is then first contemplation of the truth, and then the building up of Christ in us.” (Latourelle 55)
      2. Thus Thomas Aquinas (*ST* 1:1:4). (Latourelle 55)
      3. “Normally a deeper knowledge of the word is bound to open out in a life conformed to this knowledge, just as faith flowers in charity and knowledge is fulfilled in love. A kind of fruitful reciprocity must exist between knowledge and life, the contemplation of truth bearing the fruit of holiness, and holiness in its turn arousing the desire to know more deeply.” (Latourelle 55)
3. **theology**’**s subject matter as basis of division**
   1. One can see theology’s subject matter “in a pattern of treatises (on Revelation, on the Church, on God, one and triune, on creation, on the Incarnation, on redemption, on grace, on the virtues, on the sacraments, on the last things).” (Latourelle 55-56)
   2. Or one can see theology’s subject matter “in a pattern of disciplines (apologetic theology, dogmatic [55] theology, moral theology, spiritual theology, liturgical theology, patristic theology etc.) . . .” (Latourelle 55-56)
4. **theology**’**s method as basis of division**
   1. On the basis of method “one can speak of positive theology and speculative theology.” (Latourelle 56)
      1. “Terminology here fluctuates.” (Latourelle 56)
      2. “Some talk about historical theology (positive) and systematic theology (speculative).” (Latourelle 56)
      3. “Others [talk] about the dogmatic part of theology (dealing with Scripture, the Fathers, the Church, the magisterium) and the systematic (or speculative) part.” (Latourelle 56)
      4. “The positive and the speculative are two essential functions, two complementary aspects, of theological work.” (Latourelle 56)
   2. “The method of a science is determined by its object and its end.” (Latourelle 56)
      1. “The object of theology is God in his inner life and in his design of salvation . . .” (Latourelle 56)
      2. “. . . the end of theology is the better understanding of the design of the God who saves, which is to introduce man into the inner life of God.” (Latourelle 56)
      3. “It follows that the method of theology includes two essential and successive aspects . . .” (Latourelle 56)
         1. *First*: “the definition of the object of faith, or theology in its positive function . . .” (Latourelle 56)
         2. *Second*: “the understanding of the object of faith or theology in its properly reflective or speculative or systematic function.” (Latourelle 56)
         3. “For theology must first know the word of God, in a whole and precise way, and then understand what this word means. Just as in the experimental sciences one gathers together the facts in order afterwards to interpret them, so theology collates and systematizes the data of revelation (positive theology) in order to seek afterwards their intelligibility (speculative theology).” (Latourelle 56)
   3. Vatican II’s decree, *Optatam totius* (on the formation of priests)
      1. “The second Vatican Council has in some measure given its blessing to this procedure in theology.” (Latourelle 56)
      2. Vatican II (*Optatam totius* § 16): “The theological disciplines should be taught in such a way that . . . students may carefully derive Catholic doctrine from divine revelation” (the positive function), “understand it deeply” (the speculative function), “nourish their own spiritual lives with it, and be able to proclaim it, unfold it and defend it in their pastoral ministry.” (Qtd. in Latourelle 57)
      3. Vatican II (*Optatam totius* § 16): “Dogmatic theology should be taught so that biblical themes are presented first. Students should be shown how the Fathers of the Eastern and Western Church contributed to the faithful transmission and illumination of each of the individual truths of revelation, and also given some account of the later history of dogma, without forgetting the relation of this to the general history of the Church. [“This first part of the decree’s treatment of theology clearly describes its positive function.”] Then, so that the mysteries of salvation may be known as fully and accurately as they can be, students should learn, under the tutelage of St. Thomas, to penetrate them more deeply by means of the speculative reason, and to see how they are inter-connected. [“Here it is obviously a matter of the speculative function of theology, of the understanding of faith.”]” (Qtd. in Latourelle 57)

### The Theological Disciplines

1. **introduction**
   1. “Specialization, in theology as in all sciences, is a necessity imposed by the extent of knowl­edge, by teaching requirements, by a parallel evolution in the human sciences (philology, history, and literary criticism), by the appearance of new problems (in pastoral, missionary and ecumenical theology) and even of new objects (in the theology of terrestrial reality).” (Latourelle 93)
   2. “. . . the division of theology into particular disciplines arises from the diversity of matters treated or from mere teaching convenience (as in dogma and moral theology for instance).” (Latourelle 93)
   3. The “division of theology into specialized departments . . . is of an entirely different kind from the methodological distinction between positive theology and specula­tive or systematic theology. While this latter distinction per­meates the whole of theology and each of its special departments . . .” (Latourelle 93)
   4. The “theological disciplines are all at the service of one science [93] . . . That is why they are intimately connected with one another and support one another [in] understanding of the one design of God.” (Latourelle 93-94)
2. **Latourelle**’**s division**
   1. “The theological disciplines can be grouped in different ways. The order we have adopted is this.” (Latourelle 94)
   2. *apologetic theology*, *fundamental theology*: “God has intervened in human history and manifested himself to man to reveal to him the plan of salvation. The Word of God in Jesus Christ and through Jesus Christ: that is the first reality of Christianity. Apologetic theology and fundamental theology are the basic disciplines which have for their object the fact and the mystery of this Word in the world.” (Latourelle 94)
   3. *dogmatic theology*: “The contents of the Word spoken by God and received in faith are infinite. Dogmatic theology (ch. 2), supported by the results of specialized research, tries to understand the design of God in its totality; its object is the Mystery and the mysteries. It is presented in the description which we give of it, in the same way as a course in “general science” as compared with the special departments of the same science. It prepares the way for the particular disciplines and at the same time unifies them in a higher synthesis. In theology taken as a whole, it is at once the point of departure and the point of arrival.” (Latourelle 94)
   4. *biblical theology*, *patristic theology*, *liturgical theology*: “The word [of God] in its first and original form of expression [is] in Scripture, in the Fathers, in the liturgy [ch. 3].” (Latourelle 94)
   5. *moral theology*, *spiritual theology*: “two disciplines study how the Christian­ity of the “new man” works in practice (ch. 4), in its universal structure (moral theology), or in its personal dimension in both an historical and an experimental sense (spiritual theology).” (Latourelle 94)
   6. “The other disciplines concern the Church as a community or as an institution.” (Latourelle 94)
      1. *pastoral theology*, *missionary theology*, *ecumenical theology* (ch. 5): in her “apostolic activity [the Church] speaks to
         1. “the faithful (pastoral theology),
         2. “to the separated brethren (ecumenical theology)
         3. “or to non-Christians at large (missionary theology).” (Latourelle 94)
      2. *canon law* (ch. 6): this “governs the institutional life of the Church . . .” (Latourelle 94)
         1. By “a special relation­ship with dogma and moral theology [94] . . . [canon law] penetrates into a large part of its liturgical, pastoral and missionary activity.” (Latourelle 94-95)
      3. *Church history* (ch. 7): this “is not merely a description but an understanding of the life of the Church through the centuries . . .” (Latourelle 95)
         1. Though a separate discipline, it “at the same time . . . affects every department of theology.” (Latourelle 94-95)

### Divisions of Theology: Nichols

1. **introduction**
   1. This handout presents “the organization of contemporary theo­logy . . .” (Nichols 23)
   2. “. . . the theological habit finds itself confronted by five basic kinds of question.” (Nichols 24)
   3. “The wonder, curiosity, and ever-deepening pursuit of truth implicit in the act of faith generates . . . a variety of ques­tions, which may be sorted into five portmanteau categories. These are fundamental, historical, systematic, moral, and practical theology.” (Nichols 33) “Portmanteau”: noun, “a large suitcase”; adjective, “combining more than one use or quality.” (*Merriam*-*Webster*’*s Collegiate Dictionary*. 2000. CD-ROM. Vers. 2.5. 10 Apr. 2010.)
   4. “. . . the five great questions that theology asks . . . lead to its primordial forms: fundamental, historical, systematic, moral, and practical theology.” (Nichols 35)
2. **fundamental theology**
   1. “First, there are questions concerned with the foun­dation of faith. How is faith to be justified? On what is it based? This leads the theologian into what was formerly called “apologetics” and is now more usually termed “fundamental” or “foundational” the­ology, a less combative but somewhat bland title.” (Nichols 24)
   2. fundamental theology “helps one to convert others to the faith by suggesting considerations relevant to the truth of Catholic Christianity.” (Nichols 33)
   3. It also “helps one to help other people keep the faith by removing difficulties they may have about believing.” (Nichols 33)
3. **historical theology**
   1. “Second, there are questions about the historical origin and development of the faith. What does the biblical text mean? How is later doctrine derived from it? This would take us into historical theology—if the exegetes will forgive us for including biblical studies under this more capacious term.” (Nichols 24)
   2. “Historical theology helps one to discern the impression Jesus Christ made upon those who first met him (the New Testament), the situation he lived in (the Old Testament), and the way his image and teaching have been preserved and presented in the Church (the history of doctrine). In these ways, historical theology en­ables one to present the faith in a way that is concrete, circumstantial, and historically correct.” (Nichols 33)
4. **systematic theology**
   1. “Third, there are questions about the interconnection of the contents of the faith. How does it all hang together? How is one truth related to an­other? Such questions entail trying to relate in a systematic way the various elements that make up the teaching or dogma of the Christian religion. So they belong to systematic or dogmatic theology.” (Nichols 24)
   2. “Systematic theology helps one to show people [33] how the faith hangs together, how it all makes a satisfying design that is an inspiration to live by.” (Nichols 33-34)
5. **moral theology**
   1. “Fourth, there are questions to do with the way faith should affect the behavior of the individual or the group. How are my ethical standards altered by becoming a Christian? How should a Christian community behave? Answering these questions would involve an exploration of the basic principles of Christianity as a life, an exploration known as “moral” or “pastoral” theology.” (Nichols 24)
   2. “Moral theology is useful in showing people how they might be growing personally in relation to God and their neighbor.” (Nichols 34)
6. **practical theology**
   1. “Finally, we can group together a number of rather heterogeneous questions that deal with the implications of the Christian faith for the rest of human knowledge. What does natural science look like in the light of faith? Or social studies? How does faith modify our approach to literature or art or psychology? There is no generally agreed portmanteau for such questions, but a suitable one might be “practical” theology. Such theology would look at the con­sequences that faith has for our practice of a variety of human disci­plines (anything from parapsychology to poetry), the manifold ways that we have of moving intelligently about the world. And certainly we could include here such disciplines as sociology, economics, and politics, thus making a connection with an increasingly widespread use of the term “practical theology” in writers influenced by the po­litical and liberation schools of theological thought. [Hennelly, A.T. *Theologies in Conflict*: *The Challenge of Juan Luis Segundo*. Maryknoll: 1979. 9-10.] However, to [24] reduce practical theology to the concerns of social politics or social economics would mean a grave impoverishment of its human materials.” (Nichols 24-25)
   2. “Practical theology shows them [believers] the relevance of their religion to their professional work or private passions, to their general knowledge or social situation.” (Nichols 34)
7. **relations of subdisciplines**
   1. Two subdisciplines “have something of the nature of a preamble . . .” (Nichols 25)
      1. fundamental theology: “questions dealing with the rationale . . . of Catholic Christianity . . .” (Nichols 25)
         1. “. . . apologetics (or fundamental theology) . . .” (Nichols 74)
      2. historical theology: “questions dealing with the . . . genesis of Catholic Christianity . . .” (Nichols 25)
   2. “. . . two types of the­ology are surely theology’s central themes . . .” (Nichols 25)
      1. A theologian “wants to know how the Christian religion is a unitary belief system, and how it offers a unitary way of life. The attempt to show that Christianity is a coherent system of beliefs is another definition for systematic the­ology.” (Nichols 25)
      2. “The attempt to show how the Christian religion can be lived as a coherent way of life for an individual or a community is another definition of moral and pastoral theology.” (Nichols 25)
   3. Practical theology functions “by way of being a coda . . .” (Nichols 25)
      1. practical theology: “questions dealing with the implications of theology for the practice of other human disciplines . . .” (Nichols 25)

### Divisions of Theology: Ott

1. **traditional classification** (Ludwig Ott)
   1. *biblical-historical theology* (“positive theology”)
      1. “Biblical introduction, Hermeneutics, Exegesis;
      2. “Church History, History of Dogmas, History of Liturgy, Church Legal History, Patrology.” (Ott 3)
   2. *dogmatic theology*
      1. Dogmatic theology “includes *Fundamental Theology* . . . as the basis of Dogmatic Theology.” Ott also calls fundamental theology “natural theology.” (Ott 3)
   3. *practical theology*
      1. moral theology
      2. Church law
      3. pastoral theology, “including Catechetics and Homiletics.” (Ott 3)
   4. Ott does not mention ascetical-mystical theology (theology of prayer, now called “spirituality”).
2. **modern classifications**
   1. Johann Sebastian von Drey (1777-1853)
      1. von Drey wrote “on the organization of theological disciplines in the modern university . . .” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
      2. He divided theology “into exegetical, historical, systematic, and practical studies.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
      3. Ever since, “Catholic theology [has] identified a division of [i.e., between] foundational [a.k.a. “fundamental”] and systematic theology.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
         1. “The goal of foundational theology was to defend the presuppositions of theology . . .” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
         2. “. . . the goal [of] systematic theology was to give an exposition of Christian doctrine.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
   2. Alszeghy and Flick (1978)
      1. “Usually, following the pattern of some years, theological studies are divided into biblical, dogmatic or systematic, and moral. These are the major areas admitting of many subdivisions.” (Alszeghy and Flick 9)
      2. “The word *dogma* signifies a religious truth established by revela­tion and defined by the Church. Dogmatic theology is the systematic study of religious truth as the Church has articulated it over her lifetime.” (Alszeghy and Flick 9)
      3. “Moral theology is the study of the application of Christian doc­trine to daily living. It is the scientific understanding of the implica­tions of the Gospel for each believer.” (Alszeghy and Flick 9)
      4. “Some additional courses that will fill out the curriculum are Church History, Canon Law, and Liturgy.” (Alszeghy and Flick 9)
      5. “Also included will be studies in applied theology: pastoral and spiritual.” (Alszeghy and Flick 9)
   3. Today Catholic college and university catalogs typically distinguish
      1. scripture
      2. Church history
      3. systematic theology
      4. moral theology
      5. spirituality
3. **US bishops**’ **classification**
   1. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. *Guidelines Concerning the Academic Mandatum in Catholic Universities* (*Canon 812*). 15 June 2001. *USCCB*. 30 Mar. 2006. <http://www.nccbuscc.­org/bishops/man­datumguidelines.shtml>.
   2. ““Catholic theological disciplines” . . . signifies
      1. Sacred Scripture,
      2. dogmatic theology,
      3. moral theology,
      4. pastoral theology,
      5. canon law,
      6. liturgy,
      7. and church history (cf. canon 252).” (USCCB, *Guidelines* part 2 no. 4)
   3. comparison with higher education’s “modern classification” (2. c. above)
      1. Of these seven divisions, 1, 2, 3, and 7 match 1-4 of higher education’s classification.
      2. Of the remainder, “canon law” and “liturgy” are typically not taught in colleges and universities but are taught in seminaries; hence they are absent in higher-education’s classification but present here, since the bishops are especially thinking of priestly education.
      3. Presumably, “spirituality” in higher education’s classification would for the bishops be a subdivision of “pastoral theology” (along with, perhaps, pastoral counseling, spiritual direction, homiletics, practical application of the sacraments, etc.)
4. **discussion**
   1. Alszeghy and Flick say (9), “The word *dogma* signifies a religious truth established by revela­tion and defined by the Church. Dogmatic theology is the systematic study of religious truth as the Church has articulated it over her lifetime.”
      1. There is some confusion here. “Dogma” in the first sentence seems equated with “religous truth[s]” in the second. But the Church affirms teachings (doctrines: *doctrina* means “teaching”) that are not dogmas (Jesus’ resurrection, for example, has never been defined). Consequently, just as dogmas are a subset of doctrines, so dogmatic theology is a narrower field within systematic theology (the systematic study of religious truth”).
      2. “Systematic theology,” therefore, is the preferable term; and “dogmatic theology” should be dropped (unless its narrower meaning is intended).
   2. Fiorenza says (5: 827) that modern Catholic theology distinguishes fundamental (or “foundational”) theology from systematic theology. The matters treated in fundamental theology, however, are doctrines (some are even dogmas); and they are studied systematically and are included in the system of Catholic theology. A term is therefore needed to refer to both fundamental theology and systematic theology as distinct from practical theology.
      1. One might use “doctrinal theology.”
         1. Both fundamental and systematic theology study doctrines.
         2. Objection: since *doctrina* means “teaching,” “doctrinal theology” technically includes the Church’s specific moral teachings. However, since “doctrine” is usually associated with the Church’s system of beliefs, exclusive of moral conclusions, this objection is not insuperable.
         3. Objection: “doctrinal theology” introduces a new term into theology.
         4. Objection: since “systematic” in “systematic theology” means the treatment of the Church’s doctrines as parts of a system, “systematic theology” covers both fundamental theology and the rest of the Church’s theoretical doctrines equally as well as “doctrinal theology” (as defined above, exclusive of moral teachings). Since “doctrinal theology” therefore covers exactly the same ground as “systematic theology,” why not use “systematic theology” as the overarching term? However, since “systematic theology” is usually associated with the Church’s system of beliefs, exclusive not only of moral conclusions but of fundamental theology as well, this objection is not insuperable.
      2. One might use “theoretical theology.”
         1. Both fundamental and systematic theology are theoretical; they study what is known, as distinct from what is known and acted upon (the province of practical theology).
         2. “Theoretical theology” nicely complements the already established term, “practical theology.”
         3. The distinction between “theoretical” and “practical” utilizes Aristotle’s time-honored distinction between *theoria* (speculative science) and *technē* (practical art).
         4. Objection: “theoretical theology” introduces a new term into theology. However, this is actually an advantage: since no past associations trail along behind “theoretical theology,” it can be defined (within the given meanings of “theoretical” and “theology”) as needed.
         5. Objection: “theoretical theology” covers exactly the same ground as “systematic theology.” However, this is true only of the technical meaning of “systematic theology.” Since in actual usage “systematic theology” is set over against fundamental theology, using it to cover both would contravene “systematic theology’s” traditional meaning. “Theoretical theology,” therefore, is a better term to cover both.
   3. One can distinguish between the theoretical principles on which moral judgments are based and the practical application of moral principles to actual issues. The former has sometimes been called “fundamental moral theology” (by analogy, one supposes, with fundamental theology).
      1. As a theoretical science, fundamental moral theology seems to belong under theoretical theology.
      2. However, keeping the theoretical and practical aspects of moral theology together is probably to be preferred.
         1. Undergraduate schools are unlikely to offer two courses in moral theology, one theoretical and one practical. Keeping the two aspects together in theology’s “table of contents” (divisions of theology) therefore makes practical sense.
         2. In addition, considered as a whole, moral theology has as its end the solution of moral issues, rather than a theoretical discussion that prescinds from application. One can therefore reasonably keep fundamental moral theology, as background, with the rest of moral theology.
   4. As with moral theology, so with spirituality, one can distinguish theoretical principles and actual practice.
      1. The theoretical principles of spirituality seem to belong under theoretical theology.
      2. However, undergraduate schools are unlikely to offer two courses in spirituality, one theoretical and one practical.
      3. And spirituality as a whole seems even closer to application than does moral theology.
5. **Hahn**’**s classification of theology**
   1. positive theology
      1. scripture
      2. tradition: Church history (includes patrology, history of dogmas, history of liturgy, history of canon law, etc.)
   2. theoretical theology
      1. fundamental theology
      2. systematic theology
      3. moral theology
   3. practical theology
      1. moral theology
      2. spirituality
      3. pastoral theology (taught in seminaries but not universities)
         1. canon law
         2. homiletics
         3. catechetics
         4. liturgy (the dispensing of the sacraments)
         5. pastoral counseling
         6. spiritual direction

### The Divisions of Theology

### and Courses in Theology at the

### University of St Thomas, Houston

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| --- | --- |
| *Divisions of Theology* | *UST Courses in Theology* |
|  |  |
| **positive theology**: |  |
|  |  |
| scripture | 2300, “Introduction to the Sacred Scriptures”  3351, “Prophets of Ancient Israel”  3353, “Pentateuch”  3355, “The Book of Psalms”  4351, “Wisdom in Israel”  3352, “Paul: His Letters and Theology”  3354, “Synoptic Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke”  3365, “Gospel and Letters of John”  4320, “Luke-Acts”  4323, “Teachings of Jesus”  4368, “Book of Revelation” |
|  |  |
| Church history | 3363, “Church History I”  4347, “Fathers of the Church”  3364, “Church History II”  4336, “American Catholic Heritage”  4360, “John Henry Newman, 1801-1890” |
|  |  |
| tradition | 3326, “Opening to Transcendence” (Catholic literature)  3333, “Theology of Worship”  3336, “Christian Spirituality”  4327, “Sacred Arts in the Church” |
|  |  |
| **dogmatic theology**: |  |
|  |  |
| fundamental theology | 3321, “Apologetics”  3345, “Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas”  4331, “Revelation and the Knowledge of God”  4374, “Modern Challenges to Christianity”  4380, “Sources and Methods of Theology” |
|  |  |
| 1. the unity and trinity of God 2. God the creator    1. act of creation    2. work of creation       1. cosmology       2. anthropology       3. angelology 3. God the redeemer    1. person of the redeemer       1. Jesus’ historical existence       2. Christ’s two natures    2. work of the redeemer       1. redemption in general       2. realized through Christ’s three offices       3. conclusion of Christ’s work (descent into hell, resurrection, ascension)    3. mother of the redeemer 4. God the sanctifier    1. grace    2. the Church    3. sacraments 5. God the consummator (eschatology)    1. eschatology of the individual    2. eschatology of humanity | 3382, “God, One and Triune”  3322, “Theology of Creation”  3339, “Christ the Savior”  4367, “Mariology”  4337, “Grace and the Human Condition”  3331, “Catholic Church: Origin, Structure and Mission”  3332, “Theology of the Sacraments” |
|  |  |
| **moral theology**: | 3346, “Christian Vocations: Paths to Holiness”  3349, “Christ and the Moral Life”  4324, “Christian Ethics and the Law”  4325, “Faith and Moral Development”  4334, “Social Justice and the Church”  4348, “Theology of the Body” |
|  |  |
| **other courses**: |  |
|  |  |
| catechesis | 1300, “Teachings of the Catholic Church” |
|  |  |
| other religions | 3323, “Teachings of the Protestant Tradition”  3375, “Eastern World Religions”  3376, “Western World Religions”  3378, “Introduction to Judaism”  4378, “Selected Questions in Judaism”  (usually “Hebrew Scriptures with Rabbinic Interp.”) |
|  |  |
| miscellaneous | 4392, “Directed Reading/Independent Study in Theo.”  4393, “Special Topics in Theology” |

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   25. von Balthasar, Hans Urs. *Seeing the Form*. Vol. 1 of *The Glory of the Lord*: *A Theological Aesthetics*. Trans. E. Leivamerikakis. New York: 1982. (Fiorenza 5: 830)
   26. See also, in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*: “[Apologetics](http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.stthom.edu:2048/ps/retrieve.do?inPS=true&prodId=GVRL&userGroupName=txshracd2596&tabID=T003&searchId=R2&searchType=BasicSearchForm&contentSet=GALE&docId=GALE|CX3407700683)”; “[Immanence Apologetics](http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.stthom.edu:2048/ps/retrieve.do?inPS=true&prodId=GVRL&userGroupName=txshracd2596&tabID=T003&searchId=R2&searchType=BasicSearchForm&contentSet=GALE&docId=GALE|CX3407705585)”; “[Methodology (Theology)](http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.stthom.edu:2048/ps/retrieve.do?inPS=true&prodId=GVRL&userGroupName=txshracd2596&tabID=T003&searchId=R2&searchType=BasicSearchForm&contentSet=GALE&docId=GALE|CX3407707483)”; “[Revelation, Concept of (in the Bible)](http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.stthom.edu:2048/ps/retrieve.do?inPS=true&prodId=GVRL&userGroupName=txshracd2596&tabID=T003&searchId=R2&searchType=BasicSearchForm&contentSet=GALE&docId=GALE|CX3407709488)”; “[Revelation, Theology of](http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.stthom.edu:2048/ps/retrieve.do?inPS=true&prodId=GVRL&userGroupName=txshracd2596&tabID=T003&searchId=R2&searchType=BasicSearchForm&contentSet=GALE&docId=GALE|CX3407709491)”; “[Revelation, Fonts of](http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.stthom.edu:2048/ps/retrieve.do?inPS=true&prodId=GVRL&userGroupName=txshracd2596&tabID=T003&searchId=R2&searchType=BasicSearchForm&contentSet=GALE&docId=GALE|CX3407709489)”; “[Word of God](http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.stthom.edu:2048/ps/retrieve.do?inPS=true&prodId=GVRL&userGroupName=txshracd2596&tabID=T003&searchId=R2&searchType=BasicSearchForm&contentSet=GALE&docId=GALE|CX3407711976).”
2. **definitions**
   1. “fundamental theology”
      1. “Fundamental theology” “as commonly understood within Roman Catholic theology [refers] to the introductory tract that treats the nature, possibility, and existence of revelation. . . . Roman Catholic theology labels the discipline that deals with the existence and content of [revelation] foundational or fundamental theology.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
      2. “. . . the medieval preambles of faith [(*praeambula fidei*) are] those philosophical truths that could be proven independently and prior to faith. . . . The classical approach to the preambles of faith presupposed the rational and philosophical demonstration of”:
         1. “the existence of God,
         2. “the immortality of the soul,
         3. “and the principles of morality.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
      3. “Fundamental theology has traditionally concerned itself with the two great Christian facts . . .” (Cahill 6: 26)
         1. “the existence of divine revelation”: “God has revealed Himself to men . . .” (Cahill 6: 26)
         2. “the transmission of this revelation to and through the people of God”: “this revelation was climaxed in Christ, who founded a Church that transmits the Christian revelation.” (Cahill 6: 26)
      4. “In some versions, it also includes an analysis of the nature of Christian faith and a treatment of the nature, method, and sources of theology.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
      5. “The term “fundamental theology” is a very literal translation of the Latin *theologia fundamentalis* and was for a long time the title given to the discipline.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
      6. “. . . the neo-scholastic treatment emphasized the nontheological and the apologetical task of the discipline, . . . [using only] philosophical and historical arguments . . .” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
   2. “foundational theology”
      1. Many have felt that neo-scholastic fundamental theology “uses philosophical and historical arguments without consideration of any Christian or religious preunderstanding.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
      2. “The term “foundational theology,” however, has been used by many (especially Bernard Lonergan) to signify a conception of the discipline that interprets the foundations of theology in a way different from that of traditional neo-scholasticism.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
      3. “. . . Lonergan develops foundational theology as a specific functional specialty within theology.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
      4. “Many have adopted Lonergan’s term “foundational” in order to distance themselves from a view of the discipline that in their opinion is too naturalistic . . .” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
   3. “Nevertheless, the terms “foundational” and “fundamental” theology are often used today indiscriminately and often represent merely the choice of a different English term.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
3. **history**: **from fundamental to foundational theology**
   1. “The history of Christian apologetics up to the Enlightenment is one of individual apologies [defenses] being argued against specific heresies.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
   2. the Enlightenment (1700s)
      1. definition of “the Enlightenment”: “a philosophic movement of the 18th century marked by a rejection of traditional social, religious, and political ideas and an emphasis on rationalism . . .” (*Merriam-Webster*’*s New Collegiate Dictionary*. Software. 2000.)
      2. “The Enlightenment’s critique of prophecies, miracles, and supernatural revelation struck at the foundations of Christian belief.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
         1. “Deism criticized the existence of supernatural divine revelation, but not the existence of God.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
         2. “The Enlightenment criticized concrete historical religions that invoked prophecies and miracles as a justification of their belief in a special supernatural revelation.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
   3. “Therefore, neo-scholastic fundamental theology sought to demonstrate the possibility and existence of supernatural revelation, the truth of Christian revelation, and the truth of the Catholic church.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
   4. Johann Sebastian von Drey (1777-1853)
      1. “Johann Sebastian von Drey, one of the initiators of the German Tübingen School, argued that a new type of apologetics was necessary. Such an apologetics should go beyond the medieval preambles of faith, namely, those philosophical truths that could be proven independently and prior to faith. It should provide a foundation for Christian faith and theology through a defense of revelation.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
      2. “Drey explicated the program for this discipline within his writing on the organization of theological disciplines in the modern university, with their increased specialization. Theology came to be divided into exegetical, historical, systematic, and practical studies. Catholic theology identified a division of [i.e., between] foundational and systematic theology.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
         1. “The goal of foundational theology was to defend the presuppositions of theology . . .” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
         2. “. . . the goal [of] systematic theology was to give an exposition of Christian doctrine.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
   5. preambles of faith in *la nouvelle théologie*
      1. “. . . a theological movement known as “la nouvelle théologie” (the new theology), sought to retrieve a more integrated vision of the relation between the natural and the supernatural. The movement in reality recovered elements of patristic and scholastic theology that modern neo-scholasticism had neglected. It criticized the extrinsicism of neo-scholasticism and argued for a more intrinsic relation between human nature and divine grace and between the love of God and the knowledge of God.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
      2. Henri Bouillard (1908-81)
         1. Henri Bouillard was “one of the initiators of . . . “la nouvelle théologie” . . .” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
         2. “Bouillard’s conception of foundational theology retrieves Thomas Aquinas’s notion of the preambles of faith, but give it a new role under the conditions of modernity. Bouillard notes that modern fundamental theology developed precisely when modernity stood under the impact of the Enlightenment and deism.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
         3. “Bouillard recognized that the modern situation deals [not] only with the denial of revelation or the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but also with the denial of the God of philosophers. Not deism, but atheism is the challenge today.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
   6. In addition to fundamental theology’s preambles of faith, foundational theology takes up “modern atheism and the loss of the divine in modern culture.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
   7. “Influenced by Maurice Blondel, this approach sought to integrate the natural and philosophical with the religious by appealing to an experience of transcendence that avoided the sharp separation between the philosophical and the religious. The task of foundational theology is then to explicate the interrelation between the philosophical and the religious experience of transcendence in elaborating an approach to the knowledge of God.” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
   8. method
      1. “The method of fundamental theology has been philosophical, historical, and theological.” (Cahill 6: 26)
      2. “Because methodological questions arise only after the theological work is in progress and because of the historicist and positivistic temper of the last century, there has been a certain ambivalence as to whether fundamental theology is properly philosophical or theological. The tendency today is to regard the discipline as strictly theological, that is, the activity of man’s human reason transformed by faith seeking an understanding of the Word of God transmitted in the Church.” (Cahill 6: 26)
      3. “As fundamental theology is now structured, it is left to prior investigation to ascertain man’s cognitional powers as well as to come to a knowledge of God’s existence.” (Cahill 6: 26)
      4. “Some theologians, however, prefer to begin fundamental theology with the existence of a personal and provident God as known by reason and confirmed by a study of the history of religions.” (Cahill 6: 26)
4. **Karl Rahner** (1904-84)
   1. obediential potency
   2. “. . . scholars have pointed out that the [neo-scholastic treatment of fundamental theology] is one-sided because it does not explain how man is capable of receiving revelation without this revelation being necessary for man.” (Cahill 6: 27)
      1. “Thus, [Karl] Rahner has proposed that fundamental theology concern itself more with man’s openness to all being. Fundamental theology would proceed from man’s openness to all being by a study of the analogy of being and a careful analysis of man’s obediential potency for revelation. Precisely because man is spirit incarnated he is open to all being. He is capable of hearing the word of God, of receiving the divine self-disclosure.” (Cahill 6: 27)
      2. “An analysis of this capability, both in the abstract and as it is fulfilled in the concrete, would be the task of fundamental theology. This discipline would study man in relation to the revelation in creation, in the personal word, and in the historical deeds of God as transmitted in Scripture. The *Thematik* of fundamental theology would be the ontological principles of natural and supernatural theology. Some of the categories to be examined are:
         1. “the forms of revelation;
         2. “the demand that revelation makes upon man;
         3. “revelation as intersubjectivity or divine action in opposition to revelation as past external fact;
         4. “the logos as address and as meaning;
         5. “the social character of revelation;
         6. “the nature of word, speech, writing;
         7. “the mediation of revelation;
         8. “the presence of revelation in the Church.

“This approach to fundamental theology might well answer the questions: How can man hear the word of God? What is the word of God that man hears? Where does man receive the word of God?” (Cahill 6: 27)

* + 1. “This type of fundamental theology would be neither exclusively historical nor philosophical but rather completely and thoroughly theological. Fundamental theology would thus be the meeting point for faith and reason, theology and philosophy, revelation and the world.” (Cahill 6: 27)
  1. “formal and existential phenomenology” (Fiorenza 5: 827)
     1. “Karl Rahner’s *Foundations of the Christian Faith* transforms fundamental theology in a decisive way in terms of its addressee, [827] method, and content. Rahner sees foundational theology not simply an [*sic*] apologetic. Rather, it should deal with the possibility of the “unbelief of the believer.” It should itself explicate the philosophical mediation of faith. It should convincingly illumine the meaning of the Christian faith not just to the non-Christian or non-Catholic, but to the believers themselves.” (Fiorenza 5: 827-28)
     2. “Rahner’s conception is labeled a “formal-fundamental” theology. This name calls attention to two aspects of his theology. On the one hand, it highlights the phenomenological and existential analysis of the human person as open for God. It explicates the possibility within human knowing and will for human persons to be hearers of God’s word and receivers of God’s revelation. On the other hand, it emphasizes that foundational theology is more than a formal analysis of human nature and human subjectivity. It uncovers the fact that human beings are immersed in history in their openness to God and oriented toward history in their search for an answer to their quest for the meaning of the mystery of God. This theology explicates that meaning is found in history in the encounter with a history of salvation that culminates in God’s definitive revelation in Jesus Christ.” (Fiorenza 5: 828)
     3. “Rahner’s treatment of the traditional demonstration of the existence of God illustrates his understanding of foundational theology. He acknowledges the validity of the proofs, but he maintains that they presuppose a preunderstanding or experiential anticipation of the meaning of what they should demonstrate. Rahner stands within the tradition of the “new theology” but nuances it by maintaining that the desire for God is not a desire based upon an abstract human nature. It is a desire embedded in a historical human nature that has received a historical call from God. His term “supernatural existential” expresses this historical characteristic of human nature. (Rahner appropriates the term “existential” from Martin Heidegger, his teacher, who used it to refer to those categories specific to human nature, such as historicity and self-understanding.)” (Fiorenza 5: 828)
     4. “Bernhard Welte has developed an analogous approach. Appropriating Heidegger’s phenomenological analysis of the historicity of human nature and of the changing nature of language, thought, and metaphysics, Welte elaborates the pre-understanding of Christian salvation within the finite openness in human nature to the infinite.” (Fiorenza 5: 828)

1. **Hans Urs von Balthasar** (1905-88): **theological aesthetics**
   1. “Hans Urs von Balthasar has argued for the fundamental theological significance of a theological aesthetics that focuses on a dramatic action of God and Christ and the logic of that action for foundational theology. Balthasar contends that much of modern theology has insufficiently attended to the aesthetic dimension. This neglect had dominated certain strands of modern Protestant theology, but also influenced some modern Roman Catholic theological approaches that unfortunately neglect the classic Catholic emphasis on the aesthetic and sacramental. Against a fundamental theological method that focuses upon the human pre-understanding or the a priori condition of revelation within human rationality, Balthasar emphasizes the aesthetic contemplation of the Christian drama of revelation in his development of the fundamental theological implications of aesthetics. He points to an aesthetic model whereby the encounter with the aesthetic object influences, changes, and challenges the subject. Through contemplating the form of Christ manifest in the dramatic action of His suffering, death, and Resurrection, one opens oneself to this form and becomes conformed with Christ.” (Fiorenza 5: 828)
   2. “In developing theological aesthetics that display a Christian Trinitarian logic and drama, Balthasar cautions against the appeal to an anthropological, existential, or transcendental starting point within foundational theology. The danger is that the starting point does not remain simply a starting point or beginning, but can become a standard or measure that limits what is to be grasped. Just as an aesthetic experience transforms the subject, so too should God’s action in Jesus transform our subjectivity. In his critique of an anthropocentric starting point as the foundation of theology, Balthasar has sought to pick up and develop Karl Barth’s criticism of liberal Protestant theology, but in a way that remains sensitive to a Catholic sacramental understanding of the analogy of being and analogy of faith.” (Fiorenza 5: 828)
2. **Johann Baptist Metz** (1928-): **practical political theology**
   1. “Johann Baptist Metz, a student of Rahner, has developed a foundational theology that seeks to overcome what he perceives as the limitations of Rahner’s approach. Metz argues that Rahner has overemphasized personal subjectivity, has failed to take sufficiently into account social and political praxis, and has not confronted the moral and religious implications of the Holocaust. The horrors of Auschwitz speak against a fundamental theological conception that underscores on human autonomy and human transcendence over nature. Such an anthropocentricism interprets human history in terms of a continuous evolutionary progress. It views this history as culminating in the modern European West with its established freedoms. Such a view overlooks the suffering victims of this history. It expresses instead the viewpoint of the victors. It is Eurocentric rather than polycentric.” (Fiorenza 5: 828)
   2. “In contrast, Metz proposes a foundational theology that is a political theology or, more precisely, a practical hermeneutic of Christianity. Such a foundational theology is indeed defined by the challenge of modernity and [828] the Enlightenment. Metz, however, does not interpret this challenge as a purely theoretical or as a merely philosophical critique of Christianity. It is also, and primarily, a practical challenge and a political critique. The fundamental theological response to this challenge entails a practical hermeneutic and an emphasis on practice as its central point. Christian theology has a practical logos. The belief in God entails the affirmation of specific practice implied within Christian belief. Such a belief entails a conversion and a discipleship. It requires a discipleship of solidarity of hope in the God of Jesus and in Jesus’ practice of solidarity with society’s outcasts and victims. The God of Jesus is a God of the living and the dead. This God promises resurrection and thereby affirms all to be subjects by affirming their identities and hopes even in the face of suffering, death, and injustice. The Christian community advocates a discipleship and a “dangerous memory” that is in solidarity with those who have unjustly suffered in the past and it proclaims a hope in resurrection that gives justice and meaning to life. The logos of Christian practice is a logos involving memory, solidarity, and hope. Such a logos differs from a more theoretical logos, for it criticizes the progressive understanding of history through its conviction that Christian apocalypticism entails an “interruption” of a human history of domination.” (Fiorenza 5: 828-29)
   3. “In Germany, Helmut Peukert, a student of Metz, has sought to develop foundational theology by bringing Metz’s emphasis upon memory and a discipleship of solidarity with those who have suffered unjustly in confrontation with 20th-century philosophy, especially epistemology and the philosophy of science. Peukert criticizes the more empirical and positivist conceptions of rationality as insufficient because they are unable to deal adequately with suffering, especially the suffering and death of past victims of injustice. Foundational theology develops an understanding of meaning and rationality based upon a hope in the resurrection and in the ultimate vindications of those who have suffered and died.” (Fiorenza 5: 829)
3. **David Tracy**: “**diverse publics and criteria**” (Fiorenza 829)
   1. “David Tracy has proposed that the various branches of theology should be distinguished with reference to their specific social location, public or reference group, characteristic mode of argumentation, and distinctive religious and ethical stance. Each branch of theology seeks to provide both an interpretation of a religious tradition and an explication of the religious dimension of the contemporary situation.” (Fiorenza 5: 829)
   2. “Fundamental theology relates primarily but not exclusively to the public represented by the academy, whereas systematic theology relates primarily, though not exhaustively, to the Church. Fundamental theology consequently employs a mode of argument that suitable to the approach and methods of an established academic discipline in interpreting the truth claims of the religious tradition. Moreover, it offers arguments that all reasonable persons should acknowledge as reasonable even if these persons are neither religious believers nor members of a Christian church. In addition, fundamental theology has a distinctive ethical and religious stance. Though the fundamental theologian might be personally a believer, in arguments his personal faith or beliefs may not serve as warrants or backings of truth. His claims of the truth for the Christian faith must be argued on public grounds.” (Fiorenza 5: 829)
   3. “Such a conception of foundational theology relies on the link established within the sociology of knowledge between social location and types of argumentation and modes of commitment. Some critics question whether the awareness of the social conditioning of knowledge throws the notion of public rationality into question. Tracy’s more recent work has taken up the significance of the ambiguity of interpretation, the importance of conversation, and the fragmentary character of knowledge for theology and foundational theology.” (Fiorenza 5: 829)
4. **critique of foundationalism**
   1. “Classical pragmatic philosophers such as Charles Pierce and Wilfrid Sellars as well as neo-pragmatists such as Richard Rorty, Richard Bernstein, and Robert Brandom have criticized various forms of foundationalism. They criticize a subjective foundationalism based upon introspection of the human consciousness (e.g., R. Descartes’s method, starting point, and search for clear and distinct ideas). In addition, they criticize the foundationalism of positivism and empiricism (e.g., John Locke’s evidentialism, which equates true belief and evidential belief). Alongside this pragmatic critique, recent hermeneutical theory has underscored the role of one’s pre-understanding as well as the horizon of one’s embeddedness within a cultural historical tradition. Moreover, recent theories of deconstructive as well as postmodern analysis have underscored the ambiguity of meaning. All of these tendencies have influenced contemporary formulations of foundational theology.” (Fiorenza 5: 829)
   2. “For some contemporary Protestant theologians this critique of foundationalism has reinforced the traditional Lutheran critique of metaphysics and of natural theology.” (Fiorenza 5: 829)
      1. “Hans Frei and George Lindbeck have strongly argued against an apologetic anthropological approach. Lindbeck appeals to Ludwig Wittgenstein’s understanding of language and its interrelation with life praxis to advance a cultural-linguistic understanding of theology that stresses a community’s narratives and life practices. If Tracy argued that one can defend the notion of Christian claims via “publicly acceptable criteria,” Lindbeck underscores the linguistic and communitarian context of adjudication.” (Fiorenza 5: 829)
      2. “Ronald Thiemann and William Placher explicitly take up the critique of foundationalism. Thiemann develops a narrative theology and bases Christian theology on revelation in a way that takes into account the pragmatic critique of foundationalism. Placher advocates an unapologetic theology.” (Fiorenza 5: 830)
   3. “Roman Catholic theologians, on the other hand, have incorporated the critique of foundationalism within foundational theology itself.” (Fiorenza 5: 830)
      1. “Fiorenza argues that the critique of foundationalism does not entail the absence of any foundations. Instead, it requires a multiplicity of foundations and the awareness that every foundation is located within a web of interpretation and within a community of discourse. This procedure involves a broad reflective equilibrium (a term widely used within current political and moral philosophy influenced by John Rawls) whereby foundational theology brings together diverse grounds and reasons. Just as diverse cords are interwoven to form a strong rope, so too are diverse sources brought together to form the warrants for Christian belief. Thus foundational theology brings into reflective balance diverse tasks: the hermeneutical task of interpreting what is paradigmatic and normative within the tradition, the critical task of analyzing the warrants stemming from practice, and the philosophical task of explicating the appropriate background theories (philosophical, ethical, and anthropological). All of these tasks are interrelated and dependent on each other. The result shows the importance of diverse foundations, each influencing each other in the interpretation and warrant for Christian faith. Such a method takes up traditional topics within foundational theology, such as the foundation of the Church and the Resurrection of Jesus. These involve not only historical and existential arguments, but also a hermeneutical interpretation that attends to the Church’s reception of Jesus, evident in the diverse literary forms of its interpretation and in the living out of this reception in practice. The testimony and practice of the Christian community should be explicated in a way that acknowledges diverse foundations and varied warrants for the Christian faith.” (Fiorenza 5: 830)
5. “**diverse currents and directions**” (Fiorenza 5: 830)
   1. “These diverse currents within foundational theology show the vitality and the richness of the field. Not only are there basic agreements about the nature of fundamental theology, but there are also important disagreements.” (Fiorenza 5: 830)
      1. “There is basic agreement on the importance and necessity of foundational theology within Roman Catholic theology, the need to deal with the challenges of the modernity and the Enlightenment, and the integration of foundational theology within theology in general.” (Fiorenza 5: 830)
      2. “The disagreements include the degree to which a metaphysical defense and a transcendental philosophical approach is essential to the fundamental theological approach and whether foundational theology should be much more hermeneutical and praxis oriented. Whereas all take seriously the challenge of the modern Enlightenment, not everyone interprets this challenge in the same way and not everyone shares the same assessment of modernity. Some appeal to public reasons or public rationality as the avenue through which an apologetic should approach. Others view such a public rationality as a fiction of the modern Enlightenment. Consequently, the latter argue that foundational theology should take much more seriously the radical pluralism of philosophical worldviews and the increasing reality of religious diversity at a time when even local communities are becoming more multicultural and multireligious.” (Fiorenza 5: 830)
   2. “The emergence of the critique of modernity as Euro-centric and as dominated by a one-dimensional technological rationality has gained force with postmodern and postcolonial philosophical currents. This critique suggests that foundational theology needs to examine the extent to which its own methods and arguments have the limitations and presuppositions of the very positions it is contesting. In addition, the postmodern critique of traditional metaphysics as it emerges in Emmanuel Levinas’s emphasis upon our vulnerability before the other highlights an ethic of responsibility for the other that is intrinsically linked with an ethic of belief. Christian foundational theology has always under­scored the role of testimony for a knowledge of history and the importance of personal testimony and love for knowledge. The current task of foundational theology is to show further how the Christian community’s testimony to Jesus and its solidarity with the other is central to the theoretical tasks of foundational theology.” (Fiorenza 5: 830)

