

The Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office  
AN OUTLINE FOR THE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

Translated by Joseph A. Komonchak

The following is a translation of the *Schema pro Concilio Oecumenico* submitted to Pope John XXIII by the Holy Office.<sup>1</sup> It was drawn up in response to Pope John XXIII's request to all the Curial dicasteries that they submit proposals for the agenda of the Council.

Unlike most of the other Curial *vota*, this one does not indicate the date on which it was submitted. But Msgr. Vincenzo Carbone was able to determine that it was sent to Cardinal Tardini on March 10, 1960, but I suspect that it was written long before that. There is no evidence in the text that the Holy Office was able to take account of the proposals received from the worldwide consultation of the episcopate. In fact, it seems that the synthetic reports of those proposals, prepared by the Antepreparatory Commission, began to be communicated to the various Curial offices only between February 20th and March 7th, 1960.<sup>2</sup>

Internal evidence suggests that at least the first part of the text was written by Msgr. Pietro Parente, a hypothesis confirmed by Parente himself in a conversation with Professor Andrea Riccardi.<sup>3</sup>

Besides being submitted to Cardinal Tardini, the Holy Office's *votum* was also printed as an eighteen-page brochure and sent in September 1960 to all the members of the Preparatory Theological Commission.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Latin text may be found in *Acta et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II Apparando. Series I (Antepreparatoria). Vol. III: Proposita et Monita SS. Congregationum Curiae Romanae* (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1960), pp. 3-17.

<sup>2</sup> See Caprile, I/I, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> Professor Andrea Riccardi, in a conversation with me, October 23, 1989, said that Parente had told him that his initial draft had then been revised somewhat by Cardinal Ottaviani. Parente had recently been transferred from the see of Perugia to become the new *assessore* of the Holy Office and titular archbishop of Ptolemais in Thebiade; see Caprile, I/I, p. 164. As Archbishop of Perugia, Parente submitted a brief *votum*, all but one of whose dogmatic issues is introduced into the Holy Office's proposal; see *Acta et Documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II Apparando, Series I (Antepreparatoria), II/III* (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1960), pp. 529-31.

<sup>4</sup> Pontificia Commissio Theologica pro Concilio Oecumenico, *Votum Supremae S. Congregationis Sancti Officii*, s.d. The brochure and the letter from Ottaviani to Bishop Griffiths, 24 Sept. 1960, are found in AANY, Griffiths Papers, Box L3, Folder 8.

## INTRODUCTION

Only superficially changed, errors rejected by the Vatican Council are reviving today and threatening a radical subversion of Christian faith and the entire Christian religion.

At that time, the attacks in philosophy were coming from *rationalism*, in theology from *pantheistic emanationism*, both material and spiritual, and in political affairs from *liberalism*.

Today, however, in the polluted flood of the aberrations of *Modernism*, those old errors, prettied up in new clothing, are reviving. Again and again they repeat the same message: nothing needs to be added to nature, nothing to man and his consciousness, for there is only one reality, both material and spiritual, in constant evolution. From that source, *naturalism* and especially *atheistic humanism* (which has taken on the form of some new religion), and *integral evolutionism* have come to prevail, removing all distinction between God and man, between matter and spirit, between the absolute and the contingent, and therefore between truth and falsehood, between good and evil (*relativism, indifferentism*). The religious problem is either denied altogether (*materialistic Marxism*) or is made subject to individual conscience and to the judgement and experience of individuals (*laicism*).

All these aberrations have the same aim: the rejection of any objectively supernatural order (by which Christianity is eliminated) or, if it is admitted, an *immanentistic* restriction of it to the realm of conscience (by which the Church is eliminated, as Luther thought).

Disturbed by these ferments, human society today seems to have lost a sense of God and confidence that any truth can be attained. The task of the coming Council, therefore, will be to recall man to his and his world's limits and contingency and to lift him up so that he can lay hold of the natural and supernatural truth which is most eminently realized in God, the universal Cause, who is at once the cause of being, the basis of knowledge and the ordering principle of all life (*St. Augustine*).

After a brief preface on the authentic notion of *truth*, the Vatican Council's definitions about *God* and about his *revelation* are briefly recalled, with some additional judgements against quite recent errors.

A transition will then be made to a defense and confirmation of the chief principles of Catholic doctrine that seem most in danger of ruin today. These will be presented in the light of *the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ*. Since this is more in accord with modern theology, it will be more effective for those who wander outside the Church or even outside any Christian faith. For in the end, as Christianity is Christ, so Christ is the Church, which is Christ continued and living and active in the midst of the human race.

## I. FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

### 1. Truth

Against the countless adulterations of truth that stream out of relativism, immanentism, existentialism, phenomenologism, *the authentic essential notion of the truth* must be confirmed and defended, for on it rest both the natural and the supernatural orders.

*The objective validity* of the first principles must be vindicated, especially that of *the principle of causality*, which is the basis of a true demonstration of the existence of God (see *the Vatican Council and the Antimodernist Oath*).

## 2. God

Since all of Catholic teaching on the knowability of God is being called into question today, the Vatican Council's definition (Ch. 2 *On Revelation* and the respective canon 1) needs to be taken up again and confirmed and integrated with the terms of *the Antimodernist Oath*, on the demonstrability of God, against the efforts of the immanentism and psychologism now flourishing (see the encyclical *Humani Generis*).

## 3. The God of Creation and Grace

God, the first, universal, and utterly free cause of the world and of man (against *atheistic Evolutionism*). The human race has its origin from one source, Adam-Eve: against *Polygenism* (see the Encyclical *Humani Generis*).

Man as adorned with divine grace from the very beginning. The natural and supernatural orders and their inter-relationship (the Encyclicals *Pascendi* and *Humani Generis*).

The dignity and rights of *the human person*, as God's creature, made in the image and likeness of God. In the recent past, the person was sacrificed to "dictatorships" and state-worship; today he is being sacrificed to factions ("party-rule").

*Original sin* in the first parents and in their posterity. The Catholic teaching is being emptied out in various ways: either by denying the origin of the human race from one head (*Polygenism*), or by interpreting Adam as the race rather than as a concrete person, or by understanding original sin as man's *natural* weakness, so that Trent's teaching on the transmission of the sin of the first Parent is eliminated.

Against the revival of theories that smack of Pelagianism and Lutheranism, it is necessary to determine correctly what the *wounding* of human nature is, so that both the freedom of man and the necessity of grace for salvation may become clear.

## 4. Divine Revelation

The accurate notion of Revelation must be confirmed against modernistic theories (*immanentism*). *Objective, public* Revelation, that is, directed to the human race for its salvation (*the Word of God to men*).

*The divine seal of Revelation, that is, miracles and prophecies* and their value (see *the Vatican Council*), taking into account today's false views.

Faith: its reasonableness, freedom and supernatural character should be vindicated according to the traditional teaching (*the Councils of Trent and the Vatican*). Faith comes *from hearing*, that is, it is an assent to the truth *about a supernatural reality or Person*, but it is not *contact with or possession* of them. Finally, it is not an instinct or *blind sense* (see the Decree *Lamentabili*).

Something should be stated about *private revelations*, which *pseudomystics* and *spiritists* are abusing.

# II. THE CHURCH, THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST

## 1. The Salvific Mission of Christ, the God-Man

The Constitution of *the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ* (the *theandrisim*) of Christ and the Church).

The *one* Church, visible and invisible, consisting of a structure at once *hierarchical-juridical* and *charismatic and mystical*. No opposition, no real duality of the so-called Church *of law* and the Church *of love*, but two distinct aspects of one and the same Church, a perfect society swelling with grace and the charisms of the Holy Spirit.

The Mystical Body of Christ, not only *eschatological*, but also *present*, is essentially identical to the Roman Catholic Church and does not include separated churches and Christian sects as imperfect realizations of itself (the whole teaching of the Encyclical *Mystici Corporis* should be taken up again).

## 2. Christ, the Head of His Mystical Body

Christ, true *God*, true *Man* (against the specious denials of *Rationalism* and *Modernism*). *Christological psychologism* (on the knowledge, especially the *beatific vision*, and the consciousness of Christ: the question of the "Ego" of Christ; see the condemned book of *Seiller* and the Encyclical *Sempiternus Rex*). A psychological approach tends towards a sort of *Christological Humanism*, which smacks of Nestorianism.