### The Positive Function of Theology

1. **positive theology**
   1. “The total task of positive theology is to discover and explain the relation between the contemporary dogmatic-theological context and its sources in revelation.” (Isn’t that the task of speculative theology?—Hahn) (van Ackeren 13: 895)
   2. divisions
      1. “. . . positive theology includes exegesis, Biblical theology, and dogmatic theology.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
      2. The purpose of exegesis is “to discover the truths of revelation in their original historical contexts . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
      3. The purpose of biblical theology is “to discover and explain the development of revelation itself within the whole context of the Bible . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
      4. dogmatic theology
         1. One purpose of dogmatic theology is “to discover, determine, and explain the true development that has occurred in understanding these truths in history from the close of revelation to the present day . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
         2. Another purpose of dogmatic theology is “to further the true understanding of revelation thus far achieved in the contemporary dogmatic-theological context from further examination of its sources in history . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
   3. method
      1. “Its [positive theology’s] method basically is historical. It employs scientific exegesis as well as analysis and comparison of texts and contexts in search of reasons verifiable in history that may be used to determine, account for, and further develop the contemporary understanding of revelation.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
      2. “The exegete is concerned with explaining with all the resources at his disposal the explicit meanings of texts in particular authors (scriptural, liturgical, patristic, conciliar, etc.). His question is: “What does this particular text or this particular book mean in its particular context?”” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
      3. “The biblical theologian is concerned with the genesis and dialectical development of revelation as it comes to be expressed in the succeeding authors and books of Scripture and finds its goal and full meaning in Christ.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
      4. “The dogmatic theologian is concerned with the genesis and dialectical development of this understanding of revelation gradually unfolding in different successive contexts in the Church up to the present. From his faith he may know the direction in which this understanding is evolving; but he cannot chart its course a priori, because development often results from conflicts of opinion and is determined by contingent factors, such as something’s having been overlooked.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
   4. context
      1. Context “involves what is over and beyond the text itself. It denotes “the remainder” that is pertinent to any statement—a somewhat indeterminate group of other statements, outlooks, attitudes, ways of conceiving things, which qualify, explain, and complement the particular statement under consideration.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
      2. “The context in which the positive theologian lives and therefore the one out of which he works is the contemporary dogmatic-theological context . . .” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
         1. The “contemporary dogmatic-theological context” includes
            1. “what is currently taught and understood in the Church,
            2. “what is taken for granted in the faith of the Church,
            3. “what is taught and learned in schools of theology,
            4. “what is set forth in contemporary scriptural, liturgical, patristic, and conciliar studies, including
            5. “what is pertinent in contemporary philosophy and science for the understanding of dogmatic and theological statements (e.g., for understanding K. Rahner’s supernatural existential).” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
         2. “In regard to this context, the dogmatic theologian has two functions in positive theology: (1) the understanding of the connection between the contemporary theological knowledge and its sources in revelation and (2) the further development of the contemporary dogmatic-theological context.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
      3. “The work of positive theology thus evidently concerns history, which is its laboratory. But it goes beyond the historical as event or datum for the theologian approaches Scripture and tradition in the light of his faith. He accepts the statements of Scripture and the witness of tradition in the Church not merely as historical facts or events but as statements of truth, as God’s word in the Church, as something not to be contradicted.” (van Ackeren 13: 895)
2. **the nature of theology**’**s positive function**
   1. “. . . if theology is the science of the object of faith, it must first . . . take possession of this object.” (Latourelle 61)
   2. Faith “enters by the ears” (the *auditus fidei*). (Latourelle 61)
      1. Faith “is effected in the believer pure and simple through preaching . . .” (Latourelle 61)
      2. Catechesis then assures “a sufficient knowledge of the object of faith . . .” (Latourelle 61)
      3. But theology “wishes to know the object of faith [61] . . . in a manner at once methodical and exhaustive, in all its richness and all its implications.” (Latourelle 61-62)
   3. Yves M.-J. Congar (“Théologie,” DTC 15: 1:462 [sic]): positive theology “enters into possession of the truth revealed.” (Latourelle 61)
   4. “Positive theology studies the way in which God reveals himself to us . . . This is why it studies the relationship of God with Israel, his manifestation in Jesus Christ, and in the witness of the apostles. It seeks to define what God has revealed, and how he has revealed it, clearly or in a hidden fashion, explicitly or implicitly.” (Latourelle 62)
   5. “Positive theology must study also the progress of revelation . . . For God did not reveal everything all at once from the very beginning, but gradually . . .” (Fenton 62)
      1. Heb 1:1-2, “Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, 2but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son . . .”
      2. “The revelation of Christianity was itself progressive . . . After his death the apostles read again in the Holy Spirit the Master’s words and actions. They understood then what was beyond their understanding before the passion and resurrection and pouring out of the Holy Spirit. What they now transmit to the Church are the words and actions of Christ, but with the understanding of them which came both from the illumination of the Spirit and the experience of the life of the Church. It is the whole, the words and actions of Christ and progressive understanding of them by the [62] apostles, which has for us the value of revelation and constitutes the object of our faith. The synoptic tradition, St. Paul, St. John, represent deeper and deeper moments in this relearning by the apostles of Christ’s earthly life.” (Fenton 62-63)
      3. “It is then part of the duty of positive theology to distinguish the synoptic, the Pauline and the Johannine images of Christ.” (Latourelle 63)
   6. “It is also its task to determine what has been proposed for our belief by the magisterium of the Church (explicitly or implicitly), and what authority it has given to its pronouncements . . . An encyclical and an ecumenical council have obviously not the same authority; and in a council all its decisions do not carry the same weight.” (Latourelle 63)
   7. Also, “the documents produced by the magisterium are directed to a precise and limited end. Each arises in an historical context from which it derives its perspective, . . . its own particular emphasis . . .” (Fenton 63)
   8. “. . . in the promulgation of revealed truth, modern formulas are much more elaborate than primitive ones. For instance, the formulation by the first Vatican Council of the infallibility of the pope is much more elaborate and full of nuances than its expression in early documents of the Church.” (Latourelle 63)
   9. Positive theology undertakes “all this labor of technical precision, of doctrinal and historical research . . . It wishes to know revealed truth . . . in the characteristically methodical and exhaustive way which distinguishes science.” (Latourelle 63)
3. **divisions of positive theology**
   1. Tradition and scripture “express one and the same mystery, both are directed to one and the same end, the salvation of men; both are the word of God. [*Dei Verbum* § 9] This one deposit of faith, which tradition and Scripture together constitute, has been entrusted to the Church as a whole in order that she may live by it. But it is to the magisterium of the Church that Christ has entrusted the function of interpreting the word of God, whether written or transmitted through tradition.” (Latourelle 64)
   2. “One can, therefore, distinguish in positive theology, three departments, the theology of scriptural documents, the theology of the witness of tradition, and the theology of the teaching of the magisterium. The whole of this constitutes what are called the sources . . .” (Latourelle 64)
   3. theology of scripture
      1. “The theology of scriptural documents is based on exegesis. The aim of this is to understand the thoughts of the sacred author, what he wanted to say and intended to teach. Its object is first of all the literal sense. Its method is that of textual criticism, literary and historical, which establishes the text, discerns its sense, its literary form, and places it in the whole milieu in which it was composed and to which it was addressed, distinguishing [64] the importance and the limitations of the teaching which it contains. The exegete, says the constitution *Dei verbum*, “must try to find out what meaning the sacred writer intended to express and did in fact express, in the particular circumstances in which he wrote, in relation to his own time and culture, using the literary forms then in vogue.” [*Dei Verbum* § 12] It belongs also to exegesis to make a synthesis of the data of the scriptural texts.” (Latourelle 64-65)
   4. tradition
      1. theologians
         1. Pius XII’s apostolic constitution *Munificentissimus Deus* (which proclaimed Mary’s Assumption to be a dogma) “enumerates theologians also among the witnesses of tradition.” (Latourelle 66)
            1. Consequently, “One can, in effect, hold to be the object of faith whatever theologians have unanimously held to be so.” (Latourelle 66)
         2. Church Fathers
            1. “The Fathers of the Church are witnesses to her tradition. The value of their witness lies less in their proximity to the apostolic age than in the fact that they systematized in their writings revelation as it was received, believed and lived in the Church.” (Latourelle 65)
            2. “In technical usage, the term “Father of the Church” implies four things”:

antiquity

“orthodoxy of teaching”

“explicit or implicit approbation by the Church”

sanctity (Latourelle 65)

* + - * 1. “Those who fail to fulfill one of the four requisite conditions, even men of great genius like Tertullian and Origen, are called simply ecclesiastical writers.” (Latourelle 65)
        2. “It is now generally held that the last of the Western Fathers (Latin) closed with St. Isidore of Seville (560-636), and the last of the Eastern Fathers (Greek) was St. John Damascene (675-749).” (Hardon, “Fathers”)
        3. “The patristic age is considered as coming to an end in the West with St. Gregory the Great (604) and St. Isidore (636), and in the East with St. John Damascene (749).” (Latourelle 65)
        4. Custom accepts 39 Latin Fathers and 49 Greek Fathers. See the separate handout below. (Hardon, “Fathers”)
      1. Doctors of the Church
         1. “The Doctor of the Church is distinguished not only by the sanctity of his own life, but also by the striking role he has played in the doctrinal life of the Church, and by the particular approbation of the magisterium. He is considered a true master of the Christian faith.” (Latourelle 65)
         2. “Doctor of the Church [is a] title given since the Middle Ages to certain saints whose writing or preaching is outstanding for guiding the faithful in all periods of the Church’s history.” (Hardon, “Doctor”)
         3. Unlike Fathers, Doctors are not “confined to antiquity.” (Latourelle 65)

“Originally the [great] Western Fathers of the Church, Gregory the Great, Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome, were considered the great doctors of the Church.” (Hardon, “Doctor”)

“When the general esteem in which the Church held the Fathers became explicit, she raised them to the rank of Doctors.” (Latourelle 65)

“In the East St. Basil the Great, St. Athanasius, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, St. John Chrysostom, are considered to be so . . .” (Latourelle 65)

In the West, “St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine and St. Gregory the Great” are considered Doctors. (Latourelle 65)

Others have since been named, so there are now 33 Doctros of the Church. See the separate handout below.

* + 1. liturgy
       1. “The liturgy also constitutes a privileged witness to tradition . . . [It] is a more than normal manifestation of the faith of the Church.” (Latourelle 66)
       2. “. . . the liturgy celebrates and actualizes unceasingly the Christian mystery, the object of its faith.” (Latourelle 66)
       3. “It is the faith proclaimed in worship; for the Church prays as she believes. In the proverb, *lex orandi lex credendi*, the emphasis must be put on the objective dogmatic reality which informs the liturgy. Piety does not create dogma; rather it is its manifestation.” (Latourelle 66)
       4. The liturgy includes
          1. sacraments
          2. preaching
          3. “the unfolding pattern of its feasts, with their center in Easter” (Latourelle 66)
       5. Consequently, “it would be hard to find a truth of faith which is not in some way expressed there.” (Latourelle 66)
    2. Church history
       1. “The life of faith under the guidance of the Spirit [66] . . . is itself a way of finding out about what is being lived . . .” (Latourelle 66-67)
       2. “The expressions of the Christian faith which have arisen through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, given in new gifts to each new time, constitute an important theological source.” (Latourelle 67)
       3. Church history includes “the history of councils and heresies [66] . . . [the] declarations of the Church’s teaching authority.” (Latourelle 67)
       4. Church history includes “also the history of particular institutions (like the episcopacy and the diaconate), the history of the foundation of religious communities, the history of sanctity, in short the history of the whole people of God.” (Latourelle 66)
          1. E.g., “history of sanctity” [66]: “new light is shed upon the knowledge we have of Christ’s holiness through the Gospels, by the multiform expressions of his holiness in the lives of the saints and in the main currents of the Church’s spirituality.” [68] (Latourelle 66, 68)
       5. present Church history (“the faith of Christians as it is expressed today,” 66)
          1. The life of faith at present “is capable of making discoveries.” (Latourelle 67)
          2. “So the growing awareness of the role of the laity in the world, the foundation of secular institutes, the orientation of the religious life towards new duties, the interest of the Church in Christian communities separated from it, and in the great non-Christian religions of salvation, all this which comes about through the action of the Spirit, is faith in its fruit-bearing, and the object of theological reflection.” (Latourelle 66-67)
  1. theology of the magisterium
     1. “The theology of the teaching of the magisterium [studies] declarations of the Church’s teaching authority” and is therefore part of Church history. (Latourelle 67)
     2. But the theology of the magisterium itself is the study of a source of tradition.—Hahn
     3. “The magisterium . . . operates in two ways . . .” (Latourelle 67)
        1. the extraordinary magisterium, which is exercised in two ways
           1. by ecumenical councils
           2. by the pope speaking *ex cathedra*, i.e.,

“as the shepherd and teacher of all men,

“in the exercise of his full authority

“and with the intention that his words should be binding upon all the faithful.” (*Lumen Gentium* § 25) (Latourelle 67)

* + - 1. the ordinary magisterium, which is exercised in three ways
         1. “. . . by the bishops, individually (in preaching, in catechisms, in synodal letters and pastoral directives) or collegially (through interdiocesan [*sic*] synods and episcopal conferences)
         2. “. . . by the pope, either directly (through encyclicals, addresses or letters), or indirectly through his auxiliaries (the Roman congregations and dicasteries).” (Latourelle 67)

“The encyclical has, since the nineteenth century, been one of the privileged forms of the ordinary magisterium of the pope. Each encyclical constitutes, on a given point, a broad explanation of Catholic doctrine, in which it is less a question of condemning, correcting or warning than of clarifying, teaching and illuminating . . .” (Latourelle 67)

* + - * 1. “Canon law, which regulates the discipline of the Church, in so far as it is elaborated under the control of the magisterium and is officially promulgated by it, can be considered as forming part of its records.” (Latourelle 67-68)

1. **aims of positive theology**
   1. “The first aim is the taking possession of and defining, at a scientific level, of the whole of revealed truth as it is expressed in tradition and Scripture.” (Latourelle 68)
      1. “This intellectual grasp of the whole content of the object of faith is already an incipient understanding of revealed truth.” (Latourelle 68)
      2. “. . . we understand better a reality of which we know the origin and can follow the development.” (Latourelle 68)
         1. “So the mere fact of gathering together the various images which represent the inner nature of the Church (a People, a Vine, a Temple, a City, a Body, a Bride), as the constitution *Lumen Gentium* has said, is already an enrichment of our understanding of the mystery.” (Latourelle 68)
         2. “In the same way, the synoptic, Pauline and Johannine approaches to the mystery of Christ allow us to form from all of them a more adequate image of him and of his life as the Son in the deep mystery of the Trinity.” (Latourelle 68)
      3. “Research of this sort gives firmness to our faith . . . “ (Latourelle 68)
      4. “. . . it assures the soundness of theological procedure . . .” (Latourelle 68)
      5. It “can often forearm speculation against the dangers of considerations which are not in accord with the texts or with the facts of history.” (Latourelle 68)
   2. Second, positive theology “can, on occasion, fill an apologetic role . . .” (Latourelle 68)
      1. “. . . it can show that Christian doctrine is original, and not a commodity borrowed from neighboring religions.” (Latourelle 68)
      2. “It can show also that there is a continuity between what the Church preaches today and what was preached by the primitive Church.” (Latourelle 68)
         1. However, “theology cannot, in the case of each Christian dogma, demonstrate a perfect material identity between the faith of the first centuries and the faith of the Church today, and this is so for two reasons.” (Latourelle 69)
         2. “In the first place the historical records which would allow us to reconstruct a complete and exact picture of the faith of the primitive Church are quite simply lacking.” (Latourelle 69)
         3. “In the second place there is in the Church a constant process by which the object of faith becomes more and more explicit. Consequently we can perceive often only a continuity of mind.” (Latourelle 69)
2. **supernatural presuppositions**
   1. “Positive theology is not just a combination of philology and secular history. It does not content itself with studying the exterior facts which are the landmarks of the history of Israel [and the Church], that is with factual history. . . . Positive theology makes use of philology and history, but in the perspective of faith.” (Latourelle 69)
   2. “It does not, therefore, operate under the guidance of reason only, but in the ambience of faith and under the guidance of the magisterium of the Church.” (Latourelle 69)
   3. Positive theology “seeks in texts and facts . . . the revelation of God’s mystery and of his saving purpose.” (Latourelle 69)
   4. “At the basis of positive theology are a theology of revelation, a theology of inspiration, and a theology of the Church.” (Latourelle 69)
      1. “It regards the books of the Old and New Testaments as sacred and inspired . . .” (Latourelle 69)
      2. It accepts “the divine character of the foundation of the Church.” (Latourelle 69)
   5. a theology of revelation
      1. Positive theology’s “*a priori* is the recognition of the supernatural nature of its object . . .” (Latourelle 69)
      2. “The revelation of God to men is a unique and coherent whole, of which Christ is the keystone. If, therefore, we wish in positive theology to appreciate the exact significance and bearing of a [69] particular text we must place it in this vast context.” (Latourelle 69-70)
   6. a theology of inspiration
      1. “Positive theology takes for granted that the books of the Old and New Testaments “having been written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have God as their author.”” (*Dei Verbum* § 11) (Latourelle 70)
      2. “On the other hand, if it is true that God has used the sacred writers as free and intelligent instruments, . . . it is indispensible . . . to know the historical and literary context of each part of Scripture.” (*Dei Verbum* § 11-12) (Latourelle 70)
   7. a theology of the Church
      1. “He has entrusted his word to the Church, so that the whole Church may live by it, but it belongs to the magisterium alone . . . to interpret it authentically in the name of Christ.” (*Dei Verbum* § 10) (Latourelle 70)
      2. “Only the Church, in its living tradition, can tell us which books are validly inspired and therefore valid witnesses of God.” (*Dei Verbum* § 8) (Latourelle 70)
      3. “If it is a question of the Doctors of the Church only the Church has authority to tell us which of its writers are authentic witnesses to the word of God.” (Latourelle 70)
3. **regressive procedure and genetic procedure**
   1. “. . . the procedure of positive theology can [be conceived] as a regressive [70] procedure or as a genetic one.” (Latourelle 70-71)
   2. “Both can be justified from the documents of the magisterium . . .” (Latourelle 71)
      1. “The encyclical *Humani Generis* (*DS* 3886) favors the regressive procedure . . .” (Latourelle 71)
      2. Vatican Council II, “in the constitution *Dei verbum*, n. 12, and in the decree *Optatam totius*, n. 16, favors the genetic.” (Latourelle 71 n. 13)
   3. regressive procedure
      1. Gardeil, Ambroise. “La réforme de la théologie catholique.” *Revue thomiste* 11 (1903): 5-19, 197-215, 428-547.
      2. Dublanchy, E. “Domatique.” *DTC* 4: cols. 1524, 1533.
      3. Pius XII, *Humani Generis* (*DS* 3886).
      4. Congar, Yves M.-J. *La foi et la théologie*. Tournai and Paris: Desclée, 1962. 140.
      5. “The regressive approach, described by A. Gardeil and practiced during the whole of the last century in dictionaries and manuals of instruction, takes as its point of departure the doctrine of the Church as it exists today, and goes back to the sometimes obscure origins of this doctrine. It travels backwards from the present explicit doctrine which is expressed in the ordinary and extraordinary teaching of the magisterium, in order to find in the sources, sometimes explicitly, but sometimes also only implicitly, the foundation of the present day teaching. Basing itself thus on the present faith of the Church, which is more explicit and better formulated, positive theology may by this approach discover in texts a meaning which philology and history alone could not perhaps have discovered. . . . in the light of the Church’s faith today it can catch in mere indications a continuous manifestation of the same awareness becoming more and more explicit as time goes on.” (Latourelle 71)
      6. “For example in the light of the present dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, positive theology will find in the indications of Scripture and the facts of Tradition an expression of the uninterrupted faith of the Church.” (Latourelle 71)
      7. “The obvious advantage of such an approach is the security which it gives to the theologian . . .” (Latourelle 71)
      8. dangers
         1. “The first is that of a false supernaturalism, which, in [71] order to safeguard Christian faith, eliminates those texts which cause difficulties, or forces the meaning of others which do not seem to it sufficiently favorable.” (Latourelle 71-72)
         2. Another “danger is that of anachronism, which consists in reading into a word or expression which we encounter in a document from the past, the sense which it has for us today . . .” (Latourelle 72)
         3. There is “the further error of those who want to find in the sources of revelation the doctrine of the Church in all its present clarity, for instance upon the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin or on the three sacraments which imprint an indelible character upon the soul. There are times when one will find nothing more in tradition and Scripture than indications.” (Latourelle 72)
         4. “A final danger . . . is that of preserving only those aspects of revelation which have been emphasized by the magisterium. . . . there will always be more richness to be found in the data of revelation itself.” (Latourelle 72)
   4. genetic procedure
      1. Grelot, Pierre. *La Bible*, *Parole de Dieu*. Paris: 1965. Ch. 7, 311-91.
      2. Most theologians today “prefer a genetic approach . . .” (Latourelle 72)
      3. “This approach takes as its point of departure revelation itself. It makes use of the data and techniques of literary and historical criticism, in order to determine the original import of the texts in their social, cultural and religious context, which has long since disappeared. It tries to trace the history of revelation authentically, as it unfolded stage by stage in the past, without prejudging the present explicit formulations of the magisterium. It tries to detect the themes of Scripture in order to follow their development and orchestration through the centuries, a coherent development, but a development compatible with pauses and even with partial regressions. The immediate objective of the genetic approach is the same as that of the historian without faith, although believer and unbeliever judge differently of the value of the facts which they find in the texts. The believer recognizes the history of divine revelation . . .” (Latourelle 72)
      4. “Theology has nothing to fear from this loyal pursuit, even if on occasion, it has to rectify certain views inherited from past ages, when it finds on what slender foundations they are built.” (Latourelle 73)
      5. “If one of his conclusions seems to contradict the explicit teaching of the magisterium he should try to find, in a deepening of his understanding of the texts, a solution to this apparent incompatibility. But the results of his analysis cannot be dictated to him from outside, in defiance of the data provided by the texts.” (Latourelle 73)
      6. advantages
         1. The genetic approach is “more in accord with man’s historical dimension, and with the economy of salvation.” (Latourelle 72)
         2. “The genetic approach allows us to follow the progress of revelation step by step through history, and in some sort to get to the very heart of that admirable teaching technique by which God brought the people of Israel to maturity and prepared it, little by little, for the fullness of himself in Christ.” (Latourelle 73)
         3. “It means that we lose nothing of the riches of revealed truth. In no way prejudging the later explicit formulations of the magisterium, the genetic approach listens to the word of God as it is spoken, and tries to grasp all its themes and all its nuances. It can thus discover aspects of revelation which the teaching of the Church has not up to now stressed, or has stressed very little. In this way it prepares for and gives ripeness to the decisions of the magisterium.” (Latourelle 73)
         4. “Finally, it enables us to purify the later stages of dogmatic formulation of the imperfections which could in the past have crept into them.” (Latourelle 74)
      7. dangers
         1. “The first is that of becoming so bound up with the *epaphax* of revelation in its historical setting that we are entirely unconcerned about its later developments and about the immense labor accomplished by the Church in order to interpret and make ceaselessly contemporary the word spoken at a particular moment of history.” (Latourelle 74)
         2. “The second danger . . . is that of canonizing in some way the modes of expression we find in Scripture to the point of closing our minds against every other type of expression and systematization because it is not biblical. In its acute form, this attitude could become a contempt for all theology . . . There is a return to sources which is like a sort of biblical romanticism. The pre-scientific language of Scripture must be submitted to the most rigorous analysis, so that science may recover, as far as possible, all the richness of meaning which it originally contained.” (Latourelle 74)
   5. combined procedures
      1. “We have described types . . . [But] types do not exist in a pure state. At the level of the consciousness of their activities in the minds of those engaged in research, there is probably not so great a difference between the two procedures. At this psychological level there are elements which rather bring the two ways together than set them apart.” (Latourelle 74)
      2. “The two approaches have, in fact, a common element, the faith of the believer as it is expressed in the living tradition of the Church and its present teaching. This faith is like a light in which the positive theologian lives and is purified. The presence in him of his living faith [74] . . . presents itself to him as a working hypothesis, certainly always to be verified, so that he will affirm nothing that is not warranted by the texts, but as an hypothesis which attracts him, which has probability on its side.” (Latourelle 74-75)
      3. “In this way, the methodological difference between the two approaches is often reduced in practice to a difference of emphasis, some being more attentive to revelation in its historical setting (*terminus a quo*) others, on the contrary, being more sensitive to its realization in the Church of today (*terminus ad quem*).” (Latourelle 75)
      4. “It is more or less inevitable that the theologian applying himself to positive scientific research, and bound by a twofold loyalty, loyalty to the Church and its living magisterium, loyalty to the demands of literary and historical criticism, will sometimes experience painful tensions, especially at times when the rhythm of discovery having been suddenly accelerated, he no longer sees how to reconcile the data of faith with those of science. We must remember Loisy and Lagrange. At these times he must recognize that his status in research depends only partly upon the judgment of pure savants. His procedure has its adequate justification only within the Church, of whom he is the humble servant.” (Latourelle 75)

## The Theologian

### The Two Characteristics of the Intellectual Life

Hofstadter, Richard. *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963.

[There are] two basic qualities in the intellectual’s attitude toward ideas—qualities that may be designated as playfulness and piety.

piety

[The intellectual] lives for ideas—which means that he has a sense of dedication to the life of the mind which is very much like a religious commitment. This . . . implies a special sense of the ultimate value in existence of the act of comprehension. Socrates, when he said that the unexamined life is not worth living, struck the essence of it.

. . . the intellectual task [has] been conceived as a *calling* . . . in the service of truth. The intellectual life has here taken on a kind of primary moral significance. It is this aspect of the intellectual’s feeling about ideas that I call his piety. The intellectual is *engagé*—he is pledged, committed, enlisted. What everyone else is willing to admit, namely that ideas and abstractions are of signal importance in human life, he imperatively feels.

Of course what is involved is more than a purely personal discipline and more than the life of contemplation and understanding itself. For the life of thought, even though it may be regarded as the highest form of human activity, is also a medium through which other values are refined, reasserted, and realized in the human community. [28] Collectively, intellectuals have often tried to serve as the moral antennae of the race . . . The thinker feels that he ought to be the special custodian of values like reason and justice which are related to his own search for truth . . . intellectuals are properly more responsive to such values than others; and it is the historic glory of the intellectual class of the West in modern times that, of all the classes which could be called in any sense privileged, it has shown the largest and most consistent concern for the well-being of the classes which lie below it in the social scale. Behind the intellectual’s feeling of commitment is the belief that in some measure the world should be made responsive to his capacity for rationality, his passion for justice and order: out of this conviction arises much of his value to mankind . . .

playfulness

[The intellectual’s] piety, by itself, is not enough. He may live for ideas, as I have said, but something must prevent him from living for *one idea*, from becoming obsessive. When one’s concern for ideas, no matter how dedicated and sincere, reduces them to the service of some central limited preconception or some wholly external end, intellect gets swallowed by fanaticism. If there is anything more dangerous to the life of the mind than having no independent commitment to ideas, it is having an excess of commitment to some special and constricting idea. The effect is as observable in politics as in theology: the intellectual function can be overwhelmed by an excess of piety expended within too contracted a frame of reference. [29]

Piety, then, needs a counterpoise, something to prevent it from being exercised in an excessively rigid way; and this it has, in most intellectual temperaments, in the quality I would call playfulness. We speak of the play of the mind; and certainly the intellectual relishes the play of the mind for its own sake, and finds in it one of the major values in life. What one thinks of here is the element of sheer delight in intellectual activity. . . . the curiosity of the playful mind is inordinately restless and active. This very restlessness and activity gives a distinctive cast to its view of truth and its discontent with dogmas. . . .

Whatever the intellectual is too certain of, if he is healthily playful, he begins to find unsatisfactory. The meaning of his intellectual life lies not in the possession of truth but in the quest for new uncertainties. Harold Rosenberg summed up this side of the life of the mind supremely well when he said that the intellectual is one who turns answers into questions. . . .

piety and playfulness

But in using the terms *play* and *playfulness*, I do not intend to suggest any lack of seriousness; quite the contrary. Anyone who has watched children, or adults, at play will recognize that there is no contradiction between play and seriousness, and that some forms of play induce a measure of grave concentration not so readily called forth by work. And playfulness does not imply the absence of practicality. In American public discussion one of the tests to which intellect is constantly submitted when it is, so to speak, on trial is this criterion of practicality. But in principle intellect is neither practical nor impractical; it is extra-practical. [30] To the zealot overcome by his piety and to the journeyman of ideas concerned only with his marketable mental skills, the beginning and end of ideas lies in their efficacy with respect to some goal external to intellectual processes. The intellectual is not in the first instance concerned with such goals. This is not to say that he scorns the practical: the intrinsic intellectual interest of many practical problems is utterly absorbing. Still less is it to say that he is impractical; he is simply concerned with something else, a quality in problems that is not defined by asking whether or not they have practical purpose. . . .

One may well ask if there is not a certain fatal contradiction between these two qualities of the intellectual temperament, playfulness and piety. Certainly there is a tension between them, but it is anything but fatal: it is just one of those tensions in the human character that evoke a creative response. It is, in fact, the ability to comprehend and express not only different but opposing points of view, to identify imaginatively with or even to embrace within oneself contrary feelings and ideas that gives rise to first-rate work in all areas of humanistic expression and in many fields of inquiry. Human beings are tissues of contradictions, and the life even of the intellectual is not logic, to borrow from Holmes, but experience. Contemplate the intellectuals of the past or those in one’s neighborhood: some will come to mind in whom the note of playfulness is dominant; others who are conspicuously pious. But in most intellectuals each of these characteristics is qualified and held in check by the other. The tensile strength of the thinker may be gauged by his ability to keep an equipoise between these two sides of his mind. At one end of the scale, an excess of playfulness may lead to triviality, to the dissipation of intellectual energies on mere technique, to dilettantism, to the failure of creative effort. At the other, an excess of piety leads to rigidity, to fanaticism, to messianism, to ways of life which may be morally mean or morally magnificent but which in either case are not the ways of intellect.

Historically, it may be useful to fancy playfulness and piety as being [32] the respective residues of the aristocratic and the priestly backgrounds of the intellectual function. The element of play seems to be rooted in the ethos of the leisure class, which has always been central in the history of creative imagination and humanistic learning. The element of piety is reminiscent of the priestly inheritance of the intellectuals: the quest for and the possession of truth was a holy office. As their legatee, the modern intellectual inherits the vulnerability of the aristocrat to the animus of puritanism and egalitarianism and the vulnerability of the priest to anticlericalism and popular assaults upon hierarchy. We need not be surprised, then, if the intellectual’s position has rarely been comfortable in a country which is, above all others, the home of the democrat and the antinomian.

It is a part of the intellectual’s tragedy that the things he most values about himself and his work are quite unlike those society values in him. Society values him because he can in fact be used for a variety of purposes, from popular entertainment to the design of weapons. But it can hardly understand so well those aspects of his temperament which I have designated as essential to his intellectualism. His playfulness, in its various manifestations, is likely to seem to most men a perverse luxury; in the United States the play of the mind is perhaps the only form of play that is not looked upon with the most tender indulgence. His piety is likely to seem nettlesome, if not actually dangerous. And neither quality is considered to contribute very much to the practical business of life. [33]

### The Habit of Theology

**contents**:

introduction

studiousness

faith

theological wonder

the urge to connect

sanctity

1. **introduction**
   1. “What sort of person must I be in order to become a theologian?” (Nichols 13)
   2. “. . . concern with the subjective preconditions of theological study is quite an ancient phenomenon in the Church.” (Nichols 13)
   3. Latin tradition calls “theology a habit, a particular kind of disposition which fits the human mind to deal successfully and happily with some aspect of reality.” (Nichols 13)
      1. “The conceptualization of the theological (and other) virtues is one of the greatest achievements of Christian thought, building on both sacred and secular sources . . .” (Loftin, O. *Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles*. Louvain: 1942-60. Esp. III/2 99-150.) (Nichols 13 n. 1)
      2. “. . . the classic account is that of Thomas [*ST* 1-2.62.3]. There those virtues are described as grace-given adaptations of man to God as his supernatu­ral end, paralleling the natural virtues rooted in his natural orientation toward human perfection.” (Nichols 13 n. 1)
      3. “. . . the phrase “theological virtues” first emerges with William of Auxerre (d. 1231) . . .” (Nichols 13 n. 1)
      4. “The idea that theology itself actualizes a specific virtue draws on both su­pernatural and natural models.” (Nichols 13 n. 1)
      5. Yves M.-J. Congar (“Theologia est altissimus inter habitus intellectuales acquisitos hominis Christiani,” *La foi et la théologie* [Paris: 1962] 192): “theology is the highest of the habits of mind that a Christian man or woman can acquire.” (Nichols 13)
   4. “This theological habit of mind, like all aspects of Christian exist­ence, is at one and the same time absolutely ordinary and natural, yet entirely extraordinary and supernatural. It is natural in that it draws [13] on the human ability to study. It is supernatural in that its root and source is divinely given faith in the self-revealing God.” (Nichols 13-14)
   5. Theology “carries on its work in a religious and sacred ambience, created by the deep affinity which unites teacher and student in communion with the same object. For the word of God which they are trying to understand better is the object of their faith and the foundation of their life. Both student and teacher are *given*, *surrendered* to this word.” (Latourelle 16)
   6. The theologian, “above all among the faithful, must listen to the word which he seeks to understand. [*Dei Verbum* §§ 1-10] For the word of God . . . demands of him docility of mind and docility of heart. . . . Both [teacher and student of theology] are trying to penetrate to the depths and taste there the meaning of this word which is both the inspiration and the criterion of their life. Here, the object of the intellectual life and the object of the spiritual life coincide simply.” (Latourelle 16)
2. **studiousness**
   1. Theology is “studiousness made supernatural, enquiring faith stimulated by various kinds of objects to ask a variety of questions but in a specifically Christian way . . .” (Nichols 25)
   2. “In the first place, then, the theological habit requires studiousness, just as much as does any secular academic discipline.” (Nichols 14)
   3. “Broadly speak­ing, we may say that any academic discipline requires three things: first, it requires the ability to follow an argument; second, it requires the capacity to remember a certain number of facts; third, it requires a basic flair or sense for the subject that enables us to be creative in thinking up hypotheses in its regard. . . . [So] a habit of study, including the­ology, asks that we be argumentative, retentive, and imaginative.” (Nichols 14)
   4. “The [28] theological student needs the basic natural *desiderata* of all students of any­thing, which we have summed up as argumentativeness, retentiveness, and imagination.” (Nichols 28-29)
   5. “The science of sacred theology demands erudition as well as intelligence.” (Fenton 264)
      1. “The theologian must see how [263] the doctrine with which he is concerned is proposed in the authentic magisterium of the Catholic Church. He must see how it is expressed in the divinely revealed books which constitute Holy Scripture, and then ascertain how it was taught and developed by the Fathers. The theologian must have cognizance of the literature of his own science, and know how his teaching appears in theological tradition.” (Fenton 263-64)
   6. “. . . no one who has read nothing between the New Testament and Pope John Paul II could possibly be called a theologian.” (Nichols 179)
3. **faith**
   1. Dulles, Avery. “Method in Fundamental Theology: Reflections on David Tracy’s *Blessed Rage for Order*.” *Theological Studies* 38 (1976) 304-16. (Evalua­tion of Tracy’s position.)
   2. Schlier, H. “Religions-geschichtliche Schule.” *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*. Vol. 8. Freiburg: 1963. Cols. 1184-85.
   3. Tracy, David. *Blessed Rage for Order*: *the New Pluralism in Theology*. New York: 1975. 6-8. (Says “that, in principle, Chris­tian faith is not a prerequisite of theology.” Nichols 15 n. 4)
   4. religious studies
      1. “An atheist, or any non-Christian, could study the Christian religion from a purely descriptive standpoint, in what may be called an empirical way, amassing facts about Chris­tianity: its origins, history, and present diffusion. Again, he or she might study the Christian religion in what may be termed a phenomenological way, evoking what being a Christian appears to be like, so far as an outsider can tell. Such a person may be enormously erudite but could never become a theologian. He or she might achieve celebrity as a religious scientist or phenomenologist and be elected to a chair in religious studies—a nonconfessing discipline common in Eu­rope and North America and descended from a nineteenth-century German ancestor, *Religionsgeschichte*: the study of the history of reli­gion.” (Nichols 14)
      2. “The history-of-religions school is the first great attempt at a “neutral” scholarly study of religion.” (Nichols 14 n. 3)
      3. “. . . in pursu­ing religious studies, we are not committed to the view that a given religion is true, or even partly true . . .” (Nichols 32)
      4. “Any scholar can study the texts of the New Testament considered simply as intriguing religious writings from the ancient Near East. But to grasp the meaning which the Chris­tian religion has found in these texts, it is necessary to be in touch with the *fides quae*, the faith of the Church.” (Nichols 16)
   5. What “is this faith which is so imperative for the theologian?” (Nichols 15)
      1. “It can be thought of in two ways: either as the body of belief which the Church, the Christian community, holds to be true, or as my own personal act of faith, my very own act of believing adhesion to God in Christ by the Holy Spirit.” (Schillebeeckx, Edward. *Revelation and Theology*. London: 1967. 105-09.) (Nichols 15)
      2. faith as beliefs (*fides quae*)
         1. This is “objec­tive faith . . .” (Nichols 16)
         2. “. . . the faith which the Church believes, the articles of faith . . . form that objective content of truth that is Catholic Chris­tianity.” (Nichols 15)
         3. “. . . this view of faith [is] as a body of doctrine giving true insight into God . . .” (Nichols 16)
         4. faith and epistemology
            1. Congar, Yves M.-J. “Theologia est altissimus inter habitus intellectuales acquisitos hominis Christiani.” *La foi et la théologie*. Paris: 1962. 193-94.
            2. Ernst, C. *Multiple Echo*: *Explorations in Theology*. London: 1979. 139.
            3. “. . . the authority of God [provides] theology, via reve­lation and faith, with its distinctive epistemological basis . . .” (Nichols 29)
            4. Without faith, “the [14] person would lack the indispensable spiritual milieu which an authentic theological culture needs, and any attempts to write theology would be epistemologically defective.” (Nichols 14-15)
            5. “To be a theologian, one must share the common *fides quae*, the faith of the people of God. A theologian . . . is equally bound, with all Christians, by the Church’s rule of faith. He (or she) is dependent on the Church . . . epistemologically.” (Nichols 16)
            6. This is (to borrow from Kant) “the “ecclesiological *a pri*­*ori*” in theology: ecclesial faith precedes, enters into, and organizes the concrete knowledge which theology possesses.” (Nichols 16)
            7. Jean Leclerq describes “The value of a spiritual culture vis-à-vis theological activity . . .” (Nichols 29 n. 6)

Leclerq, Jean. *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*: *A Study of Monastic Culture*. 2nd ed. Trans. New York: 1974.

“Needless to say, monastic culture provides a paradigm for a Christian culture here, rather than being its exclusive content.” (Nichols 29 n. 6)

* + - 1. the case of Hans Küng
         1. Greimacher, N., and H. Haag, eds. *Der Fall Küng*: *Eine Dokumentation*. Munich: 1980.
         2. “The importance of the *fides quae* to theological activity was well brought out by the quarrel between the papacy and the Swiss theo­logian Prof. Hans Küng.” (Nichols 15)
         3. “At one level, the Küng affair was about Church politics, that is, the proper form which the specifically Chris­tian and ecclesial or churchly use of power should take.” (Nichols 15)

“Küng believes that the power of the bishop of Rome has become excessively inflated, largely through historical accident, and that it is high time this power was cut down to size. It has been abused, he asserts, in order to nar­row down what should count as the Catholic tradition and so is an obstacle to the development of that tradition, both inwards and in re­lation to other Churches in the ecumenical movement.” (Nichols 15)

“The Pope and the Roman curia, on the other hand, believe that . . . the Roman See must still main­tain a strong supervisory role within the communion or totality of . . . Churches. In a world of constant change, the continuity and integrity of Catholic faith, worship, and action require this stabilizing center.” (Nichols 15)

* + - * 1. “At another level, however, the Küng affair . . . concerned the limits of Catholic theology, the boundary which you cannot pass if you wish to keep the title of a Catholic theologian. By refusing to accept in an unqualified way the affirmation of the Council of Nicaea that the being of the one who [15] became man as Jesus is divine, and by refusing to accept in any way at all the ecumenicity of the First Vatican Council, which defined, *inter alia*, the primacy and infallibility (in certain circumstances) of the Roman bishop, Küng was held, not unreasonably, to have overstepped the limits which circumscribe what Catholic theology is. The Pope’s reac­tion, therefore, was to deprive him of his canonical mission, his for­mal mandate to teach theology as a member of the believing community.” (Nichols 15-16)
    1. the act of faith (*fides qua*)
       1. This is “subjec­tive faith . . .” (Nichols 16)
       2. *Fides qua* is “the faith by which I turn to God in Christ by the Spirit through my acceptance of what the Church believes.” (Nichols 16)
       3. “. . . studiousness is rooted, in theology’s case, in the supernatural gift of faith.” (Nichols 14)
          1. “The [28] theological student needs the basic natural *desiderata* of all students of any­thing, which we have summed up as argumentativeness, retentiveness, and imagination. But such qualities, taken by themselves, are insuffi­cient equipment for a theological mind. The mind must be in some way in love with God or it will lose a certain fundamental sympathy, or tact, for Christian truth. There is indeed such a thing as theological sensibility, a kind of theological good sense which is not simply ra­tional but which depends on our remaining within a spiritual culture.” (Nichols 28-29)
       4. Aquinas says that “subjective faith opens the mind to God’s own truth, enabling objective faith to become the medium of direct contact with God himself [*ST* 2-2.1-7]. The light [16] which the *fides qua* brings to the mind derives from God’s radiant being and enables us to share here and now in the knowledge which the saints enjoy in heaven and which, more fundamentally, God has of himself. St. Thomas refers to it as the *semen gloriae*, the seed of glory, or the *inchoatio gloriae*, the first shadowy sketch of the vision of God. Infused into our minds, it gives us a sympathy or connaturality with God’s revelation, orienting us in an obscure but real manner toward his truth.” (Nichols 16-17)
          1. For Aquinas’ “reflections on discernment *propter connaturalitatem*, or *per modum inclinationis*, *see* T. Gilby, “The Dialectic of Love in the *Summa*” in *St*. *Thomas Aquinas*, *Summa Theologiae 1*: *Theology* (London: 1963) 124-32.” (Nichols 17 n. 9)
       5. Aquinas also “describes faith as that which “makes our future blessed­ness to exist in us inchoatively” [*Compen*­*dium theologiae* 1.2] . . .” (Nichols 16 n. 8)
       6. Aquinas’ “account of the eschatological character of faith turns [16] on the Vulgate text of Hebrews where faith is declared to be *substantia sperandarum rerum*, “the substance of things to be hoped for.” (Nichols 16 n. 8)
       7. “As M.-D. Chenu has said, faith is “(une) connaissance réaliste, c’est-à-dire qui touche la *chose* divine. Perception directe, impregnée de l’affectivité.” (“L’unité de la foi: réalisme et formalism.” *La foi dans l*’*intelligence*. Paris: 1964. 15-16.) (Nichols 17 n. 10)
       8. “Theology presupposes the truth of the Christian faith.” (Nichols 32)
          1. “It assumes from the outset that what we are involved with in the life of the Church is a divine reality and not just a figment of the corporate imagination of a group of people. [32] . . . [Theologians] are committed from the start to the position that at the origins of the Church, an authentic revelation of the one true God took place, and that we are put into contact with this same God revealing himself through our share in the Church’s common life.” (Nichols 32-33)
          2. Anselm

Anselm defined theology “as *fides quaerens intellectum*, that is to say faith applying itself to understanding its object.” (Latourelle 8)

Anselm (*Proslogion* 1): “I do not pretend to ‘sound [*sic*] thy depth, O Lord, for how should I compare my understanding with thy mystery? But I desire to understand in some manner the truth which I believe and which my heart loves. I do not seek to understand in order to believe but I believe first in order to try afterwards to understand. For I believe this—that if I do not begin by believing I [8] shall never understand.” (Qtd. in Latourelle 8-9)

* + - * 1. Augustine (*De Trinitate* 15.28.51): “I desired to see with the eyes of my understanding what I believed.” (See also *De Trinitate* 4.1, 15.27.40; *De libero arbitrio* 2.2.5.) (Qtd. in Latourelle 9)
      1. Granting “the title “theologian” or “teacher” (Doctor) to [no] more than a handful of people exceptional for the quality of their personal faith” shows “the importance of the *fides qua*.” (Nichols 17)
         1. “In the Greek tradi­tion, . . . only three writers bear the title *ho theologos*, “the theologian”: the evangelist John, the fourth-century bishop Gregory of Nazianzus, and the eleventh-century monk Symeon of Constantinople, the so-called New Theologian. Though this fact is to be explained in part by the caprices of piety and liturgical usage, nevertheless an attempt is being made to single out three indi­viduals who shared a similar quality. By the outstanding character of their faith, they were able to enter into God’s mystery in an intimate way and so communicate that inwardness of divine revelation to others.” (Lossky, V. *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*. Trans. London: 1957. 9.) (Nichols 17)

“. . . John is in a class of its own when compared with the other three. [The difference] derives, at least partially, from the special qualities of religious insight with which the Christian mind of St. John was liberally endowed.” (Nichols 17)

“The special qualities of John were early acknowledged in the Church’s history . . .” (Nichols 17 n. 12)

Braun, F.-M. *Jean le théologien et son Évangile dans l*’*Église ancienne*. Paris: 1959.

Wiles, Maurice. *The Spiritual Gospel*: *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel in the Early Church*. Cam­bridge: 1960.

* + - * 1. The Western tra­dition names only “certain saints *doctores Ecclesiae*: [17] outstanding teachers of the Church.” (Nichols 17-18)

“The first Western list, that of Bede in his *Epistola responsoria ad Accam episcopum*, depended like Lossky’s modern Eastern triumvirate on received custom; but stimulated by Trent’s praise of Thomas, Pope Pius V began the practice of canonically naming new Doctors in 1567. The most recent creations are the first two women Doc­tors, Catherine of Siena and Teresa of Avila, named by Pope Paul VI in 1970.” (Nichols 18 n. 13)

“Here studiousness and conformity to the *fides quae* are presup­posed, and to the resultant qualities of erudition and orthodoxy is added the test of holiness, by which faith, the subjective response to the self-revealing God, is rooted in mind and heart.” (Nichols 18)

1. **theological wonder**
   1. “. . . though the root of the theological habit is supernatural faith, that faith takes on a particular quality when exercised theologically be­cause of its entering into symbiosis with the natural human quality of studiousness. The specific mode in which faith lives in the theolog­ical enterprise is Christian wonder, or curiosity.” (Schillebeeckx, *Revelation and Theology* 109) (Nichols 18)
   2. “The studious believer who wishes to become a theologian wants to know, Why? Why do we say that God exists? Why did this God make the world? Why did [God] become man . . .? In what way did he save the world?” Etc. (Nichols 18)
   3. “Probably everyone who takes his or her faith at all seriously has thought about one or more of them at some time. But there is a difference between the ordinary person who may discuss these things occasionally over a pint of beer at the local pub, or worry about them for a while before dropping off to sleep, and the person who makes a serious lifelong commitment to struggling with them and turns that commitment into a part of his or her very self-definition. For one cannot say, I’ve fin­ished theology; now I’ll move on to another subject. There is a sense in which one might say something similar of Akkadian grammar or the family tree of the Hapsburg dynasty . . .” (Nichols 18)
   4. “. . . de­veloping over a lifetime the gift of Christian wonder or curiosity . . . is the specifically theological mode of faith. As theologians, then, we commit ourselves to the lifelong study [of revelation]. . . . Our faith is from now on, in St. Anselm’s words [subtitle to *Proslogion*], *fides quaerens intellectum*, “a faith that quests for un­derstanding.”” (Nichols 18-19)
      1. Anselm (*Epistola de incarnation Verbi* 1): “The one who does not believe has no experience, and the one who has no experience, does not know.” (Qtd. in Nichols 19 n. 15)
      2. “For Thomas’ version see” *Scriptum super libros sententiarum* 3.23.2.2.1 ad 2. (Nichols 19 n. 15)
   5. “The ecclesio­logical a priori works . . . everywhere . . . in theology, for the operation of theological wonder in a Christian presupposes the faith of the Church as well as one’s own individual act of faith.” (Nichols 22)
   6. “. . . another aspect of the theological habit [is] the willingness to be stimulated by appropriate objects: the kind of objects which have, in point of fact, stimulated the curiosity of theo­logians. Such objects can be thought of as arranged in three concen­tric circles.” (Nichols 19)
      1. “The first and largest of these circles can be labelled “existence” or, more colloquially, “anything you care to mention.” In principle, any existent thing could elicit theological wonder.” (Nichols 19)
         1. “. . . our origi­nal outer circle [is] labelled “existence” or “anything” . . .” (Nichols 21)
         2. “. . . theological wonder can be stimulated by any human experience, and any human experience is a proper start­ing point for theological reflection.” (Nichols 20)
         3. “The work of God is as wide as the whole of creation, and the story of grace includes every human soul . . .” (Nichols 19)
         4. Gerard Manley Hopkins, SJ (1844-99)
            1. Thornton, R.K.R. *All My Eyes See*: *The Visual World of Gerard Manley Hopkins*. Sun­derland: 1975.
            2. Hopkins, Gerard Manley. *The Poems of Gerard Manley Hop*­*kins*. Ed. W.H. Gardner and N.H. Mackenzie. Oxford: 1967.
            3. Cotter, J.F. *Inscape*: *The Christology and Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins*. Pittsburgh: 1972. (“A theologically informed reading of the poems,” Nichols 20 n. 17)
            4. Hopkins “lived in England and Ireland . . . Hop­kins, looking at nature with the penetrating eye of an artist, found in it evidence of the divine creativity. Thus, Hopkins brought to life a commonplace of patristic and medieval theology, namely that nature is a book in which we read of God.” (Nichols 19)
         5. Blaise Pascal (1623-62)
            1. Pascal, Blaise. *Pensées*. Ed. L. Lafuma. Paris: 1962.
            2. Krailsheimer, A. *Pascal*. Oxford: 1980.
            3. Pascal was a “devout French scientist-philosopher . . .” (Nichols 20)
            4. “Pascal looked at the people around him in order to give us dramatic evidence of the Christian understanding of humankind. According to Christianity, people are made for God and open to God. At the same time, they are sunk in original sin, having a built-in ten­dency to what is evil. Humans are essentially a paradox, what Pascal calls “the glory and the refuse of the universe.” [*Pensées* no. 131; see nos. 78, 149, 430, 470, 613, 629.] To see this as really the truth we need the assistance of men like Pascal, of novels, plays, and films as well as our own observation of the people we meet.” (Nichols 19-20)
      2. “Coming now to the second, smaller concentric circle, I would label this “the sacred history.”” (Nichols 20)
         1. Lewry, O. *The Theology of History*. Cork: 1969.
         2. “Although anything can spark off theologi­cal wonder, the central focus of that wonder for the Christian must lie in history. Christianity is a historical religion. Its central figure lived [20] two thousand years ago. And this central figure cannot himself be un­derstood without a grasp of the religion of his people Israel, a religion whose own history dates back at least another fifteen hundred years. Similarly, the central figure of Christianity cannot be understood with­out a grasp of the tradition that flowed from him, the tradition of the Church.” (Nichols 20-21)
         3. “Much of the time, specifically Christian theological wonder takes the form of . . . “historical sympathy” . . .” (Nichols 21)
            1. Collingwood, R.G. *The Idea of History*. London: 1946.
            2. “. . . we place ourselves in the position of those in the past . . . Historical sympathy is a very special kind of charity toward our neigh­bor. It is a kind of love in which we reach out to the long-dead genera­tions and make their thoughts and words live again by re-creating them in our own minds. This is not an easy task . . . But if we are not willing to make this effort, then there is little point in our trying to study the theology of a historical religion at all.” (Nichols 21)
      3. “The third and smallest concentric circle I propose to label “the Bible.”” (Nichols 22)
         1. Charlier, C. *The Chris*­*tian Approach to the Bible*. Westminster: Newman, 1958. (A “general orientation in the Catholic use of the Bible,” (Nichols 22 n. 22)
         2. Only scripture is “the supreme concentration of stimuli to theological wonder, an object that expresses in a paramount way the historical religion which is Christianity . . . Pondering on the Scriptures is the most important and fertile source of theological wonder that we have.” (Nichols 22)
            1. It is “a sound principle of Catho­lic theology that all of Christian revelation is contained in Scripture in some manner.” (Congar, Y. M.-J. *Tradition and Traditions*. Trans. London: 1966. 376-424.) (Nichols 22)
            2. “. . . certain aspects of revelation cannot be found easily in Scripture unless one reads Scrip­ture within Tradition . . .” (Nichols 22)
         3. ways of encountering scripture
            1. “For the average Catholic, such stimulus will come through the reading of the Scriptures in the liturgy and . . . comments thereon of the Church’s ministers.” (Nichols 22)
            2. “For the contemplative monk, one thinks in addition of the longstanding custom of *lectio divina*, the prayerful chewing over of the Bible in one’s private room.” (Nichols 22)
            3. Also, “there are Bible study groups meeting in presbyteries or parishioners’ homes.” (Nichols 22)
            4. theologians

“The theological student must [go] further [22] . . . In the recent past, few lay Catholics were capable of finding relevant pas­sages in Scripture, but in a theological student this deficiency would be inexcusable.” (Nichols 22-23)

Every theological student should possess a copy of the Bible in a study edition, that is, a Bible with good critical introductions [22] and notes. In practice, in the English-speaking world, this will mean the *New Jerusalem Bible* [London: 1985] which is as well adapted for such study as it is ill adapted to the needs of Christian worship.” (Nichols 22-23)

“. . . we have to sustain our sense that this very human product is also a di­vine gift. In a saying no less true for being oft repeated, the Bible is the Word of God in the words of men.” (Nichols 23)

* + 1. “Theological wonder may begin anywhere in any of these three circles, but the closer it is to their common center (the self-revealing God), the closer it will be to the heart of Christian truth. However, the three circles are not, of course, mutually exclusive. Their concen­tricity shows their interconnection.” (Nichols 23)

1. “**the urge to connect**” (Nichols 25)
   1. “. . . another vital aspect of the habit of theology . . . is the urge to connect.” (Nichols 25)
   2. One needs “this sense of the unity of God’s approach to us through a medley of discrete facts and truths . . .” (Nichols 25)
   3. “. . . if the theological habit is in good working order, it will not wish to deal with any one of these five types of question on its own, despite the fact that each is rich enough to occupy the ener­gies of a lifetime.” (Nichols 25)
   4. Theology “must always keep in mind the meaning and truth of Christianity as a whole.” (Nichols 25)
   5. “In the Christian religion there are a great number of beliefs and practices. There are special texts, special ritual actions, special institutions, special ethical qualities, all of which are said to be distinctively Christian things. Also, within any one set of these things there is a sometimes bewildering diversity. The Bible, for instance, is not just one book, but a whole library of books of different kinds from different periods. The theologian wants to know how all of these differ­ent books are connected into a single, unitary whole.” (Nichols 25)
2. **sanctity**
   1. “. . . the theologian must always be concerned to develop his or her own personal relationship with . . . the God of Jesus Christ.” (Nichols 25)
   2. “. . . to see the theological habit at work, we should look to its highest prac­titioners, the Doctors of the Church.” (Nichols 25)
   3. “Ideally, the theologian should be a saint; at any rate, all theology should be what the Swiss theologian [25] Hans Urs von Balthasar called *die betende theologie* or *la théologie à genoux*: “theology on one’s knees.”” (Von Balthasar, Hans Urs. “Theology and Sanctity.” *Word and Redemption*. Essays in Theology 2. Trans. A.V. Littledale with Alexander Dru. New York: Herder and Herder; Montreal: Palm, 1965. 49-86.) (Nichols 25-26)
   4. “The liturgy is a necessary environment for the theologian. If he (or she) is cut off from these life-giving texts, his (or her) mind will soon cease to be the mind of the Church. It may remain, formally speaking, [186] an orthodox mind, but it will not be a mind possessing that entire complex of attitudes which together reflect the Church’s basic response to God: love, humility, gratitude for the redemption, and the rest.” (Nichols 186-87)
   5. “Although the personal relationship of the theologian with God . . . involves the entire Chris­tian life, nevertheless prayer is its conscious heart. . . . It is a necessary [condition] for becoming a theologian . . . that one has some kind of prayerful quality to one’s life and thought. . . . continued exposure to God and a God-centered vision of reality brings a greater quality of intuitive ability when it comes to theological judgment. In other words, if two people who differ on some aspect of theology share a comparable theological culture, but one prays and the other has stopped praying, it is the one who still prays that we should be well advised to follow.” (Leclerq, Jean. *Theology and Prayer*. N.c.: N.p., n.d. Father Cyril Gaul Memorial Lecture 24 Sept. 1961. Trans. St. Meinrad, IN: 1963.) (Nichols 26)

## Theological Places

### Theological Places

1. **introduction**
   1. 1563: at Salamanca in Spain, a work by Melchior Cano, OP (1509-60), is published: *De locis theologicis* (*Theological Places*, i.e., theological resources). (Fenton 82)
      1. “It was Cano’s idea to establish scientifically the foundations of theological science, and therefore the *De Locis* is a treatise on theological method. . . . the author enumerates ten loci, or sources of theology, each the subject of a book. . . . The twelfth and last book treats of the use and application of these loci, or sources, in scholastic debate or theological polemics.” (Volz)
      2. “In the estimation of some critics this work marking a new epoch in the history of theology has made its author worthy of a place next to St. Thomas Aquinas.” (Volz)
      3. *De locis theologicis* was “the first great scientific treatise on this particular portion of sacred doctrine . . .” (Fenton 82)
      4. It “is still classical in this portion of sacred theology . . .” (Fenton 82)
   2. Cano begins by “elucidating the distinction between arguments based on authority and arguments from reason . . .” (Volz) He points out (book 1 ch. 2) “that sacred theology, unlike any other science naturally obtainable by man, makes its supreme appeal to authority rather than to the evidence of the matter with which it is concerned.” (Fenton 83)
   3. Cano lists ten resources for theology. They are “The authority of” (Fenton 82)
      1. scripture
      2. unwritten traditions
      3. the Catholic Church [82]
      4. councils, especially ecumenical
      5. the Roman Church
      6. Church Fathers
      7. scholastic theologians and canon lawyers
      8. reason (“the value of natural reason as manifested in science,” Volz)
      9. philosophers and civil lawyers
      10. history (Fenton 82-83)
2. **classification**
   1. “. . . the first seven among the *loci theologici* enumerated by Melchior Cano are *proper* to this science. They do not pertain to the equipment of any other discipline available to mankind.” (Fenton 84)
      1. “The divine message . . . is contained in Scripture and in tradition as in its proper sources. There is not, nor will there ever be, any portion of that public revelation . . . that is not to be found in that collection of truth contained in Scripture and in tradition.” (Fenton 83)
      2. “This divine message is taught and defended infallibly by the Catholic Church, both through its ordinary magisterium and in its solemn definitions and declarations. The organs of this solemn magisterium are the Holy Father, speaking *ex cathedra* and the various ecumenical councils of the Church.” (Fenton 83)
      3. “The Fathers of the Church, and the scholastic theologians who have been entrusted with the expression of her [the Church’s] teaching are [83] authentic witnesses and proponents of Catholic teaching, even though they are not individually endowed with infallibility.” (Fenton 83-84)
   2. “The last three are *common* to theology and to other sciences as well. These are subsidiary instruments which, however, can and must be utilized in order to attain the purpose which is essential to sacred theology.” (Fenton 84)

### Church Fathers

Custom accepts 39 Latin Fathers and 49 Greek Fathers.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Latin Fathers | Greek Fathers |
| 1. St Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons (130-200) 2. Minucius Felix, apologist (second or third century) 3. Tertullian, apologist, founder of Latin theology (160-223) 4. St Cornelius, Pope (d. 253) 5. St Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (d. 258) 6. Novatian, the Schismatic (200-62) 7. St Dionysius, Pope (d. 268) 8. St Pamphilus, priest (240-309) 9. Lactantius Firmianus, apologist (240-320) 10. Arnobius, apologist (d 327) 11. Marius Victorinus, Roman rhetorician (fourth century) 12. St Pacian, Bishop of Barcelona (fourth century) 13. St Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers (315-68) 14. St Damasus I, Pope (d. 384) 15. St Opatus, Bishop of Mileve (late fourth century) 16. St Gregory of Elvira (died after 392) 17. St Phoebadius, Bishop of Agen (d. 395) 18. St Ambrose, Bishop of Milan (340-97) 19. St Siricius, Pope (334-99) 20. Marius Mercator, Latin polemicist (early fifth century) 21. Rufinus, Latin translator of Greek theology (345-410) 22. St Innocent I, Pope (d. 417) 23. St Jerome, priest, exegete (343-420) 24. St Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (354-430) 25. St Paulinus, Bishop of Nola (353-431) 26. St Celestine I, Pope (d. 432) 27. St John Cassian, abbot, ascetical writer (360-435) 28. St Eucherius, Bishop of Lyons (d. 449) 29. St Peter Chrysologus, Archbishop of Ravenna (400-50) 30. St Vincent of Lérins, priest and monk (d. 450) 31. St Leo the Great, Pope (390-461) 32. St Prosper of Aquitaine, theologian (390-463) 33. Salvian, priest (400-80) 34. St Ennodius, Bishop of Pavia (473-521) 35. St Fulgentius, Bishop of Ruspe (468-533) 36. St Caesarius, Archbishop of Arles (470-542) 37. St Benedict, abbot (480-546) 38. St Gregory (I) the Great, Pope (540-604) 39. St Isidore, Archbishop of Seville (560-636) | 1. St Clement I of Rome, Pope (30-101) 2. St Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch (35-107) 3. Hermas, author of *The Shepherd* (second century) 4. St Justin Martyr, apologist (100-65) 5. Athenagoras, apologist (second century) 6. St Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (69-155) 7. Tatian the Assyrian, apologist and theologian (120-80) 8. St Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch (late second century) 9. St Melito, Bishop of Sardis (d. 190) 10. St Clement of Alexandria, theologian (150-215) 11. St Hippolytus, martyr (170-236) 12. Origen, head of the Catechetical School, Alexandria (184-254) 13. St Dionysius the Great, Archbishop of Alexandria (190-264) 14. St Firmillian, Bishop of Caesarea (d. 268) 15. St Gregory Thaumaturgus, Bishop of Neocaesarea (213-70) 16. St Archelaus, Bishop of Cascar (d. 282) 17. St Methodius, Bishop of Olympus (d. 311) 18. Aphraates, Syriac monk (early fourth century) 19. Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea (260-340) 20. St Julius I, Pope (d. 352) 21. St Eustathius, Bishop of Antioch (fourth century) 22. St Serapion, Bishop of Thmuis (died after 362) 23. St Caesarius of Nazianzus (330-69) 24. St Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria (c. 297-373) 25. St Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea (329-79) 26. St Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem (315-86) 27. St Macarius the Great, monk (300-90) 28. St Gregory of Nazianzus, Bishop of Sasima 329-90) 29. Diodore, Bishop of Tarsus (d. 392) 30. St Gregory of Nyssa (330-95) 31. Didymus the Blind, theologian (313-98) 32. St Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis (315-403) 33. St John Chrysostom, Patriarch of Constantinople (347-407) 34. Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia (350-428) 35. St Nilus the Elder, priest and monk (d. 430) 36. St Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria (376-444) 37. St Proclus, Patriarch of Constantinople (d. 446) 38. St Isidore of Pelusium, abbot (360-c. 450) 39. Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrrhus (393-458) 40. Gennadius I, Patriarch of Constantinople (d. 471) 41. Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite (late fifth century) 42. St Leontius of Byzantium, theologian (sixth century) 43. St Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem (560-638) 44. St John Climacus, monk (579-649) 45. St Maximus, abbot and confessor (580-662) 46. St Anastasius Sinaita, apologist, monk (d. 700) 47. St Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople (634-733) 48. St Andrew of Crete, Archbishop of Gortyna (660-740) 49. St John Damascene, defender of sacred images (675-749) |

### Doctors of the Church

To be a Doctor of the Church, one must have (1) holiness that is truly outstanding, even among saints; (2) depth of doctrinal insight; and (3) an extensive body of orthodox writings.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Doctor* | *date of death* | *date of recognition* |
| *ancient doctors* |  |  |
| 1. Hilary of Poitiers | c 368 | 1851 |
| 1. Athanasius | 373 | pre-750 |
| 1. Ephræm of Syria | 378 | 1920 |
| 1. Basil the Great | 379 | pre-750 |
| 1. Cyril of Jerusalem | 386 | 1882 |
| 1. Gregory Nazianzen | 389 | pre-750 |
| 1. Ambrose | 397 | pre-750 |
| 1. John Chrysostom | 407 | pre-750 |
| 1. Jerome | 420 | pre-750 |
| 1. Augustine | 430 | pre-750 |
| 1. Cyril of Alexandria | 444 | 1882 |
| 1. Peter Chrysologus | 450 | 1729 |
| 1. Pope Leo the Great | 461 | 1754 |
| 1. Pope Gregory the Great | 604 | pre-750 |
| 1. Isidore of Seville | 636 | 1722 |
| 1. Venerable Bede | 735 | 1899 |
| 1. John of Damascus | 780 | 1890 |
| *medieval doctors* |  |  |
| 1. Peter Damian | 1072 | 1828 |
| 1. Anselm of Canterbury | 1109 | 1720 |
| 1. Bernard of Clairvaux | 1153 | 1830 |
| 1. Anthony of Padua | 1231 | 1946 |
| 1. Thomas Aquinas | 1274 | 1568 |
| 1. Bonaventure | 1274 | 1588 |
| 1. Albert the Great | 1280 | 1931 |
| 1. Catherine of Siena | 1380 | 1970 |
| *modern doctors* |  |  |
| 1. Teresa of Avila | 1582 | 1970 |
| 1. Peter Canisius | 1597 | 1925 |
| 1. John of the Cross | 1605 | 1926 |
| 1. Francis de Sales | 1612 | 1877 |
| 1. Lawrence of Brindisi | 1619 | 1959 |
| 1. Robert Bellarmine | 1621 | 1931 |
| 1. Alphonsus Liguori | 1787 | 1871 |
| 1. Thérèse of Lisieux | 1897 | 1997 |

### The Liturgy

1. **introduction**
   1. “. . . a widely accepted maxim [is] *lex orandi est lex credendi*, “the law of praying is the law of believing.”” (Nichols 181)
      1. “The phrase derives from the fifth-century *Indiculus de gratia Dei* . . .” (Nichols 181 n. 1)
         1. The *Indiculus* refers to the “apostolic injunction” in 1 Tim 2:1-4. (Nichols 181 n. 1) 1 Tim 2:1-4, “I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, 2for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. 3This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”
         2. The *Indiculus* says the injunction is “satisfied by the bishop when he prays in the liturgy that grace may be given to all (*lex orandi*) . . .” (Nichols 181 n. 1)
         3. That prayer, the *Indiculus* says, entails “our believing (against Pelagians and semi-Pelagians) that grace is necessary for all (*lex credendi*).” (Vagaggini, C. *Theo*­*logical Dimensions of the Liturgy*. Trans. Collegeville: 1976. 529-42.) (Nichols 181 n. 1)
      2. “In other words, the best guide to what the Church believes is what the Church says when she prays—thinking here of the Church’s official public prayer, not of the unstruc­tured private prayer of individuals or small groups.” (Nichols 181)
   2. “. . . why give such a high theological status to the liturgy as a mediation of Tradition, a source for theological insight? [181] . . . [Because] pray­ers and hymns are full of doctrine, much richer doctrine often than the formal teaching of the Churches that produced them. The liturgy is the poetry of the Church, and just as poetry is language at its most intensely expressive, so in the liturgy we hear the Church’s voice at its most eloquent.” (Nichols 181, 184)
   3. “Although the primary aim of the liturgy is not to instruct us but to adore God, nevertheless, by adoring God in a certain way, using certain images and concepts, it cannot help but be theological.” (Nichols 185)
   4. We can “think of the Christian liturgy as a sign system pointing to the truth of Tradition [187] . . . [It includes] the verbal sign system of the texts . . . and the dramatic sign system of its gestures.” (Nichols 188)
   5. “The liturgy expresses what we might call the “inside” of the act of faith: the interiority of the relationship with God which God’s own saving plan, once entered into, set up. As the human expression of the covenant, the liturgy articulates the inside of the life of the household of faith, just as the conversation of husband and wife brings out what is implicit in their marital and family living. The theological student must learn how to interpret this language so as to find the voice of the Church, the Bride, calling on Christ, the Bridegroom.” (Nichols 187)
2. “***leitourgia***,” “***liturgia***”
   1. Martimort, A.G. “Preliminary Concepts.” *The Church at Prayer*: *Introduc*­*tion to the Liturgy*. Ed. A.G. Martimort. Trans. New York: 1968. 1-2.
   2. Raitz von Frentz, E. “Der Weg des Wortes ‘Liturgie’ in der Geschichte.” *Epheme*­*rides liturgicae* 55 (1941): 74-80.
   3. Greek
      1. “. . . one’s liturgy was one’s duty as a citizen to the *polis*, the common social good.” (Nichols 182)
   4. New Testament and patristic period
      1. “. . . “liturgy” meant the service of God in the broadest sense, including, for example, practical [181] service of one’s neighbor. [Hence] the term borrowed much of its connotation from the secular usage . . .” (Nichols 181-82)
   5. Later “the word became attached . . . to the highest form of [Christian] duty, . . . the Eucharist.” (Nichols 182)
   6. So *he leitourgia* “became the common name for the Eucharist as celebrated of obligation, Sunday by Sunday and feast by feast.” (Nichols 182)
   7. 1500s: “the word entered Latin-Chris­tian usage under the influence of Byzantine texts . . .” (Nichols 182)
   8. by 1700s: the word “came to stand . . . for all the rites which make up the common prayer of the Church.” (Nichols 182)
3. **Christ**’**s intercession**
   1. Koenker, E. *The Liturgical Renaissance* in *the Roman Catholic Church*. Chicago: 1954. (“The history of the liturgical movement,” Nichols 182 n. 4.)
   2. Michels, T. “Die Liturgie im Lichte der katholischen Gemeinchaftsidee.” *Jahrbuch für die Liturgiewissenschaft* 1 (1921): 109-16. (The “opening number of Odo Casel’s journal,” Nichols 182 n. 4)
   3. Miller, J.H. “The Nature and Definition of the Liturgy.” *Theological Studies* 18 (1957): 325-26.
   4. “. . . Christ can be called the eternal or permanent [182] high priest, through whose mediation we become immediately present to God . . .” (Nichols 182-83)
      1. Heb 7:25, “he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.”
   5. “In *Media*­*tor Dei*, this intercessory activity of Christ before the Father is said to be “continued” in the liturgy of the Church.” (Nichols 183)
      1. 1947: Pius XII’s encyclical *Mediator Dei* gave the “liturgi­cal movement . . . its official charter . . .” (Nichols 182)
      2. “. . . the Pope summed up the conclusions of inter-war theologians of the liturgy by defining it as “the Church’s continuation of the priestly office of Jesus Christ.”” (*Mediator Dei* 3) (Nichols 182)
   6. “In the liturgy, the Church as Christ’s body unites herself to Christ her head and makes the mind of Christ her own. She glorifies the Father through Christ and prays for the salvation of the world, once again through Christ: *per Christum Dominum nostrum*, as the Roman Rite ends so many of its prayers. The liturgy is, therefore, the expression of the Church’s deepest point of entry into the mystery of humanity’s salvation.” (I.H. Dalmais, “The Liturgy and the Mystery of Salvation.” *The Church at Prayer*. Ed. A.G. Martimort. Trans. New York: 1968. 190-211.) (Nichols 183)
   7. Vatican II
      1. “. . . Pius XII’s definition of the liturgy was taken up and extended . . .” (Nichols 183)
      2. Vatican II (constitution *On the Sacred Liturgy* [*Sacrosanctum Concilium*] 7): “Every liturgical ac­tion, inasmuch as it is a work of Christ the Priest and of his Body the Church, is pre-eminently a sacred action, the efficacy of which no other act of the Church can equal on the same basis and to the same degree.” (Qtd. in Nichols 183)
      3. “It is because the liturgy is the expression of the deepest union there can be between the Church and the Church’s Lord that the various rites used in the history of the Church have so high a theological authority. . . . in this assemblage of texts and gestures, we see the Church’s self-understanding (and thus Tradition) unfold­ing before our eyes. The liturgy permits us to overhear the Church interpreting her own faith in the best way she knows how.” (Nichols 183)
   8. “. . . pray­ers and hymns are full of doctrine, much richer doctrine often than the formal teaching of the Churches that produced them. The liturgy is the poetry of the Church, and just as poetry is language at its most intensely expressive, so in the liturgy we hear the Church’s voice at its most eloquent.” (Nichols 184)
4. **historical forms of liturgy**
   1. Baumstark, A. *Comparative Liturgy*. Trans. London: 1958.
   2. Dalmais, I.H. *The Eastern Liturgies*. Trans. New York: 1960.
   3. “When we are think­ing of the liturgy as theological *locus*, as an authority in the making of theology, we have to look back in time and out across space . . .” (Nichols 183)
   4. “. . . the principal rites or liturgical families . . . are usually reckoned to be nineteen. Usually, these rites grew up by the participation of more and more local Churches from a given cultural milieu in a liturgy emanating from a see which had won general recognition because of the quality of its witness to the faith: a patriarchal see like Antioch or Alexandria or, at any rate, a primatial see like Seleucia in the eastern half of the Syriac-speaking world.” (Nichols 187)
      1. “. . . there are a number of Oriental liturgies at least as venerable as the Roman liturgy, and enacted in local Churches in full communion with the Holy See.” (Nichols 184)
      2. “. . . other Western rites [183] still celebrated here and there” have only “minor variations . . . [and] should perhaps be called “uses” rather than full rites . . .” (Nichols 183-84)
      3. “. . . the Roman Rite itself has changed notably in the course of history. It has sometimes been reformed back to more of its old self, in the mid- sixteenth century, for instance, and again in the mid-twentieth, but we should beware of assuming that the primitive is always the best.” (Crichton, J.D. “An Historical Sketch of the Roman Liturgy.” *True Worship*. Ed. L. Sheppard. Baltimore: 1963. 45-82.) (Nichols 184)
   5. “The liturgical prayers of every age have treasures to offer. Theological students need to have some acquaintance, therefore, with the history . . .” (Nichols 184)
5. **examples**
   1. “We can take some examples of how theologians might be instructed by the liturgy.” (Nichols 184)
   2. “an example from the Malankar liturgy of Southern India” (Nichols 184)
      1. Brown, L.W. *The Indian Christians of St*. *Thomas*. Cambridge: 1956. 219.
      2. “The small Eastern Catholic Church which uses this liturgy is traditionally ascribed, along with other South In­dian Churches, to the missionary work of the Apostle Thomas. After a confused history, the Malankar Church, along with other “Indian Christians of St. Thomas” not in union with Rome, adopted a version of the Antiochene, or West Syrian liturgy.” (Nichols 184)
      3. “Here is the dialogue that precedes and follows the reading of the gospel at the Sunday Eucharist, the *kurbana*.” (Nichols 184)
         1. “First, the deacon gives this command to the people: “Let us stand in silence, in awe and modesty, and listen to the proclama­tion of the living words of God from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah.” At this point the priest turns and blesses the congrega­tion with the words, “Peace be with you all.” They reply, “May the Lord make us also worthy, along with you.” Then the priest announces the gospel of the day with these words: “The life-giving preaching of the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah, from the evangelist N. who preaches life and salvation to the world.” To this the congre­gation responds: “Blessed is he who has come and is to come in the name of the Lord. Praise be to him who sent him for our salvation, [184] and may his blessings be on us all.”” (Nichols 184-85)
         2. “After the gospel has been read, all sing a brief hymn, itself partly a paraphrase of a parable [expectant and unexpectant slave, Matt 24:45-51, Luke 42-46; unexpectant slaves, Matt 25:14 [talents intro.], Mark 13:34-37; expectant slaves, Luke 12:35-38]:

Blessed are those good servants

who, when their Lord comes, are found awake and working in his vineyard.

He will gird himself and serve them

who worked with them from morning until evening.

The Father will place them round the table, the Son will minister to them,

and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, will make crowns, alleluia,

and put them on the head of each.” (Nichols 185)

* + 1. “Into this piece of liturgical conversation, there is packed a great deal of doctrinal stimulus for theology. It instructs us on the relationship between Christ, the gospel, and the destiny of the Church’s own mem­bers. The gospel text when read in the assembly of the baptized brings people the life and salvation which flow from God in Christ. This does not happen automatically, however, but requires from the disciple at­tentiveness and fidelity. But since the same Christ who once came as Jesus will come again, the faithful can rest assured that Father, Son, and Spirit, who began their salvation, will also assist it and bring it to completion.” (Nichols 185)
    2. “Because this particular Indian tradition derives the bulk of its litur­gical literature from Syria where Christian hymn writing had its earli­est flowering, it is not surprising to find such a rich linguistic texture, at once poetic and theological.” (Nichols 185)
  1. an example from the Roman liturgy
     1. “. . . the Roman liturgy [is] a much more sober affair, [but] we also find it to be a teaching vehicle for theological understanding.” (Nichols 185)
     2. “The climax of the liturgy of Good Friday is the veneration of the cross, whereby we advance toward the unveiled crucifix, genuflect, and then kiss the wood which symbolizes the instrument of our redemption. “See the wood of the cross, upon which hung the world’s salvation: come, let us adore!”” (Nichols 185)
     3. “Here we have a statement that the salvation of the world is essentially related to the cross of Jesus, and that this cross is not simply venerable [185] but adorable. It is the cross not just of a man but of God, of a man who was personally God.” (Nichols 185-86)
     4. Dame Aemiliana Löhr (pupil of Dom Odo Casel; *The Great Week*. Trans. London: 1958. 141): “If one is only an onlooker at this reverence, one can well let it go by, without being inwardly touched by it: a fine cere­mony which binds the individual to nothing. But one who goes up and takes part must pledge himself to the crucified God for life and death, must offer his longing to have part in Jesus’ suffering, to have a share in the Passover, both here in ritual and in all the difficulty of daily life. If my act is to be no kiss of Judas it must say: ‘Here is a pledge to you, Christ my Lord. Draw me into your holy Passover.’” (Qtd. in Nichols 186)
     5. “Here the liturgy has . . . offered an affirmation about the life of discipleship as a participation in the redemptive suffering by which Jesus took what was negative in this world and transformed it into something positive through the power of the divine love.” (Nichols 186)
  2. the Exsultet
     1. Benoit-Castelli, G. “Le *Praeconium paschal*.” *Ephemerides liturgicae* 67 (1953): 309-34.
     2. text: “Exsult, all creation around God’s throne. Jesus Christ, our King, is risen! . . . Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendor, radiant in the brightness of your king! Christ has conquered! Glory fills you! Darkness vanishes for ever.” (Qtd. in Nichols 186)
     3. The Exsultet is “the solemn hymn in praise of the risen Christ sung by the deacon in the Roman Rite on the Vigil of Easter . . .” (Nichols 186)
     4. It “is a major source for understanding the mystery of the resurrection as grasped by the Church’s faith experience. . . . What the Exsultet teaches the theologian is the universal, cosmic sig­nificance of the resurrection of Christ. This is not simply the resuscita­tion of a corpse: it is the point where the Creator God begins the re-creation of his world by transforming the corpse of Jesus into the nucleus of a new creation. Here the liturgy shows us theologically the universality of the call to salvation, the mission of the Church. At the same time, the resurrection cannot be irrelevant to biological nature either, for that nature will also receive a transfigured mode of existing in the age to come.” (Nichols 186)

1. **weighing liturgical evidence**
   1. “Liturgical texts have varying degrees of evidential value for theo­logy.” (Nichols 187)
   2. “We cannot simply seize on what may be an isolated text from a rather ob­scure liturgical use and build some vast theological edifice on top of it.” (Nichols 187)
   3. “The liturgies proper to individual monasteries, dioceses, or reli­gious orders have the least evidential value, just because they are so highly particularized. Reflecting some local tradition or a particular spiritual family within the Church, they are not as important as the principal rites or liturgical families . . .”
   4. Where “different liturgies from various places and times [converge] in their testimony to some aspect of faith [theologians] can draw from the liturgy with most confidence.” (Dalmais, I.H. “La liturgie comme lieu théologique.” *La Maison-Dieu* 78 (1964): 97-106.) (Nichols 187)
   5. “. . . the greater the agree­ment of these liturgies on a particular point, the stronger their eviden­tial value for theology.” (Nichols 187)
2. **conclusion**
   1. “To summarize: the liturgy is the continuation of the atoning work of Jesus Christ and, as such, is the Church’s primary expression from within of the covenant relationship binding her life to God’s. It is, there­fore, rich in implicit theology.” (Nichols 187)

## Dogmatic Theology

### “Dogma”

1. **classical authors**
   1. Greek δόγμα (*dogma*, from *dokein*, “to seem”) in classical authors meant: (Coghlan)
      1. opinion, that which seems true
      2. a philosophical school’s tenets (especially its distinctive ones) (e.g., Cicero, *Ac*. 2.9)
      3. a public decree or ordinance (e.g., *dogma poieisthai*, “to make dogma”)
   2. “Tenets of the various philosophical schools of antiquity were called their *dogmata*.” (Sullivan *Creative* 29)
2. **scripture**
   1. In the New Testament and “other ancient literature, [*dogma* has] a variety of meanings, such as “decree, decision, ordinance, opinion, doctrine.”” (Sullivan *Creative* 29)
   2. an ordinance of the Mosaic Law (Coghlan)
      1. Eph 2:15, “He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances [τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν] . . .”
   3. a decree of civil authority (Coghlan)
      1. Est 3:3, “the king’s servants . . . said to Mordecai, “Why do you disobey the king’s command?””
      2. Luke 2:1, “In those days a decree [an imperial *dogma*] went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.”
      3. Acts 17:7, Thessalonian Jews say to city authorities, “They [some Thessalonian Christians] are all acting contrary to the decrees [τῶν δογμάτων] of the emperor, saying that there is another king named Jesus.”
   4. a decree of ecclesiastical authority (Coghlan)
      1. Acts 16:4, “As they went from town to town, they delivered to them for observance the decisions [*dogmata*] that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem.”
3. **Church Fathers** (c. 100-750)
   1. Some early Church Fathers used *dogmata* for Jesus’ or the apostles’ doctrines and moral precepts. (Coghlan)
   2. But to refer to what are now called dogmas, Church Fathers usually used “rule of faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 29)
   3. Church Fathers sometimes distinguish among “divine, apostolical, and ecclesiastical dogmas” (the latter “having been delivered to the faithful by the Church”). (Coghlan)
   4. Church Fathers used “dogma” “of both orthodox and heretical beliefs.” (Sullivan *Creative* 29)
4. **middle ages**
   1. To refer to dogmas, medieval theologians usually used “articles of faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 29)
   2. But medieval theologians also used “dogma,” for “both orthodox and heretical beliefs.” (Sullivan *Creative* 29)
5. **modern usage**
   1. Trent
      1. To refer to dogmas, Trent usually used “Catholic truths.” (Sullivan *Creative* 29)
   2. Even into the early modern period, theologians still used “dogma” for “both orthodox and heretical beliefs.” (Melchior Cano [c. 1509-60], for example, referred to “the dogmas of the Lutherans.”) (Sullivan *Creative* 29)
   3. Unlike “rule of faith,” “articles of faith,” or “Catholic truths,” the modern word “dogma” “puts more emphasis on the definitive proposal of the doctrine by the teaching authority of the church than the earlier terms did.” (Sullivan *Creative* 29)
   4. A dogma is a truth “revealed by God and . . . definitively taught as such by the church’s magisterium.” (Sullivan *Creative* 28)
   5. “. . . a dogma is an ecclesial proposition which expresses some aspect of divine revelation.” (Sullivan *Creative* 40)
   6. Philipp Neri Chrismann
      1. Chrismann (*Regula fidei catholicae*, 1792): a dogma is “a divinely revealed truth which is proposed by the public judgment of the church as to be believed with divine faith, so that the contrary doctrine is condemned by the church as heretical.” (Qtd. in Kasper, Walter. *Dogma unter dem Wort Gottes*. Mainz: Matthias Grünewald, 1965. 36.) (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 29)
      2. Chrismann was “One of the first to give it this precise sense . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 29)
   7. Pius IX
      1. Pius IX in the letter *Tuas libenter* (1863) gave “An example of the modern Catholic use of the term “dogma”, . . . where the term *praefata Ecclesiae dogmata* (the aforesaid dogmas of the church) refers to both defined and undefined dogmas of faith.” (DS 2880) (Sullivan *Creative* 28-29)
         1. “. . . in *Tuas libenter* Pius IX used the term *dogmata* referring both to defined dogmas and those which had been proposed for belief by the ordinary universal magisterium.” (Sullivan *Creative* 101)
         2. “In the paragraph following the one we have quoted above, he used the term *praefata Ecclesiae dogmata* where it clearly includes both defined and undefined dogmas (DS 2880).” (Sullivan *Creative* 195 n. 29)
   8. Vatican I
      1. Vatican I (DS 3011, ND 121): “All those things are to be believed with divine and Catholic faith which are contained in the word of God, written or handed down, and which by the church, either in solemn judgment or through her ordinary and universal teaching office, are proposed for belief as having been divinely revealed.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 28)
   9. “. . . the term has had this precise sense in Catholic usage only for about two hundred years.” (Sullivan *Creative* 29)
      1. “What is true of the term “dogma” is also true of several related terms, such as “faith,” “morals,” and “heresy”: these terms have an accepted, technical meaning in modern Catholic theology, but they have not always had this same meaning.” (Sullivan *Creative* 28)
      2. “It is a source of grave error to presume, when one finds these terms in earlier documents such as the decrees of the Council of Trent, that they have there the same meaning as they have today.” (Sullivan *Creative* 28)
      3. Vice versa, “one must be careful not to rely on the use of the word “dogma” in writings prior to about 1800 as a sign that what is meant is what we now mean by “dogma.”” (Sullivan *Creative* 29)