*The redemptive work* of Christ (see the drafts prepared for the *Vatican Council*). *Objective* and *subjective* soteriology. *Vicarious satisfaction*: the role of merciful love and justice: against a two-fold error:

a) that of the Reformers (and of some Catholics) who make Christ the object of the Father's *vindictive justice* (to the detriment of mercy);

b) that of the devotees of a certain *moralism*: the suffering Christ by his example alone draws men to repentance and to union with God (the reparation of justice is eliminated).

The true notion of redemption should be asserted according to the thought of St. Thomas (*Summa theologiae*, III, qq. 46-48), who provided a summary of the traditional doctrine, which harmonizes *justice* and *merciful love*.

The *sacrifice of the Cross* and its soteriological value (again denied today), which, however, is also to be attributed to the Resurrection (*St. Paul*).

The *solidarity* between Christ the Redeemer and men in need of redemption (an objection is often made on the basis of the *personal* character of sin and of its reparation).

## 3. Mary, the Mother of Christ the Head and of the Church

Mary, the Mother of Christ the Head and the Mother of the Church, that is, of the members of the Mystical Body (see the Encyclical of St. Pius X, *Ad diem illum*). Therefore, Mary does not occupy a marginal but a *central* place with Christ in the work of redemption.

The real participation of Mary in the redemption of the human race: *subjective* and *objective* cooperation. *Mary*, universal *Mediatrix* for both the acquisition and the dispensing of graces.

This truth should be clearly presented, if not by a dogmatic definition, then at least *liturgically* (for example, a specially designed office and Mass of the Mediation might be celebrated in place of one of the two feasts of the Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, under the title "the Blessed Virgin Mary Mediatrix").

In the light of this intimate relationship of Mary to Christ and to the Church, in the order of redemption, the hyperdulic devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary should more and more be

encouraged (against the views of Protestantism and against the *minimalism* of some Catholics); such devotion does not constitute any impediment to the desired union of Christians.

The *Virginity* of Mary: the recent view, based on biological laws, of a tearing of the body of the Blessed Virgin while giving birth should be rejected as contrary to the traditional dogma of the perfect Virginity, which rests, not on the laws of nature, but on the power of God.

The *bodily death* of Mary, about which there has been a sharp dispute since the definition of the Assumption. The assertion of her death is more in agreement with the tradition than that of her bodily immortality.

#### 4. The Members of the Mystical Body

The clear and precise notion of a "member" of the Church. The nature and degrees of belonging to the Church of Christ (*in reality, by desire, etc.*).

The value and limits of the saying, "*Outside the Church no salvation,*" should be well defined (see the Letter of the Holy Office to the Archbishop of Boston).

The salvation of non-believers, taking into account the salvific will of God. The matter depends on the possibility of a supernatural act of faith, both *subjectively* (under the influence of grace) and *objectively* (by divine revelation which presents the truth to be believed).

On the *Limbo* (of children) and on those who die with only original sin.

#### 5. The Mission of the Church

Since the Church is already constituted as a society and has as its purpose gaining the whole world for Christ, it enjoys a twofold power: one *internally* (full jurisdiction over all believers, as its subjects) and the other *externally* in order to go in quest of others. This second implies more than mere preaching; for by right the Church or, better, the Supreme Pontiff, can exercise a power, if not proper and perfect jurisdiction, over pagans with regard to matters that have a sacred character, as, for example, marriage. (This power is already being exercised in fact.)

#### 6. The Freedom of the Church

Church and State and their inter-relationship (see the *Encyclicals of Leo XIII* for the traditional teaching and the *Allocutions of Pius XII* for new aspects of the problem).

Two Institutions perfect in their own orders, with distinct *purposes* but coming together with regard to *the same subject* (man). The purpose of the Church transcends that of the State, whence the superiority of the one to the other, which implies:

a) the full *freedom* of the Church in its teaching role, in exercising jurisdiction, in worship and in everything that concerns the spiritual salvation of believers;

b) the *authority* of the Church with regard even to civil and temporal matters insofar as they concern spiritual matters.

The Council might further make determinations especially about the following:

a) the extent of the *distinction* of the two Institutions in acting according to their proper competencies; the extent of their *collaboration* in mixed matters;

b) the religious obligations of a *Catholic State*: professing the true religion, exercising the true public worship, defending the rights of the truth, etc.;

c) whether there can be a certain sound lay character to the State, and what it is (see Pius XII, *Allocution*, December 6, 1953);

d) the notion of *tolerance*, giving attention to the new spirit of the times and to new social structures; deeper examination should be made of the question of freedom of conscience and of faith and also of the rights of truth (and of error) under both the *objective* and *subjective* aspects.

e) what should be thought about the *Laicism* of some Catholics.

### III. THE VARIOUS POWERS OF THE CHURCH

#### A. Teaching Authority

The teaching authority of the Church is unique because it is *endowed with power* and *infallible*. What the *ordinary* and *extraordinary* teaching authority is.

The object of *this* magisterium: *the deposit* of divine revelation contained in Sacred Scripture and Tradition. -- The Deposit not entrusted to individual believers, but to the Church, so that it might be defended and authoritatively interpreted.

*Sacred Scripture*, *exclusively* or *by itself* (without the teaching authority), is not to be considered a source of revelation. -- The authority, inspiration, inerrancy, and sound interpretation of the Sacred Books according to the *sense of the Church*; the criterion of literary genres (see the Documents of Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XII in the Encyclicals *Divino Afflante Spiritu* and *Humani Generis*). -- Against new efforts of biblical criticism the real *historicity* of the Gospels needs to be secured.

The authentic notion of *Tradition* should be asserted; augmentative Tradition; the relationship between the teaching authority and Tradition.

The subordination of the conscience of believers also to the ordinary teaching authority of the Church (*internal, religious* assent).

The relationship of Sacred Theology to the teaching authority. A defense of *Scholastic Theology* against the attacks of the *new theology* (the Encyclical *Humani generis*). The *development of dogmas* (objective, subjective); the value of dogmatic formulae; *kerygmatic* theology.

#### B) The Hierarchy of the Church

The Church's *form of government* by divine right: not an absolute monarchy, not a democracy, but a *hierarchical- monarchical* form.

##### 1. *The Power of Orders and of Jurisdiction; the Roman Pontiff*

Here the teaching of the Vatican Council should be recalled and confirmed:

On the Power of Orders and of Jurisdiction (with the threefold function: legislative, judicial, executive).

On *the Supreme Pontiff* (Primacy, ordinary Power over all the members of the Mystical Body, Infallibility,...).

The authoritative character of the Christian Religion (against today's crisis of authority).

## 2. The Bishop and Presbyters

*The nature of the Episcopate:* by divine institution *monarchical*. There should be a clear confirmation of what is already stated in the Encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, namely that Bishops are true successors of the Apostles, established by the Holy Spirit to govern the Church of God (*Acts* 20:28) and therefore true pastors and teachers, the only true divine-right authoritative teachers, the nobler members of the Mystical Body.

*Episcopal authority:* by divine ordination, bishops enjoy a threefold power: *of orders, of jurisdiction, and of teaching*. The power of orders is full, but that of jurisdiction is *ordinary and immediate* in their own Churches, but dependent on the Roman Pontiff (it is from God but *through the Roman Pontiff*) and subordinated to him; and in its own order it is *the power of a ruler*, and not merely *ministerial*.

In virtue of the hierarchy of *orders*, the Episcopate is truly and properly called a Sacrament of the New Law, immediately instituted by Christ, implying a character and sacramental grace; it is therefore a distinct level in the hierarchy.

In virtue of the hierarchy of *jurisdiction*, the Bishop enjoys true jurisdiction or power of government according to the threefold task: *legislative, judicial, executive*.

The only *true and legitimate* Bishops are those who are received by the authority of the Supreme Pontiff (*Council of Trent*, DB 966), freely nominated by the Supreme Pontiff (*Code of Canon Law*, c. 329,2). Therefore, an episcopal consecration is not legitimate unless it occurs with the Pontiff's mandate (*Encyclical Ad Apostolorum Principis*, 1958).

*Presbyters:* By divine right, the Presbyterate is a level of the hierarchy of orders, a true Sacrament. -- Presbyters enjoy full power over the real Body of Christ, but have no power of jurisdiction by divine right, receiving it, however, from the Roman Pontiff and from a Bishop. In virtue of Orders, therefore, they can be called *Ministers of Christ*, and in virtue of the jurisdiction received from the Hierarchy, *Ministers of the Church*. Therefore, in their ministry they must be completely obedient to the Bishops.