### Dogma

1. **definition of dogma** (“according to a long-standing usage”) (Coghlan)
   1. doctrine and dogma contrasted
      1. “Doctrine, belief system that forms a part of every religion. Although the word *doctrine* is sometimes used for such a system as a whole, it is more commonly used for particular items of belief.” (“Doctrine”)
      2. “Dogma, authoritative and precisely formulated statement of a religious doctrine that is advanced, not for discussion, but for belief. In its strict sense, the term seems to be limited to Christianity. . . . Dogmas have usually been formulated at times of doctrinal controversy, to clarify the orthodox teaching in the face of heretical aberrations.” (“Dogma”)
      3. So within the superset of all doctrines is the set of revealed doctrines; and within the set of revealed doctrines is the subset of dogmas (defined revealed doctrines).
   2. three definitions
      1. “By dogma in the strict sense is understood a truth immediately (formally) revealed by God which has been proposed by the Teaching Authority of the Church to be believed as such.” (Ott 4)
      2. A dogma is “a truth appertaining to faith or morals, revealed by God, transmitted from the apostles in the scriptures or by tradition, and proposed by the Church for the acceptance of the faithful.” (Coghlan)
      3. “A dogma of faith is a proposition which has been definitively declared to be part of the normative faith of the Catholic Church, to be believed on the authority of God who has revealed it. Only what is in itself revealed can be proposed to be believed with such faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 131)
      4. So a dogma is “a revealed truth defined by the Church . . .” (Coghlan, emphasis deleted)
   3. Vatican I (1869-70)
      1. Vatican I (*Dei Filius* [24 Apr. 1870] ch. 3, D 1792): “All those things are to be believed by divine and Catholic faith which are contained in the Word of God written or handed down and which are proposed for our belief by the Church either in a solemn definition or in its ordinary and universal authoritative teaching.” (Qtd. in Ott 4)
      2. “divine and Catholic faith”
         1. A dogma is a truth believed by both divine faith and Catholic faith. (Ott 5)
         2. Divine faith believes a truth because it is divinely revealed. (Ott 5)
         3. Faith is “divine” “because it is a response to God who has revealed” the truth. (Sullivan *Creative* 28)
         4. Catholic faith believes a truth because it is infallibly defined. (Ott 5)
         5. Faith is “Catholic” “because revealed truths which have been definitively proposed for our belief by the supreme teaching authority are by that fact part of the normative faith of the Catholic Church.” (Sullivan *Creative* 28)
         6. So a dogma “is part of the normative faith of the Catholic Church.” (Sullivan *Creative* 29)
         7. truths believed to be revealed but not defined
            1. “If, despite the fact that a Truth is not proposed for belief by the Church, one becomes convinced that it is immediately revealed by God, then, according to the opinion of many theologians (Suarez, De Lugo), one is bound to believe it with Divine Faith (fide divina).” (Ott 5)
            2. “However, most theologians teach that such a Truth prior to its official proposition of the Church is to be accepted with theological assent (assensus theologicus) only, as the individual may be mistaken.” (Ott 5)
            3. Coghlan seems to belong to the former group: “We are bound to believe revealed truths irrespective of their definition by the Church, if we are satisfied that God has revealed them. When they are proposed or defined by the Church, and thus become dogmas, we are bound to believe them in order to maintain the bond of faith.” (Coghlan)
      3. “contained in the Word of God”
         1. Thomists say that a dogma must be contained in scripture or tradition “either explicitly or implicitly.” (Ott 4)
         2. Scotists say “a Truth can be proposed as a dogma, if it . . . may be derived from a Truth of Revelation by the aid of a truth known by Natural Reason.” [4] A problem with this view is that such a dogma “is supported not solely by the authority of the Revealing God, but also by the natural knowledge of reason, while the Church demands for the dogma a Divine Faith . . .” (Ott 4-5)
      4. “proposed”
         1. “Revealed truths become formally dogmas when defined or proposed by the Church.” (Coghlan)
         2. Some theologians restrict “defined” to doctrines solemnly defined by the extraordinary magisterium (the pope or a general council).
         3. But “a revealed truth becomes a dogma even when proposed by the Church through her ordinary magisterium . . .” (Coghlan should say “universal ordinary magisterium.”) (Coghlan)
         4. “. . . private revelations do not constitute dogmas . . .” (Coghlan)
         5. “. . . dogmatic definitions are but the authentic interpretation and declaration of the meaning of divine revelation . . .” (Coghlan)
         6. Promulgation of a dogma by magisterium implies the obligation of the faithful to believe it. (Ott 4)
         7. Promulgation can be in an extraordinary manner (a solemn declaration by a pope or a general council) or through the ordinary teaching power of the Church. “The latter may be found easily in the catechisms issued by the Bishops.” (Ott 4)
         8. “If a baptised person deliberately denies or doubts a dogma properly so-called, he is guilty of the sin of heresy [and] becomes subject to the punishment of excommunication . . .” (Ott 5)
         9. “Protestantism rejects the Teaching Authority of the Church, and consequently also the authoritative proposition of the content of Revelation by the Church. It claims that the Biblical Revelation attests itself.” (Ott 5)
         10. Liberal Protestantism and Catholic Modernism reject in addition “the objective Divine Revelation, by conceiving Revelation as a subjective religious experience . . . As against Modernism, the Catholic Church stresses that dogma [is] the expression of an *objective truth*, and its content is *immutable*.” (Ott 5)
   4. theological opinions (not dogmas, but included here for contrast)
      1. “Theological opinions are free views on aspects of doctrines concerning Faith and morals, which are neither clearly attested in Revelation nor decided by the Teaching Authority of the Church.” (Ott 9)
      2. “Their value depends upon the reasons adduced in their favour (association with the doctrine of Revelation, the attitude of the Church, etc.).” (Ott 9)
      3. “A point of doctrine ceases to be an object of free judgment when the Teaching Authority . . . is clearly in favour of one opinion.” (Ott 9)
2. **three classes of revealed truths**
   1. formal and explicit truths revealed by God
      1. “The revelation is formal and explicit, when made in clear express terms.” (Coghlan)
      2. These truths are certainly dogmas “when they are proposed or defined by the Church.” (Coghlan)
      3. “Such are the articles of the Apostles’ Creed.” (Coghlan)
   2. formal but implicit truths revealed by God
      1. “. . . the language [in scripture] is somewhat obscure, [so] the rules of interpretation must be carefully employed to determine the meaning of the revelation.” (Coghlan)
      2. These truths “are dogmas in the strict sense when proposed or defined by the Church.” (Coghlan)
      3. “Such, for example, are the doctrines of Transubstantiation, papal infallibility, the Immaculate Conception, some of the Church’s teaching about the Saviour, the sacraments, etc.” (Coghlan)
   3. “All doctrines defined by the Church as being contained in revelation are understood to be formally revealed, explicitly or implicitly.” (Coghlan)
      1. “It is a dogma of faith that the Church is infallible in defining these two classes of revealed truths . . .” (Coghlan)
      2. “. . . the deliberate denial of one of these dogmas certainly involves the sin of heresy.” (Coghlan)
   4. virtual truths revealed by God
      1. A teaching “is not formally guaranteed by the word of the speaker, but is inferred from something formally revealed.” (Coghlan)
      2. “There is a diversity of opinion about virtually revealed truths, which has its roots in a diversity of opinion about the material object of faith.” (Coghlan)
         1. Some theologians say that “virtually revealed truths belong to the material object of faith and become dogmas in the strict sense when defined or proposed by the Church . . .” (Coghlan)
         2. Others say that “they do not belong to the material object of faith prior to their definition, but become strict dogmas when defined . . .” (Coghlan)
         3. Still others say that “they do not belong to the material object of divine faith at all, nor become dogmas in the strict sense when defined, but may be called mediately-divine or ecclesiastical dogmas.” (Coghlan)
         4. If “virtually revealed conclusions do not belong to the material object of faith, [then] it has not been defined that the Church is infallible in defining these truths . . .” (Coghlan)
         5. But the Church’s infallibility “in relation to these truths is a doctrine of the Church theologically certain, which cannot lawfully be denied . . .” (Coghlan)
         6. “. . . though the denial of an ecclesiastical dogma would not be heresy in the strict sense, it could entail the sundering of the bond of faith and expulsion from the Church by the Church’s anathema or excommunication.” (Coghlan)
3. **dogmas and infallibility**
   1. dogmas and the primary object of magisterium
      1. “. . . only what is in the primary object of magisterium . . . can be defined as a ‘dogma of faith’.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 131)
      2. “. . . the object of solemn definition as dogma has to be a ‘doctrine of faith or morals’ which is in itself formally contained in the ‘deposit of revelation’.” (Vatican I, *Pastor aeternus* ch. 4) (Sullivan *Magisterium* 102)
   2. dogmas and the secondary object of magisterium
      1. “As I understand it, a non-revealed proposition even if it could be infallibly defined to be true, could never be defined as a ‘dogma of faith’, because only what is in itself divinely revealed can be an object of divine faith.” (Sullivan Magisterium 79)
4. **classification of dogma**
   1. “The divisions of dogma follow the lines of the divisions of faith. Dogmas can be (1) general or special; (2) material or formal; (3) pure or mixed; (4) symbolic or non-symbolic; (5) and they can differ according to their various degrees of necessity.” (Coghlan)
   2. by content
      1. general dogmas: “the fundamental truths of Christianity” (Ott 5)
      2. special dogmas: “the individual truths contained therein” (Ott 5)
      3. “General dogmas are a part of the revelation meant for mankind and transmitted from the Apostles . . .” (Coghlan)
      4. Special dogmas “are the truths revealed in private revelations. Special dogmas, therefore, are not, strictly speaking, dogmas at all; they are not revealed truths transmitted from the apostles; nor are they defined or proposed by the Church for the acceptance of the faithful generally.” (Coghlan)
   3. by promulgation or not
      1. formal dogmas: proposed by the magisterium as truths of revelation (Ott 6)
      2. material dogmas: truths of revelation not so proposed (not strictly dogmas) (Ott 6)
      3. Dogmas are formal (or “Catholic,” or “in relation to us”, *quoad nos*) “when they are considered both as revealed and defined.” (Coghlan)
      4. Dogmas are material (or “divine,” or “dogmas in themselves,” *in se*) “when abstraction is made from their definition by the Church, when they are considered only as revealed . . .” (Coghlan)
      5. “. . . material dogmas are not dogmas in the strict sense of the term.” (Coghlan)
   4. by relation with reason
      1. pure dogmas: known solely through revelation, e.g., the Trinity (Ott 6)
      2. mixed dogmas: known by natural reason also, e.g., God’s existence (Ott 6)
      3. Pure dogmas “can be known only from revelation, as the Trinity, Incarnation, etc.” (Coghlan)
      4. Mixed dogmas “can be known from revelation or from philosophical reasoning, as the existence and attributes of God.” (Coghlan)
      5. “Both classes are dogmas in the strict sense, when considered as revealed and defined.” (Coghlan)
   5. by relation to salvation
      1. necessary dogmas: these “must be explicitly believed by all in order to achieve eternal salvation” (Ott 6)
      2. nonnecessary dogmas: “implicit faith . . . suffices . . .” (Ott 6)
         1. Heb 11:6, “without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”
      3. Belief in some dogmas “is absolutely necessary as a means to salvation . . .” (Coghlan)
      4. “. . . faith in others is rendered necessary only by divine precept . . .” (Coghlan)
      5. “. . . some dogmas must be explicitly known and believed, while with regard to others implicit belief is sufficient.” (Coghlan)
   6. by inclusion in creeds or not
      1. symbolic dogmas: “Dogmas contained in the symbols or creeds of the Church are called symbolic . . .” (Coghlan)
      2. non-symbolic dogmas: dogmas not in the creeds. (Coghlan)
      3. “Hence all the articles of the Apostles’ Creed are dogmas [at least materially]—but not all dogmas are called technically articles of faith, though an ordinary dogma is sometimes spoken of as an article of faith.” (Coghlan)
5. **objective truth of dogmas**
   1. “As a dogma is a revealed truth, the intellectual character and objective reality of dogma depend on the intellectual character and objective truth of divine revelation. We will here apply to dogma the conclusions developed at greater length under the heading of revelation.” (Coghlan)
   2. deniers of dogmas’ objective truth
      1. “Rationalists deny the existence of divine supernatural revelation, and consequently of religious dogmas.” (Coghlan)
         1. refutation: “we are bound to render to God the homage of our assent to revealed truth once we are satisfied that He has spoken. Even atheists admit, hypothetically, that if there be an infinite Being distinct from the world, we should pay Him the homage of believing His divine word.” (Coghlan)
      2. “A certain school of mystics has taught that what Christ inaugurated in the world was “a new life”.” (Coghlan)
      3. Modernism
         1. “Some of them do not, apparently, deny all intellectual value to dogma (cf. Le Roy, *Dogme et Critique*). Dogma, like revelation, they say, is expressed in terms of action. Thus when the Son of God is said “to have come down from heaven”, according to all theologians He did not come down, as bodies descend or as angels are conceived to pass from place to place, but the hypostatic union is described in terms of action. So when we profess our faith in God the Father, we mean, according to M. Le Roy, that we have to act towards God as sons; but neither the fatherhood of God, nor the other dogmas of faith, such as the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Resurrection of Christ, etc. imply of necessity any objective intellectual conception of fatherhood, Trinity, Resurrection, etc., or convey any idea to the mind.” (Coghlan)
         2. “According to other writers, God has addressed no revelation to the human mind. Revelation, they say, began as a consciousness of right and wrong—and the evolution or development of revelation was but the progressive development of the religious sense until it reached its highest level, thus far, in the modern liberal and democratic State. Then, according to these writers, the dogmas of faith, considered as dogmas, have no meaning for the mind, we need not believe them mentally; we may reject them—it is enough if we employ them as guides for our actions. (See “Modernism.”)” (Coghlan)
         3. refutation
            1. “. . . the Church teaches that God has made a revelation to the human mind.” (Coghlan)
            2. “. . . some of the dogmas of faith may be expressed under the symbolism of action, but they also convey to the human mind a meaning distinct from action. The fatherhood of God may imply that we should act towards Him as children towards a father—but it also conveys to the mind definite analogical conceptions of our God and Creator.” (Coghlan)
            3. “And there are truths, such as the Trinity, the Resurrection of Christ, His Ascension, etc. which are absolute objective facts, and which could be believed even if their practical consequences were ignored or were deemed of little value.” (Coghlan)
            4. “The dogmas of the Church, such as the existence of God, the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Resurrection of Christ, the sacraments, a future judgment, etc. have an objective reality and are facts as really and truly as it a fact that Augustus was Emperor of the Romans, and that George Washington was first President of the United States.” (Coghlan)
6. **dogma and the Church**
   1. Interpretation of scripture by private judgment “is as unreasonable as would be the notion that the civil legislature makes laws, and then commits to individual private judgment the right and the duty of interpreting the laws . . .” (Coghlan)
   2. Because God has endowed the Church and the pope with infallibility, dogmas defined by the Church “are the truths contained in divine revelation.” (Coghlan)
7. **dogmas are immutable**
   1. Since revelation “expresses real objective truth, dogmas are immutable divine truths.” (Coghlan)
   2. “It is an immutable truth for all time that Augustus was Emperor of Rome and George Washington first President of the United States. So according to Catholic belief, these are and will be for all time immutable truths—that there are three Persons in God, that Christ died for us, that He arose from the dead, that He founded the Church, that He instituted the sacraments.” (Coghlan)
   3. “We may distinguish between the truths themselves and the language in which they are expressed. The full meaning of certain revealed truths has been only gradually brought out; the truths will always remain. Language may change or may receive a new meaning; but we can always learn what meaning was attached to particular words in the past.” (Coghlan)
8. **the number of dogmas**
   1. “The same divine Providence which preserves the Church from error will preserve her from inordinate multiplication of dogmas. . . . We need only observe the life of the Church . . . to see that dogmas are not multiplied inordinately.” (Coghlan)
9. **dogma and religion**
   1. “It is sometimes charged that in the Catholic Church, in consequence of its dogmas, religious life consists merely in speculative beliefs and external sacramental formalities.” (Coghlan)
   2. But “dogmatic religion does not degenerate into mere external formalities. On the contrary, in non-Catholic Christian bodies a general decay of supernatural Christian life follows the dissolution of dogmatic religion. Were the dogmatic system of the Catholic Church, with its authoritative infallible head, done away with, the various systems of private judgment would not save the world from relapsing into and following pagan ideals.” (Coghlan)
   3. “Dogmatic belief is not the be-all and end-all of Catholic life; but the Catholic serves God, honours the Trinity, loves Christ, obeys the Church, frequents the sacraments, assists at Mass, observes the Commandments, because he believes mentally in God, in the Trinity, in the Divinity of Christ, in the Church, in the sacraments and the Sacrifice of the Mass, in the duty of keeping the Commandments, and he believes in them as objective immutable truths.” (Coghlan)
10. **dogma and science**
    1. “But, it is objected, dogma checks investigation, antagonizes independence of thought, and makes scientific theology impossible.” (Coghlan)
    2. the charge when made by Protestants
       1. “Beyond scientific investigation and freedom of thought Catholics recognize the guiding influence of dogmatic beliefs.” (Coghlan)
       2. “Protestants also profess to adhere to certain great dogmatic truths which are supposed to impede scientific investigation . . . Protestants, therefore, cannot consistently complain that Catholic dogmas impede scientific investigation.” (Coghlan)
    3. the charge when made by unbelievers
       1. “There is no prohibition or restriction on Catholics in regard to the observation and co-ordination of the phenomena of Nature. But some scientists . . . propound theories often unwarranted by experimental observation. One will maintain as a “scientific” truth that there is no God, or that His existence is unknowable—another that the world has not been created; another will deny in the name of “science” the existence of the soul; another, the possibility of supernatural revelation.” (Coghlan)
       2. “Catholic dogma and ecclesiastical authority limit intellectual activity only so far as may be necessary for safeguarding the truths of revelation. If non-believing scientists in their study of Catholicism would apply the scientific method, which consists in observing, comparing, making hypotheses, and perhaps formulating scientific conclusions, they would readily see that dogmatic belief in no way interferes with the legitimate freedom of the Catholic in scientific research, the discharge of civic duty, or any other form of activity that makes for true enlightenment and progress.” (Coghlan)
       3. “The service rendered by Catholics in every department of learning and of social endeavour, is a fact which no amount of theorizing against dogma can set aside.” (Coghlan)

### The Nature of Dogmas

1. **necessity of dogmas**
   1. “God has definitively revealed himself to us not in many propositions, but in his one Word.” (Sullivan *Creative* 30)
      1. Consequently, “the object of Christian faith is Christ as the Word of God, and not the propositions in which Christian faith is formulated.” (Sullivan *Creative* 30)
      2. John of the Cross (*The Ascent of Mount Carmel* 2:22.3): “In giving us his Son, his only Word (for he possesses no other) he spoke everything to us in this sole Word—and has no more to say.” (Kavanaugh, Kieran, OCD, and Otilio Rodriguez, OCD, trans. *The Collected Works of St*. *John of the Cross*. Rev. ed. Washington: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1991. 230.)] (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 30)
   2. necessity of propositions
      1. “However, since the unity of the church has always called for professing the same faith in common, this faith necessarily has had to be formulated in propositions for all to accept, believe and profess.” (Sullivan *Creative* 30)
      2. “The history of the church shows that in every age there have been . . . new challenges to the faith, calling for new clarifications of what the words of the creed really mean.” (Sullivan *Creative* 31)
      3. “. . . the common profession of orthodox faith . . . necessarily involves formulating the propositions in which the common profession is to be made . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 33)
      4. Dogma’s “ongoing function . . . has been to provide the authoritative answers to the questions that have kept coming up about the meaning of what Christians profess in the creed, and thus to make possible a common profession not only of the same words but really of the same faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 31)
      5. Dogmatic decisions “make possible a common profession of the true faith that will respond to the contemporary challenges to that faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 31)
   3. “. . . our faith in the guidance of the church by the Holy Spirit gives us an assurance that definitive answers to questions about the meaning of the faith will also be the right answers, since otherwise they would inevitably lead the whole church away from the truth of the gospel.” (Sullivan *Creative* 31)
2. **early history of dogmas**
   1. New Testament
      1. “. . . membership in the Christian community required the profession of Christian faith, and . . . there were certain prescribed formulas in which this profession was to be made.” (Sullivan *Creative* 30)
      2. “. . . the Christian faith has from the beginning had a “dogmatic” character: that is, there have always been prescribed formulas in which those who belong to the Christian community must profess their faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 30)
      3. “Jesus is Lord”
         1. 1 Cor 12:3, “no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit.”
         2. Rom 10:9, “if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”
      4. “A somewhat more developed formula of faith” (Sullivan *Creative* 30)
         1. 1 Cor 15:3, “For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, 4and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, 5and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.”
   2. early Church
      1. creeds
         1. baptismal creeds
            1. “The first occasion on which early Christians professed their faith was at their baptism.” (Sullivan *Creative* 30)
            2. Hippolytus’s *Traditio Apostolica* (§ 21.12) says that “baptism consisted of a threefold immersion, accompanied by a confession of faith in God the Father Almighty, in Christ Jesus who was crucified, died and rose from the dead, and in the Holy Spirit in the holy church. This confession of faith . . . in the actual reception of baptism was made by responding “I believe” to the questions put by the minister . . .” (Hippolytus. *The Apostolic Tradition*. Ed. Gregory Dix and Henry Chadwick. London: Alban, 1992. 36-37.) (Sullivan *Creative* 30)
            3. “. . . the baptismal creed expressed the essential elements of the “rule of faith” for the early church . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 31)
         2. declaratory creeds
            1. “This confession of faith . . . was later given a declaratory form, such as we have in the “Apostles’ Creed,” to be recited by the candidates before the end [30] of the catechumenate.” (Sullivan *Creative* 30-31)
         3. The baptismal and later declaratory creeds were “an interpretation of the foundational revelation which came to its fulfillment in Christ, an interpretation formulated (or at least approved) and prescribed by the bishops who presided over the catechumenate. In that sense, it had dogmatic character.” (Sullivan *Creative* 31)
         4. But “this dogmatic character was at the service of the faith, life and worship of the Christian community. The confession of faith in God, in Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, is a way of praising and worshiping God.” (Sullivan *Creative* 31)
      2. early councils
         1. Soon differences arose “as to the meaning of various articles of the creed. The unity of the church required that authoritative answers be given to fundamental questions about the meaning of the creed, so that Christians could not only say the same words in professing their faith, but [mean] the same thing . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 31)
         2. “From the third century on, there is abundant evidence of the fact that when a dispute about the faith arose in some area of the church, the bishops of that region would gather in council to give an authoritative answer to the question. The church had already had a century of experience of such regional councils prior to” Nicea I (325). (Sullivan *Creative* 32)
         3. Nicea I and Constantinople I (381) “gave definitive answers to questions about the divinity of the Word and the Holy Spirit, thus assuring the trinitarian character of Christian faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 32)
         4. “The following four great councils, of Ephesus (431), Chalcedon (451), Constantinople II (553) and Constantinople III (681), were all devoted to settling christological issues, especially the unity of person in Christ, and the integrity of his human nature.” (Sullivan *Creative* 33)
         5. “Each of these councils resulted in the solemn definition of dogmas.” (Sullivan *Creative* 33)
         6. “Obviously, during the long intervals between these councils, in the ordinary life of the church, the faith was being handed on by parents, catechists, and teachers, as well as by the bishops.” (Sullivan *Creative* 33)
         7. But “the dogmatic decisions taken by the councils were . . . crucial moments in times of crisis, when a decisive answer had to be given to questions that threatened the unity of the church in professing the true faith. In each case, an interpretation of the meaning of the gospel and of the creed was given that met the contemporary need, and at the same time marked out the direction which the teaching of the faith must take for the future on that particular question.” (Sullivan *Creative* 33)
3. **bishops**’ **role in defining dogmas**
   1. bishops roles in tradition
      1. “Tradition” is “both what is handed on (*Verbum Dei traditum*) [and] the process of handing this on.” (Sullivan *Creative* 32)
         1. Vatican II (*Dei Verbum* 8): “What was handed on by the apostles includes everything which contributes to the holiness of life and the increase in faith of the people of God; and so the church, in her teaching, life and worship, perpetuates and hands on to all generations all that she herself is, all that she believes.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 32)
         2. *What* is handed on is “all that the church is, all that she believes” (*Dei Verbum* 8). So what is handed on is “not only what the church believes (its doctrine) but all that it is . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 32)
         3. *Handing on* “is the role of the whole church . . .” So handing on is “not only by teaching, but also by the church’s life and worship.” (Sullivan *Creative* 32)
      2. bishops’ two roles in tradition
         1. “Bishops, along with many others, are engaged in the day-to-day handing on of the faith to each succeeding generation of the faithful.” (Sullivan *Creative* 32)
         2. “But they have a special role when disputes arise concerning the meaning of the faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 32)
   2. defining doctrine
      1. *Dei Verbum* (§ 10): “But the task of authentically [*authentice*] interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church, whose au­thor­ity is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ.”
         1. “That the Latin word *authentice* is correctly translated by “authoritatively” [Sullivan’s preferred translation] is clear from the phrase: ‘whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ.”” (Sullivan *Creative* 188 n. 10)
         2. *Dei Verbum* (§ 10) : “This teaching office [explains] the word of God . . . faithfully in accord with a divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit . . .”
      2. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* § 25): “bishops are . . . authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ, who preach to the people committed to them the faith they must believe and put into practice, and by the light of the Holy Spirit illustrate that faith.”
   3. “A dogma can be either defined or undefined . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 28)
      1. A “defined” dogma “is a “solemn judgment” by an ecumenical council or a pope speaking *ex cathedra* . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 28)
      2. “. . . an undefined dogma is a truth that has been proposed by the ordinary universal [28] magisterium as definitively to be held by divine faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 28-29)
      3. (It seems contradictory to say that a “definitively taught” dogma can be “undefined,” since the root “defin-” is in both adjectives.
         1. But “define” in “undefined” has the restricted sense of a solemn definition, an infallible assertion by ecumenical council or pope that a proposition is true and is truly part of the faith.
         2. Bishops around the world, when they agree in teaching a proposition as “definitively to be held,” have “definitively taught” it, yet without “defining” it.
         3. Hence, “definitive” in “definitively taught” is not an adjectival form of “define.”—Hahn)
4. **dogma**’**s regulative functions**
   1. dogma’s regulative function of determining the language of the faith
      1. “. . . there is general agreement that dogmatic decisions have a regulative function of determining the language of faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 33)
      2. “As a binding ruling on the language of faith, it [a dogma] makes possible a common profession of faith that is vital both to the unity of the church and to its praise and worship of God.” (Sullivan *Creative* 40)
      3. Lutheran scholar George Lindbeck
         1. Lindbeck, George. *The Nature of Doctrine*: *Religion and Theology in a Post-Liberal Age*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.
         2. “Lindbeck maintains that doctrine does not have the function of making ontological truth claims . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 33)
         3. He says “that the function of doctrine is exclusively that of regulating the language in which Christian faith is professed.” (Sullivan *Creative* 33)
         4. Doctrine “is regulative, not informative. . . . [It] tells us what to say, when we profess our faith, but not that what we say is objectively true.” (Sullivan *Creative* 33)
   2. dogma’s regulative function of expressing the truth of the faith
      1. Dogma’s “more basic function [is] expressing the truth which we believe when we profess our faith. Indeed, it seems to me that the only adequate basis for an obligation to profess Christian faith in a creed is that this creed, however imperfectly, says something of the truth that God has revealed to us in his Son.” (Sullivan *Creative* 34)

### Undefined Dogmas

1. **introduction**
   1. A consensus of the universal Church is infallible. (Sullivan *Creative* 108)
   2. Solemn declarations (by councils or popes) express that consensus. (Sullivan *Creative* 108)
   3. But “there are some dogmas of faith that have never been defined.” They are dogmas because the consensus of the universal Church about them means that they are taught definitively. (Sullivan *Creative* 108)
      1. “Some articles of the creed are such . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 108)
      2. “. . . some dogmatic issues have been settled by regional councils, and their decisions have been universally received.” (Sullivan *Creative* 108)
      3. “Many of the doctrines of Trent were already dogmas of Catholic faith prior to being defined.” (Sullivan *Creative* 108)
2. **early Church**: **the** “**rule of faith**”
   1. Irenaeus (c. 130-202)
      1. “. . . the conviction that the consensus of the universal church in its faith is an infallible norm of truth goes back to the second century, with Irenaeus, and is a consistent element of Christian belief.” (Sullivan *Creative* 97)
      2. Irenaeus (fl. c. 180) “often mentioned the “rule of faith” or “canon of truth” which Christians followed in their profession of faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 94)
      3. Irenaeus (*Against the Heresies* 3.3.1): “It is within the power of all, in every church, who may wish to see the truth, to [94] contemplate clearly the tradition of the apostles manifested throughout the world.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 94-95)
      4. Irenaeus (*Against the Heresies* 3.4.1-2): “Suppose there arise a dispute relative to some important question among us, should we not have recourse to the most ancient churches with which the apostles held constant intercourse, and learn from them what is certain and clear in regard to the present question? For how should it be if the apostles themselves had not left us writings? Would it not be necessary to follow the course of the tradition which they handed down to those to whom they committed the churches? To which course many nations of those barbarians who believe in Christ do assent, having salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit, without paper or ink, and carefully preserving the ancient tradition, believing in one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and all things therein, by means of Christ Jesus, the Son of God; who, because of his surpassing love toward his creation, condescended to be born of the virgin, he himself uniting man through himself to God, and having suffered under Pontius Pilate, and rising again, and having been received up in splendor, shall come again in glory, the Savior of those who are saved, and the judge of those who are judged, and sending into eternal fire those who transform the truth, and despise his Father and his coming.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 94)
      5. “In this passage . . . the formal principle of the “rule of faith” [is] the tradition preserved in the apostolic churches . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 94)
      6. “In this passage [we also see] the contents of this “rule,” namely, the basic truths of faith which Christians professed. An essential feature of this “rule of faith” was that it was common to all the churches that were faithful to the apostolic tradition.” (Sullivan *Creative* 94)
3. **early Church**: **baptismal creeds**
   1. “The introductory section of DS [1-76] gives the text of a considerable number of early baptismal creeds from both eastern and western churches.” (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
   2. “. . . at this period there was no creedal formula common to all the churches . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
   3. “The “rule of faith” was not simply identical with the baptismal creed,” since there no universal baptismal creed. (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
   4. “. . . despite their variations, their contents represent the same “rule of faith” that was common to all the churches.” (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
   5. Apostles’ Creed (DS 25-30)
      1. The Apostles’ Creed “was originally the baptismal creed of the Roman church . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
      2. It “was received by the other local churches of the west.” (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
      3. “. . . it [95] came to be more fully developed in the churches of northern Europe, and eventually that augmented formula came to be received in turn by the church of Rome.” (Sullivan *Creative* 95-96)
      4. “This final form of the Apostles’ Creed, which offers a striking example of “reception,” is appropriately known as the *textus receptus*.” (Sullivan *Creative* 96)
      5. “. . . not every article of the creed has been defined. But it can hardly be doubted that every article of the creed is a dogma of faith. So if one is looking for “undefined dogmas,” the first place to look is to those articles of the Apostles’ Creed which have never been defined.” (Sullivan *Creative* 96)
4. **patristic period**: **consensus by reception**
   1. “The consensus of all the churches in the profession of the same faith continued to be recognized as the reliable criterion of the truth in the patristic period.” (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
   2. Augustine
      1. “An outstanding exponent of this criterion is St. Augustine, who again and again expressed it in his famous phrase: *securus iudicat orbis terrarum*, which can be translated: “One can rely on the judgment of the whole world.”” (*Contra epistulam Parmeniani* [ad 400] 3.4.2) (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
      2. “. . . what Augustine meant by “*securus iudicat orbis terrarum*”” is essentially the idea that “ordinary magisterium” expresses. (Sullivan *Creative* 100)
      3. “For Augustine, the sure test of orthodoxy was the “consensus of the universal church.” (*De Baptismo* 7.53.102; *CSEL* 51:373) (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
   3. “In most cases, such a consensus was obtained through the practice of communicating the decisions of regional councils to the other churches for their approval and reception.” (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
   4. “There was an extraordinary amount of communication among the Christian churches during the patristic period. Newly elected bishops would send their profession of faith to the bishops of other major churches. Bishops would keep one another informed about heresies that had arisen in their region, and of how their authors were dealt with, so that others would also deny communion to those condemned as heretics.” (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
      1. “It was through such a process of mutual communication and reception that a consensus was reached on so fundamental a question as the canon of the New Testament. The Council of Trent was the first ecumenical council to issue a definitive decree about the canon of scripture; until then it was a matter of consensus.” (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
      2. “Similarly, the baptismal formula that we know as the Apostles’ Creed came to be received in the whole western church by such a consensus.” (Sullivan *Creative* 95)
   5. For “undefined dogmas,” a good place, in addition to the Apostle’s Creed, is “the conciliar creeds of Nicea and Constantinople.” (Sullivan *Creative* 96)
      1. “We know which dogmas those councils intended to define . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 96)
      2. “. . . there is no reason to think that they intended to define other articles of faith which at that time were not in dispute.” (Sullivan *Creative* 96)
5. **patristic period and dark age**: **regional councils**’ **decrees are universally received**
   1. “In the patristic period several important doctrinal issues were settled by regional councils, whose decisions were received so widely that a genuine consensus was reached without having the question decided by an ecumenical council.” (Sullivan *Creative* 96)
   2. examples
      1. regional councils
         1. ad 268: a synod of Antioch “condemned Paul of Samosata [for] his heretical use of *homoousios* . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 96)
            1. This condemnation was so widely received that, when Nicea I “chose to use the same term in an orthodox sense,” it became “a serious problem . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 96)
         2. 418: the Council of Carthage XVI condemned Pelagianism.
            1. This “was received as a dogma of faith . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 96)
            2. It “remained undefined” until 1547, when Trent confirmed it. (DS 222-30; ND 501, 1901-06) (Sullivan *Creative* 97)
         3. 529: the Council of Orange II on grace. (DS 370-397; ND 504-05, 1915-1920) (Sullivan *Creative* 97)
         4. 649: a Lateran Council “played a key role in the history of Mariology, especially regarding the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary.” (DS 503; ND 703) (Sullivan *Creative* 97)
            1. The council was “mainly concerned with a Christological issue . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 97)
         5. 675: the Council of Toledo XI’s *Profession of Faith* is “one of the most important formulations of Trinitarian doctrine by any council.” (DS 525-32; ND 308-16) (Sullivan *Creative* 97)
         6. 853-55: two Frankish regional councils, the Council of Quiercy (853) and the Council Valence III (855), “were decisive in maintaining the doctrine of the universal salvific will of God against heretical views on predestination.” (DS 621-33) (Sullivan *Creative* 97)
      2. comments
         1. All of these doctrines “became part of the faith of the church by virtue of their universal reception.” (Sullivan *Creative* 97)
         2. Some “have subsequently been solemnly defined, others have not.” (Sullivan *Creative* 97)
         3. I would class those that have not been defined as good examples of what I mean by undefined dogmas.” (Sullivan *Creative* 97)
6. **medieval period**: “**articles of faith**”
   1. infallibility of ecumenical councils and popes
      1. “. . . the first known reference to the infallibility of ecumenical councils dates from the ninth century . . .” (See Sullivan, *Magisterium* 85) (Sullivan *Creative* 97)
      2. “. . . the first reference to the infallibility of popes [dates] to the thirteenth century . . .” (See Sullivan, *Magisterium* 91) (Sullivan *Creative* 97)
   2. “articles of faith”
      1. “Taking the Apostles’ Creed as the most basic expression of Christian faith, medieval theologians distinguished in it twelve “articles,” in which they recognized the essential elements of Christian doctrine. Where we now speak of “dogmas,” St. Thomas and the other medieval theologians would speak of “articles of faith.”” (Sullivan *Creative* 96)
      2. “Not every article of the creed had been defined by St. Thomas’ day . . .” Some still are not. (Sullivan *Creative* 96)
      3. “For a doctrine to be termed an “article of faith,” it did not have to have been defined by one of the great councils; it sufficed that it was included, at least implicitly, in the creed.” (Sullivan *Creative* 96)
      4. For example, “the Decree for the Armenians of the Council of Florence was based on an *opusculum* of St. Thomas entitled ‘On the Articles of Faith and the Sacraments of the Church” (*Opera*, ed. Parma, 16:115-122). The first part of this work is an exposition of the doctrines contained in the creed.” (Sullivan *Creative* 194 n. 9)
   3. Thomas Aquinas (1225-74)
      1. Aquinas (*Quodl*. 9.8.1): “It is certain that it is impossible for the judgment of the universal church to err in matters that pertain to faith.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 97)
      2. What Aquinas meant is essentially the idea which “ordinary magisterium” expresses. (Sullivan *Creative* 100)
7. **Trent** (**1545-63**)
   1. “. . . again and again in its dogmatic decrees . . . Trent expressed its confidence in the reliability of a consensus of the whole church on a matter of faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 98)
   2. “. . . We shall quote just a few of the many places . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 98)
      1. 1546: *Decree on Original Sin* (introductory paragraph, D 787, DS 1510, ND 507): Trent says it will base this decree on “the testimony of the sacred scriptures, the holy fathers and the approved councils, and the judgment and consensus of the church.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 98)
      2. 1546: *Decree on Original Sin* (§ 4, DS 1514, ND 511): Rom 5:12 (“just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned”) “is not to be understood otherwise than as the Catholic Church throughout the world has always understood it.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 98)
      3. 1547: *Decree on Justification* (introductory paragraph, DS 1520, ND 1924): Trent says it intends to present the doctrine which “the Catholic Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has always held.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 98)
      4. 1547: *Decree on Justification* (ch. 8, D 801): Paul’s statements about justification by faith “are to be understood in that sense which the perpetual consensus of the Catholic Church has held and expressed.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 98)
      5. 1551: *Decree on the Eucharist* (introductory paragraph, DS 1635, ND 1512): Trent intends to hand on “that sound and pure doctrine which the Catholic Church, instructed by Jesus Christ our Lord himself and his apostles, and taught by the Holy Spirit . . . has always retained, and will keep to the end of time.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 98)
      6. 1551: *Decree on the Eucharist* (DS 1637, ND 1514): those who deny Christ’s real presence distort Christ’s words “against the universal consensus of the church.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 98)
      7. 1551: *Decree on the Eucharist* (DS 1740, ND 1546): one must understand Christ’s words at the Last Supper in the way that “the Catholic Church has always understood and taught.” (Sullivan *Creative* 98)
   3. “This repeated appeal of Trent to the consensus of the Catholic Church as warrant for its dogmatic decrees demonstrates beyond any doubt that the bishops at the council shared the view [98] later expressed by Bellarmine, that “what all the faithful hold as of faith is necessarily true and of faith; and likewise what all the bishops teach as of faith is necessarily true and of faith.” () (Sullivan *Creative* 98-99)
   4. Consequently, one can “reasonably conclude that a good many of the doctrines defined by Trent were already dogmas of Catholic faith prior to being solemnly defined. Trent obviously did not invent them; it found them already there in the universal teaching, belief and practice of the Catholic Church.” (Sullivan *Creative* 99)
   5. “It is absurd to think that the Tridentine dogmas were merely pious opinions until the council defined them.” (Sullivan *Creative* 100)
   6. “. . . what the bishops at Trent had in mind when they appealed to “what the Catholic Church has always believed and taught” as the sure ground for their dogmatic decrees” is essentially the same as the idea which “ordinary magisterium” expresses. (Sullivan *Creative* 100)
8. **Robert Bellarmine** (**1542-1621**)
   1. Bellarmine (*De Ecclesia militante*, 111.14, in: Giuliani, ed. *De Controversiis* II, p. 98): “When we say that the church cannot err, we understand this both of the entire body of the faithful and of the entire body of the bishops, so that the meaning of the proposition that the church cannot err is this: that what all the faithful hold as of faith is necessarily true and of faith; and likewise what all the bishops teach as of faith is necessarily true and of faith.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 97)
   2. “. . . Bellarmine is not talking about different truths, but of two criteria by which we can be certain that something is true and is *de fide*, i.e., to be believed as divinely revealed. A universal consensus of the faithful in their belief and of the bishops in their teaching are both infallible criteria of revealed truth.” (Sullivan *Creative* 98)
   3. “Here Bellarmine was enunciating the principle which the Council of Trent put into practice . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 98)
   4. The idea which “ordinary magisterium” expresses “is essentially the same as . . . what Bellarmine meant by saying: “What all the bishops teach as of faith is necessarily true and of faith.”” (Sullivan *Creative* 100)
9. **1853**: **Joseph Kleutgen**, **SJ**, **on the ordinary magisterium**
   1. Boyle, John P. “The Ordinary Magisterium: Towards a History of the Concept.” *Heythrop Journal* 20 (1979): 380-98; 21 (1980): 14-29.
   2. Kleutgen, Joseph. *Die Theologie der Vorzeit verteidigt*. 3 vols. Münster: Theissing’schen Buchhand­lung, 1853-60. 2nd. ed. (“much expanded,” Boyle 14). 5 vols. 1867-74.
   3. Kleutgen (1811-83) “distinguished between the extraordinary magisterium, exercised by ecumenical councils in defining doctrine, and the “ordinary and perpetual” magisterium exercised by the popes with the bishops when they are dispersed around the world.” (*Theologie der Vorzeit* 2nd. ed. 1: 47-52) (Sullivan *Creative* 100)
   4. “He had insisted that many traditional Christian doctrines had already been taught as dogmas of faith by this ordinary magisterium prior to their solemn definition, and that therefore obligatory faith could not be limited to what had been defined. He also suggested that the consensus of Catholic theologians that a doctrine was *de fide* would indicate that it had been taught as such by the ordinary magisterium.” (Sullivan *Creative* 100)
   5. “Kleutgen’s distinction between “extraordinary” and “ordinary” magisterium seems to have been a new way of expressing the matter.” (Sullivan *Creative* 100)
10. **1863**: **Pius IX on the ordinary magisterium**
    1. Boyle, John P. “The Ordinary Magisterium: Towards a History of the Concept.” *Heythrop Journal* 20 (1979): 380-98; 21 (1980): 14-29. (A study of Pius IX’s *Tuas libenter*.)
    2. Pius IX *Tuas libenter*. Letter to the archbishop of Munich). 21 Dec. 1863. DS 2875-80.
    3. Pius IX in *Tuas libenter* was the first official document to use “ordinary magisterium.” (Sullivan *Creative* 99)
    4. The pope had heard that, at “a meeting of Catholic theologians . . . in Munich earlier that year, organized by Ignaz von Döllinger . . . the opinion had been aired that Catholic theologians were bound to hold only those truths of faith which had been solemnly defined.” (Sullivan *Creative* 99)
    5. “Pius IX [objected] to the idea that a Catholic is obliged to believe only such dogmas as have been solemnly defined.” (Sullivan *Creative* 108)
    6. Pius IX (*Tuas libenter*, DS 2879, trans. from Boyle 397): “We want to persuade ourselves that they do not wish to limit the obligation by which Catholic teachers and writers are bound, only to those things which have been proposed by the infallible judgment of the church as dogmas of faith to be believed by all. And we are persuaded that they did not wish to declare that that perfect adherence to revealed truths which they acknowledge to be absolutely necessary for the genuine progress of science and for the refutation of errors can be had if faith and assent is given only to the expressly defined dogmas of the church. For even if it is a matter of that subjection which must be given in the act of divine faith, it must not be limited to those things which have been defined by the express decrees of councils or of the Roman pontiffs and of this apostolic see, but must also be extended to those things which are handed on by the ordinary magisterium of the whole church dispersed throughout the world as divinely revealed, and therefore are held by the universal and constant consensus of Catholic theologians to pertain to the faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 99)
    7. Boyle “has demonstrated the likelihood that it owes much of its language to a memorandum concerning the Munich congress, which was given to the pope by Cardinal Reisach, who in turn was indebted to the work of the Jesuit theologian Joseph Kleutgen.” (Sullivan *Creative* 100)
    8. “Boyle is no doubt correct in seeing the link between Kleutgen’s theology and the doctrine of Pius IX.” (Sullivan *Creative* 100)
    9. “Two points in the statement of Pius IX are especially worth noting.” (Sullivan *Creative* 100)
       1. “First, he limits it to matters which are taught by the ordinary magisterium throughout the world *as divinely revealed*.” (Sullivan *Creative* 100)
       2. “Second, he suggests how it can be known which doctrines have been taught in this way: namely by the universal and constant consensus among Catholic theologians that certain doctrines are [100] matters of faith, even though they have not been solemnly defined. It was not difficult to ascertain this fact, when Catholic theologians in writing their manuals qualified each of their theses with a theological “note,” giving to some dogmas the note *de fide definita* and to others the simple *de fide*.” (Sullivan *Creative* 100-01)
11. **1870**: **Vatican I on the universal ordinary magisterium**
    1. 4 Apr. 1870: Vatican I promulgated *Dei Filius* (a.k.a. *De fide catholica*, dogmatic constitution *On the Catholic Faith*)
    2. 18 July 1870: Vatican I promulgated *Pastor Aeternus* (dogmatic constitution *On the Church of Christ*)
    3. *Dei Filius*, first draft
       1. Vatican I, dogmatic constitution *Dei Filius* (Mansi 51: 35A): “All those things are to be believed by divine and Catholic faith which are contained in the Word of God, written or handed down, and are proposed by the church for belief either by solemn judgment or by the ordinary magisterium.” (Sullivan *Creative* 101)
       2. “The reference to the teaching of the ordinary magisterium was introduced into the text at the urging of Bishop Senestrey.” (Sullivan *Creative* 101)
       3. “. . . the insistence of Archbishop Manning and Bishop Senestrey at Vatican I brought it about that papal infallibility was defined in such a way that it was not limited to defining dogmas of faith . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 102)
          1. Aubert, Roger. *Vatican I*. *Histoire des Conciles Oecuméniques*. Vol. 12. Paris: Éd. de l’Orante, 1964. 211, 225-26.
          2. Betti, Umberto. *La Costituzione Dommatica* “*Pastor Aeternus*” *del Concilio Vaticano I*. Rome: Pontificio Ateneo Antonianum, 1961. 175, 389-404.
       4. “. . . the term “ordinary magisterium” was an unfamiliar one to many of the bishops. Some thought it referred to papal teaching, and objected that it prematurely raised the issue of papal infallibility. Others wanted it to be made clear that the statement referred only to divinely revealed truths.” (Sullivan *Creative* 101)
       5. “To clarify the text, two additions were made.” (Mansi 51: 322) (Sullivan *Creative* 101)
          1. To “proposed,” the modifier “as divinely revealed” was added. (Sullivan *Creative* 101)
          2. “Ordinary magisterium” became “ordinary and universal magisterium” . . . It was explained to the bishops that the term “universal magisterium” referred to the teaching of the whole episcopate along with the pope, and not to the teaching of the pope alone, even when this was directed to the universal church.” (Sullivan *Creative* 101)
    4. *Dei Filius*, final text
       1. Vatican I, dogmatic constitution *Dei Filius* (DS 3011, ND 121): “All those things are to be believed with divine and Catholic faith which are contained in the word of God, written or handed down, and are proposed by the church either by a solemn judgment or by its ordinary and universal magisterium as divinely revealed and to be believed as such.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 101)
    5. Did Vatican I define the universal ordinary magisterium’s infallibility?
       1. “The question has been raised whether this statement of Vatican I defines the *infallibility* of the ordinary universal [101] magisterium.” (Sullivan *Creative* 101-02)
       2. “It certainly does not do so explicitly . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 102)
       3. “. . . nor is it likely that it was the intention of the council to define it in this document, which is the Constitution on the Faith, since questions about the magisterium were still to be treated in the Constitution on the Church.” (Sullivan *Creative* 102)
       4. “However, it [infallibility of the universal ordinary magisterium] might be said to follow as a theological conclusion from the obligation on all the faithful to believe what is proposed as divinely revealed in this way, in view of the basic truth that the whole church cannot be led into error in what it is obliged to believe.” (Sullivan *Creative* 102)
12. **Vatican II on the universal ordinary magisterium**
    1. Vatican II addressed the infallibility of the universal ordinary magisterium. (Sullivan *Creative* 102)
    2. Vatican II (*Lumen gentium* 25b, Sullivan’s translation): “Although the individual bishops do not enjoy the prerogative of infallibility, they do nevertheless proclaim Christ’s doctrine infallibly even when dispersed around the world, provided that while maintaining the bond of communion among themselves and with Peter’s successor, and teaching authoritatively on a matter of faith or morals, they are in agreement that a particular judgment is to be held definitively.” (Sullivan *Creative* 102)
    3. two emendations to an earlier draft
       1. “while . . . teaching authoritatively on a matter of faith or morals”
          1. An earlier draft said “in handing on the revealed faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 102)
          2. Like Pius IX and Vatican I, the earlier draft said the universal ordinary magisterium was only infallible “when it proposed a doctrine as divinely revealed and calling for the response of faith.” [102] Pius IX and Vatican I spoke “only about the teaching of revealed truth that called for the assent of faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 102-03)
          3. So Vatican II went beyond Pius IX and Vatican I: it said the universal ordinary magisterium can be infallible “on a matter of faith or morals that was not revealed, but connected with revelation.” (*Acta Synodalia Conc*. *Vat*. *II* III/1, 251) (Sullivan *Creative* 103)
          4. “Vatican II has opened the door to the claim that norms of the natural law, even those not confirmed by revelation, have been infallibly taught by the ordinary universal magisterium.” (Sullivan *Creative* 103)
          5. As a result, “by divine faith” became “to be held.” (Sullivan *Creative* 103)
       2. “to be held definitively”
          1. To “to be held,” the council added “definitively.” (Sullivan *Creative* 103)
          2. “This clearly limits the infallibility of the ordinary universal magisterium to what it proposes in such a way as to call for the definitive assent of the faithful.” (Sullivan *Creative* 103)
          3. The pope could teach a doctrine in an encyclical, and bishops around the world could concur and teach it. That would not prove “that the doctrine was being taught infallibly . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 103)
          4. Pope and bishops would have to make clear that they propose the doctrine “as one to be held definitively.” (Sullivan *Creative* 103)
          5. “But this raises a problem, because, normally, the ordinary exercise of magisterium, while it requires a response of “religious submission,” does not propose a teaching as definitive, and consequently does not call for definitive assent.” (Sullivan *Creative* 103)
    4. There are two problems in proving that the universal ordinary magisterium has taught a doctrine infallibly.
       1. One must prove that the pope and the bishops throughout the world all teach a doctrine. (Sullivan *Creative* 103)
       2. One must prove that the pope and the bishops throughout the world require that the doctrine “be held definitively.” (Sullivan *Creative* 103)
13. “**constant**” **consensus**
    1. “. . . Pius IX suggested a sign by which one could know that a doctrine had been taught by the universal magisterium as a matter of faith: it was the “universal and constant” consensus of Catholic theologians that the doctrine was *de fide*.” (Sullivan *Creative* 103)
       1. “Universal” is in itself problematic: must the consensus be 100%?
       2. For “constant” Pius IX used the Latin word *constans*, which means “steady, firm, unchanging, immovable.” This suggests that the kind of consensus by which we can conclude that a doctrine has been infallibly taught must be one that perseveres and remains unchanged. On the other hand, if it becomes evident that there is no longer a consensus on some point of doctrine about which, in former times, there was a consensus, it would seem necessary to conclude that this is not the kind of *constant* consensus that points to infallible teaching.” (Sullivan *Creative* 103-04)
    2. example: polygenism
       1. “. . . both draft documents on Catholic doctrine that were prepared for the First Vatican Council [*Dei Filius* and *Pastor Aeternus*] proposed that the council define, as a dogma of faith, that the whole human race descended from a single couple [Mansi 50: 70; 53: 170, 175]. It was repeatedly noted in the *Acta* that there was no opposition to such a projected definition [Mansi 53: 212, 297]. Although the interruption of the council prevented conciliar discussion and action on this proposal, the unanimity in the commission that prepared those *schemata* suggests that prior to Vatican I there was a consensus among Catholic bishops and theologians that the descent of all men from Adam was definable doctrine, and that the theory of polygenism was contrary to the Tridentine decree which speaks of the “sin of Adam as one in origin and transmitted by propagation.” [DS 1513, ND 510] Eighty years after Vatican I, Pius XII, in his encyclical *Humani generis*, still insisted that Catholic theologians were not to hold the theory of polygenism, “for it is not at all apparent how such a view can be reconciled with the data which the sources of revealed truth and the documents of the church propose concerning original sin, namely, that it originates from a sin truly committed by one Adam, is transmitted to all through generation, and is in each, proper to him.” [DS 3897, ND 420] However, the fact that in 1950 Pius XII felt the need to tell Catholic theologians that they were not free to hold a theory of polygenism indicates that in the intervening years the former consensus on this point had begun to weaken. Indeed, within another twenty years that consensus had weakened to the point that Karl Rahner could write: “We may surely say that the development of Catholic theology since ‘Humani generis’ has made such advances (advances that have been tolerated by the church’s *magisterium*) that the opinion that [104] polygenism is not irreconcilable with the doctrine of original sin is no longer exposed to the danger of being censured by the authorities of the church.”” (“The Sin of Adam.” *Theological Investigations* 11: 247-62, at 252.) (Sullivan *Creative* 104-05)
       2. “Here we have an instance of a consensus that seemed strong enough in 1870 to justify defining a doctrine as a dogma of faith, but which has not remained constant and is no longer universal. It would hardly seem reasonable to argue that since the former consensus had fulfilled the conditions required for the infallible exercise of ordinary universal magisterium, the subsequent lack of consensus could not nullify the claim that the doctrine had already been infallibly taught.” (Sullivan *Creative* 105)
    3. example: artificial contraception
       1. Ford, John C., and Germain Grisez. “Contraception and the Infallibility of the Ordinary Magisterium.” *Theological Studies* 39 (1978): 258-312.
       2. Grisez, Germain. “Response to Francis Sullivan’s Reply.” *Theological Studies* 55 (1994): c. 737.
       3. “Here is another example, in the field of moral teaching.” (Sullivan *Creative* 105)
       4. “. . . John C. Ford and Germain Grisez claimed that the official teaching on artificial contraception fulfilled the conditions laid down by Vatican II for the infallible exercise of the ordinary universal magisterium.” (Sullivan *Creative* 105)
          1. “To show that the condition of “universal consensus” was fulfilled, they appealed to the fact that this teaching “was universally proposed by Catholic bishops up to 1962.” (Ford and Grisez 277) (Sullivan *Creative* 105)
          2. “They also appealed to “a constant consensus of Catholic theologians in modern times,” and gave the references to a very large number of works of moral theology of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which maintained this doctrine . . .”
          3. “They also cited the historical study of contraception by John T. Noonan, Jr., as offering “substantial evidence for the universality of the Catholic Church’s teaching on contraception up to 1962.”” (Ford and Grisez 277) (Sullivan *Creative* 105)
          4. “They concluded that “the historical evidence shows that Catholic bishops dispersed throughout the world agreed in one judgment on the morality of contraception, a judgment which remained substantially the same and which was universally proposed at least until 1962.” (Ford and Grisez 278) (Sullivan *Creative* 105)
          5. “The repeated reference to consensus “until 1962” indicates that Ford and Grisez did not claim that in the late 1970s, when they were writing their article, there was still a universal consensus in the Catholic Church on the moral wrongness of contraception. However, in their view, the pre-1962 consensus was sufficient to fulfill the condition required for infallible teaching. They wrote: “Another point about the required universality [of consensus] is that if this condition has been met for some period [105] in the past, it is not nullified by lack of present consensus among Catholic bishops.”” [Ford and Grisez 273] In their view, it does not matter that the previous consensus has weakened or disappeared.” (Sullivan *Creative* 105-06)
          6. “In a recent article, Germain Grisez has reiterated the argument which he and John Ford had proposed, saying: “Since the previously existing ecclesial consensus was absent in 1978, we also argued that, once something has been taught infallibly, subsequent dissent cannot negate it.” (Grisez 737) (Sullivan *Creative* 106)
          7. “It is true, of course, that if something was indeed taught infallibly, subsequent dissent cannot negate it.” (Sullivan *Creative* 106)
       5. objections
          1. “. . . none of the “very large number of works of moral theology” cited by Ford and Grisez “is dated after 1962.” (Sullivan *Creative* 105)
          2. “. . . to fulfill the conditions required for the infallible teaching of the ordinary universal magisterium, the consensus must not only be universal; it must also be *constant*.” (Sullivan *Creative* 106)
14. **canon law**
    1. 1917 *Code*: “Nothing is understood to be infallibly defined or declared unless this is clearly established.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 106)
       1. “Or declared” seems to apply to recognizing infallible teaching by the universal ordinary magisterium. (Sullivan *Creative* 106)
    2. 1983 *Code of Canon Law*, canon 749.3: “no doctrine is understood to be infallibly defined unless this fact is clearly established.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 106)
       1. By omitting “or declared,” the 1983 *Code* seems to imply that a teaching of the universal ordinary magisterium need not be “clearly established” to be recognized as infallible. (Sullivan *Creative* 106)
    3. Germain Grisez
       1. Grisez, Germain. “Infallibility and Specific Moral Norms: A Review Discussion.” *The Thomist* 49 (1985): 248-87. Rpt. *Dissent in the Church*. Readings in Moral Theology 6. Ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick. New York: Paulist, 1988. 58-96.
       2. Grisez (rpt. p. 80) argues that a doctrine “has to be “clearly established” only when it is a question of judging that a doctrine has been infallibly defined.” (Sullivan *Creative* 106)
       3. “Perhaps this is the only requirement that is now recognized in canon law.” (Sullivan *Creative* 106)
    4. Francis A. Sullivan
       1. “However, I would argue on theological grounds that it is also true that no doctrine should be understood as having been infallibly taught by the ordinary universal magisterium unless this fact is clearly established.” (Sullivan *Creative* 106)
       2. “My argument is based on the consequences for the faithful of the fact that a doctrine has been infallibly taught, whether this is by solemn definition or by the ordinary universal magisterium.
          1. “According to Vatican I [DS 3011, ND 141] and the 1983 Code [canon 750], doctrine proposed as divinely revealed must be believed with “divine and catholic [106] faith,” whether it has been solemnly defined, or infallibly taught by the ordinary universal magisterium.” (Sullivan *Creative* 106-07)
          2. “According to the 1983 Code, a person who is guilty of obstinate denial or doubt regarding a doctrine which must be believed with divine and Catholic faith is guilty of heresy [canon 751]. No distinction is made between doctrine which has been solemnly defined, and that which has been infallibly taught by the ordinary and universal magisterium.” (Sullivan *Creative* 107)
          3. “According to the new Formula for the Profession of Faith, if a doctrine has been infallibly proposed as divinely revealed, whether this was by solemn definition or by the ordinary universal magisterium, the obligation on the faithful is the same: they must believe it with firm faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 107)
       3. “From the fact that the consequences for the faithful are the same whether doctrine has been solemnly defined or infallibly taught by the ordinary universal magisterium, I conclude that on theological grounds, the principle is equally true that no doctrine should be understood as having been infallibly proposed unless this fact is clearly established, whether the doctrine has been defined or taught by the ordinary universal magisterium.” (Sullivan *Creative* 107)
       4. The *Code*’*s* language, *nisi id manifeste constiterit* (“no doctrine is understood to be infallibly defined”?), means that the fact that a doctrine has been infallibly defined must not only be “settled, undisputed, well known,” but must be “manifestly” such. One could hardly claim that the fact that a doctrine had been infallibly defined was manifestly established if there were no consensus among Catholic theologians about this alleged fact. On the same grounds, I would say that one could hardly claim that a doctrine had been infallibly taught by the ordinary universal magisterium if there were no consensus among Catholic theologians on this point. On the other hand, their *constant and universal* consensus would be a reliable basis for judging that it had actually been taught in that way. As we have seen above, this is the criterion that Pope Pius IX himself proposed in *Tuas libenter*. It is true, of course, that it is not so easy nowadays to establish the fact of such a consensus among Catholic theologians as it was when they wrote manuals and assigned a theological “note” to each of their theses.” (Sullivan *Creative* 107)
       5. Canon 749.3’s final phrase, “unless this fact is clearly established,” is in the original Latin “*nisi id manifeste constiterit*” (literally, “unless it manifestly is settled”). (Sullivan *Creative* 43)
          1. “The neuter pronoun *id* refers to the *fact* that a doctrine has been infallibly defined.” (Sullivan *Creative* 43)
          2. “*Constat*” means (according to Harper’s *Latin Dictionary*) “*it is settled*, *established*, *undisputed*, *certain*, *well known*.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 43)
          3. “*Constat*” “does not specify the criteria by which a fact is recognized as “settled” . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 43)
          4. But “ it does suggest that there will be a general recognition that this is an “established fact.” Synonyms such as “undisputed, well known” suggest that one can expect a consensus about a fact if one can say of it: “*constat*.”” (Sullivan *Creative* 43)
          5. The canon also adds “manifestly”: “the fact that a doctrine has been infallibly defined must not only be “settled, undisputed, well known,” but must be “manifestly” such.” (Sullivan *Creative* 43)
          6. “To whom would one [43] expect such a fact to be “manifest” if not to Catholic theologians, whose business it is to evaluate the dogmatic weight of magisterial pronouncements?” (Sullivan *Creative* 43-44)
          7. “I conclude that one could hardly claim that the fact that a doctrine had been infallibly defined was *manifestly* “settled, established, undisputed,” if there were serious disagreement among Catholic theologians about this alleged fact.” (Sullivan *Creative* 44)