## 3. Priestly Vocations and Sanctity

A clear and precise notion should be given of a vocation, the distinction being made between a *divine* and a *canonical* vocation.

The prerequisites and criteria for discerning a vocation.

The Priesthood as a distinct *state of perfection*.

## 4. Priestly Celibacy

Its notion, nature, dignity, necessity. -- The source of the obligation to maintain celibacy (*vow, ecclesiastical law*).

## 5. Deacons

Whether the Diaconate is a Sacrament.

The question of restoring the Diaconate: The *transitional* Diaconate as a preparation (also protracted for some time) for the Priesthood. The *permanent* Diaconate, endowed with fuller faculties, with or without the obligation of *celibacy*, both in established Churches and in the Missions.

Study should be made of assisting Priests in the ministry.

### 6. *Religious*

An accurate notion of *religion* in the strict sense, insofar as it is a state of evangelical perfection.

*Contemplative, active, mixed religion.*

The privilege of exemption and the relationship of religious to the Bishop.

*Secular Institutes*: nature, essential elements, various forms. Their relation to the "state of evangelical perfection" (see the Constitution, *Provida Mater*).

### 7. *Lay people*

The notion and place of the layperson in the Church. The layperson not merely an *object* but a *subject*, indeed an *active* subject in the Church.

What should be said about *the Priesthood of the faithful*. The dignity of lay people in virtue of the *character of baptism* and of *confirmation*: their place and responsibility in the Mystical Body.

The *juridical condition* of lay people in the Church, in relationship to the Hierarchy; their apostolate.

A whole chapter on lay people should be inserted into the *Code of Canon Law*.

## C. The Apostolate of the Church

The notion, nature and tasks of this Apostolate.

### 1. *Preaching the Word of God*

Preaching to Catholics, non-Catholics, non-believers.

*Religious instruction* a priestly task; laypeople can collaborate (official Catechists).

The catechetical problem: importance, obligations, organic realization. -- The question of *texts* and *methods*.

### 2. *Catholic Action*

Its nature, purpose, and relationship to the Hierarchy should be well defined (*participation, cooperation* with the hierarchical Apostolate).

The *supernatural character* of Catholic Action.

The relation of other organisms of the apostolate to Catholic Action, to preserve the unity of the apostolate.

### 3. *The Missions*

The teaching of recent Encyclicals (*Rerum Ecclesiae, Evangelii Praecones*, etc.) should be taken up again and confirmed in its essential elements, especially in matters relating to the method of missions, the indigenous clergy and the local hierarchy.

(But on this the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith should speak.)

## IV. THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

### 1. The Sacramental Economy

The Mystical Body of Christ, which is the Church, draws its life from *divine grace* that flows from Christ the Head and is conferred on individual members by the Holy Spirit, the soul of the Mystical Body.

But, just as the Humanity was taken up by the Word as a conjoined *instrument* in order to bring forth saving grace, so the Sacraments were instituted by Christ as separated instruments in order to pour that same grace out into individual souls. Thus the sacramental regime is as it were the vital woof of the Mystical Body, in which both *sacramentality* and *sociality* are appropriately interconnected, so that the salvation of man is realized with the help of inferior creatures and gives a sense of family solidarity.

It is desirable that the coming Council again propose and more clearly state the teaching of Trent on the symbolism and the causality of the Sacraments and that it harmoniously relate the *opus operatum* and the *opus operantis*, making use of the abundant teaching of the Encyclical *Mediator Dei*.

The fundamental role played by the sacramental *character* in building up the Body of Christ, since the existence of the Church in an historical moment (*here and now*) depends on the real impression of the baptismal character, without which there can be no power of orders or power of jurisdiction in the Church.

The reality and nature of *sacramental grace* should be well stated, with attention especially to its role with regard to the structure of the Mystical Body.

The institution of the Sacraments by Christ the Lord should be again defined, and a careful determination made of what power Christ handed over to the Church in determining the *matter* and *form* of the Sacraments, with attention to recently promulgated documents.

### 2. The Individual Sacraments

a) *Baptism*: the fate of infants who die without baptism (see above). -- The validity of Baptism conferred in various *sects*.

b) *Confirmation*: It seems that all Priests should be granted the faculty of conferring Confirmation at the moment of death. It seems that the *age* appropriate for receiving Confirmation should be raised (around the tenth year).

c) *Penance*: The faculty for absolving *globally* in carefully defined circumstances other than an urgent danger of death should be established. Consideration should be given as to whether the divine law utterly excludes absolution *at a distance*, with regard to determinate penitents when it is impossible to reach them. -- *Restrictions on reservations*. -- The question of *Indulgences* should be thoroughly studied, with regard to their limitation, simplification, gradations, etc.

d) *Eucharist*: It is quite necessary to stress Trent's definition, with attention to recent theories of *symbolists*. The word "transubstantiation" itself again needs to be vindicated, as an appropriate expression of the dogma of total conversion, against some innovators who maintain the word should be done away with. The *sacrificial* character of the Holy Mass and its intimate nature should be explained (see the Encyclical *Mediator Dei*). -- "Mysteric" exaggerations should be rejected along with the efforts of those who want to reduce the Most Holy Eucharist to a Meal (*Agape*). -- Active *concelebration*, but not co-consecration.

e) *Extreme Unction*: whether by divine law Extreme Unction is forbidden in a serious illness, apart from a danger of death. -- Whether it is forbidden by divine law to administer Extreme Unction [again] in the same danger of death. -- Reducing the number of anointings.

f) *Marriage*: It is most opportune to recall, clarify, and confirm the chief topics of the teaching on the institution of marriage: its origin, its purpose, its essential properties, its use. Then to consider and define (see the Encyclical *Casti Connubii* and other more recent documents) questions on birth control, periodic continence, *amplexus reservatus*, artificial fertilization, consummation (penetration, insemination), impotence, therapeutic abortions, mixed marriages, and the so-called *Petrine privilege*. -- Careful examination should be made of the validity of the marriage of the baptized (in general) and of its conditions.

### 3. The Liturgy

The great importance of the Liturgy for the worship of God and the sanctification of the faithful. -- Liturgy, linked with Preaching and Governance, cannot be considered superior to either. -- Liturgy as a *locus theologicus* (*Lex precandi, lex credendi*).

The full authority of the Church in liturgical matters, especially with regard to the regulating of rites and the language to be used. What in these matters can be allowed to the Bishops. -- The authority of the Church also extends to sacred music and art.

The active participation of the faithful in the Liturgy, especially in the Sacrifice of the Mass. Fostering liturgical piety, but without detriment to private piety which, for the sake of the freedom of souls, should be defended.

The whole question of liturgical renewal and of its principles needs to be addressed and solved.

## V. THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

The Christian life is based on *natural* and on *supernatural* morality (the latter including grace). As the Church defends the rights and value of reason before faith, so it defends the rights and value of freedom before grace. The Church, therefore, does not condemn nature and man in order to affirm supernature and God, but affirms and harmoniously relates both, powerfully and gently subordinating all things to God without scorning the creature, but rather in order to raise and strengthen it.

### A. The Moral Order

The Christian life is governed by the precepts of the *natural* and of the *supernatural* orders, which *oblige in conscience* and are not impossible to fulfil if good will cooperates with grace.

Independently of any *state of perfection*, observing the precepts already constitutes *moral perfection* which can reach heroism. But Christian perfection, more strictly speaking, transcends

precepts and implies the supererogatory. -- A distinction should be made between spirit and practice with regard to the evangelical counsels.

The author of the *moral order* is God (not man, individually or collectively, nor the historical evolution of human consciousness and society). The same God who is the promulgator of the moral order through reason and revelation is also its judge and vindicator. (Against the prevailing ethical and juridical *relativism*, that attempts to draw all law and right from human judgement and from historical changes, excluding any absolute and transcendent ground.) A serious theoretical and practical problem!

## The Chief Contemporary Questions

### 1. *Situation Ethics*

It was recently condemned by the Church. Against subjectivism, it must be held that there are objective norms of morality.

### 2. *The Concept of Sin*

Efforts to extinguish the *awareness of sin* need to be condemned. The principle needs to be maintained that it is possible to commit a sin without explicit contempt of God. -- This against widespread opinions (even among Catholics!) that attempt either to diminish or to do away with responsibility altogether, especially in those indulging in various kinds of licentiousness.