### Theological Conclusions

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2. **introduction**
   1. definition
      1. Theological conclusions are “propositions that necessarily follow from revealed truth . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 135)
   2. characteristics
      1. syllogism
         1. If two “premisses are immediately revealed truths, then the conclusion also must be regarded as being immediately revealed and as the object of Immediate Divine Faith . . .” (Ott 8)
         2. Theological conclusions “are derived from two premisses, of which one is an immediately revealed truth, and the other a truth of natural reason. Since one premiss is a truth of Revelation, theological conclusions are [“mediately”] revealed.” (Ott 8)
         3. “The expression theological conclusion is used to signify the conclusion of an argument one of the premises of which is from faith, the other from reason.” (Mondin 13: 888)
         4. “Here it is a question of true propositions which in themselves are not revealed, but which follow with strict necessity as conclusions of a syllogism in which one of the premises is revealed, the other or others naturally certain.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 135)
         5. “In order to have a real theological conclusion the consequence must follow from the premises by way of demonstration; i.e., it must be the result of a deductive, not of an analytic, syllogism. But, in practice, it is hard to say when a syllogism is analytic and when it is deductive. Consequently it is hard to distinguish real from apparent theological conclusions. A case in which this difficulty created great confusion was that of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, a truth formally revealed, which, however, before the bull *Ineffabilis Deus* [Pius IX, 1854,] was considered by many a theological conclusion, i.e., a virtually revealed truth.” (Mondin 13: 888)
      2. “. . . ‘theological conclusions’ are said to be virtually revealed.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 135)
      3. Theological conclusions belong to the secondary object of infallibility. (Sullivan *Magisterium* 136)
         1. “They cannot be defined as dogmas of faith, because strictly speaking they are not part of the deposit of faith. But it is [135] conceivable that the definition of such a theological conclusion might be necessary in order to elucidate a revealed truth, or to exclude some proposition contrary to it, and this would justify including what is virtually revealed in the secondary object of infallibility.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 135-36)
   3. example
      1. “The same divine nature is common to all the Persons of the Holy Trinity [truth from faith]. Now, nature is the remote principle of operation [truth from reason]. Therefore operations are common to all the Persons of the Holy Trinity [theological conclusion].” (Mondin 13: 888)
3. **objection**
   1. “The main objection against theological conclusions is that no syllogism built on premises belonging to two different levels of knowledge [faith, reason,] is correct, because it violates one of the fundamental rules of logic, the rule that prescribes that the middle term must keep the same meaning in the two premises.” (Mondin 13: 888)
      1. example
         1. “The word proceeds from the intellect. But the Son is the Word of the Father. Therefore the Word proceeds from the intellect of the Father.” (Mondin 13: 888)
         2. “It is claimed, as regards this argument, that the conclusion is wrong, because the meaning of the middle term, word, is not the same in the major and in the minor premises: what one knows from reason about the word and the intellect is entirely different from what one knows from faith.” (Mondin 13: 888)
   2. “The answer to this objection is that the fact of a concepts [*sic*] belonging to two different levels of knowledge does [888] not prevent it from having the same meaning, and, therefore, it does not prevent it from satisfying the rules of a syllogism: *terminus esto triplex* and *aut semel aut iterum medius generaliter esto*. To deny this with regard to faith and reason is to wreck the intelligibility of faith and to fall into the Averroistic theory of double truth, or into the Marcionistic theory of the unknown God.” (Mondin 13: 888-89)
   3. “It must be said, however, that theological conclusions are legitimate only when the middle term expresses something pertaining to the essence of a thing and not to a peculiar historical circumstance. This point has been brought out with the utmost clarity by F. Marin-Sola [*sic*] in his *Évolution homogne* [*sic*] *du dogme catholique*, where he distinguishes between the essence considered in itself, i.e., in its metaphysical *ratio*, and the essence considered in the concrete, i.e., in its historical and physical realization. On the ground of this distinction he shows that one is allowed to apply to Christian realities only the predicates that belong to them essentially, otherwise the terms would be equivocal and the conclusion would not be valid.” (Mondin 13: 889)
      1. example
         1. “. . . if it is revealed that God has become man in Jesus, one is authorized to conclude that He is endowed with reason and free will, but not that He is white or red. An important contribution to the understanding of theological conclusions has been given by (Y.M.J. [*sic*] Congar, who has shown that theological conclusions are not so much the result of speculative procedures as of the development of faith in its existential conditions, both human and supernatural.” (Congar, *La Foi et la thologie* 113) (Mondin 13: 888-89)
4. **degree of certitude**
   1. “Theological conclusions are strictly connected with revelation and, consequently, enter into the domain of the infallibility of the Church.” (Mondin 13: 889)
   2. “It is, however, disputed whether they enter into such a domain directly or indirectly, i.e., whether they are objects of ecclesiastical or of divine faith, and whether they are to be treated as dogma or not.” (Mondin 13: 889)

### Theological Conclusions as Virtual Revelation

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2. **definition**
   1. *definition*
      1. “Truths of faith and morals that are not formally revealed either explicitly or implicitly but that are necessary to guard and to explain the deposit of revealed truth.” (Green 198)
      2. “The Church has traditionally taught, and [defined], truths of faith and morals that are not directly and formally revealed but that are necessary for the integrity of the Christian message.” (Green 199)
      3. “Many truths have been defined that do not pertain directly and immediately to the deposit of faith. They are propositions that express a concept not formally and immediately contained in the terms of a revealed proposition . . . they are conceptually and propositionally distinct from the revealed deposit. This is possible because revelation contains mysteries that the intellect cannot fully comprehend. Since the time of the Apostles there has been no new public revelation; it is “closed,” yet the revealed mysteries are “open” to a deeper understanding and avoidance of misunderstanding.” (Green 199)
   2. “*revelation*”
      1. three types of theological proposition
         1. *formally revealed truths*: “the truths of the revealed deposit [198] . . ., e.g., articles of the Apostles’ Creed . . .” (Green 198-99)
         2. *virtually revealed truths*: “Virtual revelation is distinct from formal revelation.” [200] Virtually revealed truths “are said to be “revealed” because they possess an objective connection with revealed truth.” [198] (Green 198, 200)
         3. *other truths*: “Some truths are even further removed from direct connection with the deposit of faith, e.g., various problems of the moral life of spouses, rights and obligations of workers and employers, peace among nations. In teaching such truths the pope may not intend to apply the full force of his prudential authority in a universal manner, and then such truths are not proposed infallibly nor are they a part of virtual revelation.” (Green 199)
   3. “*virtual*”
      1. “Revelation is “virtual” because deduced from formally revealed truths of faith and morals by means of a naturally known proposition in virtue of some relationship of causality or fittingness . . .” (Green 198)
3. **certainty**
   1. “The Church has irrevocably and infallibly declared the truth of these propositions . . .” (Green 199)
      1. The Church “expects its members to accept them on faith.” (Green 199)
      2. “. . . the Church expects its members to accept [them] on divine faith.” (Green 200)
   2. Virtually revealed truths “may be defined as
      1. “infallibly true on divine faith,
      2. “infallibly safe to follow on ecclesiastical faith,
      3. “or recommended as fitting.” (Green 200)
   3. The Church “has not declared that they are revealed but leaves it to the theologians to determine just [199] how these truths may be connected to the revealed deposit.” (Green 199-200)
   4. “The magisterium determines the extent of the connection and indicates it by the solemnity with which it proposes the truth, e.g., by papal bull, or by the censure attached to its denial, e.g., excommunication.” (Green 198)
4. **examples**
   1. The canon of Scripture is a virtually revealed truth “needed to preserve its [revelation’s] sources . . .” (Green 199)
   2. Heretics can administer valid baptisms (declared at Nicaea I (325), DS 127). (Green 199)
   3. “. . . the necessity of confessing all mortal sins committed after Baptism . . .” (Green 200)
   4. “. . . the human soul of Christ always enjoyed the beatific vision.” (Green 199)
   5. “. . . to guard the supernaturality of revelation, [the Church] has defined that [198] faith gives a different and higher knowledge of God than does natural science [DS 3015].” (Green 198-99)
   6. legitimacy of popes
      1. It is revelation that Peter “has successors who possess supreme teaching authority in the Church . . .” (Green 199)
      2. But it is virtual revelation that “Pius XII was such a successor with this authority.” This is an example of “a revealed proposition applied to a particular fact . . .” (Green 199)
   7. legitimacy of councils
      1. E.g., “. . . Vatican Council I was an ecumenical council . . .” (Green 200)
   8. “determination of the matter and form of Orders” (Green 200)
      1. “. . . Pius XII defined the matter and form for Holy Orders [DS 3859].” (Green 199)
      2. “. . . Pius XII did not “reveal” anything by determining the matter and form of Orders, but he did determine for the future what part of the ceremony would essentially constitute the Sacrament.” (Green 199)
      3. (I don’t understand the preceding statement.—Hahn)
   9. “solemn canonization of saints” (Green 200)
5. **history of the concept**
   1. “Saint Thomas Aquinas, one of the first to do so, distinguished a double object of faith [*ST* 1.32.4; 2-2.11.2]: one composed of truths directly and principally believed, . . . the other composed of truths indirectly and secondarily believed insofar as their denial would lead to a denial of a revealed truth . . .” (Green 199)
   2. “Sixteenth-and seventeenth-century theologians such as [Domingo] Báñez, Gregory of Valencia, and [Juan] de Lugo applied this distinction to the magisterium, [and] later theologians adopted it . . .” (Green 199)
   3. “. . . ecclesiastical documents expressed it, e.g., Syllabus of Errors of Pius IX (Dec. 8, 1864).” (Green 199)
   4. “Present-day theologians distinguish formally revealed truth, i.e., directly and immediately revealed, from that which is virtually revealed, i.e., indirectly and mediately. Modern emphasis on development of dogma has necessitated a greater precision in terms to clarify the limits of formally revealed truth.” (Green 199)
6. **types**
   1. truths or facts
      1. “Both dogmatic facts and theological conclusions pertain to virtual revelation . . .” (Green 200)
      2. A distinction between virtually revealed “facts and truths” (199) occurs five times in Green’s article.—Hahn
   2. “Virtual revelation is divided according to its connection with revealed truth, a relationship of either necessity or fittingness.” (Green 199)
      1. relationship of necessity
         1. *absolute necessity*: “Certain truths or facts are connected to formal revelation by a relationship of absolute necessity insofar as they are needed to preserve its very sources, e.g., the determination of the canon of Scripture.” (Green 199)
         2. *moral necessity*
            1. Other truths “are needed for the [magisterium] to attain its primary end of guarding and explaining the deposit of faith, e.g., the condemnation of J. Hus’s error that neither Peter nor his successors are head of the Church [DS 1207, 1210].” (Green 199)
            2. Morally necessary virtually revealed truths include

“the condemnation of statements directly or indirectly contrary to revealed truth” (Green 199)

“contingent facts that happened after the close of revelation but that are necessary to guard or explain the truths of faith and morals as particular applications of a universal revealed proposition, e.g., Pius XII was truly Pope.” (Green 199)

* + 1. relationship of fittingness
       1. “Other truths and facts are not directly connected to revelation, yet to reason illuminated by faith they appear connected with eminent fittingness, e.g., the theological conclusion that the human soul of Christ always enjoyed the beatific vision.” (Green 199)
       2. papal pronouncements of fitting truths
          1. “The pope, using his full authority as head of the Church, may approve them as matters of faith, morals, or worship that are suitable for leading souls to the truth and holiness of God . . .” (Green 199)
          2. Or the pope “may condemn propositions contrary to them.” (Green 199)
          3. His authority guarantees infallible safety to these pronouncements, though not infallible truth.” (Green 199)

“So Pius XII denounced the hypothesis of polygenism as applied to man’s origin, since it is not apparent how it can be reconciled with the Church’s teaching on original sin and hence cannot safely be held by Catholics [DS 3897].

* + - * 1. “This is the secondary teaching message of the Church, and the truths pertain more remotely to virtual revelation. They are accepted on ecclesiastical, or mediate, faith.” (Green 199)
  1. Notice that virtual truths, whether necessary (absolutely or morally) or fitting, can be asserted by affirmation or by negation. (Green 199)
     1. Affirmatively, the Church “declares as true those facts and truths that are connected with the preserving and explaining of Christian dogma.” (Green 199)
     2. Negatively, the Church condemns “errors that imperil revealed truth . . .” (Green 199)

1. **opinions of theologians on absolutely necessary virtual revelation**
   1. Absolutely necessary virtually revealed truths are “are needed to preserve its [revelation’s] very sources . . .” (Green 199)
   2. the issue
      1. If “the truths connected to formal revelation by a relationship of absolute necessity [are] an intrinsic part of the revealed deposit,” then they are part of formal revelation. (Green 199)
      2. If “the truths connected to formal revelation by a relationship of absolute necessity [are] annexed to it from outside,” then they are part of virtual revelation. (Green 199)
   3. “There are three principal opinions.” (Green 200)
      1. first opinion: all defined truths are formal revelation.
         1. “All truths that have been infallibly and irrevocably declared as true are, and always have been, a part of the formally revealed deposit, as the implicit is contained in the explicit. . . . Hence, all truths defined irrevocably and infallibly are an intrinsic part of the revealed deposit and demand divine faith . . .” (Green 200)
         2. “It suffices to analyze the extension of the subject or the comprehension of the predicate of the revealed proposition.” (Green 200)
         3. Cyril Vollert held this view. (Green 200)
      2. second opinion: some defined truths are virtual revelation.
         1. “Truths infallibly and irrevocably declared by the Church may be a part of virtual revelation insofar as they have an intrinsic connection with the formally revealed deposit, but are conceptually distinct from it and are obtained by means of some other naturally known truth . . .” (Green 200)
         2. Here formal and virtual truths are intrinsically connected. (Green 20)
         3. Such a truth “is accepted on divine faith and may be declared as revealed by the Church (F. Marín-Sola).” (Green 200)
         4. “This also applies to an individual under a universal revealed proposition, e.g., Christ died to save all men, [all men includes me,] therefore He died to save me . . .” (So say Charles Journet and Karl Rahner.) (A died for B, B includes C,  A = C.—Hahn) (Green 200)
         5. Cyril Vollert held the second opinion. (Green 200)
      3. third opinion
         1. This “differs from the second by expressing the connection between formal and virtual as one that is necessary for the proper preserving and explaining of revealed truth, rather than as an intrinsic one . . .” (Green 200)
         2. “Nor may the Church declare such truths to be revealed, though it may and does oblige its members to accept them on divine, or theological, faith.” (Green 200)
         3. L. Ciappi holds this view. (Green 200)

### Dogmatic Theology

1. **concept of dogmatic theology**
   1. “. . . only the theoretical truths of Revelation concerning God and His activity are dealt with in dogmatic theology . . ., while the practical teachings of Revelation regulating the activity of men are the object of moral theology . . .” (Ott 3)
   2. Matthias Joseph Scheeben’s (1835-88) definition of dogmatic theology (*Dogmatik*, “Introduction” 2): “the scientific exposition of the whole theoretical doctrine revealed by God about God Himself and His activity and which we accept on the authority of the Church.” (Qtd. in Ott 3)
2. **method of dogmatic theology**
   1. “The method of dogmatic theology is both positive and speculative.” (Ott 3)
   2. “Positive dogmatic theology is concerned with doctrines that” (1) are contained in scripture and tradition, and that (2) are proposed to our belief by the Church’s teaching authority. [3] When dogmatic theology defends such doctrines, “it becomes controversial theology,” i.e., apologetics. (Ott 3-4)
   3. “Speculative dogmatic theology, which is identical with the so-called scholastic theology, [is] the application of human reason to the content of revelation.” (Ott 4)
   4. Pius XI (1922-39)
      1. Pius XI (apostolic institution *Deus scientiarum Dominus* [1931]): theology “is to be presented according to the positive as well as to the scholastic method.” (Qtd. in Ott 4)
      2. Pius XI (apostolic institution *Deus scientiarum Dominus* [1931] § 29): speculative theology is to be presented “according to the principles and teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas.” (see Aquinas, *Quodl*. 4.9.18) (Qtd. in Ott 4)

### Summary of Dogmatic Theology

“. . . all theological treatises speak of God, of the God who is one and triune, of the God who creates and justifies, of the God who is made man and suffering servant, of the God who is the source of every grace and virtue, of the God who sanctifies through the Church and the sacraments, of the God who is the blessedness of those who love and serve him.” (Latourelle 12)

“The inner dynamic of the divine life is fulfilled in the generation of the Word and the spiration of the Spirit—hence the treatise *de Deo uno* and *de Deo trino*. But there is also in [14] God an external activity, in virtue of which the divine life is communicated to creatures: God creates man and raises him to a participation in his own *life*—hence the treatises *de Deo creante et elevante*. Through original sin this life has been destroyed in man but through the Incarnation of the Word and the sacrifice of Christ new life has come into the world—hence the treatises *de Christo legato*, *de Verbo Incarnato*, *de Deo Redemptore*. The divine life is diffused within the members of Christ’s Body—hence the treatises *de Ecclesia*, *de Sacramentis*, *de Virtutibus*. There is a special treatise whose province is the study of the nature of this divine life communicated to men, the treatise *de Gratia*. Finally theology discusses man’s last end, that is the everlasting possession or the everlasting loss of this life—the treatise *de Novissimis*. Each of these treatises studies an aspect of the divine life. Indeed it is always a matter of the mystery of the divine life, which takes its source in the Trinity, is communicated to men, destroyed by sin, restored by Christ and diffused within the Church.” (Latourelle 14-15)

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* + - * 1. nature of original sin (Ott 110)

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positive solution: ***original sin consists in the deprivation of grace caused by the free act of sin committed by the head of the race***. (sententia communis) (Ott 110)

* + - * 1. transmission of original sin: ***original sin is transmitted by natural generation***. (de fide) (Ott 111)
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1. **God the redeemer** (Ott 123)
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dogma: ***Christ assumed not only a body but also a rational soul***. (de fide) (Ott 141)

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* + - * 1. the Adamite origin of Christ’s human nature: ***Christ was truly generated and born of a daughter of Adam***, ***the Virgin Mary***. (de fide) (Ott 142)
      1. union of the two natures in one person (Ott 143)
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the heresy of Nestorianism (Ott 143)

dogma: ***the divine and the human natures are united hypostatically in Christ***, ***that is***, ***joined to each other in one person***. (de fide) (Ott 144)

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dogma: ***in the hypostatic union each of the two natures of Christ continues unimpaired***, ***untransformed and unmixed with the other***. (de fide) (Ott 147)

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* + - * 1. duality of wills and modes of operation in Christ (Ott 147)

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* + - * 1. beginning and duration of the hypostatic union (Ott 150)

beginning of the hypostatic union: ***the hypostatic union of Christ***’***s human nature with the divine Logos took place at the moment of conception***. (de fide) (Ott 150)

duration of the hypostatic union (Ott 150)

***The hypostatic union was never interrupted***. (sententia certa) (Ott 150)

***The hypostatic union will never cease***. (de fide) (Ott 151)

the precious blood of Jesus Christ: ***The blood in the living body of Jesus is an integral constituent part of human nature***, ***immediately***, ***not merely mediately***, ***united with the person of the divine Logos***. (sententia certa) (Ott 151)

* + - * 1. speculation on the hypostatic union (Ott 152)

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relationship of the hypostatic union to the trinity (Ott 155)

the act of the hypostatic union: ***the hypostatic union was effected by the three divine persons acting in common***. (de fide) (Ott 155)

the terminus of the hypostatic union: ***only the second divine person became man***. (de fide) (Ott 155)

* + - * 1. inferences from the hypostatic union (Ott 156)

the natural sonship of God of the man Jesus Christ (Ott 156)

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Christ’s right to adoration (Ott 157)

dogma: ***the God-man Jesus Christ is to be venerated with one singe mode of worship***, ***the absolute worship of latria which is due to God alone***. (de fide) (Ott 157)

proof from the sources of faith (Ott 158)

speculative foundation (Ott 158)

adoration of the most sacred heart of Jesus: ***just as latria is due to the whole human nature of Christ***, ***so is it due to the individual parts of his nature***. (sententia certa) (Ott 159)

dogmatic basis of the veneration (Ott 159)

object of the veneration (Ott 159)

purpose of the veneration (Ott 160)

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* + - * 1. communication of idioms: ***Christ***’***s divine and human characteristics and activities are to be predicated of the one word incarnate***. (de fide) (Ott 160)

proofs (Ott 160)

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tradition (Ott 161)

rules concerning the predication of idioms (Ott 161)

* + - * 1. the Christological perichoresis: ***the two natures of Christ exist in the closest union***. (sententia communis) (Ott 161)
      1. the attributes of Christ’s human nature (Ott 162)
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prerogative of Christ in the domain of human knowledge (Ott 162)

immediate vision of God (Ott 162)

actuality of the immediate vision

dogma: ***Christ***’***s soul possessed the immediate vision of God from the first moment of its existence***. (sententia certa) (Ott 162)

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compatibility of the passion with the *scientia beata* (Ott 164)

object and scope of Christ’s *scientia beata* (Ott 164)

freedom of Christ’s human knowledge from ignorance and error: ***Christ***’***s human knowledge was free from positive ignorance and from error***. (sententia certa) (Ott 165)

Christ’s infused knowledge: ***from the beginning of Christ***’***s life***, ***his soul possessed infused knowledge*** (***scientia infusa***). (sententia communis) (Ott 167)

Christ’s acquired knowledge: ***Christ***’***s soul possessed also an acquired knowledge or experimental knowledge*** . . . (sententia communis) (Ott 167)

progress in Christ’s human knowledge (Ott 168)

Christ’s holiness (prerogatives of his human will) (Ott 168)

sinlessness: ***Christ was free from all sin***, ***from original sin as well as from all personal sin***. (de fide) (Ott 168)

impeccability: ***Christ has not merely not actually sinned***, ***but also could not sin***. (sententia fidei proxima) (Ott 169)

sanctity (Ott 170)

Christ’s substantial sanctity derives from the *gratia unionis*: ***by reason of the hypostatic union***, ***Christ***’***s human nature***, ***through the uncreated holiness of the word***, ***is substantially holy***. (sententia communis) (Ott 170)

Christ’s accidental holiness by reason of sanctifying grace: ***by reason of his endowment with the fullness of created habitual grace***, ***Christ***’***s soul is also accidentally holy***. (sententia certa) (Ott 170)

the fullness of grace of the head: ***sanctifying grace overflows from Christ***, ***the head***, ***to the members of his mystical body***. (sententia communis) (Ott 171)

the perfection of Christ’s human power: ***Christ***’***s humanity***, ***as instrument of the Logos***, ***possesses the power of producing supernatural effects***. (sententia certa) (Ott 172)

* + - * 1. the defects or the passibility of Christ’s human nature: Christ’s capacity for suffering (Ott 173)

the corporeal defects of Christ: ***Christ***’***s human nature was passible***. (de fide) (Ott 173)

the emotions of Christ’s soul: ***Christ***’***s soul was subject to sensual emotions***. (sententia certa) (Ott 174)

* 1. the work of the redeemer (Ott 175)
     1. the redemption in general (Ott 175)
        1. purpose of the incarnation: ***the son of God became man in order to redeem men***. (de fide) (Ott 175)
        2. controversy on the conditioned or unconditioned predestination of the incarnation (Ott 175)
           1. conditioned predestination (Ott 176)
           2. unconditioned predestination (Ott 176)
        3. concept of the redemption (Ott 177)
        4. possibility of redemption (Ott 177)
        5. necessity for and freedom of redemption (Ott 178)
           1. necessity from the side of man: ***fallen man cannot redeem himself***. (de fide) (Ott 178)
           2. freedom from the side of God (Ott 178)

***God was not compelled to redeem mankind by either an internal or an external compulsion***. (sententia certa) (Ott 178)

***Even on the presupposition of the divine resolve of redemption***, ***the incarnation was not absolutely necessary***. (sententia communis) (Ott 179)

***If God demanded a full atonement the incarnation of a divine person was necessary***. (sententia communis) (Ott 179)

* + 1. realisation of the redemption through Christ’s three offices (Ott 179)
       1. Christ’s teaching or prophetical office (Ott 179)
          1. soteriological significance of Christ’s teaching office (Ott 179)
          2. Christ as teacher and prophet according to the testimony of the sources of faith: ***Christ is the supreme prophet promised in the old covenant and the absolute teacher of humanity***. (sententia certa) (Ott 180)
       2. Christ’s pastoral or kingly office (Ott 180)
          1. soteriological significance (Ott 180)
          2. functions (Ott 181)
          3. Christ as lawgiver and judge of mankind (Ott 181)
       3. Christ’s priestly office (Ott 182)
          1. reality: ***the God-man Jesus Christ is a high priest***. (de fide) (Ott 182)
          2. exercise of the sacerdotal office or Christ’s sacrifice (Ott 183)

concept of sacrifice (Ott 183)

Christ’s sacrifice on the cross: ***Christ offered himself on the cross as a true and proper sacrifice***. (de fide) (Ott 184)

* + - * 1. soteriological importance of Christ’s sacrifice (Ott 185)

dogma: ***Christ by his sacrifice on the cross has ransomed us and reconciled us with God***. (de fide) (Ott 185)

proofs from scripture and tradition (Ott 185)

“ransomed” (Ott 185)

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inadequate patristic theories of the redemption (Ott 186)

Irenaeus’ recapitulation theory (Ott 186)

Origen’s ransom-to-Satan theory (Ott 186)

* + - * 1. Christ’s vicarious atonement (Ott 186)

the notion of atonement (Ott 186)

reality: ***Christ***, ***through his suffering and death***, ***rendered vicarious atonement to God for the sins of man***. (sententia fidei proxima) (Ott 187)

intrinsic perfection of Christ’s atonement (Ott 187)

***Christ***’***s vicarious atonement is adequate or of full value***, ***by reason of its intrinsic merit***. (sententia communior) (Ott 187)

***Christ***’***s vicarious atonement is superabundant***, ***that is***, ***the positive value of the expiation is greater than the negative value of the sin***. (sententia communis) (Ott 188)

external perfection of Christ’s atonement (Ott 188)

***Christ did not die for the predestined only***. (de fide) (Ott 188)

***Christ died not for the faithful only***, ***but for all mankind without exception***. (sententia fidei proxima) (Ott 188)

***Christ***’***s atonement does not extend to the fallen angels***. (*sic*: no classification; cf. the top of p. 120) (Ott 189)

* + - * 1. Christ’s merits (Ott 189)

notion of merit (Ott 189)

meritoriousness of Christ’s passion and death: ***Christ***, ***through his passion and death***, ***merited reward from God***. (de fide) (Ott 189)

object of Christ’s merit (Ott 190)

***Christ merited for himself the condition of exaltation*** (***resurrection***, ***transfiguration of the body***, ***ascension into heaven***). (sententia certa) (Ott 190)

***Christ merited all supernatural graces received by fallen mankind***. (sententia certa) (Ott 190)

* + 1. the glorious conclusion of Christ’s work of redemption (Ott 191)
       1. descent into hell: ***after his death***, ***Christ***’***s soul***, ***which was separated from his body***, ***descended into the underworld***. (de fide) (Ott 191)
       2. resurrection (Ott 192)
          1. dogma: ***on the third day after his death Christ rose gloriously from the dead***. (de fide) (Ott 192)
          2. foundation (Ott 193)
          3. significance (Ott 193)
       3. ascension (Ott 194)
          1. dogma: ***Christ ascended body and soul into heaven and sits at the right hand of the father***. (de fide) (Ott 194)
          2. foundation (Ott 194)
          3. significance (Ott 194)
  1. the mother of the redeemer (Ott 196)
     1. Mary’s motherhood of God (Ott 196)
        1. reality of Mary’s motherhood of God (Ott 196)
           1. Nestorianism (Ott 196)
           2. dogma: ***Mary is truly the mother of God***. (de fide) (Ott 196)
           3. proofs (Ott 196)

scripture (Ott 196)

tradition (Ott 196)

* + - 1. Mary’s objective dignity deriving from her motherhood of God (Ott 197)
      2. Mary’s plenitude of grace deriving from her motherhood of God (Ott 198)
    1. privileges of the mother of God (Ott 199)
       1. immaculate conception (Ott 199)
          1. dogma: ***Mary was conceived without stain of original sin***. (de fide) (Ott 199)
          2. proofs (Ott 196)

scripture (Ott 196)

tradition (Ott 196)

historical development of dogma (Ott 201)

reason (Ott 202)

* + - 1. freedom from concupiscence: ***from her conception Mary was free from all motions of concupiscence***. (sententia communis) (Ott 202)
      2. freedom from actual sin: ***in consequence of a special privilege of grace from God***, ***Mary was free from every personal sin during her whole life***. (sententia fidei proxima) (Ott 203)
      3. perpetual virginity: ***Mary was a virgin before***, ***during and after Jesus***’ ***birth***. (Ott 203)
         1. before birth: ***Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit without the co-operation of man***. (de fide) (Ott 204)
         2. during birth: ***Mary bore her son without any violation of her virginal integrity***. (de fide on the ground of the general promulgation of doctrine) (Ott 205)
         3. after birth: ***also after the birth of Jesus Mary remained a virgin***. (de fide) (Ott 206)
      4. bodily assumption into heaven (Ott 207)
         1. death: ***Mary suffered a temporal death***. (sententia communis) (Ott 207)
         2. dogma: ***Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven***. (de fide) (Ott 208)
         3. proofs (Ott 208)

scripture (Ott 208)

tradition (Ott 208)

historical development of the dogma (Ott 210)

reason (Ott 209)

freedom from sin (Ott 209)

motherhood of God (Ott 209)

perpetual virginity (Ott 209)

participation in the work of Christ (Ott 209)

* + - * 1. queenship of Mary (Ott 211)
    1. Mary’s co-operation in the work of redemption (Ott 211)
       1. mediatorship of Mary (Ott 211)
          1. ***Mary gave the redeemer***, ***the source of all graces***, ***to the world***, ***and in this way she is the channel of all graces***; ***Mary is the mediatrix of all graces by her co-operation in the incarnation*** (***mediatio in universali***). (sententia certa) (Ott 212)
          2. ***Since Mary***’***s assumption into heaven no grace is conferred on man without her actual intercessory co-operation***; ***Mary is the mediatrix of all graces by her intercession in heaven*** (***mediatio in speciali***). (sententia pia et probabilis) (Ott 212, 213)
       2. veneration of Mary: ***Mary***, ***the mother of God***, ***is entitled to the cult of hyperdulia***. (sententia certa) (Ott 215)
          1. theological proof (Ott 215)
          2. historical development (Ott 215)

1. **God the sanctifier** (Ott 217)
   1. grace (Ott 219)
      1. grace in general (Ott 219)
         1. subjective redemption in general (Ott 219)
         2. concept of grace (Ott 219)
            1. grace in scripture (Ott 219)
            2. the language of theology (Ott 220)
            3. causes of grace (Ott 220)
         3. classification of grace (Ott 220)
            1. gratia increata—gratia creata (Ott 220)
            2. gratia dei (creatoris)—gratia Christi (redemptoris) (Ott 221)
            3. gratia externa—gratia interna (Ott 221)
            4. gratia gratis data—gratia gratum faciens (Ott 221)
            5. gratia habitualis (sanctificans)—gratia actualis (Ott 222)
            6. gratia actualis is distinguished into: (Ott 222)

gratia illuminationis and gratia imspirationis (Ott 222)

gratia praeveniens and gratia subsequens (Ott 222)

gratia sufficiens and gratia efficax (Ott 222)

* + - 1. principal errors concerning grace (Ott 222)
         1. Pelagianism (Ott 222)
         2. Semi-pelagianism (Ott 223)
         3. reformers (Ott 223)
         4. Baius, Jansenius, Quesnel (Ott 224)
         5. modern rationalism (Ott 224)
    1. actual grace (Ott 225)
       1. nature of actual grace (Ott 225)
          1. enlightening and strengthening grace (Ott 225)

concept of actual grace (Ott 225)

nature of actual grace (Ott 225)

dogma: ***actual grace internally and directly enlightens the understanding and strengthens the will***. (sententia certa) (Ott 225)

proofs (Ott 226)

scripture (Ott 226)

tradition (Ott 226)

reason (Ott 226)

* + - * 1. antecedent grace: ***there is a supernatural intervention of God in the faculties of the soul***, ***which precedes the free act of the will***. (de fide) (Ott 226)
        2. Consequent grace: ***there is a supernatural influence of God in the faculties of the soul which coincides in time with man***’***s free act of will***. (de fide) (Ott 227)
        3. controversy on the nature of actual grace (Ott 228)
      1. necessity of actual grace (Ott 229)
         1. necessity of grace for the acts of the supernatural order (Ott 229)

necessity of grace for every salutary act: ***for every salutary act internal supernatural grace of God*** (***gratia elevans***) ***is absolutely necessary***. (de fide) (Ott 229)

necessity of grace for the beginning of faith and of salvation: ***internal supernatural grace is absolutely necessary for the beginning of faith and of salvation***. (de fide) (Ott 229)

necessity of actual grace for the salutary acts of the justified: ***the justified also require actual grace for the performance of salutary acts***. (Ott 230)

necessity of grace for final perseverance: ***without the special help of God the justified cannot persevere to the end in justification***. (de fide) (Ott 231)

necessity of a special privilege of grace for the permanent avoiding of all venial sins: ***the justified person is not able for his whole life long to avoid all sins***, ***even venial sins***, ***without the special privilege of the grace of God***. (de fide) (Ott 232)

* + - * 1. human nature’s capacity to act without grace, and the limits of this capacity (Ott 233)

capacity of the merely natural man to act (Ott 233)

***Even in the fallen state***, ***man can***, ***by his natural intellectual power***, ***know religious and moral truths***. (de fide) (Ott 233)

***For the performance of a morally good action sanctifying grace is not required***. (de fide) (Ott 234)

***The grace of faith is not necessary for the performance of a morally good action***. (sententia certa) (Ott 234)

***Actual grace is not necessary for the performance of a morally good action***. (sententia certa) (Ott 235)

limits of natural capability

***In the state of fallen nature it is morally impossible for man without supernatural revelation***, ***to know easily***, ***with absolute certainty and without admixture of error***, ***all religious and moral truths of the natural order***. (de fide) (Ott 235)

***In the condition of fallen nature it is morally impossible for man without restoring grace*** (***gratia sanans***) ***to fulfil the entire moral law and to overcome all serious temptations for any considerable period of time***. (sententia certa) (Ott 236)

* + - 1. distribution of actual grace (Ott 236)
         1. God’s freedom in the distribution of grace or the gratuity of grace (Ott 236)

***Grace cannot be merited by natural works either de condigno or de congruo***. (de fide) (Ott 236)

***Grace cannot be obtained by petitions deriving from purely natural prayer***. (sententia certa) (Ott 237)

***Man of himself cannot acquire any positive disposition for grace***. (sententia certa) (Ott 237)

the axiom, “facienti quod est in se, deus non denegat gratiam.” (Ott 238)

* + - * 1. universality of grace (Ott 238)

God’s universal will for salvation considered in itself: ***despite men***’***s sins God truly and earnestly desires the salvation of all men***. (sententia fidei proxima) (Ott 239)

God’s universal desire for salvation in its practical operation (Ott 240)

***God gives all the just sufficient grace*** (***gratia proxime vel remote sufficiens***) ***for the observation of the divine commandments***. (de fide) (Ott 240)

***God gives all the faithful who are sinners sufficient faith*** (***gratia saltem remote sufficiens***) ***for conversion***. (sententia communis) (Ott 240)

***God gives all innocent unbelievers*** (***infideles negativi***) ***sufficient grace to achieve eternal salvation***. (sententia certa) (Ott 241)

* + - * 1. predestination (Ott 242)

meaning of “predestination” (Ott 242)

all God’s willings (Ott 242)

God’s willings concerning the destination of persons to heaven or hell (Ott 272)

God’s willings concerning the destination of persons to heaven (Ott 242)

reality of predestination: ***God***, ***by his eternal resolve of will***, ***has predetermined certain men to eternal blessedness***. (de fide) (Ott 242)

basis of predestination (Ott 243)

the problem (Ott 243)

attempts at solution (Ott 243)

Thomists (Ott 243)

Molinists

properties of predestination (Ott 244)

* + - * 1. reprobation (Ott 244)

dogma: ***God***, ***by an eternal resolve of his will***, ***predestines certain men***, ***on account of their foreseen sins***, ***to eternal rejection***. (de fide) (Ott 245)

positive reprobation

negative reprobation

properties of reprobation

* + - 1. relation between grace and freedom
         1. dogmas on grace and freedom (Ott 246)

freedom of the will under the influence of efficacious grace: ***the human will remains free under the influence of efficacious grace***, ***which is not irresistible***. (Ott 246)

*gratia vere et mere sufficiens*: ***there is a grace which is truly sufficient and yet remains inefficacious*** (***gratia vere et mere sufficiens***). (de fide) (Ott 247)

* + - * 1. speculation on the relation between grace and freedom (Ott 248)

the problem (Ott 248)

Thomism (Ott 248)

Augustinianism (Ott 248)

Molinism (Ott 248)

congruism (Ott 249)

syncretism (Ott 249)

* + 1. habitual grace (Ott 250)
       1. process of justification (Ott 250)
          1. concept of justification (Ott 250)

reformers’ concept (Ott 250)

true concept (Ott 250)

* + - * 1. causes of justification (Ott 251)
        2. preparation for justification (Ott 252)

possibility and necessity of preparation: ***the sinner can and must prepare himself by the help of actual grace for the reception of the grace by which he is justified***. (de fide) (Ott 252)

faith and justification: ***the justification of an adult is not possible without faith***. (de fide) (Ott 252)

necessity of other acts of disposition besides faith: ***besides faith***, ***further acts of disposition must be present***. (de fide) (Ott 253)

* + - 1. state of justification (Ott 254)
         1. nature of sanctifying grace (Ott 254)

ontological definition of sanctifying grace

***Sanctifying grace is a created supernatural gift really distinct from God***. (sententia fidei proxima) (Ott 254)

***Santifying grace is a supernatural state of being which is infused by God***, ***and which permanently inheres in the soul***. (sententia certa) (Ott 255)

***Sanctifying grace is not a substance***, ***but a real accident***, ***which inheres in the soul-substance***. (sententia certa) (Ott 255)

***Sanctifying grace is really distinct from charity***. (sententia communior) (Ott 256)

theological definition of sanctifying grace: ***supernatural grace is a participation in the divine nature***. (sententia certa) (Ott 256)

* + - * 1. formal effects of sanctifying grace

santification of the soul: ***sanctifying grace sanctifies the soul***. (de fide) (Ott 257)

beauty of the soul: ***sanctifying grace bestows supernatural beauty on the soul***. (sententia communis) (Ott 257)

friendship with God: ***sanctifying grace makes the just man a friend of God***. (de fide) (Ott 258)

kinship with God: ***sanctifying grace makes the just man a child of God and gives him a claim to the inheritance of heaven***. (de fide) (Ott 258)

indwelling of the Holy Spirit: ***sanctifying grace makes the just man a temple of the Holy Spirit***. (sententia certa) (Ott 259)

* + - * 1. comity of sanctifying grace (supernatural gifts accompanying it) (Ott 259)

theological virtues: ***the three divine or theologial virtues of faith***, ***hope and charity are infused with santifying grace***. (de fide) (Ott 260)

moral virtues: ***the moral virtues also are infused with sanctifying grace***. (sententia communis) (Ott 260)

gifts of the Holy Spirit: ***the gifts of the holy ghost also are infused with santifying grace***. (sententia communis) (Ott 261)

* + - * 1. attributes of the state of grace

uncertainty: ***without special divine revelation no one can know with the certainty of faith***, ***if he be in the state of grace***. (de fide) (Ott 261)

inequality

***The degree of justifying grace is not identical in all the just***. (de fide) (Ott 262)

***Grace can be increased by good works***. (de fide) (Ott 262)

possibility of losing grace (Ott 263)

loss of grace: ***the grace by which we are justified may be lost***, ***and is lost by every grievous sin***. (de fide) (Ott 263)

loss of the infused virtues and gifts of the holy ghost: ***the loss of sanctifying grace always involves the loss of charity***. (Ott 263)

* + - 1. consequences or fruits of justification or the doctrine concerning merit (Ott 264)
         1. reality of supernatural merit

heresies (Ott 264)

dogma: ***by his good works the justified man really acquires a claim to supernatural reward from God***. (de fide) (Ott 264)

the doctrine in scripture and tradition (Ott 264)

* + - * 1. the conditions of supernatural merit

the meritorious work itself (Ott 265)

the person meriting (Ott 266)

on the side of the rewarding God (Ott 267)

* + - * 1. the object of supernatural merit

object of meritum de condigno: ***a just man merits for himself through each good work an increase of sanctifying grace***, ***eternal life*** (***if he dies in a state of grace***) ***and an increase of heavenly glory***. (de fide) (Ott 267)

object of meritum de congruo (Ott 268)

* 1. the Church (Ott 270)
     1. divine origin of the Church (Ott 270)
        1. concept of Church (Ott 270)
           1. the word “Church” (Ott 270)
           2. material explanation: ***the Church is the mystical body of Jesus Christ***. (sententia certa) (Ott 270)
           3. classification (Ott 271)
        2. foundation of the Church by Christ (Ott 272)
           1. dogma: ***The Church was founded by Jesus***. (de fide) (Ott 272)
           2. proofs (Ott 272)

scripture (Ott 272)

tradition (Ott 272)

* + - 1. purpose of the Church (Ott 274)
         1. propagation of the mission of Christ: ***Christ founded the Church in order to continue his work of redemption for all time***. (de fide) (Ott 274)
         2. inferences (Ott 275)

***By reason of her purpose and the means she uses to effect it***, ***the Church is a supernatural spiritual society***. (sententia certa) (Ott 275)

***The Church is a perfect society***. (sententia certa) (Ott 275)

* + 1. constitution of the Church (Ott 276)
       1. hierarchical constitution (Ott 276)
          1. divine origin of the hierarchy: ***Christ gave his Church an hierarchical constitution***. (de fide) (Ott 276)

heresies (Ott 276)

proofs (Ott 277)

scripture (Ott 277)

“Christ delegated to the Apostles the mission which He, as man, received from the Father . . .” (Ott 277)

John 20:21, “Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.””