*Sensual mysticism* needs to be done in.

### 3. *The Penalty for Sin*

The teaching about guilt and penalty as effects of the breaking of the moral order needs complete defence. -- The penalty of *hell* and its eternity (against many recent errors). -- The same for *Purgatory*.

### 4. *Individual Morality*

The tendency today to consider the conscience of individuals as an autonomous sphere with its own proper ethical norms.

*Psychoanalysis*, spreading everywhere! The problem should be addressed both *doctrinally* and *practically*. A defense should be made of freedom and of the possibility, with the divine assistance that is available to everyone, of overcoming the perverse inclinations of nature, especially sexual ones.

The traditional teaching on *chastity*, *continence* and *modesty* should be confirmed.

### 5. *Family Morality*

(See above on Marriage.)

The prohibitions should be renewed against *divorce* and against the emancipation of women and of children. -- The rights of parents over the *education* of children should be confirmed.

## 6. Christian Sociology

Sociology as a part of Christian morality.

The notion of *social justice* should be determined: its nature and relation to charity. -- The right to *private property*: its origin, nature, purpose and *social function*. -- Therefore, *wealth* and *superfluous* goods.

The *right and duty to work*: nature, payment, just wage, sharing in profits, lock-outs, strikes, unionism. -- *Professional* morality.

*Classism, political parties, political votes* in relation to Catholic morality and the rights of the Church to teach and command.

N.B.: At the *Vatican Council* there was already an intention to treat this material. And Pius XI (*Ubi Arcano*) speaks with disapproval of a certain "moral, juridical, social modernism."

## 7. Political Morality, National and International

The restoration of the notion of the *State*, with attention to modern teachings and facts. The relation between State and society, city, nation. -- The origin, rights and purpose of the State. (Condemnation of: Hypernationalism, ultrademocraticism, totalitarianism, communism.)

Against *juridical positivism*, the *natural law* of the international society must be defended. -- The validity of international *treaties*. -- The juridical *equality* of states. -- Colonialism.

The question of the *just war* needs to be discussed and resolved (along with related problems: non-belligerence, the use of the *atomic bomb*, non-intervention, etc.).

The *supernational character of the Church*.

## 8. Certain Precepts and Laws

The law of *fast* and *abstinence* needs to be revised (the Lenten liturgy contradicts the practice). -- The observing of *feast days*, attending to today's conditions. What are servile works today? -- The law against the *cremation* of cadavers.

### B. The Ascetical-Mystical Order

Contemporary Dangers:

- a) *Sanctity* is being reduced to external observation of precepts.
- b) *Charity* is being promoted to the despite of other virtues and laws.
- c) From the teaching on the Mystical Body a *communitarian* spirituality is being deduced, to the detriment of individual piety and the interior life.
- d) *Activism* to the detriment of prayer and the exercise of the virtues.
- e) *Mortification* is to be rejected because impeding the development of the personality.
- f) A *false mysticism* is being opposed to the "juridicism" of the Church (see the old *Charismaticism!*).

## VI. PARTICULAR QUESTIONS

### A. Ecumenism

(See the Decree *on the Ecumenical Movement*.)

The lively tendency towards a union of all Christians is to be praised, but it is dangerous. -- Norms for *mixed meetings*. -- Rejection of the abuse of the word *Church*, which uniquely and properly belongs to Catholicism.

*Common worship*. -- The admittance of schismatics to the Catholic sacraments.

Cautious efforts to foster unity and union both with regard to dogmas and with regard to moral and juridical questions (many abuses are now going on!).

### 2. Catholic Schools

Rejection of *laicism* in education. -- Freedom in educating one's children; the rights of the Church (see the Encyclical *Divini illius Magistri*).

### 3. The Profession of Faith

*A new formula* should be devised from the two that are now in use (the *Tridentine* and *Pian*). Some things regarding new demands should be added in the new formula.

*A particular request*: to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Symbol an article should be added on *the Most Holy Eucharist* which is the center and source of the Church's supernatural life.

*Note*: What is here being proposed in outline will later be organically and at greater length rewritten in the form of a *votum*, with sources and documents added for the individual topics of doctrine.