“Christ’s mission embraces His three-fold office of Redeemer.” (Ott 277)

“He gave them the mandate to proclaim His Gospel through the whole world . . .” (Ott 277)

Matt 28:19, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit . . .”

Mark 16:15, “And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.””

He “endowed them with His authority . . .” (Ott 277)

Luke 10:16, “Whoever listens to you listens to me, and whoever rejects you rejects me, and whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me.”

Matt 10:40, “Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.”

He “promised them a wide power of binding and loosing . . .” (Ott 277)

Matt 18:18, “Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

He “transferred to them sacerdotal powers . . .” (Ott 277)

*of baptism*: Matt 28:19, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit . . .”

*of celebrating the Eucharist*: Luke 22:19, “Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.””

*of forgiving sins*: John 20:23, “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

tradition (Ott 277)

* + - * 1. perpetuation of the hierarchy: ***The powers bestowed on the apostles have descended to the bishops***. (de fide) (Ott 278)
      1. primacy of Peter (Ott 279)
         1. dogma: ***Christ appointed the apostle Peter to be the first of all the apostles and to be the visible head of the whole Church***, ***by appointing him immediately and personally to the primacy of jurisdiction***. (de fide) (Ott 279)

heresies (Ott 279)

proofs (Ott 280)

scripture (Ott 280)

tradition (Ott 281)

Peter and Paul (Ott 281)

* + - 1. primacy of jurisdiction of the pope (Ott 282)
         1. perpetuation of the primacy: ***According to Christ***’***s ordinance***, ***Peter is to have successors in his primacy over the whole Church and for all time***. (de fide) (Ott 282)
         2. primacy and the see of Rome: ***The successors of Peter in the primacy are the bishops of Rome***. (de fide) (Ott 282)
      2. nature of papal primacy (Ott 285)
         1. dogma: ***The pope possesses full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the whole Church***, ***not merely in matters of faith and morals***, ***but also in Church discipline and in the government of the Church***. (de fide) (Ott 285) The primacy is:

legislative, executive, and judicial (Ott 285)

universal (Ott 285)

supreme (Ott 285)

full (Ott 285)

ordinary (connected with the office) (Ott 285)

episcopal (he is universal bishop of the whole church) (Ott 286)

immediate (Ott 286)

* + - * 1. inferences (Ott 286)

state interference between the pope and his subjects is rejected (Ott 286)

the pope is bound by divine law alone, not Church decisions (Ott 286)

a papal judgment cannot be appealed to a general council (Ott 286)

* + - 1. papal infallibility (Ott 286)
         1. dogma: ***The pope is infallible when he speaks ex cathedra***. (Ott 286)

conditions (Ott 287)

he speaks as universal bishop of the Church, not as bishop of his diocese or as private theologian (Ott 287)

his intention to decide finally a teaching of faith or morals must be clear in the formulation or the circumstances (Ott 287)

proofs (Ott 287)

scripture (Ott 287)

tradition (Ott 288)

* + - 1. bishops (Ott 289)
         1. nature of episcopal power: ***By divine right bishops possess an ordinary power of government over their dioceses***. (de fide) (Ott 289) Episcopal power is:

ordinary (connected with the office) (Ott 290)

appointed by God (Ott 290)

pastoral, therefore legislative, executive, and judicial (Ott 290)

limited (Ott 290)

* + - * 1. manner of conferrence: ***A bishop receives his power immediately from the pope***. (sententia probabilior) (Ott 290)
    1. internal constitution of the Church (Ott 291)
       1. Christ and the Church (Ott 291)
          1. ***Christ founded the Church***. (de fide) (Ott 291)
          2. ***Christ is the head of the Church***. (de fide) (Ott 292)
          3. ***Christ conserves the Church with divine power***. (Pius XII) (Ott 293)
          4. ***Christ redeems the Church***. (Pius XII) (Ott 294)
       2. the Holy Spirit and the Church (Ott 294)
          1. ***The Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church***. (sententia communis) (Ott 294)
          2. The lawfully organized, visible commonwealth of the faithful is the body of the Church. (Ott 295)
    2. properties (essential attributes) of the Church (Ott 296)
       1. indefectibility: ***The Church is indefectible***, ***that is***, ***she remains and will remain the institution of salvation***, ***founded by Christ***, ***until the end of the world***. (sententia certa) (Ott 296)
       2. infallibility
          1. dogma: ***In the final decision on doctrines concerning faith and morals the Church is infallible***. (de fide) (Ott 297)
          2. object of infallibility (Ott 298)

***The primary object of the infallibility is the formally revealed truths of Christian doctrine concerning faith and morals***. (de fide) (Ott 298)

***The secondary object of the infallibility is truths of the Christian teaching on faith and morals***, ***which are not formally revealed***, ***but which are closely connected with the teaching of revelation***. (sententia certa) (Ott 299)

theologial conclusions derived by reason from a formally revealed truth (Ott 299)

*facta dogmatica*, historical facts on which truths of revelation depend (Ott 299)

natural truths of reason connected with truths of revelation (Ott 299)

canonization of saints (Ott 299)

possessors of infallibility (Ott 299)

pope: ***The pope is infallible when he speaks ex cathedra***. (de fide) (Ott 299)

episcopate: ***The totality of the bishops is infallible***, ***when they***, ***either assembled in general council or scattered over the earth***, ***propose a teaching of fath or morals as one to be held by all the faithful***. (de fide) (Ott 299)

extraordinary magisterium (Ott 300)

ordinary magisterium (Ott 300)

* + - 1. visibility of the Church (Ott 301)
         1. external side of the Church: ***The Church founded by Christ is an external visible commonwealth***. (sententia certa) (Ott 301)
         2. the inner, invisible side of the Church (Ott 302)
      2. unity of the Church: ***The Church is unique and one***. (de fide) (Ott 302)
         1. unity of faith (Ott 303)
         2. unity of communion (Ott 303)
      3. sanctity of the Church (Ott 304)
         1. sanctity as an essential attribute of the Church: ***The Church is holy***. (de fide) (Ott 304)
         2. the Church and sin: ***Not only those members who are holy but the sinners also belong to the Church***. (sententia certa) (Ott 306)
      4. catholicity of the Church: ***The Church is catholic***. (de fide) (Ott 306)
      5. apostolicity of the Church: ***The Church is apostolic***. (de fide) (Ott 308)
    1. necessity of the Church (Ott 309)
       1. membership of the Church (Ott 309)
          1. dogma: ***The members of the Church are those who have validly received the sacrament of baptism and who are not separated from the unity of the confession of the faith***, ***and from the unity of the lawful communion of the Church***. (sententia certa) (Ott 309)
          2. proof (Ott 310)

scripture (Ott 310)

tradition (Ott 310)

inference: non-members of the Church include:

unbaptized (Ott 311)

apostates (Ott 311)

heretics (Ott 311)

schismatics (Ott 311)

excommunicati vitandi (those “severed . . . for very grave crimes, by the legitimate authority,” Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*) (Ott 311)

* + - 1. necessity for membership of the Church: ***Membership of the Church is necessary for all men for salvation***. (de fide) (Ott 312)
    1. the communion of saints (Ott 314)
       1. concept and reality: ***The members of the kingdom of God on earth and in the other world sanctified by the redeeming grace of Christ are united in a common supernatural life with the head of the Church and with one another***. (sententia certa) (Ott 314)
       2. communion of the faithful living on earth (Ott 315)
          1. intercessory prayer: ***By intercessory prayer the faithful on earth can procure gifts from God for one another***. (sententia certa) (Ott 315)
          2. merits for others: ***By good works performed in the state of grace the faithful on earth an merit de congruo gifts from God***. (sententia probabilis) (Ott 316)
          3. vicarious atonement: ***The faithful on earth can***, ***by their good works performed in a state of grace***, ***render atonement for one another***. (sententia certa) (Ott 317)
       3. communion between the faithful on earth and the saints in heaven (Ott 318)
          1. veneration and invocation of the saints: ***It is permissible and profitable to venerate the saints in heaven and to invoke their intercession***. (de fide) (Ott 318)
          2. veneration of relics of the saints: ***It is permissible and profitable to venerate the relics of the saints***. (de fide) (Ott 319)
          3. veneration of images of the saints: ***It is permissible and profitable to venerate images of the saints***. (de fide) (Ott 320)
       4. communion of the faithful on earth and the saints in heaven with the poor souls in purgatory (Ott 321)
          1. possibility of suffrages: ***The living faithful can come to the assistance of the souls in purgatory by their intercessions*** (***suffrages***). (de fide) (Ott 321)
          2. efficacy of suffrages (Ott 322)
          3. intercession of the saints for the souls in purgatory: ***The saints in heaven also can come to the help of the souls in purgatory by their intercession***. (sententia communis) (Ott 322)
          4. intercession and invocation of the poor souls: ***The souls in purgatory can intercede for other members of the mystical body***. (sententia probabilis) (Ott 323)
       5. appendix: suffrages for the damned?: ***Suffrages are of no profit to the damned in hell as they do not belong to the mystical body of Christ***. (sententia communis) (Ott 323)
  1. sacraments (Ott 325)
     1. in general (Ott 325)
        1. nature of the sacraments (Ott 325)
           1. concept of sacrament (Ott 325)

explanation of the word (Ott 325)

explanation of the doctrine: ***The sacraments of the new covenant are effective signs of grace instituted by Christ***. (Ott 326)

Protestant concept of sacrament (Ott 327)

* + - * 1. constituent parts of the sacramental sign (Ott 325)

matter and form: ***The outward sign of the sacraments is composed of two essential parts***, ***namely***, ***thing and word***. (sententia fidei proxima) (Ott 327)

moral unity of both (Ott 328)

*sacramentum* (outward sign) and *res sacramenti* (inner operation of grace) (Ott 328)

It is appropriate that there be signs of grace perceptible to the senses. (Ott 328)

* + - 1. efficacy and effects of the sacraments (Ott 328)
         1. objective efficacy (Ott 328)

sacraments and grace: ***The sacraments of the new covenant contain the grace which they signify and bestow it on those who do not hinder it***. (de fide) (Ott 328)

***The sacraments work ex opere operato***. (de fide) (Ott 329)

* + - * 1. mode of operation of the sacraments (Ott 328)

physical mode of operation (Ott 330)

moral mode of operation (Ott 331)

intentional mode of operation (Ott 331)

criticism (Ott 331)

objections (Ott 331)

spatial distance between minister and recipient (Ott 331)

temporal sequence of the rite (Ott 331)

revival (Ott 332)

* + - * 1. effects of the sacraments (Ott 332)

sacramental grace (Ott 332)

sanctifying grace: ***All the sacraments of the new covenant confer sanctifying grace on the receivers***. (de fide) (Ott 332)

specific sacramental grace: ***Each individual sacrament confers a specific sacramental grace***. (sententia communis) (Ott 332)

measure of the sacramental grace (Ott 333)

sacramental character (Ott 333)

reality: ***Three sacraments***, ***baptism***, ***confirmation***, ***and orders***, ***imprint a character***, ***that is***, ***an indelible spiritual mark***, ***and for this reason cannot be repeated***. (de fide) (Ott 333)

nature: ***The sacramental character is a spiritual mark imprinted on the soul***. (de fide) (Ott 334)

purpose: ***The sacramental character confers the full power for the performance of acts of Christian worship***. (sententia communis) (Ott 335)

duration: ***The sacramental character continues at least until the death of its bearer***. (de fide) (Ott 335)

* + - 1. institution and sevenfold nature of the sacraments (Ott 336)
         1. institution of the sacraments by Christ (Ott 336)

institution by Christ: ***All sacraments of the new covenant were instituted by Christ***. (de fide) (Ott 336)

immediate institution: ***Christ instituted all the sacraments immediately and personally***. (sententia certa) (Ott 336)

substance: ***Christ fixed the substance of the sacraments***: ***the Church has no power to alter them***. (sententia certa) (Ott 337)

accidental rites (Ott 338)

* + - * 1. seven sacraments: ***There are seven sacraments of the new covenant***. (de fide) (Ott 338)

theological proof (Ott 338)

proof from prescription (Ott 338)

historical proof (Ott 339)

speculative foundation (Ott 339)

* + - * 1. necessity of the sacraments (Ott 340)

on God’s part: ***God can communicate grace even without the sacraments***. (Ott 340)

on humans’ part: ***The sacraments of the new covenant are necessary for the salvation of mankind***. (Ott 340)

* + - 1. minister and recipient of the sacraments (Ott 341)
         1. minister (Ott 341)

minister’s person (Ott 341)

primary and secondary ministers (Ott 341)

primary: ***The primary minister of the sacraments is Christ***. (sententia certa) (Ott 341)

secondary: ***The secondary minister of the sacraments is man in the wayfaring state***. (sententia communis) (Ott 341)

minister’s state of grace: ***The validity and efficacy of a sacrament is independent of the minister***’***s state of grace***. (de fide) (Ott 342)

minister’s orthodoxy: ***The validity and efficacy of a sacrament is independent of the minister***’***s orthodoxy***. (re baptism: de fide; re other sacraments: sententia proxima fidei) (Ott 342)

minister’s worthiness (Ott 342)

minister’s activity (Ott 343)

***For the valid dispensing of the sacraments it is necessary that the minister accomplish the sacramental sign in the proper manner***. (de fide) (Ott 343)

***The minister must further have the intention at least of doing what the Church does***. (de fide) (Ott 343)

necessity of intention (Ott 343)

nature of the required intention (Ott 343)

inadequacy of a merely external intention (Ott 344)

* + - * 1. recipient (Ott 344)

person: ***Only a person in the wayfaring state can validly receive a sacrament***. (sententia communis) (Ott 344)

conditions for valid reception (Ott 345)

***Excepting penance***, ***neither orthodox belief nor moral worthiness is necessary for the validity of the sacrament***. (sententia communis) (Ott 345)

***For adults***, ***the intention of receiving the sacrament is necessary***. (sententia certa) (Ott 345)

conditions for worthy reception: ***For adults***, ***moral worthiness is necessary for the fruitful reception of the sacraments***. (de fide) (Ott 346)

revival of the sacraments: ***Baptism***, ***confirmation***, ***and consecration***, ***when received validly but unworthily***, ***revive after the removal of the moral indisposition***; ***that is***, ***the sacramental grace is conferred subsequently***. (sententia communis) (Ott 346)

* + - 1. pre-Christian sacraments (Ott 347)
         1. existence (Ott 347)

primitive era (Ott 347)

natural-law era (Ott 347)

Mosaic-Law era (Ott 347)

* + - * 1. efficacy: ***The Old-Testament sacraments wrought***, ***ex opere operato***, ***not grace***, ***but merely an external lawful purity***. (Ott 348)
      1. sacramentals (Ott 348)
         1. concept (Ott 348)
         2. types (Ott 348)

ceremonies associated with sacraments (Ott 348)

independent religious actions: exorcisms, blessings, and consecrations (Ott 348-9)

blessed and consecrated objects (Ott 349)

use of blessed and consecrated objects (Ott 349)

* + - * 1. differences between sacraments and sacramentals (Ott 349)

institution (Ott 349)

efficacy (Ott 349)

effects (Ott 349)

* + 1. the seven sacraments (Ott 350)
       1. baptism (Ott 350)
          1. concept (Ott 350)

sacramental nature: ***Baptism is a true sacrament instituted by Christ***. (de fide) (Ott 350)

proofs (Ott 350)

scripture (Ott 350)

tradition (Ott 351)

time of institution (Ott 351)

* + - * 1. outward sign (Ott 352)

matter (Ott 352)

***The remote matter of the sacrament of baptism is true and natural water***. (de fide) (Ott 352)

***The proximate matter is the ablution***, ***by physical contact***, ***of the body with water***. (sententia certa) (Ott 352)

form: ***The form of baptism consists in the words of the minister which accompany it and more closely determine it***. (Ott 353)

invocation of the Trinity (Ott 353)

designation of the act of baptism (Ott 354)

* + - * 1. effects (Ott 354)

justification: ***Baptism confers the grace of justification***. (de fide) (Ott 354)

remission of the punishments of sin: ***Baptism effects the remission of all punishments of sin***, ***both the eternal and the temporal***. (de fide) (Ott 355)

baptismal character: ***Even if it be unworthily received***, ***valid baptism imprints on the soul of the recipient an indelible spiritual mark***, ***the baptismal character***, ***and for this reason***, ***the sacrament cannot be repeated***. (de fide) (Ott 355)

* + - * 1. necessity (Ott 356)

necessity: ***Baptism by water is***, ***since the promulgation of the gospel***, ***necessary for all persons for salvation***, ***without exception***. (de fide) (Ott 356)

substitutes: ***In case of emergency baptism by water can be replaced by baptism of desire or baptism by blood***. (sententia fidei proxima) (Ott 356)

baptism of desire (Ott 356)

baptism of blood (Ott 357)

* + - * 1. minister (Ott 358)

person: ***Baptism can be validly administered by anyone***. (de fide) (Ott 358)

rite (Ott 358)

* + - * 1. recipient (Ott 359)

***Baptism can be received by any person in the wayfaring state who is not already baptized***. (de fide) (Ott 359)

adults (Ott 359)

young children: ***The baptism of young children is valid and licit***. (de fide) (Ott 359)

* + - 1. confirmation (Ott 361)
         1. concept (Ott 361)

definition (Ott 361)

***Confirmation is a true sacrament properly so-called***. (de fide) (Ott 361)

proofs (Ott 361)

scripture (Ott 361)

tradition (Ott 362)

* + - * 1. outward sign (Ott 363)

matter (Ott 363)

form: ***The form of confirmation consists in the words which the minister speaks when he imposes his hands on the recipient and anoints his forehead***. (sententia communis) (Ott 365)

* + - * 1. effects (Ott 365)

grace (Ott 365)

***As a sacrament of the living***, ***confirmation effects*** (**per se**) ***an increase of sanctifying grace***. (sententia certa) (Ott 365)

***The specific operation of confirmation is the perfection of baptismal grace***. (sententia communis) (Ott 366)

character imposed: ***Confirmation imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual mark***, ***and for this reason cannot be repeated***. (de fide) (Ott 366)

* + - * 1. necessity (Ott 367)

for the individual: ***A baptized person an achieve eternal salvation without confirmation***. (sententia fidei proxima) (Ott 367)

confirmation of desire (Ott 368)

* + - * 1. minister (Ott 368)

ordinary minister: ***The ordinary minister of confirmation is the bishop alone***. (Ott 368)

extraordinary minister: ***The extraordinary minister of confirmation is a priest on whom this full power is conferred by the common law or by a special apostolic indult***. (sententia certa) (Ott 369)

* + - * 1. recipient (Ott 369)

***Confirmation can be received by any baptized person who is not already confirmed***. (sententia certa) (Ott 369)

***The repetition of confirmation is invalid and grievously sinful***. (Ott 370)

* + - 1. Eucharist (Ott 370)
         1. concept (Ott 370)

definition (Ott 370)

prototypes (Ott 370)

sublimity (Ott 370)

* + - * 1. real presence of Christ (Ott 371): ***The body and blood of Jesus are truly***, ***really***, ***and substantially present in the Eucharist***. (de fide) (Ott 373)

fact of the real presence (Ott 371)

heretical counter-theses (Ott 371)

antiquity (Ott 371)

middle ages (Ott 371)

modern times (Ott 372)

proofs (Ott 373)

scripture (Ott 373)

John 6:22-71 (Ott 373)

institution narratives (1 Cor 11:23-25, Matt 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-34, Luke 22:15-20) (Ott 374)

tradition (Ott 375)

pre-Nicene fathers (Ott 375)

post-Nicene fathers (Ott 377)

transubstantiation (the effecting of Christ’s real presence) (Ott 379)

concept (Ott 380)

dogma: ***Christ becomes present in the sacrament of the altar by the transformation of the whole substance of the bread into his body and of the whole substance of the wine into his blood***. (de fide) (Ott 379)

proofs (Ott 381)

scripture (Ott 381)

tradition (Ott 381)

sacramental accidents (Ott 383)

***The accidents of bread and wine continue after the change of substance***. (de fide) (Ott 383)

***The sacramental accidents retain their physical reality after the change of substance***. (sententia certa) (Ott 383)

no subject of inhesion: ***The sacramental accidents continue without a subject in which to inhere***. (sententia certa) (Ott 383)

nature and manner of the real presence (Ott 384)

totality of the presence (Ott 384)

total presence of Christ: ***The body and blood of Jesus together with his divinity and therefore the whole Christ are truly present in the Eucharist***. (de fide) (Ott 384)

under each species: ***The whole Christ is present under each of the two species***. (de fide) (Ott 385)

in every part: ***When either consecrated species is divided***, ***the whole Christ is present in each part of the species***. (de fide) (Ott 385)

permanence of the real presence (Ott 386)

continuance: ***After the consecration has been completed***, ***the body and blood are permanently present in the Eucharist***. (de fide) (Ott 386)

cessation: “According to the general teaching of theologians, . . . When the species are corrupted, . . . those substances probably appear which correspond to the specific nature of the altered accidents.” (Ott 387)

adoration due the Eucharist: ***The worship of adoration*** (***latria***) ***must be given to Christ present in the Eucharist***. (Ott 387)

the Eucharist and reason (Ott 388)

mysterious character of the Eucharist: ***The real presence of Christ in the Eucharist is a mystery of faith***. (sententia certa) (Ott 388)

apparent contradictions between reason and the Eucharistic dogma (Ott 388)

existence of the accidents without a subject (Ott 388)

the spaceless, spirit-form mode of existence of the body of Christ (Ott 389)

multilocation or multipresence of the body of Christ (Ott 390)

* + - * 1. Eucharist as sacrament (Ott 391)

sacramental nature: ***The Eucharist is a true sacrament instituted by Christ***. (Ott 391)

outward signs (Ott 391)

matter: ***The matter for the consummation of the Eucharist is bread and wine***. (de fide) (Ott 391)

form: ***The form of the Eucharist is Christ***’***s words of institution***, ***uttered at the consecration***. (sententia certa) (Ott 392)

effects (Ott 394)

unification with Christ: ***The chief fruit of the Eucharist is an intrinsic union of the recipient with Christ***. (sententia certa) (Ott 394)

preservation and increase of supernatural life: ***The Eucharist***, ***as food for the soul***, ***preserves and increases the supernatural life of the soul***. (sententia certa) (Ott 395)

pledge of future resurrection and heavenly bliss: ***The Eucharist is a pledge of heavenly bliss and of the future resurrection of the body***. (sententia certa) (Ott 395)

necessity (Ott 396)

young children: ***For children before the age of reason the reception of the Eucharist is not necessary for salvation***. (de fide) (Ott 396)

adults: ***For adults the reception of the Eucharist is necessary for salvation with the necessity of precept***. (sententia certa) (Ott 396)

validity of communion under one form: ***Communion under two forms is not necessary for any individual member of the faithful***, ***either by reason of divine precept or as a means of salvation***. (de fide) (Ott 397)

minister (Ott 397)

power of consecration: ***The power of consecration resides in a validly consecrated priest only***. (de fide) (Ott 397)

minister: ***The ordinary minister of the Eucharist is the priest***. ***The extraordinary minister is the deacon*** (***with permission of the local ordinary or of the parish priest for some weighty reason***). (CIC 845) (Ott 398)

recipient (Ott 398)

conditions for valid reception: ***The Eucharist can be validly received by every baptized person in the wayfaring state***, ***including young children***. (de fide) (Ott 398)

conditions for worthy reception: ***For the worthy reception of the Eucharist the state of grace as well as the proper and pious disposition are necessary***. (state of grace: de fide) (Ott 399)

* + - * 1. Eucharist as sacrifice (Ott 402)

reality of the sacrifice of the Mass (Ott 402)

dogma (Ott 402)

***The Mass is a true and proper sacrifice***. (de fide) (Ott 402)

difference between sacrament and sacrifice (Ott 402)

proofs (Ott 403)

scripture (Ott 403)

tradition (Ott 405)

nature of the sacrifice of the Mass (Ott 407)

relation of the sacrifice of the Mass to the sacrifice of the cross (Ott 407)

relative character of the sacrifice of the Mass: ***In the sacrifice of the Mass***, ***Christ***’***s sacrifice on the cross is made present***, ***its memory is celebrated***, ***and its saving power is applied***. (de fide) (Ott 407)

essential identity of the sacrifice of the Mass with the sacrifice of the cross: ***In the sacrifice of the Mass and in the sacrifice of the cross***, ***the sacrificial gift and the primary sacrificing priest are identical***; ***only the nature and mode of the offering are different***. (de fide) (Ott 408)

physical nature of the sacrifice of the Mass (Ott 408)

negative determination (Ott 408)

positive determination: ***The essential sacrificial action consists in the transubstantiation alone***. (sententia communis) (Ott 409)

metaphysical nature of the sacrifice of the Mass (Ott 410)

probable solution (Ott 410)

theories of the sacrifice of the Mass (Ott 410)

destruction theories (Ott 410)

oblation theories (Ott 411)

synthesis (Ott 411)

effects of the sacrifice of the Mass (Ott 412)

***The sacrifice of the Mass is not merely a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving but also a sacrifice of expiation and appeal***. (de fide) (Ott 412)

sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving (Ott 412)

sacrifice of expiation and appeal (Ott 412)

efficacy of the sacrifice of the Mass (Ott 413)

in general (Ott 413)

as expiation and appeal (Ott 413)

value of the sacrifice of the Mass (Ott 414)

intrinsic value (Ott 414)

extrinsic value (Ott 414)

as expiation and appeal (Ott 414)

fruits of the sacrifice of the Mass (Ott 415)

general fruit (Ott 415)

special fruit (Ott 415)

personal fruit (Ott 415)

* + - 1. penance (Ott 416)
         1. concept (Ott 416)

sacrament of penance (Ott 416)

virtue of penance (Ott 416)

* + - * 1. the Church’s power to forgive sins (Ott 417)

existence (Ott 417)

dogma: ***The Church has received from Christ the power of remitting sins committed after baptism***. (de fide) (Ott 417)

heretical counter-theses (Ott 417)

proofs (Ott 418)

scripture (Ott 418)

promise of the power of the keys (Ott 418)

promise of the power of binding and loosing (Ott 418)

transference of the power to forgive sins (Ott 418)

tradition (Ott 419)

properties of the Church’s power to forgive sins (Ott 422)

a true power of absolution: ***By the Church***’***s absolution sins are truly and immediately remitted***. (de fide) (Ott 422)

universality: ***The Church***’***s power to forgive sins extends to all sin without exception***. (de fide) (Ott 422)

judicial character: ***The exercise of the Church***’***s power to forgive sins is a judicial act***. (de fide) (Ott 423)

* + - * 1. penance as a sacrament (Ott 425)

the sacramental nature of the Church’s power to forgive sins: ***The forgiveness of sins which takes place in the tribunal of penance is a true and proper sacrament***, ***which is distinct from the sacrament of baptism***. (de fide) (Ott 425)

physical essence of the sacrament (Ott 425)

Thomists (Ott 425)

Scotists (Ott 425)

outward signs (Ott 426)

contrition (Ott 426)

in general (Ott 426)

perfect contrition (Ott 427)

imperfect contrition (Ott 428)

confession (Ott 431)

divine institution (Ott 431)

necessity (Ott 431)

object (Ott 432)

satisfaction (Ott 434)

concept (Ott 434)

quality (Ott 434)

the priest’s absolution as the form of the sacrament of penance (Ott 436)

effects (Ott 437)

necessity (Ott 438)

minister (Ott 439)

recipient (Ott 440)

appendix: indulgencces (Ott 445)

* + - 1. extreme unction (Ott 445)
         1. concept and sacramental nature (Ott 445)
         2. outward signs (Ott 447)
         3. effects (Ott 448)
         4. necessity (Ott 449)
         5. minister (Ott 449)
         6. recipient (Ott 450)
      2. holy order (Ott 450)
         1. concept and sacramental nature (Ott 450)
         2. grades of ordination (Ott 452)
         3. outward sign (Ott 454)
         4. effects (Ott 456)
         5. minister (Ott 457)
         6. recipient (Ott 459)
      3. matrimony (Ott 460)
         1. concept, origin, and sacramental nature (Ott 460)
         2. purpose (Ott 462)
         3. properties (Ott )
         4. outward sign (Ott 465)
         5. effects (Ott 467)
         6. minister (Ott 468)
         7. recipient (Ott )
         8. the Church’s power over matrimony (Ott 469)

1. **God the consummator** (eschatology, the doctrine of the last things) (Ott 471)
   1. eschatology of the individual human being (Ott 473)
      1. death (Ott 473)
         1. ***In the present order of salvation death is a punishment for sin***. (de fide) (Ott 473)
         2. ***All human beings subject to original sin are subject to the law of death***. (de fide) (Ott 474)
         3. ***With death the possibility of merit or demerit or conversion ceases***. (sententia certa) (Ott 474)
      2. particular judgment (Ott 475)
         1. ***Immediately after death the particular judgment takes place***, ***in which***, ***by a Divine Sentence of Judgment***, ***the eternal fate of the deceased person is decided***. (sententia fidei proxima) (Ott 475)
      3. heaven
         1. ***The souls of the just which in the moment of death are free from all guilt of sin and punishment for sin***, ***enter into Heaven***. (de fide) (Ott 476)
         2. beatific vision
            1. ***The blessed in heaven possess an immediate intuitive knowledge of the Divine Essence***. (de fide) (Ott 20)
            2. essential and accidental bliss of heaven

essential bliss of heaven: ***the essential bliss of Heaven*** . . . ***springs from the immediate Vision of God*** . . . (sententia communis) (Ott 478)

accidental bliss of heaven: ***In addition to the essential bliss of Heaven*** . . ., ***there is also an accidental blessedness***, ***which proceeds from the natural knowledge and love of created things***. (sententia communis) (Ott 478)

The secondary object is created things seen in God as the origin of all things.

* + - * 1. the light of glory (necessary for the beatific vision)

***The Immediate Vision of God transcends the natural power of cognition of the human soul***, ***and is therefore supernatural***. (de fide) (Ott 21)

***The soul***, ***for the Immediate Vision of God***, ***require the light of glory***. (de fide) (Ott 22)

***God***’***s essence is also incomprehensible to the blessed in heaven***. (de fide) (Ott 23)

God’s essence is still incomprehensible to the blessed.

* + - 1. ***The bliss of Heaven lasts for all eternity***. (de fide) (Ott 478)
      2. the bliss of heaven
         1. ***Bliss primarily springs from the immediate vision of God and the perfect love of God***. (no note) (Ott 478)
         2. ***Bliss secondarily springs from natural knowledge and love of created things***. (sententia communis) (Ott 478)
      3. inequality of rewards: ***The degree of perfection of the beatific vision granted to the just is proportioned to each one***’***s merits***. (de fide) (Ott 479)
    1. hell
       1. ***The souls of those who die in the condition of personal grevious sin enter Hell***. (de fide) (Ott 479)
       2. ***The punishment of Hell lasts for all eternity***. (de fide) (Ott 481)
       3. inequality of punishments: ***The punishment of the damned is proportioned to each one***’***s guilt***. (sententia communis) (Ott 482)
    2. purgatory (Ott 482)
       1. Purgatory is a place and state of temporal penal purification.
       2. ***The souls of the just which***, ***in the moment of death***, ***are burdened with venial sins or temporal punishment due to sins***, ***enter Purgatory***. (de fide) (Ott 482)
       3. ***The purifying fire will not continue after the General Judgment***. (sententia communis) (Ott 485)
  1. eschatology of the whole of humanity (Ott 485)
     1. second coming (Ott 485)
        1. ***At the end of the world Christ will come again in glory to pronounce judgment***. (de fide) (Ott 485)
        2. ***The time of Jesus***’ ***second coming is unknown to men***. (sententia certa) (Ott 488)
     2. resurrection of the dead
        1. ***All the dead will rise again on the last day with their bodies***. (de fide) (Ott 488)
        2. ***The bodies of the just will be re***-***modelled and transfigured to the pattern of the risen Christ***. (sententia certa) (Ott 491)
        3. ***The bodies of the godless will rise again in incorruption and immortality***, ***but they will not be transfigured***. (sententia certa) (Ott 492)
     3. general judgment (Ott 492)
        1. ***Christ***, ***on His second coming***, ***will judge all men***. (de fide) (Ott 492)
     4. end of the world (Ott 494)
        1. ***The present world will be destroyed on the Last Day***. (sententia certa) (Ott 494)
        2. ***The present world will be restored on the Last Day***. (sententia certa) (Ott 495)

### The Relative Authority of Church Documents

1. **bibliography**
   1. Morrisey, Francis G. “Papal and Curial Pronouncements: Their Canonical Significance in Light of the 1983 Code of Canon Law.” *The Jurist* 50 (1990): 102-25. (Miller 9 n. 1)
   2. John Paul II. Allocution to the International Theological Commission. Oct. 1979. (“On the nature and the authority of Council formulations,” De Lubac 180 n. 7)
2. **John Paul II on degrees of authority**
   1. John Paul II (*Ex corde Ecclesiae* [apostolic constitution *On Catholic Universities*], 15 Aug. 1990, § 29, emphasis added): “Theologians enjoy [academic] freedom so long as they are faithful to [theology’s] principles and methods. . . . since theology seeks an understanding of revealed truth whose authentic interpretation is entrusted to the bishops of the Church [i.e., the magisterium], it is intrinsic to the principles and methods of their research and teaching in their academic discipline that theologians respect the authority of the bishops, and assent to Catholic doctrine *according to the degree of authority with which it is taught* [by the magisterium].”
3. **papal bulls**
   1. “. . . there are different kinds of papal documents with different levels of authoritativeness. One visible sign of this diversity is the kind of seal affixed to the document. The most authoritative documents are sealed with a lead seal (in Latin *bulla*) and on that account are called “bulls”; lesser documents are sealed with wax, and on others the papal seal is merely stamped in ink.” (Sullivan *Creative Fidelity* 21)
4. **list of document types of decreasing authority**: **Miller**
   1. “The following list ranks in decreasing order of formal authority: apostolic constitutions, encyclical letters, encyclical epistles, apostolic exhortations, apostolic letters, letters, and messages.” (Miller 9 n. 1)
5. **list of document types of decreasing authority**: **Sullivan**
   1. “. . . the most authoritative [kinds of papal document] are “apostolic constitutions,” “apostolic letters,” “encyclical letters,” and “apostolic exhortations.” Such documents are usually addressed to the universal church.” (Sullivan *Creative Fidelity* 21)

### Theological Notes

1. **introduction**
   1. “Certain theologians have sought to sanction theological opinions or conclusions in their relation to the truth of faith. They have thus established the following terminology . . .” (Liégé “Believer” 278) Propositions may be:
      1. certain erroneous
      2. probable improbable (rash, less probable)
      3. bordering on faith bordering on heresy
      4. propositions of faith heresy (Liégé “Believer” 278-79)
2. **theological grades of certainty**
   1. *de fide*
      1. “The highest degree of certainty appertains to the immediately revealed truths. The belief due to them is based on the authority of God Revealing (fides divina), and if the Church, through its teaching, vouches for the fact that a truth is contained in Revelation, one’s certainty is then also based on the authority of the Infallible Teaching Authority of the Church (fides catholica). If Truths are defined by a solemn judgment of faith (definition) of the Pope or of a General Council, they are “de fide definita.”” (Ott 9)
      2. “Catholic truths or Church doctrines, on which the infallible Teaching Authority of the Church has finally decided, are to be accepted with a faith which is based on the sole authority of the Church (fides ecclesiastica). These truths are as infallibly certain as dogmas proper.” (Ott 9)
   2. *sententia fidei proxima*: “A Teaching proximate to Faith [is] a doctrine, which is regarded by theologians generally as a truth of Revelation, but which has not yet been finally promulgated as such by the Church.” (Ott 9)
   3. *sententia certa*: “A Teaching pertaining to the Faith, i.e., theologically certain (sententia ad fidem pertinens, i.e., theologice certa) is a doctrine, on which the Teaching [9] Authority of the Church has not yet finally pronounced, but whose truth is guaranteed by its intrinsic connection with the doctrine of revelation (theological conclusions).” (Ott 9-10)
   4. *sententia communis*: “Common Teaching (sententia communis) is doctrine, which in itself belongs to the field of the free opinions, but which is accepted by theologians generally.” (Ott 10)
   5. *sententia probabilis*: “Theological opinions of lesser grades of certainty are called probable, more probable, well-founded (sententia probabilis, probabilior, bene fundata). Those which are regarded as being in agreement with the consciousness of Faith of the Church are called pious opinions (sententia pia). The least degree of certainty is possessed by the tolerated opinion (opinio tolerata), which is only weakly founded, but which is tolerated by the Church.” (Ott 10)
3. **theological censures**
   1. A theological censure is a “judgment which characterises a proposition . . . as contrary to Faith or at least as doubtful.” (Ott 10)
   2. “The usual censures are the following . . .” (Ott 10)
      1. “A Heretical Proposition . . . signifies that the proposition is opposed to a formal dogma . . .” (Ott 10)
      2. A “Proposition Proximate to Heresy . . . signifies that the proposition is opposed to a truth which is proximate to the Faith (Sent. fidei proxima) . . .” (Ott 10)
      3. A “Proposition Savouring or Suspect of heresy . . .” (Ott 10)
      4. An “Erroneous Proposition [is] opposed to a truth which is proposed by the Church as a truth intrinsically connected with a revealed truth [or] opposed to the common teaching of theologians . . .” (Ott 10)
      5. A “False Proposition [is one] contradicting a dogmatic fact . . .” (Ott 10)
      6. A “Temerarious Proposition [is one] deviating without reason from the general teaching . . .” (Ott 10)
      7. A “Proposition Offensive to pious ears [is one] offensive to religious feeling . . .” (Ott 10)
      8. A “Proposition badly expressed [is one] subject to misunderstanding by reason of its method of expression . . .” (Ott 10)
      9. A “Captious Proposition [is one] reprehensible because of its intentional ambiguity . . .” (Ott 10)
      10. A “Proposition exciting scandal . . .” (Ott 10)
4. **International Theological Commission**
   1. There is a “long-standing tradition by which considerable importance has been attached to the practice of assigning “theological notes” to the Church’s doctrinal statements. In this tradition, it was always crucial to know whether there was a consensus among Catholic theologians in qualifying a doctrine with the same “note.”
   2. International Theological Commission (*On the Interpretation of Dogma* § B. II. 3. *Origins* 20.1 (17 May 1990): 7): “The living character of tradition gives rise to a great variety of doctrinal statements, differing in import and degree of binding force. In order to assess and interpret them properly, theology has developed its teaching with regard to theological notes; this was derived in part from the Church’s magisterium. Unfortunately, it has fallen somewhat into desuetude in recent times. Nevertheless, it is useful for the interpretation of dogma and should therefore be renewed and further developed.”” (Qtd. in Sullivan, “Reply” 736-37)

### Theological Notes (Chart)

Slightly adapted from (title is translated): Cartechini, Sixtus, SJ. *On the Value of Theological Notes and the Criteria for Discerning Them*. Rome: 1951. (Written for the use of Roman Congregation auditors.) Translation and adaptation by Mr. John Daly. Further adjustments by Paul Hahn.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| (a) Theological note: | ***De fide***. |
| Equivalent terms: | Dogma; dogma of faith; *de fide*, *de fide Catholica*; *de fide divina et Catholica*. |
| Explanation: | A truth proposed by the Church as revealed by God. |
| Examples: | The Immaculate Conception; all the contents of the Athanasian Creed. |
| Censure attached to contradictory proposition: | Heresy |
| Effects of denial: | Mortal sin committed directly against the virtue of faith, and, if the heresy is outwardly professed, excommunication is automatically incurred and membership of the Church forfeited. |
| Remarks: | A dogma can be proposed either by a solemn definition of pope or council, or by the Ordinary Magisterium, as in the case of the Athanasian Creed, to which the church has manifested her solemn commitment by its long-standing liturgical and practical use and commendation. |
| (b) Theological Note: | ***De fide ecclesiastica definita***. |
| Equivalent term: | Doctrine of ecclesiastical faith. |
| Explanation: | A truth not directly revealed by God but closely connected with Divine revelation and infallibly proposed by the Magisterium. |
| Example: | The lawfulness of communion under one kind. |
| Censure attached to contradictory proposition: | Heresy against ecclesiastical faith. |
| Effects of denial: | Mortal sin directly against faith, and, if publicly professed, automatic excommunication and forfeiture of membership of Church. |
| Remarks: | It is a dogma that the Church’s infallibility extends to truths in this sphere, so one who denies them denies implicitly a dogma or Divine faith. |
| (c) Theological Note: | ***De fide divina***. |
| Equivalent term: | Truth of Divine faith. |
| Explanation: | A truth revealed by God but not certainly proposed as such by the Church. |
| Example: | Christ claimed from the beginning of His public life to be the Messias. |
| Censure attached to contradictory proposition: | Error (in faith). |
| Effects of denial: | Mortal sin directly against faith, but no loss of Church membership. May incur a canonical penalty. |
| (d) Theological Note: | ***Sententia fidei proxima***. |
| Equivalent term: | Proximate to faith. |
| Explanation: | A doctrine all but unanimously held as revealed by God. |
| Example: | Christ possessed the Beatific Vision throughout his life on earth. |
| Censure attached to contradictory proposition: | Proximate to error. |
| Effects of denial: | Mortal sin indirectly against faith. |
| (e) Theological Note: | ***Theologically certain***. |
| Equivalent term: | Dogmatic fact; theological conclusion. |
| Explanation: | A truth logically following from one proposition which is divinely revealed and another which is historically certain. |
| Example: | Legitimacy of Pope Pius XI. |
| Censure attached to contradictory proposition: | Error (in theology). |
| Effects of denial: | Mortal sin against faith. |
| (f) Theological Note: | ***Catholic doctrine***. |
| Equivalent term: | Catholic teaching. |
| Explanation: | A truth authentically taught by the ordinary magisterium but not as revealed or intimately connected with revelation. |
| Example: | Invalidity of Anglican orders; validity of baptism conferred by heretic or Jews. |
| Censure attached to contradictory proposition: | Temerarious. |
| Effects of denial: | Mortal sin indirectly against faith. |
| Remarks: | The expression “Catholic doctrine” is sometimes applied to truths of a higher order also, but never of a lower one. In some cases the appropriate censure may be graver than “temerarious”. |
| (g) Theological Note: | ***Certain***. |
| Equivalent term: | Common; theologically certain. |
| Explanation: | A truth unanimously held by all schools of theologians which is derived from revealed truth, but by more than one step of reasoning. |
| Example: | The true and strict causality of the sacraments. |
| Censure attached to contradictory proposition: | Temerarious. |
| Effects of denial: | Usually, mortal sin of temerity. |
| Remarks: | Proportionately grave reason can sometimes justify an individual who has carefully studied the evidence in dissenting from such a proposition; since it is not completely impossible for all the theological schools to err on such a matter, although it would be highly unusual and contrary to an extremely weighty presumption. |
| (h) Theological Note: | ***Safe***. |
| Explanation: | Affirmed in doctrinal decrees of Roman Congregations. |
| Example: | That Christ will not reign visibly on earth for a thousand years after Antichrist. |
| Censure attached to contradictory proposition: | Unsafe/temerarious. |
| Effects of denial: | Mortal sin of disobedience and perhaps imprudence. |
| Remarks: | Exterior assent is absolutely required and interior assent is normally required, since, though not infallible, the Congregations possess true doctrinal authority and the protective guidance of the Holy Ghost. |
| (i) Theological Note: | Very common/commoner. |
| Explanation: | The most solidly founded or best attested theological opinion on a disputed subject. |
| Example: | Antichrist will be of the tribe of Dan. |
| Censure attached to contradictory proposition: | None. |
| Effects of denial: | None. |
| Remarks: | Very common or commoner opinions can be mistaken and there is no obligation to follow them though prudence inclines us to favour them as a general policy. It should be noted that an opinion which is “very common” is less well established than one which is “common” which implies moral unanimity of theological schools. |
| (j) Theological Note: | ***Probable***. |
| Explanation: | A theological opinion which is well founded either on the grounds of its intrinsic coherence or the extrinsic weight of authority favouring it. |
| Example: | Judas received Holy Communion at the Last Supper. Judas did not receive Holy Communion at the Last Supper. |
| Censure attached to contradictory proposition: | None. |
| Effects of denial: | None. |
| Remarks: | The better founded of two conflicting opinions is referred to as more probable; but Catholics are free to prefer some other opinion for any good reason. |

### Church Texts on the Hierarchy of Truths

1. **Clement XI** (**1700-21**)
   1. Clement XI (“Response of the Sacred Office to the Bishop of Quebec” [25 Jan. 1703, D 1349a): “Whether a minister is bound, before baptism is conferred on an adult, to explain to him all the mysteries of our faith, especially if he is at the point of death, because this might disturb his mind. Or, whether it is sufficient, if the one at the point of death will promise that when he recovers from the illness, he will take care to be instructed, so that he may put into practice what has been commanded him. Resp. A promise is not sufficient, but a missionary is bound to explain to an adult, even a dying one who is not entirely incapacitated, the mysteries of faith which are necessary by a necessity of means, as are especially the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation.” (Denzinger)
2. **c**. **1900**
   1. A distinction between fundamental and non-fundamental dogmas was recognized by c. 1900, as evidenced by Coghlan’s article on “Dogma” in *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1909).
   2. “. . . it is not permissible to distinguish revealed truths as fundamental and non-fundamental in the sense that some truths, though known to have been revealed by God, may be lawfully denied.” (Coghlan)
   3. “But while we should believe, at least implicitly, every truth attested by the word of God, we are free to admit that some are in themselves more important than others, more necessary than others, and that an explicit knowledge of some is necessary while an implicit faith in others is sufficient.” (Coghlan)
3. **Vatican II**
   1. Vatican II (*Decree on Ecumenism* [*Unitatis redintegratio*, 21 Nov. 1964] § 11): “in Catholic doctrine there exists a “hierarchy” of truths, since they vary in their relation to the fundamental Christian faith. Thus the way will be opened by which through fraternal rivalry all will be stirred to a deeper understanding and a clearer presentation of the unfathomable riches of Christ.” (*Welcome*)
   2. Vatican II (*Decree on Ecumenism* [*Unitatis redintegratio*, 21 Nov. 1964] § 11): in ecumenical dialogue, theologians must “remember that in Catholic teaching there exists an order or “hierarchy” of truths, since they vary in their relationship to the foundation of the Christian faith.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Magisterium* 117)
   3. Vatican II (*Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* [*Gaudium et spes*, 7 Dec. 1965] § 62): “The recent studies and findings of science, history and philosophy raise new questions which affect life and which demand new theological investigations. . . . it is to be hoped that many of the laity will receive a sufficient formation in the sacred sciences and that some will dedicate themselves professionally to these studies, developing and deepening them by their own labors.” (*Welcome*)
4. **post-conciliar statements**
   1. Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (*Reflections and Suggestions Concerning Ecumenical Dialogue* IV 4b (Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity Information Service no. 12 (Dec. 1970): 5-11): “Neither in the life nor in the teaching of the whole Church is everything presented on the same level. Certainly all revealed truths demand the same acceptance of faith, but according to the greater or lesser proximity that they have to the basis of the revealed mystery they are variously placed with regard to one another and have varying connections among themselves.” (Qtd. in Pontifical Council § 176)
   2. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (declaration *In Defense of the Catholic Doctrine on the Church against Certain Errors of the Present Day* [*Mysterium Ecclesiae*, 24 June 1973] § 4): “It is true that there exists an order as it were a hierarchy of the Church’s dogmas, as a result of their varying relationship to the foundation of the faith. This hierarchy means that some dogmas are founded on other dogmas which are the principal ones, and are illuminated by these latter. But all dogmas, since they are revealed, must be believed with the same divine faith.” (*Catholic Desktop Library*)
   3. Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (*Directory for the Application of the Principles and Norms of Ecumenism* [11 Dec. 1994] § ):
      1. Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (*Directory for the Application of the Principles and Norms of Ecumenism* [11 Dec. 1994] § 61): catechesis “should expound clearly, with charity and with due firmness the whole doctrine of the Catholic Church respecting in a particular way the order of the hierarchy of truths and avoiding expressions and ways of presenting doctrine which would be an obstacle to dialogue.” (Pontifical Council § 61)
      2. Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (*Directory for the Application of the Principles and Norms of Ecumenism* [11 Dec. 1994] § 75): “Moreover, the “hierarchy of truths” of Catholic doctrine should always be respected; these truths all demand due assent of faith, yet are not all equally central to the mystery revealed in Jesus Christ, since they vary in their connection with the foundation of the Christian faith.” (Pontifical Council § 75)
      3. Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (*Directory for the Application of the Principles and Norms of Ecumenism* [11 Dec. 1994] § 181): “In assessing and assimilating new forms of expression of the faith, which may appear in statements issued from ecumenical dialogue, or even ancient expressions which have been taken up again in preference to certain more recent theological terms, Catholics . . . must also allow for the “hierarchy of truths” in Catholic doctrine noted by the Decree on Ecumenism.” (Pontifical Council § 181)
   4. US Conference of Catholic Bishops, *National Catechetical Directory*
      1. New ed.: *General Catechetical Directory*. 1 Nov. 1997.
      2. US Catholic Conference (*Sharing the Light of Faith*: *National Catechetical Directory for Catholics of the United States* [May 1979] § 27):
      3. “Catechesis and Unity of Christians. 27 Communities of the faithful should, according to the circumstances in which they live, take part in ecumenical dialogue and the other undertakings for the restoring of Christian unity (cf. UR, 5). Catechesis should, there­fore, assist in this cause (cf. UR, 6) by clearly explaining the Church’s doctrine in its entirety (cf. UR, 11) and by fostering a suitable knowledge of other confessions, both in matters where they agree with the Catholic faith, and also in matters where they differ. . . . The order or hierarchy of the truths of Catholic teaching should be kept (cf. UR, 11; AG, 15; *Ad Ecclesiam totam*, May 14, 1967, AAS, 1967, pp. 574-592). However, the case for Catholic doctrine should be presented with charity as well as with due firmness.” (*Welcome*)
      4. “Hierarchy of Truths to Be Observed in Catechesis. 43 In the message of salvation there is a certain hierarchy of truths (cf. UR, 11), which the Church has always recognized when it composed creeds or summaries of the truths of faith. This hierarchy does not mean that some truths pertain to faith itself less than others, but rather that some truths are based on others as of a higher priority, and are illumined by them. On all levels catechesis should take account of this hierarchy of the truths of faith. These truths may be grouped under four basic heads: the mystery of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Creator of all things; the mystery of Christ the incarnate Word, who was born of the Virgin Mary, and who suffered, died, and rose for our salvation; the mystery of the Holy Spirit, who is present in the Church, sanctifying it and guiding it until the glorious coming of Christ, our Savior and judge; and the mystery of the Church, which is Christ’s Mystical Body, in which the Virgin Mary holds the preeminent place.” (*Welcome*)
5. **location of a doctrine in the hierarchy of truths**
   1. “. . . our foundational belief [is] that Jesus is the Lord, and that ‘he loved the Church and gave himself up for her’ (Eph 5:26).” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 118)
   2. “The criterion for assigning truths their place in this hierarchy is their “relationship to the foundation of Christian faith,” that is to say, their intrinsic importance for our life of faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 93)
   3. “. . . doctrines that have been defined by ecumenical councils or by popes [need not] rank highest in that “hierarchy of truths” . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 93)
      1. “. . . the place of a doctrine in this ‘hierarchy of truths’ is not determined by whether it has been dogmatically defined or not.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 117)
      2. “In most cases, truths have been defined because they were being threatened by erroneous teaching. The development of dogma reflects the historical circumstances that required the church to take a definitive stand on certain issues.” (Sullivan *Creative* 93)
      3. “Nothing in this history suggests a deliberate intention to give priority to the more important truths of faith by defining them. Nothing [93] suggests an intention to make sure that all the most important articles of faith would become defined dogmas.” (Sullivan *Creative* 93-94)
   4. “Some truths which have never been defined are much more closely related to the foundation of Christian faith . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 93)
      1. “One could hardly think of truths more basic to the faith than those mentioned” in Rom 10:9 (“if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved”). (Sullivan *Creative* 93)
      2. “No doubt, Christ’s lordship and resurrection are basic dogmas of our faith, but they have not been the object of any solemn definition.” (Sullivan *Creative* 93)
   5. “In respect to some basic truths of our faith, we are still in the same situation as the early church was, before any dogmas had been defined.” (Sullivan *Creative* 94)
6. **example of a remote truth**: **papal infallibility**
   1. “Actually, our belief in the infallibility of the pope is a fairly remote consequence of our foundational belief . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 118)
   2. “. . . that papal infallibility was the object of solemn definition by Vatican I tended to exalt its importance in the eyes of many Catholics. But the sober fact is that it is far from being among the truths at the very foundation of our faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 117)
   3. “Belief in Christ’s eschatological victory and his universal Lordship is the foundation of our belief that the Church . . . will never be led away from the truth of the Gospel . . .” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 118)
   4. Belief in the Church’s indefectibility “is the foundation of our belief that the Church . . . will never be [astray] by the one who has inherited the charge given to Peter to ‘feed his lambs and feed his sheep’ [John 21:15-17].” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 118)

### The Hierarchy of Truths

1. **bibliography**
   1. Carroll, D. “‘Hierarchia veritatum’: A Theological and Pastoral Insight of the Second Vatican Council.” *Irish Theological Quarterly* 44 (1977): 125-33.
   2. Henn, W. *The Hierarchy of Truths according to Yves Congar*, *O*.*P*. Rome: 1987.
   3. Pangrazio, A. “The Mystery of the History of the Church.” In Hans Küng, et al. *Council Speeches of Vatican II*. Glen Rock, NJ: 1964. 188-92.
   4. Tavard, G. “Hierarchi veritatum.” *Theological Studies* 32 (1971): 278-89.
   5. See also related articles in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed.: “Truth”; “Ecumenical Movement.”
2. **definition**
   1. “The term “hierarchy of truths” refers to the order and relationship that Christian doctrines have with one another.” (Ford 822)
3. **before Vatican II**
   1. “. . . the basic idea of a differentiation in the scale and value of individual truths has long been recognized in various ways by theologians.” (Ford 822)
   2. Coghlan, writing in 1909, is an example.
      1. “. . . it is not permissible to distinguish revealed truths as fundamental and non-fundamental in the sense that some truths, though known to have been revealed by God, may be lawfully denied.” (Coghlan)
      2. “But while we should believe, at least implicitly, every truth attested by the word of God, we are free to admit that some are in themselves more important than others, more necessary than others, and that an explicit knowledge of some is necessary while an implicit faith in others is sufficient.” (Coghlan)
4. **Vatican II**
   1. “. . . the expression came into common theological usage at Vatican Council II . . .” (Ford 822)
   2. Archbishop Andrea Pangrazio
      1. “This idea originated in a speech given by Archbishop Andrea Pangrazio of Gorizia-Gradisca (Italy) . . .” (Ford 822)
      2. Pangrazio (*Council Speeches of Vatican II* 191): “to arrive at a fair estimate of both the unity which now exists among Christians and the diversity which still remains, it seems very important to me to pay close attention to the hierarchical order of revealed truths which express the mystery of Christ and those elements which make up the Church. Although all the truths revealed by divine faith are to be believed with the same divine faith and all those elements which make up the Church must be kept with equal fidelity, not all of them are of equal importance.” (Qtd. in Ford 822)
      3. “Distinguishing between truths *on the level of our final goal* (such as the Trinity or Incarnation) and truths *on the level of means toward salvation* (such as the sevenfold number of Sacraments or apostolic succession), Pangrazio thought that “doctrinal differences among Christians have less to do with these primary truths on the level of our final goal, and deal mostly with truths on the level of means, which are subordinate to those other primary truths.” (Ford 822)
   3. Vatican Council II (*Decree on Ecumenism* [*Unitatis redintegratio*, 1964] Church. 2 § 11): in ecumenical dialogue, “when comparing doctrines, they [Catholic theologians] should remember that in Catholic teaching there exists an order or hierarchy of truths, since they vary in their relationship to the foundation of the Christian faith.” (Qtd. in Ford 822)
   4. “. . . Vatican II did not explain the meaning of hierarchy of truths . . .” (Ford 822)
5. **since Vatican II**
   1. “. . . usage has varied since the Council.” (Latourelle 822)
   2. *Ecumenical Directory* (Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, 16 Apr. 1970)
      1. The second part (ch. 2.5) “identified the hierarchy of truths in terms of the relationship of a particular truth to the foundations of Christian faith, but also distinguished between “revealed truths” and “theological doctrines.” (Ford 822)
   3. *Reflections and Suggestions Concerning Ecumenical Dialogue* (Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, 18 Sept. 1970)
      1. This document (ch. 4.4) speaks of “a hierarchy of truths based on their different relationships to the foundation of Christian faith . . .” (Ford 822)
      2. But it also (ch. 4.4) “apparently distinguishes . . . another hierarchy of truths related to the actual life of the Church.” (Ford 822)
      3. “Accordingly, the position of a given doctrine in the life of Christians may differ from its theoretical place in relation to Christian foundations.” (Ford 822)
   4. usage in theology
      1. “. . . some continue to categorize truths on the basis of the degree of their explicitness in scripture or the teaching of the Church.” (Latourelle 822)
      2. “Others evaluate truths on the basis of their necessity for salvation.” (Ford 822)
      3. “Still others contrast “nuclear” beliefs which are basic to the psychological functioning of a person’s belief-system with “peripheral” beliefs which have few ramifications in a person’s life.” (Ford 822)
   5. “Insofar as various principles of ordering or evaluating truths are available or possible, theologians can construct different hierarchies of truths, so that the position of a particular revelatory truth might then vary from one hierarchy to another. (Ford 822)
6. **Sullivan on the hierarchy of truths**
   1. “The criterion for assigning truths their place in this hierarchy is their “relationship to the foundation of Christian faith,” that is to say, their intrinsic importance for our life of faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 93)
   2. “. . . doctrines that have been defined by ecumenical councils or by popes [need not] rank highest in that “hierarchy of truths” . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 93)
      1. “In most cases, truths have been defined because they were being threatened by erroneous teaching. The development of dogma reflects the historical circumstances that required the church to take a definitive stand on certain issues.” (Sullivan *Creative* 93)
      2. “Nothing in this history suggests a deliberate intention to give priority to the more important truths of faith by defining them. Nothing [93] suggests an intention to make sure that all the most important articles of faith would become defined dogmas.” (Sullivan *Creative* 93-94)
   3. “Some truths which have never been defined are much more closely related to the foundation of Christian faith . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 93)
      1. “One could hardly think of truths more basic to the faith than those mentioned” in Rom 10:9 (“if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved”). (Sullivan *Creative* 93)
      2. “No doubt, Christ’s lordship and resurrection are basic dogmas of our faith, but they have not been the object of any solemn definition.” (Sullivan *Creative* 93)
   4. “In respect to some basic truths of our faith, we are still in the same situation as the early church was, before any dogmas had been defined.” (Sullivan *Creative* 94)

## Development of Doctrine

### Church Texts on Doctrinal Development:

### Unchangeable Truth and Changeable Expression

the meaning of dogmas does not change

1. **Vatican I** (1869-70)
   1. Vatican I (dogmatic constitution *Dei Filius* [24 Apr. 1870] ch. 4, DS 3020): “the same signification (of sacred dogmas) is to be forever retained once our Holy Mother the Church has defined it, and under no pretext of deeper penetration may that meaning be weakened.”
   2. Vatican I (dogmatic constitution *Dei Filius* [24 Apr. 1870] canon 3, DS 3043): it is false that “dogmas once proposed by the Church must, with the progress of science be given a meaning other than that which was understood by the Church, or which she understands.”
2. **Paul VI** (1963-78)
   1. Paul VI (encyclical letter *Mystery of Faith* [*Mysterium fidei*, 3 Sept. 1965] ¶ 27): dogmatic “formulas can sometimes be more clearly and accurately explained. . . . But it would be wrong to give to these expressions a meaning other than the original. Thus the understanding of the faith should be advanced without threat to its unchangeable truth.”

the formulas of dogmas should not change

1. **Paul VI** (1962-78), ***Mysterium fidei*** (1965)
   1. Paul VI (encyclical letter *Mystery of Faith* [*Mysterium fidei*, on the Eucharist, 3 Sept. 1965] ¶ 25): “Who would ever tolerate that the dogmatic formulas used by the ecumenical councils for the mysteries of the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation be judged as no longer appropriate for men of our time, therefore that others be rashly substituted for them? In the same way it cannot be tolerated that any individual should on his own authority modify the formulas which were used by the Council of Trent to express belief in the Eucharistic Mystery.” (The formulas referred to are “Three persons in one substance,” “Two natures in one person,” and “transubstantiation.”)
   2. Paul VI (ibid. ¶ 26): “the most sacred task of theology is, not the invention of new dogmatic formulas to replace old ones, but rather such a defense and explanation of the formulas adopted by the councils as may demonstrate that divine Revelation is the source of the truths communicated through these expressions.”
   3. Paul VI (ibid. ¶ 27): “It must be admitted that these formulas can sometimes be more clearly and accurately explained. In fact, the achievement of this goal is highly beneficial. But it would be wrong to give to these expressions a meaning other than the original. Thus the understanding of the faith should be advanced without threat to its unchangeable truth.”

the formulas of dogmas can change

1. **c**. **1900**
   1. Coghlan, Daniel. “Dogma.” *Catholic Encyclopedia*. 1909. *New Advent*. 2006. Web. 26 Feb. 2007.
   2. Already c. 1900 the distinction between the unchanging meaning of dogma and its changeable expression was recognized.
   3. Coghlan: “We may distinguish between the truths themselves and the language in which they are expressed. The full meaning of certain revealed truths has been only gradually brought out; the truths will always remain. Language may change or may receive a new meaning; but we can always learn what meaning was attached to particular words in the past.”
2. **John XXIII** (1959-63)
   1. John XXIII (allocution at the beginning of Vatican II, 11 Oct. 1962): “This certain and unchangeable doctrine, to which faithful obedience is due, has to be explored and presented in a way that is demanded by our times. One thing is the deposit of faith, which consists of the truths contained in sacred doctrine, another thing is the manner of presentation, always however with the same meaning and signification.”
3. **Vatican II** (1962-65)
   1. Vatican II (decree *On Ecumenism* [*Unitatis redintegratio*, 21 Nov. 1964] § 6): if “there have been deficiencies . . . in the way that church teaching has been formulated—to be carefully distinguished from the deposit of faith itself—these can and should be set right at the opportune moment.”
   2. Vatican II (pastoral constitution *On the Church in the Modern World* [*Gaudium et spes*, 7 Dec. 1965] § 62): “theologians [should] seek continually for more suitable ways of communicating doctrine to the men of their times; for the deposit of Faith or the truths are one thing and the manner in which they are enunciated, in the same meaning and understanding, is another.”
4. **Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith**, ***Mysterium Ecclesiae*** (1973)
   1. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (declaration *Mysterium Ecclesiae* § 5 [*AAS* 65, 24 June 1973]): “the meaning of dogmatic formulas . . . remains ever true and constant in the Church, even when it is expressed with greater clarity or more developed. The faithful therefore must shun the opinion . . . that dogmatic formulas . . . cannot signify truth in a determinate way, but can only offer changeable approximations to it, which to a certain extent distort or alter it . . . [as if truth were] a goal . . . constantly . . . sought by . . . approximations. Those who hold such an opinion do not avoid dogmatic relativism and they corrupt the concept of the Church’s infallibility relative to the truth to be taught or held in a determinate way.”
   2. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (ibid.): “the dogmatic formulas of the Church’s Magisterium . . . remain forever suitable for communicating [revealed] truth to those who interpret them correctly. It does not however follow that every one of these formulas has always been or will always be [suitable] to the same extent.”
   3. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (ibid.): “The transmission of divine Revelation by the Church encounters difficulties . . . from the historical condition that affects the expression of Revelation.”
      1. “. . . the truths which the Church intends to teach through her dogmatic formulas are distinct from the changeable conceptions of a given epoch . . . these truths may be enunciated by the Sacred Magisterium in terms that bear traces of such conceptions.”
      2. Sometimes a “dogmatic truth is first expressed incompletely (but not falsely), and at a later date, when considered in a broader context of faith or human knowledge, it receives a fuller and more perfect expression.”
   4. example: “a growth in human knowledge of such sciences as geography [and] psychology has contributed to a better understanding of the necessity of belonging to the church for salvation.” (Sullivan 11)
5. **Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity**, ***Directory for the Application of the Principles and Norms of Ecumenism*** (1994)
   1. Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (*Directory for the Application of the Principles and Norms of Ecumenism* [11 Dec. 1994] § 74): “Students must learn to distinguish
      1. “between . . . revealed truths, which all require the same assent of faith, and . . . the manner of stating those truths . . .
      2. “between the “deposit of faith itself or the truths” . . . and the way in which these truths are formulated;
      3. “between the truths to be proclaimed and the various ways of perceiving them and shedding light upon them;
      4. “between the apostolic tradition and strictly ecclesiastical traditions . . .
   2. “. . . students should . . . appreciate the legitimate diversity in theology which derives from the different methods and language theologians use in penetrating the divine mysteries. From which it follows that different theological formulations are often more complementary than contradictory.”

### Development of Doctrine

1. **Vatican II** (1962-65)
   1. Vatican II (dogmatic constitution *On Divine Revelation* [*Dei Verbum*, 18 Nov. 1965] § 8): “This tradition which comes from the Apostles develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. For there is a growth in the understanding of the realities and the words which have been handed down. . . . For as the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly moves for­ward toward the fullness of divine truth . . .” (Vatican II)
      1. John 14:17, “This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.”
      2. John 15:26, “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf.”
      3. John 16:7, “Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.”
      4. John 16:13, “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”
2. **van Ackeren**
   1. “. . . just as God’s revelation was [given] gradually until it reached its fullness and completeness in the risen Lord, so too the assimilation by His people of that revelation has been a gradual process conditioned by history, even after the definitive revelation in Christ. Similarly the assimilation of this revelation in an individual is a historical process beginning with personal commitment to God in faith. . . . This process of growth in understanding reaches its culmination only when the Word of God is given immediately to men in the beatific vision.” (van Ackeren 13: 893)
3. **Dil­len­ber­ger and Welch**
   1. “The history of Christian theology is always the record of a continuous conversation, carried on within the church and between the church and the world in which it lives. Thus the development of theology is always a dual move­ment . . . It is the effort of this community to understand itself and to make clear the nature of its faith—in relation to the thought and life of earlier generations, in relation to new insights into the meaning of the gospel, and in relation to the perspectives of the world to which the community proclaims the gospel.” (Dil­len­ber­ger and Welch 161)
4. **Walter Farrelly**
   1. “The development of the Church’s understanding of an element [71] of revelation is seen in the official teaching of the Church and in the witness to that teaching contained in the belief of the faithful.” (Farrelly 71-72)
      1. “It is the magisterium of the Church that constitutes the official proximate norm of faith and the agent that canonizes, as it were, a new stage of theological understanding of the revealed truth. So the official teaching of the Church has the first place in order of importance in our study of tradition.” (Farrelly 72)
      2. “But a second norm of the Church’s teaching is the witness given to Catholic belief in different ages by the faithful. The privileged witnesses of this belief are, of course, the Fathers and the theologians, so we shall investigate their teaching in the different periods of the history of the Church. [Farrelly refers to a teaching being “in accord with the Church’s official teaching and theological tradition that is a witness to the belief of the Church.” 107] . . . we are interested not in the individual Father or theologian for his own sake but for his function as a witness to the belief of the Church [since] it is the moral unanimity of such witnesses or the special witness of one as receiving general acceptance by the Church that is the basis of their value as norms of faith . . .” (Farrelly 71-72, 107)
   2. why doctrines develop
      1. heresy
         1. An example is Semipelagianism (those who say that God gives grace only after a person first turns to God).
         2. “. . . there are found at times in the Eastern Fathers statements which Semipelagians could later use to defend their orthodoxy. For instance, St. John Chrysostom says that when we have desired to advance in the ways of the spirit, God increases that desire.” (Farrelly 75)
         3. “But such statements of the Eastern Fathers . . . are directly contrary to other statements of the same Fathers, and so show not a definite Semipelagian doctrine, but that lack of accuracy that is common before a heresy has made the Church aware of a particular difficulty.” (Farrelly 75)
      2. better philosophical tools
         1. “Moreover, the Greek Fathers did not achieve a perfectly adequate expression of *how* God’s initiative in the order of grace and man’s free will were harmonized; this is due in part to the lack of the philosophical tools necessary for this. Hence a certain ambivalence or inexactness of expression appears from time to time.” (Farrelly 75)
5. **Ludwig Ott**
   1. “The Liberal Protestant concept of dogma (cf. A. von Harnack) as well as Modernism (cf. A. Loisy) assumes . . . that the content of dogma changes radically in the course of time.” (Ott 6)
      1. See Vatican I’s condemnation of Anton Günther’s († 1863) proposal: “If anybody says that by reason of the progress of science, a meaning must be given to dogmas of the Church other than that which the Church understood and understands them to have let him be anathema” (D 1818). (Ott 6)
   2. “The ground for the immutability of dogmas lies in the Divine origin of the Truths which they express. Divine Truth is as immutable as God Himself.” (Ott 6) Mark 13:31, “Heav­en and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.”
   3. development of material dogmas
      1. “. . . *substantial* growth took place in human [6] history until Revelation reached . . . Christ” (italics added: i.e., dogmas *evolved* in salvation history up to Christ but have only *developed* since). (Ott 6-7)
         1. Heb 1:1-2, “Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, 2but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son . . .”
         2. The difference between *evolution* of doctrine and *development* of doctrine was well stated by the Church Father, Vincent of Lerins († before 450): “For progress [= development] it is necessary that something should increase of itself, for alteration [= evolution], however, that something should change from one thing to the other.” (*Commonitorium* 23 [D 1800]) (Ott 8)
      2. “With Christ and the Apostles General Revelation concluded. (*sent. certa.*)” (Ott 7)
         1. scripture
            1. “Christ was the fulfillment of the Law” (Matt 5:17, 21-48). (Ott 7)
            2. Christ was “the absolute teacher of humanity . . .” (Ott 7)

Matt 23:10, “you have one instructor, the Messiah.”

Matt 28:20, “teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

* + - * 1. Christ’s coming was “the fullness of time” (Gal 4:4). (Ott 7)
        2. The apostles saw preservation of the faith as their task. 1 Tim 6:20, “Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the profane chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge . . .” Cf. 1 Tim 6:14, 2 Tim 1:14, 2:2, 3:14. (Ott 7)
      1. tradition
         1. “St. Irenaeus (Adv. haer [*sic*] III 1; IV 35, 8) and Tertullian (De praesc. 21) stress, against the Gnostics, that the full truth of Revelation is contained in the doctrine of the Apostles which is preserved unfalsified through the uninterrupted succession of the bishops.” (Ott 7)
         2. Pius X “condemned the proposition that: The Revelation . . . was not terminated with the Apostles.” (D 2021) (Ott 7)
  1. development of formal dogmas
     1. There is development “in the knowledge and in the ecclesiastical proposal of Revealed Truth, and consequently also in the public faith of the Church . . .” (Ott 7) This development occurs in several ways.
        1. “Truths which formerly were only implicitly believed are expressly proposed for belief.” Aquinas, *ST* 1-2.7, “There was an increase in the number of articles believed explicitly . . .” (Ott 7)
        2. “Material Dogmas are raised to the status of Formal Dogmas.” (Ott 7)
        3. “. . . truths which were always believed, i.e., the Hypostatic Union, . . . Transubstantiation, etc., are formulated in new, sharply defined concepts.” (Ott 7)
        4. “Questions formerly disputed are explained and decided . . .” (Ott 7)
        5. “. . . heretical propositions are condemned.” Augustine, *City of God* 2.1: “a question moved by an adversary gives an occasion for learning.” (Ott 7)
        6. “There may be also a progress in the confession of faith of the individual believer . . .” (Ott 8)
     2. “The exposition of [dogmas] is prepared by theological science and promulgated by the Teaching Authority of the Church under the [7] direction of the Holy Ghost (John 14, 26 [“But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you”]).” (Ott 7-8)
     3. “These new expositions of dogmatic truth are motivated, on the one hand, by the natural striving of man for deeper understanding of Revealed Truth, and on the other hand by external influences, such as
        1. “the attacks arising from heresy and unbelief,
        2. “theological controversies,
        3. “advances in philosophical knowledge and historical research,
        4. “[and] development of the liturgy . . .” (Ott 8)

1. **summary**: **causes of the development of doctrine**
   1. heresy
      1. “. . . lack of accuracy [by theologians] . . . is common before a heresy has made the Church aware of a particular difficulty.” (Farrelly 75)
   2. better philosophical tools
      1. A “lack of the philosophical tools necessary [causes] a certain ambivalence or inexactness of expression . . .” (Farrelly 75)
      2. “. . . truths which were always believed, i.e., the Hypostatic Union, . . . Transubstantiation, etc., are formulated in new, sharply defined concepts.” (Ott 7)
      3. The faith is better explained “in relation to the perspectives of the world to which the community proclaims the gospel.” (Dil­len­ber­ger and Welch 161)
   3. “advances in . . . historical research” (Ott 8)
      1. The faith is better explained “in relation to the thought and life of earlier generations . . .” (Dil­len­ber­ger and Welch 161)
      2. The faith is better explained “in relation to new insights into the meaning of the gospel . . .” (Dil­len­ber­ger and Welch 161)
   4. Implicitly held truths “are expressly proposed for belief.” (Ott 7)
      1. Aquinas (*ST* 1-2.7): “There was an increase in the number of articles believed explicitly . . .” (Qtd. in Ott 7)
      2. Example: assumption of Mary.
      3. “. . . facets of the total Christian mystery have come to be objects of the explicit faith-consciousness of the Church only after centuries of contemplation of this mystery. . . . insights which are the fruit of such ecclesial contemplation can bring to light truths which are really contained in the total Christ-event, and therefore really contained in the Gospel, even though they are not found explicitly in Scripture or in the early records of explicit Christian belief. . . . the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption [are] examples of such truths. . . . such truths as these are really there in the deposit of faith, even though it took centuries for the Church to come to see them clearly. Such truths as these, which are really, though only implicitly, contained in the Gospel, are still part of the deposit of revelation, and as such belong to the primary object of magisterium. They can be defined as dogmas of faith.” (Sullivan *Magisterium* 130)
   5. “development of the liturgy” (Ott 8)

### Dogmas Are Historically Conditioned

1. **historical and cultural conditions affecting the expression of revelation**
   1. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, three paragraphs from the declaration *Mysterium Ecclesiae* (1973, §§ 12-14):
      1. “12. With regard to this historical condition, it must first be observed that the meaning of the pronouncements of faith depends partly upon the expressive power of the language used at a certain point in time and in particular circumstances.
         1. “Moreover, it sometimes happens that some dogmatic truth is first expressed incompletely (but not falsely), and at a later date, when considered in a broader context of faith or human knowledge, it receives a fuller and more perfect expression.
         2. “In addition, when the church makes new pronouncements she intends to confirm or clarify what is in some way contained in sacred scripture or in previous expressions of tradition; but at the same time she usually has the intention of solving certain questions or removing certain errors.
         3. “All these things have to be taken into account in order that these pronouncements may be properly interpreted.
         4. “Finally, even though the truths which the church intends to teach through her dogmatic formulas are distinct from the changeable conceptions of a given epoch and can be expressed without them, nevertheless it can sometimes happen that these truths may be enunciated by the sacred magisterium in terms that bear traces of such conceptions.
      2. “13. In view of the above, it must be stated that the dogmatic formulas of the church’s magisterium were from the very beginning suitable for communicating revealed truth, and that as they are they remain forever suitable for communicating this truth to those who interpret them correctly.
         1. “It does not however follow [34] that every one of these formulas has always been or will always be so to the same extent.
         2. “For this reason theologians seek to define exactly the intention of teaching proper to the various formulas, and in carrying out this work they are of considerable assistance to the living magisterium of the church, to which they remain subordinated.
         3. “For this reason also it often happens that ancient dogmatic formulas and others closely connected with them remain living and fruitful in the habitual usage of the Church, but with suitable expository and explanatory additions that maintain and clarify their original meaning.
         4. “In addition, it has sometimes happened that in this habitual usage of the Church certain of these formulas gave way to new expressions which, proposed and approved by the Sacred Magisterium, presented more clearly or more completely the same meaning.
      3. “14. As for the *meaning* of dogmatic formulas, this remains ever true and constant in the church, even when it is expressed with greater clarity or more developed.
         1. “The faithful therefore must shun the opinion, first, that dogmatic formulas (or some category of them) cannot signify truth in a determinate way, but can only offer changeable approximations to it, which to a certain extent distort or alter it; secondly, that these formulas signify the truth only in an indeterminate way, this truth being like a goal that is constantly being sought by means of such approximations. Those who hold such an opinion do not avoid dogmatic relativism and they corrupt the concept of the church’s infallibility relative to the truth to be taught or held in a determinate way.” (*Declaration in Defence of the Catholic Doctrine on the Church against Certain Errors of the Present Day*. Vatican City: 1973. §§ 12-14 (ch. 5).) (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 34-35)
   2. Sullivan’s comments
      1. “This statement of the CDF provides official clarification of the sense in which dogmatic statements can be said to be “irreformable.”” (Sullivan *Creative* 35)
         1. “Irreformability is predicated of their *meaning* . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 35)
         2. “. . . irreformability is not predicated of dogmatic formulas as such” (since their “meaning can be expressed with greater clarity or be more developed”). (Sullivan *Creative* 35)
      2. The CDF says that “considering dogmatic truth in a broader context not only of faith *but also of human knowledge* may result in giving that truth a more perfect expression.” (Sullivan *Creative* 35)
         1. An “example is the effect which the discovery of the existence of vast populations which had never heard of Christ had on the understanding of the necessity of Christian faith and baptism for salvation.” (Sullivan *Creative* 36)
         2. Another example is “the influence which growth in human knowledge about the origin of the human species has had, and [35] can still have, on our understanding and expression of the doctrine of creation and original sin.” (Sullivan *Creative* 35-36)
      3. Sullivan’s and Rahner’s reservations about the last sentence in § 12
         1. text: “Finally, even though the truths which the church intends to teach through her dogmatic formulas are distinct from the changeable conceptions of a given epoch and can be expressed without them, nevertheless it can sometimes happen that these truths may be enunciated by the sacred magisterium in terms that bear traces of such conceptions.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 36)
         2. objection to the idea of dogmas expressed without historical conditioning
            1. Karl Rahner (“Mysterium Ecclesiae.” *Theological Investigations* 17: 149): “The declaration says explicitly that the Church’s magisterium can under certain circumstances enunciate dogmatic truths in terms which bear traces of the ‘changeable conceptions of a given epoch.’ We are told, however, rather curiously, that anything of this kind only happens ‘sometimes’ and that there are also truths of faith which could be expressed without historically conditioned terminology of this kind. Here the authors of the document are evidently still influenced by the earlier notion of ‘natural’ and general human terminology, which can always and everywhere be understood without further explanation, and which is independent of the wider context of the history of thought as a whole.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 36)
         3. objection to the idea that dogmas cannot be “approximations” to the truth
            1. Karl Rahner (“Mysterium Ecclesiae.” *Theological Investigations* 17: 151): “If one dogmatic statement can express the same content in a better, more living, more fruitful, more complete and more perfect way than another (as the document says), then the term *approximatio* does not necessarily have the heretical sense of a dogmatic relativism. It can also mean exactly what this document intends. If a dogmatic formula were to be totally identical with the reality meant—if, that is, it was not an *approximatio* in any way at all—how could there ever be a history of dogma, which the document itself says exists? How could we then talk about better or less adequate dogmatic formulations, let alone about formulations that have to be superseded?” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 36)
         4. “. . . I think Rahner’s critique is well founded . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 36)
         5. But both Sullivan and Rahner think “that this section on the historical character of dogmatic [36] formulations is the best in the whole document, and that we should be glad that this teaching has at last been expressed in an official document of the holy see.” (“Mysterium Ecclesiae.” *Theological Investigations* 17: 148-49.) (Sullivan *Creative* 36-37)
   3. Rahner on “What Is a Dogmatic Statement?”
      1. Rahner, Karl. “What Is a Dogmatic Statement?” *Theological Investigations* 5: 42-66.
      2. Rahner’s answer is “spelled out in five theses. Here is a summary of his theses.” (Sullivan *Creative* 37)
      3. A dogmatic statement “can be rash and presumptuous . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 37)
         1. “A dogmatic statement claims to be true, in the way that human statements can be true . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 37)
         2. “. . . but it can still bear the stamp of human weakness . . . the guarantee of speaking the truth does not exclude the possibility of speaking sinfully.” (Sullivan *Creative* 37)
      4. “A dogmatic statement is a statement of faith not only on the part of its object (what is believed) but also on the part of its speaker (the one who believes). There is more to the act of supernatural faith than the holding of dogmatic propositions; on the other hand, dogmatic reflection and its statement can never separate themselves from the source from which they spring: from faith itself.” (Sullivan *Creative* 37)
      5. “It is the role of the magisterium to present the form of the word that is valid here and now. Hence dogmatic statements signify a ruling on terminology, even though such terminology can never be adequate to the reality it signifies. While respecting the church’s ruling on dogmatic language, the theologian can be aware of its limitations, and contribute to the development of better formulations of the faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 37)
      6. “A dogmatic statement leads its hearers beyond themselves into the mystery of God. The object to which a dogmatic statement refers is only properly known when it is grasped as something infinite and incomprehensible—as a permanent mystery—in the very act of taking hold of its finite concept.” (Sullivan *Creative* 37)
         1. “While Rahner does not do so in this context, one could invoke the statement of St. Thomas that the act of faith terminates not in the proposition but in the reality which it signifies.” (*ST* 2-2.1.2 ad 2) (Sullivan *Creative* 37)
      7. “. . . statements of faith, given to us in scripture, have one thing no other statement has: they belong to that unique historical event of salvation itself to which all later proclamation and theology are referred. Scripture is the primary norm for the consciousness of faith of the church as a whole and for the church’s magisterium . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 38)
         1. “. . . thus the original word of revelation and of faith is essentially distinct from every dogmatic statement.” (Sullivan *Creative* 38)
         2. But “Christians will always hear the original statement in terms of its later statement by the church’s magisterium and consciousness of faith. Yet they hear that original statement of faith itself, precisely because they hear it by means of the present church. For the ultimate guarantee of being able to hear the original statement is not the historical skill of man, but the exercise of faith in community with the present-day church.” (Sullivan *Creative* 38)
   4. “definitive [but] provisional” (Sullivan *Creative* 38)
      1. Walter Kasper
         1. Kasper, Walter. *Dogma unter dem Wort Gottes*, Mainz: Grünewald, 1965. (Italian trans.: *Il Dogma sotto la Parola di Dio*. Brescia: Queriniana, 1968. 145 ff.) (An “important work on dogma, which unfortunately is not available in English . . .” Sullivan, *Creative* 38)
         2. “. . . Kasper has emphasized [the provisional] aspect of the nature of a dogmatic statement.” (Sullivan *Creative* 38)
         3. Kasper insists that “dogma is under the word of God” . . . in this sense: that God’s word will always surpass any statement, however dogmatic, that the church can say about it.” (Sullivan *Creative* 38)
            1. “. . . the “eschatological” situation of the church [is] the “already—but not yet” situation . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 38)

“. . . the present reality of salvation . . . is essentially directed toward a fulfillment that will take place only in the definitive kingdom of God.” (Sullivan *Creative* 38)

“This “already—not yet” tension will characterize the church throughout its historical existence.” (Sullivan *Creative* 38)

* + - * 1. “. . . dogma reflects the “eschatological” situation of the church . . . every historical enunciation of the church’s message will be affected by the “not yet” of Christian eschatology. That means that while a dogmatic statement is definitively true, it is still provisional, and must remain open to the future, which can disclose more of the gospel than has been grasped in this interpretation of it. A dogma is a true word, but it is never the last word that can be said about a mystery of faith.” (Sullivan *Creative* 38)
    1. Karl Rahner and Karl Lehmann (*Kerygma and Dogma*. New York: Herder and Herder, 1969. 98): “The dogmatic statement can only show forth in a provisional way the final state of things. It is part of the sobriety of dogmatic discourse to remain critically aware of this dual eschatological significance in dogmatic statements. Thus the seriousness which is necessary when dealing with the subject of *salvation* is preserved, but also the provisional nature of all theological formulation can remain more critically present to the mind.” (Sullivan *Creative* 39)
  1. “*In dogmatic statements*, *revealed truth may be mingled with ideas which are not part of the binding content of the article of faith*.” (Sullivan *Creative* 39)
     1. Karl Rahner (“Yesterday’s History of Dogma and Theology for Tomorrow.” *Theological Investigations* 18: 11-12): “In the transmission and expression of dogmas properly speaking there may be inseparably mingled ideas, interpretations, etc., which are not part of the binding content of the article of faith concerned but which have not been explicitly separated from this article at a particular epoch in history . . . and for historical reasons cannot be separated up to a certain point in time. There may be such amalgams (if we may use this admittedly problematic expression) even with dogmas properly so called. Not every idea then that was actually but without further reflection brought to bear on the elucidation of the meaning of an article of faith is in principle really an indissoluble part of this article itself . . . in view of the historicity of truth they [amalgams] are simply unavoidable; they will remain (even though in such a way that the elimination of one such amalgam means that another takes its place) . . .” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 39)
     2. example (ibid.): monogenism
        1. Pius XII (encyclical *Humani generis*, DS 3897, ND 420): “As regards . . . polygenism, . . . the faithful cannot lend support to a theory which involves either the existence on this earth, after Adam, of true men who would not originate from him, as the ancestor of all, by natural generation, or that ‘Adam’ stands for a plurality of ancestors. For, it is not at all apparent how such a view can be reconciled with the data which the sources of revealed truth and the documents of the Church propose concerning original sin, namely, that it originates from a sin truly committed by one Adam, is transmitted to all through generation and is in each proper to him (cf. Rom 5:12-19).” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 188 n. 21)
        2. Karl Rahner (“Yesterday’s History of Dogma and Theology for Tomorrow.” *Theological Investigations* 18: 11-12): “. . . Pius XII still thought that monogenism is an indispensable and unrenounceable element of the Catholic doctrine of original sin . . . we may nevertheless hold a different opinion today and, while upholding the doctrine of original sin and its essential meaning, eliminate a monogenistic interpretation of this doctrine as an historically conditioned amalgam, even though the theology of former times and the magisterium never thought and could not have thought of this possibility.” (Qtd. in Sullivan, *Creative* 39)
  2. “Dogma is always a partial statement of revealed truth.” (Sullivan *Creative* 39)
     1. “The historical circumstances that have led up to the definition of dogmas of faith have tended to focus the attention of the [39] magisterium on certain aspects of revelation which were then being challenged. Inevitably other aspects of the truth, to which the dogmatic statement did not attend, would be left in oblivion. In interpreting dogmatic statements, therefore, it will be necessary to insert the truth defined by a particular dogma into the broader and more complete picture of revelation. . . . the full truth of any particular dogma depends on its place in the broader picture. It may need to be balanced by other aspects of the truth which the dogma did not express.” (Sullivan *Creative* 39-40)

1. **summary**
   1. “Its [dogma’s] formulation is always historically and culturally conditioned.” (Sullivan *Creative* 40)
      1. “It is a true statement, but it never says the whole truth . . .” (Sullivan *Creative* 40)
      2. “. . . it may be mixed with elements that are not part of revealed truth.” (Sullivan *Creative* 40)
      3. “A dogma is not identical with the original word of revelation. The truth of a dogmatic statement is guaranteed by the Spirit, but it is not written under the Spirit’s inspiration, as scripture is.” (Sullivan *Creative* 40)
   2. “While a dogma will always be a provisional expression of the word of God, still it leads beyond itself into the ultimate mystery, since the act of faith terminates not in the proposition but in the reality which it signifies.” (Sullivan *Creative* 40)

## History of Theology

### A History of Systematic Theology

1. **patristic period**
   1. “Patristic theology was most often conditioned by its polemical or pastoral preoccupations, and we hardly ever find in the Fathers a systematic and coherent organization of the whole of the faith.” (Camelot 281)
   2. “*Saint John Damascene* was the first to have made any attempt of this kind, a fact which has merited for him the title “Father of Scholasticism.”” (Camelot 281)
2. **dark ages**
   1. “In the general decline of culture the ecclesiastical literature of the Middle Ages did little more than repeat the teaching of the Fathers, whose works were cut up and compiled in the *Glosses* and collections of *Sentences*.” (Camelot 281)
   2. 800s: Carolingian Renaissance
      1. “The Carolingian Renaissance (*Alcuin*, died 804; *Rhabanus Maurus*, died 856) was perhaps more literary and grammatical than theological, and the theology of the ninth century still remained exclusively biblical.” (Camelot 281)
      2. “A genius like *John Scotus Erigena* was an isolated phenomenon and his influence was felt only later through the medium of his translation of the Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite.” (Camelot 281)
      3. “Nevertheless, the reorganization of the schools and the introduction of dialectic into teaching prepared an instrument for scholasticism.” (Camelot 281)
3. **middle ages**
   1. 1000s
      1. “. . . *Berengarius of Tours* (died 1088) applied the dialectical method that he had learned in the schools of Chartres to eucharistic dogma: it was an unhappy attempt, but it introduced speculation into theology.” (Camelot 281)
      2. “These attempts were violently opposed by those who held to the traditional method: *Saint Peter Damian* (died 1072), and *Lanfranc*, monk of Bec, and later archbishop of Canterbury (died 1089).” (Camelot 281)
      3. “*Saint Anselm*, who was also abbot of Bec and archbishop of Canterbury (died 1099), can be considered as the founder of the rational method in theology, a way of proceeding for a believer in quest of an understanding of his faith: “*fides quaerens intellectum*.” . . . he sought to discover the very reason of the mysteries and to draw from them in a dialectical fashion all the conclusions they contain.” (Camelot 281)
   2. 1100s
      1. “The twelfth century saw the renewal of the study of Greek [281] philosophy, Platonist and even Aristotelian . . .” (Camelot 281-82)
      2. A result was “great philosophical debates (Nominalism and Realism, the quarrel of the universals) whose scope went far beyond that of simple scholastic controversies: school of Chartres (Gilbert de la Porrée), of Laon (Anselm of Laon), of Paris (William of Champeaux).” (Camelot 282)
      3. “Thanks to this renewal of philosophy theology began to set itself up as a *science*, a science of a special type since it receives its object from revelation and its light from faith, but a science which develops by its own methods and according to all the exigencies of a rational kind of knowledge.” (Camelot 282)
      4. Abelard and Bernard
         1. “*Abelard* (died 1142) submitted the data of tradition to a severe rational analysis (*Sic et Non*); his *Introductio ad Theologiam* is one of the first attempts at a “Theological Summa.” His audacity drew down upon him the fierce opposition of Saint Bernard and had him condemned.” (Camelot 282)
         2. Bernard “was a very great mystical theologian.” (Camelot 282)
         3. “But in this controversy Bernard, who tried to reduce theology to the exclusive study of Scripture and the Fathers, represented the past, and Abelard, despite his errors, represented the future.” (Camelot 282)
      5. Abbey of Saint Victor, Paris
         1. “The school of the abbey of *Saint Victor* at Paris was the representative of the supreme effort of the traditional method, a contemplation of the mysteries of faith as seen through Scripture allegorically interpreted.” (Camelot 282)
         2. Hugh of Saint Victor’s (c. 1078-1141) *De Sacramentis Christianae Fidei* “is at the same time a complete system of dogmatic theology . . .” (Camelot 282)
         3. Richard of Saint Victor’s (?-d. 1173) *De Trinitate* “endeavored to explain the mystery by reason of the goodness and the love of God.” (Camelot 282)
         4. “Both men were also important mystical authors.” (Camelot 282)
      6. cathedral school of Notre Dame, Paris
         1. “*Peter Lombard* (c. 1100-60), “the Master of the Sentences,” rendered great service to the developing scholastic theology by furnishing it with his manual [*Four Books of Sentences*, c. 1150], his framework, and his method, namely, the gathering together of the “auctoritates” of the Fathers (argument from authority), the use of dialectic for discussing them, reconciling them if necessary, and for making the most of them in a rational manner.” (Camelot 282)
      7. “The twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth were to witness the appearance of the *Summas*, attempts to gather together the whole of theology.” (Camelot 282)
   3. 1200s
      1. universities
         1. “The Universities were organized at the beginning of the thirteenth century (Paris 1200-1215), and it was not long before the Mendicant Orders, Preachers and Minors, came to establish themselves [282] there and to occupy chairs of teaching. Teaching was to be divided into two separate currents . . .” (Camelot 282-83)
         2. (Platonist) Augustinianism (Camelot 283)
            1. This tradition “was more affective and mystical, as well as symbolical (exemplarism) . . .” (Camelot 283)
            2. Representatives early in the 1200s included two *magisters* (professors) of theology at the University of Paris. (Camelot 283)

William of Auvergne (1180/90-1249) (Yet *Wikipedia* says he was “the first theologian to reconcile Aristotle with Christian doctrine,” “William of Auvergne.”)

William of Auxerre (d. 1231)

* + - * 1. “. . . the first Franciscan theologians like *Alexander of Hales* (died 1245), who was not ignorant of Aristotle, continued the Augustinian tradition for which *Saint Bonaventure* (died 1274) provided an original synthesis strongly impressed with the Franciscan spirit.” (Camelot 283)
        2. “At the end of the century, *John Duns Scotus* [c. 1265-1308] completed the systematization of Franciscan theology in a vigorous synthesis that we can undoubtedly characterize by the primacy of love (voluntarism); in theology he was especially famous for his theology of the motive for the Incarnation, which he claimed was predestined for the glory of God and of Christ Himself independently of the sin of man. He was also the ardent champion of the Immaculate Conception of Mary.” (Camelot 283)
        3. Even in “the Dominican Order, . . . there still continued for some time a Platonist current (whence would issue the Rhenish mystics of the fourteenth [283] century) . . .” (Camelot 283-84)
      1. (Aristotelian) Thomism
         1. “. . . Aristotelianism, through the medium of the Arabs (Avicenna and Averroes), represented a real danger for Christian thought. Condemned at Paris in 1210 and 1215, it was to be rethought and assumed into Christianity by two great Dominican doctors, *Albert the Great* [1193/1206-80] and *Thomas Aquinas* [c. 1225-74].” (Camelot 283)
      2. Aquinas
         1. “Recognizing without reserve the demands of the “natures” and the rights of reason, that he put at the service of the faith, Saint Thomas Aquinas, in whom his contemporaries emphasized a boldness of invention and a newness of method, nevertheless kept all the essentials of the patristic tradition and the Augustinian heritage; at the same time he resolutely committed himself to an intellectual conception of theology of which his Aristotelian epistemology permitted him to establish definitively the scientific status.” (Camelot 283)
         2. “Being “the genius of order,” he built up a magnificent structure of the work of God and the plan of salvation in which his profoundly religious soul took pleasure in contemplating and adoring the Christian mystery.” (Camelot 283)
    1. “Scientific theology had in one bound attained its apogee in the thirteenth century.” (Camelot 284)
  1. 1300s-1400s
     1. Thomism
        1. “After spirited opposition even within the Order of Preachers (condemnations of 1277, 1284, 1296), *Thomism*, which we can undoubtedly characterize by the primacy of the intelligence and the primacy of being, became the official teaching of the Dominican Order . . .” (Camelot 283)
        2. the *Summa* replaces the *Four Books of Sentences*
           1. “. . . during the course of the fifteenth century, the *Summa* took the place of the *Book of the Sentences* as the text-book for the schools of the [Dominican] Order . . .” (Camelot 284)
           2. It replaced the *Four Bookd of the Sentences* “in the universities of the sixteenth century.” (Camelot 284)
        3. “The Thomist school . . . still had some good theologians like *Capreolus* (Rodez, died 1444) and *John of Torquemada* (died 1468).” (Camelot 284)
     2. decadence
        1. But “The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were times of profound decadence.” (Camelot 284)
        2. “The weakening of Thomism, the abuse of dialectic, and above all the Nominalism of the Franciscan *William of Occam* (died 1349) provoked a distrustful reaction towards reason . . .” (Camelot 284)
        3. “. . . the subtleties of an ill-regulated scholasticism gave rise to a purely affective and voluntaristic spirituality: *Gabriel Biel* (died 1495) was its most characteristic representative in fifteenth century Germany.” (Camelot 284)

1. **modern period**
   1. 1500s
      1. “The sixteenth century, the century of the Renaissance, the Protestant Reform, and the Catholic Reform, also experienced a real theological renaissance.” (Camelot 284)
      2. “On the one hand, the influence of humanism and the restoration of classical letters orientated Christian thought towards a return to its sources, both biblical and patristic.” (Camelot 284)
         1. “*Positive theology* was born at this time . . .” (Camelot 284)
         2. Melchior Cano, OP (c. 1509-60), *De Locis Theologicis* (1563)
      3. “On the other hand, the renewal of religious and intellectual life in the Friars Preacher brought about a renaissance of *Thomism* . . .” (Camelot 284)
         1. Cajetan (Tommaso de Vio, 1469-1534) “united to a vigorous and penetrating metaphysics a real boldness of outlook, for example, in exegesis.” (Camelot 284)
         2. “But it was in Spain that the Thomist school came to full flower, benefiting from all that humanism had to contribute. At Salamanca, *Francis of Vittoria* [1492-1546] was the founder of international law, and *Melchior Cano* [c. 1509-60] the initiator of modern theology.” (Camelot 284)
      4. Dominicans versus Jesuits
         1. Jesuit theology, “which grew up in reaction to Protestantism, professed a certain independence with regard to the theology of Saint Thomas and placed itself on a psychological and moral rather than metaphysical plane . . .” (Camelot 285)
            1. Francisco Suarez (1548-1617) “was to become the official theologian of the Company . . . A metaphysician of original tendencies (denial of the real distinction between essence and existence, a new theory of substance and accidents, and of subsistence), in theology he kept the generality of traditional positions (“the whole school can be heard in him”), although he took certain original initiatives.” (Camelot 285)
         2. the controversy *de auxilius* (on grace and predestination)
            1. “It was over the question of grace (a long controversy *De Auxilius*, which ended in a stale­mate in 1607) that separation and opposition arose between the theology of the Jesuits and Thomist theology . . .” (Camelot 285)
            2. Dominicans

“. . . the Thomist school was to be characterized by the very firm positions it took on the questions of [284] predestination, grace, and divine cooperation . . .” (Camelot 284-85)

Domingo de Soto (1494-1560)

Domingo Bañez (1528-1604)

* + - * 1. Jesuits

Luis de Molina’s (1535-1600) *Concordia liberi arbitrii cum gratiae donis* “tried to reconcile free will with divine foreknowledge . . . through a new theology of human liberty and divine knowledge . . .” (Camelot 285)

“. . . he was followed by *Vasquez* (died 1604)

But Francisco Suarez (1548-1617), “who was to become the official theologian of the Company, professed a subtler theory [congruism].” (Camelot 285)

* + - 1. probabilism
         1. “In moral theology the two schools separated again over the question of *probabilism* which, despite the resistance of the Thomist, ended up by being accepted in the Church but which as regards morality does not perhaps represent progress.” (Camelot 285)
         2. “At the end of the eighteenth century *Saint Alphonsus of Liguori* (died 1777) took up a middle position between extreme opinions and acquired very great authority in moral questions.” (Camelot 285)
  1. 1600s
     1. Positive theology “was in full bloom in the seventeenth century . . .” (Camelot 284)
        1. Caesarius Cardinal Baronius, Oratorian, historian (1538-1607)
        2. Petavius (Denis Pétau), SJ (1583-1652), *Dogmata Theologica* (*De theologicis dogmatibus*, incomplete in 5 vols., 1644-50; “the first systematic attempt ever made to treat the development of Christian doctrine from the historical point of view,” “Denis Pétau”)
        3. Louis Thomassin, Oratorian, historian (1619-95)
        4. Robert Bellarmine’s (1542-1621) *Controversies* “made extensive use of the contributions of positive theology in discussions with Protestants and was to have considerable influence on Catholic apologetics.” (Camelot 284)
  2. 1600s-1700s
     1. “. . . the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were once again a time of decadence for theology . . .” (Camelot 285)
        1. “. . . this was due mainly to Jansenism . . .” (Camelot 285)
        2. It was also due “to Cartesianism and Rationalism which, under an appearance of fidelity to traditional theology, penetrated the very teaching of the schools.” (Camelot 285)
        3. In addition, “endless controversies [e.g., controversy *de auxiliis*; probabilism] were sterile . . .” (Camelot 285)
     2. “Thomism still possessed some glorious representatives . . .” (Camelot 285)
        1. John of Saint Thomas, OP (Portuguese, 1589-1644) was “the adversary of *Vasquez*, the metaphysician of subsistence, the theologian of the divine missions and of the gifts of the Holy Spirit . . .” (Camelot 285)
        2. Charles-René Billuart’s, OP (French, 1685-1757), “work represents a solid synthesis of classical Thomism.” (Camelot 285)
  3. 1900s
     1. “The theological renaissance of the end of the nineteenth and of [285] the beginning of the twentieth century [was] due
        1. “to the express encouragements given by Leo XIII to the study of the theology of Saint Thomas, as well as
        2. “to the renewal of positive theology, both biblical and patristic, which had been provoked by the Modernist crisis . . .” (Camelot 285-86)
        3. Thomists
           1. Ambroise Gardeil (1859-1931)
           2. Louis Billot, SJ (1846-1931)
           3. Matthias Joseph Scheeben (1835-88)
        4. non-Thomists
           1. Jean-Pierre Rousselot (1846-1924)
        5. “. . . Scotist theology is still living and vigorous.” (Camelot 286)

### Nouvelle Théologie

“Nouvelle Théologie.” *Wikipedia*. 14 Oct. 2009. 3 Jan. 2010.

Nouvelle Théologie (French, “New Theology”) is the name commonly used to refer to a school of thought in Catholic theology that arose in the mid-20th century, most notably among certain circles of French and German theologians. The shared objective of these theologians was a fundamental reform of how the [Catholic Church](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church) was approaching theology. Namely, the movement reacted against the dominance of [Scholasticism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scholasticism) and the scholastically-influenced manuals of theology, criticism of the [Modern Era](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_Era) by the Church, and a defensive stance towards non-Catholic faiths.

Nouvelle Théologie theologians, in response, sought a return of Catholic Theology to (what they perceived was) its original purity of thought and expression. To accomplish this, they advocated a ‘return to the sources’ of the Christian Faith: namely, Scripture and the writings of the [Church Fathers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_Fathers). This methodological move is known by its French name, *ressourcement* (French, “return to the sources”). Along with this, the movement adopted a systemic openness to dialogue with the contemporary world on issues of theology. They developed also a renewed interest in biblical exegesis, typology, art, literature and mysticism.

While the name ‘Nouvelle Théologie’ is today considered the standard designation for the movement, it was originally a pejorative label given the movement by its opponents (usually attributed to the Dominican theologian [Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reginald_Garrigou-Lagrange)). The pejorative connotation stems from the critique that theologians of the movement did not ‘return to the sources’ but deviated from the long-standing theological tradition of the Catholic Church, thus creating a ‘new theology’ all their own—a claim they denied. Instead, theologians of the movement generally preferred to call their movement “Ressourcement”. Yet, their own label enjoyed less popular coinage than that of their opponents. Over time, as ‘Nouvelle Théologie’ has gained widespread usage, the debate over the movement’s proper name has largely become a marginal note.

The theologians usually associated with Nouvelle Théologie are [Henri de Lubac](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henri_de_Lubac), [Pierre Teilhard de Chardin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_Teilhard_de_Chardin), [Hans Urs von Balthasar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hans_Urs_von_Balthasar), [Yves Congar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yves_Congar), [Karl Rahner](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Rahner), [Hans Küng](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hans_K%C3%BCng), [Edward Schillebeeckx](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Schillebeeckx), [Marie-Dominique Chenu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie-Dominique_Chenu), [Louis Bouyer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Bouyer), [Etienne Gilson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etienne_Gilson), [Jean Daniélou](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Dani%C3%A9lou), [Jean Mouroux](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Jean_Mouroux&action=edit&redlink=1) and [Joseph Ratzinger](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Ratzinger) (now, [Pope Benedict XVI](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Benedict_XVI)).

The Nouvelle Théologie had been previously criticized by Pope [Pius XII](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pius_XII) in his enyclical [*Humani generis*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humani_Generis), who felt a tendency towards excessive criticism in Old Testament texts and warned of a resurgence of [modernism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modernism_(Roman_Catholicism)) in many Catholic seminaries.

Theologians from this school of thought had a very significant influence on the reforms brought about in the Catholic Church by the [Second Vatican Council](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Vatican_Council) (1962-1965). In the aftermath of the Council, the movement became divided into two camps, splitting in effect into left and right wings, over the interpretation and implementation of the Council, with Rahner, Congar, Schillebeeckx, Küng, and Chenu founding the more progressive theological journal [*Concilium*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concilium) in 1965, and de Lubac, Balthasar, Ratzinger, and others founding the theological journal [*Communio*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communio) in 1972.

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Wilhelm, Joseph, and Thomas B. Scannell, eds. and trans. *A Manual of Catholic Theology Based on Scheeben*’*s* Dogmatik. 2 vols. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1908. (Scheeben, Matthias Joseph (1835-88). *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*. 7 vols. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1873-87.) (Wilhelm and Scannell, “whilst strictly adhering to Scheeben’s thought, reduced the bulky work to two handy volumes entitled: *A Manual of Catholic Theology based on Scheeben’s Dogmatik* (3rd ed., 1906).” Wilhelm)

## Denzinger’s Enchiridion Symbolorum, Definitionum

## et Declarationum de Rebus Fidei et Morum

latin editions

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *edition* | *editor* | *city and publisher* | *date* |
| 1 | Heinrich Denzinger (1819-83); title: | Würzburg | 1854 |
| 2 | Denzinger |  |  |
| 3 | Denzinger |  |  |
| 4 | Denzinger |  |  |
| 5 | Denzinger |  | 1874 |
| 6 | Denzinger (d. 1883) |  |  |
| 7 | Ignatius Stahl |  |  |
| 8 | Ignatius Stahl |  | 1899 |
| 9 | Ignatius Stahl | Würzburg:  Typis Stahelii | 1900 |
| 10 | Clemens Bannwart, SJ (1873-) (paragraphs renumbered)  (assistant ed., Johann Baptist Umberg, SJ [1875-1959])  new title: *Enchiridion symbolorum definiti­onum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* | Freiburg im Breisgau:  Herder (from 10th ed. to the present) | 1908 |
| 11 | Clemens Bannwart | Freiburg im Breisgau | 1911 |
| 12 | Clemens Bannwart | Freiburg im Breisgau | 1913 |
| 13 | Johann Baptist Umberg (editor-in-chief) and Clemens Bannwart | Freiburg im Breisgau | 1921 |
| 14 | Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg | Freiburg im Breisgau,  St. Louis | 1922 |
| 16-17 | Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg | Freiburg im Breisgau | 1927 |
| 18 | Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg | Freiburg im Breisgau | 1932 |
| 21 | Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg | Freiburg im Breisgau | 1937 |
| 24 | Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg | Barcelona | 1946 |
| 26 | Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg | Freiburg im Breisgau | 1947 |
| 27 | Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg | Barcelona | 1951 |
| 28 | Johann Baptist Umberg and Karl Rahner, SJ (1904-84) | Freiburg im Breisgau | 1952 |
| 29 | Clemens Bannwart, Johann Baptist Umberg, and Karl Rahner | Freiburg im Breisgau,  Barcelona | 1953 |
| 30 | Clemens Bannwart, Johann Baptist Umberg, and Karl Rahner | Freiburg im Breisgau | 1955 |
| 31 | Clemens Bannwart, Johann Baptist Umberg, and Karl Rahner | Freiburg im Breisgau,  Barcelona, St. Louis | 1957 |
| 3 | Clemens Bannwart, Johann Baptist Umberg, and Karl Rahner | Freiburg im Breisgau,  Barcelona, Rome | 1960 |
| 3 | Karl Rahner | Rome | 1960 |
| 3 | Karl Rahner | Barcelona | 1963 |
| 32 | Adolf Schönmetzer (paragraphs renumbered) | Barcelona | 1963 |
| 33 | Adolf Schönmetzer | Barcelona | 1965 |
| 34 | Adolf Schönmetzer | Barcelona | 1967 |
| 36 | Adolf Schönmetzer | Barcelona | 1973 |
| 37 | Adolf Schönmetzer | Barcelona | 1976 |
| 38 | Peter Hünermann |  | 1997 |

In the 10th edition, “The word “*decla­rationum*” was added to the title because some of the texts in­cluded in the work were neither creeds nor definitions. The last portion of the title which Denzinger had employed [*a Conciliis oecumenicis et summis pontificibus emanarunt*] was omitted for the very good reason that many of the texts did not emanate either from the Sovereign Pontiff himself or from Oecumenical Councils.” (Fenton 392)

The 28th edition includes “the letter [of 1948] of the Secretary of the Biblical Commission to the late Cardinal Suhard, a document written in French, the first language other than Latin and Greek . . . to be included in the *Enchiridion* as the tongue in which an authoritative statement of the *magisterium* was originally set down.” (Fenton 393)

“The numbering that scholars in recent decades (since 1963) have usually cited for the entries is that introduced in the edition prepared by Adolf Schönmetzer, SJ [in 1963.] . . . this numbering [is] very different from that in earlier editions.” (Fortescue) (References to editions prior to Schönmetzer’s in 1963 use the abbreviation “D” plus the number of the passage; references to editions edited by Schönmetzer use the abbreviation “DS” plus the number.)

editions in Latin:

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum et definitionum*, *quae de rebus fidei et morum a Conciliis oecumenicis et summis pontificibus emanarunt*. *In auditorum usum edidit Henricus Denzinger*. [1st ed.] Würzburg: 1854.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. 1865.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum in auditorum usum edidit Henricus Denzinger*. Ed. Ignatius Stahl. 9th ed. Würzburg: Typis Stahelii, 1900.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum auctore Henrico Denzinger*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart. 10th ed. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1908.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart. 11th ed. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1911.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum auctore Henrico Denzinger*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart. 12th ed. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1913.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart. 12a ed. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1913.

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Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg. 14th-15th eds. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1922.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg. 14th-15th eds. St. Louis: Herder, 1922.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg. 16th-17th eds. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1927.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum quod a Clemente Bannwart denuo compositum iteratis curis edidit Iohannes Bapt. Umberg*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg. 18th-20th eds. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1932.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg. 18th-20th eds. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1937.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum quod a Clemente Bannwart denuo compositum iteratis curis edidit Iohannes Bapt*. *Umberg*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg. 21st-23rd eds. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1937.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum quod a Clemente Bannwart denuo compositum iteratis curis edidit Iohannes Bapt*. *Umberg*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg. 24th ed. Barcelona: Editorial Herder, 1946.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart and Johann Baptist Umberg. 26th ed. augmentata. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1947.

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Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Ed. Johann Baptist Umberg and Karl Rahner. 28th ed. augmentata. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1952.

Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart, Johann Baptist Umberg, and Karl Rahner. 29th ed. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1953.

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Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Ed. Clemens Bannwart, Johann Baptist Umberg, and Karl Rahner. 3rd ed. Barcelona, Freiburg im Breisgau, Rome: Herder, 1960.

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Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, *quod primum edidit Henricus Denzinger*, *et quod funditus retractavit*, *auxit*, *notulis ornavit Adolfus Schönmetzer*. Ed. Adolf Schönmetzer. 33rd ed. Barcelona: Herder, 1965.

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Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definition et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* *quod primum edidit Henricus Denzinger*; *et quod funditus retractavit auxit notulis ornavit Adolfus Schönmetzer*. Ed. Adolf Schönmetzer. 36th ed. Barcelona: Herder, 1973.

(*probably Latin and Italian in parallel columns*:) *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Edizione bilingue. Bologna: EDB, 1995.

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English translations and editions

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Denzinger, Heinrich. *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*. Trans. Roy J. Deferrari. St. Louis: Herder, 1957. Rpt. Powers Lake, ND: Marian House, 1990. Rpt. Fitzwilliam, NH: Loreto, 2001, 2002. (Trans. from the 30th Latin ed.)

Hünermann, Peter, Helmut Hoping, Robert L. Fastiggi, Anne Englund Nash, and Heinrich Denzinger, eds. *Compendium of Creeds*, *Definitions*, *and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2012.

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(*Chinese*) Denzinger, Heinrich. *Tian zhu jiao hui xun dao wen xian xuan ji*: *xin li lun li da cheng*. Ed. Adolf Schönmetzer and Antang Shi. Teipei: 1975.

(*German*) Denzinger, Heinrich. *Kompendium der Glaubensbekenntnisse und kirchlichen Lehr­entscheidungen*. 37th ed. Freiburg im Breisgau : Herder, 1991.

(*Latin and Italian in parallel columns*) Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum*, *definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. Edizione bilingue. Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 1995.

(*Latin and French in parallel columns*) Denzinger, Heinrich. *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*. 38th ed. *Symboles et définitions de la foi catholique*. *Édité par Peter Hünermann pour l’édition originale et par Joseph Hoffmann pour l’édition française*. Le Magistère de l’Église. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1997. (Trans. from the 37th German ed.)

Denzinger, which arranges passages chronologically, is being replaced by Neuner-Dupuis, which arrange passages first by theme, then chronologically under each theme:

Neuner, Josef [1908-2009], SJ, and Heinrich Roos, SJ [1904-77]. *The Teaching of the Catholic Church as Contained in Her Documents*. Ed. Karl Rahner. Trans. Geoffrey Stevens. Staten Island: Alba House, 1967. (Trans. from *Glaube der Kirche in den Urkunden der Lehrverkündigung*. Regensburg: 1938. 2nd ed. Ed. Karl Rahner. Regensburg: Gregorius, 1948. 5th ed., 1958. 11th ed., Regensburg: Pustet, 1983.)

(A little about Fr. Neuner: He taught theology at a Jesuit seminary in India for 60 years. “He was one of four *periti* (experts) from India at [Vatican II] and contributed to its many documents, especially *Nostra aetate* [*Declaration on the Relation of the Church with Non-Christian Religions*] and *Ad gentes* [*Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church*]. He was “a stalwart of Church renewal after the Second Vatican Council.” He “worked in India with Mother Teresa . . . He was retreat director for her Missionaries of Charity and helped her integrate some of the darkest spiritual moments of her life with her work for the poor.” Catholic Bishops Conference of India)

Neuner, Josef, and Jacques Dupuis [1923-2004]. *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*. Dublin: Mercier, 1973; Westminster: Christian Classics, 1975.

Neuner, Josef, and Jacques Dupuis. *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*. Rev. ed. New York: Alba House, 1982. Rpt. London: Collins Liturgical, 1983, 1986. 5th ed. London: HarperCollinsReligious, 1992.

Neuner, Josef. *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*. Ed. Jacques Dupuis. 6th rev. and enl. ed. New York: Alba House, 1996.

Neuner, Josef. *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*. Ed. Jacques Dupuis. 7th rev. and enl. ed. New York: Alba House; Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2001. Rpt. Bangalore, 2004.

similar works:

Cavallera, Ferdinand [1875-]. *Thesaurus doctrinae catholicae*. *Ex docu­mentis magisterii ecclesiastici*. 1920. Nova editio recognita e aucta. Paris: Beauchesne, 1936.

“Where Denzinger’s *Enchiridion* arranges its material in chronological order . . ., Cavallera’s *Thesaurus* arranges its content in the doctrinal order . . .” (Fenton 393)

Cechetti, Igino, comp. *Enchiridion clericorum*: *Documenta ecclesiae sacrorum alumnis instituendis*.

Kirsch, Conrad, SJ, ed. *Enchiridion fontium historiae ecclesiasticae antiquae*.

Rouet de Journel, Marie-Joseph, SJ, ed. *The Teachings of the Church Fathers*. Trans. John Randolph Willis. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2002. (Original: *Enchiridion patristicum*. 1911. 21st ed. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1960.)

Viller, Marcel, SJ, et al., eds. *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, *doctrine et histoire*. Paris: Gilbert Beauchesne, 1932.

## A Bibliography of Basic Church Documents

“Basic Church Documents: World Wide Web.” *St*. *John*’*s Seminary* (Camarillo CA). N.d. 18 Apr. 2010. <http://library.stjohnsem.edu/basic church docs.htm>.

Vatican and U.S. Bishops Websites

Many recent documents, with limited older material, are made available on the Vatican and U.S. Bishops Web sites.

The Holy See (Vatican): www.vatican.va

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: www.nccbuscc.org

Especially for older documents, explore the sites below.

Papal Encyclicals Online: http://www.papalencyclicals.net/

EWTN Searchable Library: <http://www.ewtn.com/ewtn/library/search.asp>

Catholic Information Network: [www.cin.org/ftp.html](http://www.cin.org/ftp.html)

Catholic Documents by Subject: [www.catholic.net/extlinks.phtml?cat=8](http://www.catholic.net/extlinks.phtml?cat=8)

New Advent: Church Documents: <http://www.newadvent.org/docs>

In-Library Sources

*Origins* (1971-)

Origins is a reliable source for items from U.S. Bishops as well as significant documents from the Vatican. Even with the advent of web sites for the Holy See and US bishops, Origins remains indispensable, with much retrospective material. Consult pink index pages in each volume. See  
cumulative index for 1971-1990.

*Catholic Periodical and Literature Index* (CPLI). online database. Also on CD-ROM.

Although there are unfortunate gaps in coverage, the indexing of CPLI is often easier to use than *Origins*’ own index.

*L*’*Osservatore Romano*. Newspaper. Available in paper, microfilm and on CD. Check holdings in catalog for details.

Official Vatican weekly in English. International scope, including documents, addresses and pronouncements, many not available elsewhere in English. Extensive coverage of papal   
activities, as well as documents from the congregations and curia. Annual index on film. Items may also be indexed in CPLI.

*The Pope Speaks* (1954-). Periodical.

Selected papal as well as other Vatican documents.

Papal Documents

*Encyclicals of John Paul II*. 1978.

Ref BX 860 1978 .A213 1996

*Papal Encyclicals*: *1740-1981*. 1981. 5 vols.

Ref BX 860.C37 1981

The most complete collection of texts for the period. Good subject index.

*Papal Pronouncements*: *1740-1978*. 2 vols.

Ref BX 850 .P36

Excellent subject index. Citations and brief abstracts with English translation noted when available. In general does not index the encyclicals (see above collection).

*Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations of John Paul II*. 1998.

Ref BX 870 .C36 J5316 1998

Six documents, to 1997.

Other Reference Resources

*Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*. 1990. 2 vols.

Ref BX 825 .A1990

Collection of all major councils, including Trent and Vatican I and II. Latin and English on facing pages.

*Vatican Council II*: *The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*.

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Primary documents.

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A recent excellent encyclopedia on a broad range of topics having to do with the Papacy. Includes bibliographies.

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English versions of selected documents from a period of major liturgical reform. In depth resource of original material.

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More Resources

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Known simply as “Denziger,” and usually cited by DS number, the best-known compendium of  
doctrines/teachings of the Magisterium. In Latin with German translations.

*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (1865-). Periodical.

Cited as AAS; the official source for documents and speeches of the Pope, in addition to the acts and decisions of congregations and other curial bodies. In original language, most frequently Latin.

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Latin collection of documents on the liturgy.

## Selected Reference Works for the Study of Theology

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Betz, Hans Dieter, et al., eds. *Religion Past and Present*: *Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*. 4th English ed. 6 vols. (at present, A-J). Leiden: Brill, 2007-. (Trans. of: Galling, Kurt, ed. *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*: *Handwörterbuch fuer Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*. 3rd ed. 1957.) Ref. BL31.R382r 1957 Six volumes plus an index. Known as the RGG, all three editions are important because of the status of the contributors and the references in the bibliographies. The index volume gives extensive treatment to both contributors and subject matter.

Catholic University of America faculty, eds. *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. 15 vols. New York: McGraw‑Hill, 1967. Supplemental volumes, 1974, 1979, 1989, 1996. 2nd ed. Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2003. Ref. BX841 .N44 2002 Vol. 15 is an index, 16 is a supplement covering 1967‑74, and 17 is a supplement on change in the church. Some 17,000 signed articles, most with bibliographies. Covers the major figures, doctrines, and events which have influenced Roman Catholic history, with emphasis on English‑speaking regions.

Christman, J. Creighton, ed. *Religious and Theological Abstracts*. Myerstown: Religious and Theological Abstracts, 1957‑present. Ref. Z7753.R3 Articles from three hundred journals are abstraced quarterly and classified into four general sections (historical theology, systematic theology, biblical studies, and practical theology). Includes cumula­tive subject and author indices for each volume.

Coxe, A. Cleveland, ed. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*: *The Writings of the Fathers Down to a*.*d*. *325*. 10 vols. New York: Christian Literature, 1885-96. Based on: *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*. Ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1868-73.) *ChristianCulture*.*org*. 2010. Web. 5 Jan. 2010. <http://www.catholiccul­ture.org/cul­ture/library/fathers/>.

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Daniel-Rops, Henri, ed. *Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism*. 150 vols. New York: Hawthorn, 1959-71. (French: *Je sais—je crois*: *Encyclopédie du Catholique au XXème siècle*. Paris: Arthème Fayard, 1960.) REF BX 880 .T9.

Davis, H. Francis, et al., eds. *A Catholic Dictionary of Theology*. London: Thomas Nelson, 1962‑. Ref. BX 841.C360 Subtitled “A Work Projected with the Approval of the Catholic Hierarchy of England and Wales.” Three of the four volumes have appeared. Long, signed articles by scholars in respective fields; selective bibliographies. Reflects the thought and interests of Vatican II.

Edwards, Paul, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. New York: Macmillan, 1967. Ref. B41.E3 Extensive thematic and historical coverage. Treats a broad spectrum of philosophical issues, but from an essentially Anglo‑American perspective. Articles are by major contemporary philosophers and scholars; longer entries include bibliographies, some annotated.

Eliade, Mircea, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. 15 vols. New York: Macmillan, 1987. Ref. BL31.E46 1987 Signed articles by major scholars. Wide coverage of the ideas, rituals, events, symbols, and persons which make up the world’s religions. Particularly valuable as an introduction to the history, basic concepts and practices of non‑Christian religions. Brief bibliogra­phies.

Ford, David F., ed. *Modern Theologians*: *An Introduction to Christian Theology in the Twentieth Century*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989. Ref. BT28.M59 Two volumes of essays written by respected scholars. Volume 1 looks at fourteen individual Protest­ant and Roman Catholic theologians, and is divided into five parts. Volume 2 discusses fourteen theolog­ical movements, also divided into five parts. Extensive bibliographies follow each essay.

Harvey, Van A. *Handbook of Theological Terms*. New York: Macmillan, 1964. Ref. BR95.H34h Concise definitions of historic theological terms.

Hastings, James, ed. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*. 13 vols. Edinburgh: Clark; New York: Scribner’s, 1908-27. Rpt. 1951. Rpt. Whitefish MT: Kessinger, 2003. Ref. BL31.E57e 1951 A comprehensive work, now somewhat dated. Broad coverage of persons, issues, and events in religion and ethics. Articles by major figures of the turn of the century. Good bibliographies, excellent indexing.

Herbermann, Charles George, et al., eds. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. 18 vols. New York: Robert Appleton, 1907-14. Vol. 16 is an index. Vols. 17 and 18 are supplements, published in 1922 and 1958.

Jackson, Samuel Macauley, ed. *The Schaff‑Herzog Encyclopedia*/*The New Schaff‑Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1949‑50. Ref. BR95.S296n Twelve volumes plus an index volume. This edition is a revision and translation of the third edition of the *Realencyclopäie*. Considered to be strong on classical theological positions, church history, and biography, but rather weak on Biblical studies. Extensive bibliographies found through­out the volumes.

Komonchak, Joseph A., Mary Collins, and Dermot A. Lane, eds. *New Dictionary of Theology*. Wilmington: Glazier, 1987. Ref. BR95.N48 1987 Signed articles of uneven length; twenty‑four topics are examined in major entries. Hindered by lack of indexing, although there are some cross‑references. Selective bibliographies cite both Protestant and Roman Catholic works.

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Muller, Richard A. *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*: *Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985. Ref. BR95.M86 1985 Several thousand theological terms and short phrases are translated, many of which include extended historical definitions and usages. Important for placing terms in theological context. Many words are cross‑indexed.

Parente, Pietro, ed. *Dictionary of Dogmatic Theology*. Milwaukee: Bruce, 1951. REF BR95 .P3

Peerman, Dean G., and Martin E. Marty, eds. *A Handbook of Christian Theologians*. Enlarged ed. Nashville: Abingdon, 1984. Ref. BT28.H33 1984 Well‑written summaries of the thought of thirty‑eight influential theologians of the past one hundred and fifty years. Contributors are themselves well‑known scholars.

Pelikan, Jaroslav, ed. *Twentieth Century Theology in the Making*. London: Fontana, 1969; London: Collins, 1970; New York: 1971 (paperback). Ref. BR45.R4235b Translations from the second edition of *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (the *RGG*, see “Galling” entry) with selected articles by Troeltsch, Harnack, Barth, Tillich, and others. See also “Betz” entry for another translation.

Rahner, Karl, ed. *Encyclopedia of Theology*: *The Concise Sacramentum Mundi*. New York: Seabury, 1975. Ref. BR95.E48 Contains revised versions of major articles from *Sacramentum Mundi* and other works as well as entirely new articles. Entries are signed; no bibliographies.

Rahner, Karl, ed. *Sacramentum Mundi*: *An Encyclopedia of Theology*. 6 vols. New York: Herder and Herder, 1968‑70. Ref. BR95.S123 Considered a “Summa” of modern Roman Catholic theology, incorpo­rates a post‑Vatican II viewpoint. Contains over one thousand articles by more than six hundred interna­tional scholars. Selective bibliographies. Vol. 6 has a general index and list of contributors.

Richardson, Alan, and John Bowden, eds. *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983. Ref. BR95.W494 1983 Compared to its predecessor (*A Dictionary of Christian Theology*), this work has articles on more recent theological developments and interests, e.g., the relation of theology to other disciplines and to other religions, theologies of liberation, religious language, etc. Contributors are major contemporary theologians from a broad theological and confessional spectrum. Selective bibliogra­phies.

Richardson, Alan, ed. *A Dictionary of Christian Theology*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969. Ref. BR95.M86 1985 Contains excellent articles on the classical formulations of major doctrines, e.g., Christology, Atonement, Holy Spirit, etc. Longer entries include brief bibliographies.

Schaff, Philip, and Henry Wace, eds. *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. Series 1 (Augustine and Chrysostom), ed. Philip Schaff, 14 vols. Series 2 (others), ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, 14 vols. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark; New York: Christian Literature, 1886-1900. *ChristianCulture*.*org*. 2010. Web. 5 Jan. 2010. <cath­oliccul­ture.org/culture/library/fathers/>.

Thomas Aquinas, OP. *Summa theologiae*: *Latin Text and English Translation*, *Introductions*, *Notes*, *Appendices*, *and Glossaries*. Ed. Thomas Gilby, OP. 55 vols. Cambridge: Blackfriars; London: Eyre and Spottiswode; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964-81.

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1. The same three meanings are found in the equivalent Hebrew and Greek words (*nephesh* and *pneuma*, respectively). Primitive people naturally assume that the breath going in and out of their nostrils is the same thing as the wind they feel on their skin or see moving the trees; and since cessation of breathing is the most obvious sign of death, they assume that breath *is* the vital spirit, that which animates a body. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Before all else, Protestantism is, in its very essence, an appeal from all other authority to the divine authority of Holy Scripture.” (Warfield 111) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Since contradictions in the Bible are especially important for establishing that fundamentalism is inadequate as an approach to scripture, I here present some contradictions from the first five books of the Bible (see Rowley 16-23).

   Water exists (Gen 1:2) before anything else exists (Gen 1:3-31).

   Light exists (Gen 1:3-5) before stars exist (Gen 16).

   Day and night, and morning and evening, exist (Gen 1:4-5) before the sun, moon, and stars exist (Gen 1:14-16).

   The sky is a dome (Gen 1:6-8), But it is not a dome.

   Vegetation appears (Gen 1:9-13) before the sun appears (Gen 1:16).

   God creates plants and later creates humans (Gen 1:11, 26-27). *Or*: God creates a human and only later creates plants (Gen 2:4-9).

   God creates birds (Gen 1:20-23), then land animals. But birds evolved from reptiles.

   God, being omnipotent, has no need to rest (Gen 2:2).

   God creates animals and later creates humans (Gen 1:24-25, 26-27). *Or*: God creates a human and only later creates animals (Gen 2:4-7, 18-20).

   God creates male and female humans simultaneously (Gen 1:26-27). *Or*: God creates the man and only later creates the woman (Gen 2:7, 21-22).

   Creation took 7 days (Gen 1:1-2:4a), or creation took 1 day (Gen 2:4b).

   Creation took one week (Gen 1:1-2:4a). But in fact it has taken over 13 billion years.

   The Bible says that the Universe is about 6000 years old. (Using biblical data, Archbishop James Usscher in 1650 determined that creation began on 23 Oct. 4004 bc [of the Julian calendar: 21 Sept. of the present Gregorian calendar]; the Hebrew calendar, based on biblical data, reckons the year ad 2020 as the year 5780.]) But science has established that the Universe is 13.77 billion years old.

   The Bible says that humans are about 6000 years old. But science says that humans are about 300,000 years old.

   God tells Noah to take one pair of each kind of animal (Gen 6:19-20). *Or*: he tells Noah to take seven pairs of each clean animal and one pair of each unclean animal (7:2-3). (Noah takes one pair of each kind of animal, Gen 7:7-9.)

   The flood lasted 40 days (Gen 7:4, 12). *Or*: the flood lasted 150 days (Gen 7:11, 24; 8:2).

   The waters recede below the mountaintops (8:5). Later they are still above the mountaintops (8:9).

   Beersheba was so named to commemorate a cov­en­ant between Abraham and Abimelech (Gen 21:31). *Or*: it was named from an incident concerning Isaac and Abimelech (Gen 26:31).

   Jacob named Bethel on his journey to Paddan-aram (Gen 28:19). *Or*: he named it on his return many years later (Gen 35:14-15).

   Jacob was nicknamed “Israel” at Peniel (Gen 32:28). *Or*: he was nicknamed “Israel” at Bethel (Gen 35:10).

   Judah proposed to his brothers that they sell Joseph to some Ishmael­ites (Gen 37:27). *Or*: Midianites kidnapped Joseph without the brothers knowing (Gen 37:28-30).

   God is known to the patriarchs as “Yahweh” (Gen 4:26, “At that time [birth of Adam’s third son] people began to invoke the name of the Lord [Hebrew *Yahweh*]”; see also Gen 4:1; 15:2, 7-8; 16:2; 18:14; 19:13; 24:31; 28:13). *But*: centuries later God says, “I ap­peared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty [Hebrew *el Shaddai*], but by my name ‘the Lord’ I did not make myself known to them” (Exod 6:3).

   All plants in Egypt die in plague 4 (Exod 8:24), *Or*: flax and barley die in plague 7 (Exod 9:31), and locusts kill plants in plague 8 (Exod 10:15).

   All cattle in Egypt die in plague 5 (Exod 9:6). *Or*: cattle still die in plague 7 (Exod 9:19).

   A Hebrew male slave must be released after six years, whereas a He­brew female slave is not entitled to release (Exod 21:2-11). *Or*: the female slave, like the male, must be re­leased after six years (Deut 15:12).

   One who accidentally kills another may seek sanctuary at the altar (Exod 21:12 ff.). *Or*: such a person may seek sanctu­ary in any of several cities (Deut 19:1-13, Num 35:9-24; Deut 19 says 3 sanctu­ary cities must be designated, while Num 35 says 6).

   Sacrifice may be offered at altars to be set up in every place (Exod 20:24). *Or*: sacrifice may be offered at only one sanctu­ary (Deut 12:14).

   Only descendants of Aaron may offer sac­ri­fices (Exod 28:1). *Or*: any of the descendants of Levi can offer sacri­fices (Deut 18:7).

   The feast of booths lasts 8 days (Lev 23:36). *Or*: it lasts 7 days (Deut 16:15).

   The tabernacle is (a) simple, (b) outside the camp, and (c) cared for by Joshua a­lone (Exod 33:7-11; Num 11:16 ff., 12:4 ff.). *Or*: it is (a) elaborate, (b) always at the center of the Israelites, and (c) cared for by more than 8000 Levites (Exod 25-31, 35-40; Num 1:49-53; 3-4).

   The Israelites set up twelve stones from the Jordan River at Gilgal (Josh 4:8). *Or*: they set up the stones in the middle of the river (Josh 4:9).

   The Israelites are to shout when rams’ horns blast (Josh 6:5). *Or*: The Israelites are to shout when Joshua commands them to (Josh 6:10).

   Joshua sends 30,000 men at night to lie in ambush west of Ai (Josh 8:3, 9). *Or*: he sends 5,000 men the next morning (Josh 8:12) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The geocentrism accepted by everyone until the 1500s was systematized by the Greek astronomer Ptolemy in Alexandria around ad 140. Actually, the Greek astronomer Aristarchus of Samos (310-230 bc) was the first to hold that the planets revolve around the sun; but his was a lone voice. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. There may even be significance in the Council’s reference to “truth” in the singular, rather than to “truths”: the Bible is not so much a field to be mined for proof texts as a document which *as a whole* teaches inerrantly the Christian faith *as a whole*. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)