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Publication Details

Winters, M. (2017). Communion Ecclesiology and communication in the post-Vatican II Church [Master of Philosophy (School of Philosophy and Theology)]. The University of Notre Dame Australia. <https://researchonline.nd.edu.au/theses/171>

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THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
A U S T R A L I A

School of Philosophy and Theology
Sydney

Communion Ecclesiology and
Communication in the post-Vatican II
Church.

Submitted By
Marita Joan Winters

A thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of the
Masters of Philosophy by Research

Supervised by
Dr Moira Debono, RSM
Dr Matthew Tan

August 2017

Declaration of Authorship

This thesis/dissertation is the candidate's own work and contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other institution.

To the best of the candidate's knowledge, the thesis/dissertation contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Marita Winters

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Date: 17 August 2017

Abstract

From the time of the Second Vatican Council (1962–65) there has been a recovery of the understanding of the nature of the Church as communion. The communion of the Church is derived from the divine love between the three Persons of the Trinity and gives rise to communion among the faithful. It is evident in scripture and was understood by the early Church. This shift in ecclesiology underpinned the renewal of the Church's mission of evangelization in the years since the Council. The Church is called to go out to the whole world and tell the Good News of Jesus Christ in new ways for new times. This means promoting an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ. It is the responsibility of all people, regardless of their vocation, to proclaim and witness to Christ. Due to the increasing secularisation of modern western societies this led to the call for the New Evangelization. Throughout history, communicating Christ and the Good News has been done through the media of social communications. In the years since the Council, there has been developed a theology of communication which recognises that communication can be a useful way for the Church to reach the goal of communion. At the same time, there has been a revolution in the forms of media available, including digital media that have been enabled by the invention of the Internet. This has also led to a new culture of communication. The Church must evangelize within this culture. In fact, the Church itself could be regarded as an act of communication as she facilitates the encounter with Christ and draws the hearer into the Trinity, which is a relationship of love. Thus there is an inherent link between communion, communication and evangelization.

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Acknowledgements

This thesis started as a workshop presentation at *The Great Grace*, a 2013 conference to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Opening of the Second Vatican Council. I am grateful to Bishop Peter Comensoli for inviting me to present a workshop entitled ‘Put out into deep water... the evangelizing thrust of Vatican II’. Thus I began a period of exploration of the Council and the impact it has on the Church in the twenty-first century, especially regarding evangelization and communication. My colleagues at the National Office for Evangelisation – Catholic Enquiry Centre contributed to this early part of my journey.

I would like to acknowledge the members of the Philosophy and Theology faculty at the University of Notre Dame Australia (Sydney campus). Dr Renee Kohler-Ryan and Dr Paul Morrissey supported me as I set out on the path to being a postgraduate student, the latter being my initial supervisor. I am grateful to Dr Moira Debono, RSM for taking over as Principal Supervisor and to Dr Matthew Tan, an expert on theology and popular culture who came on board as Co-Supervisor. Their wisdom and guidance has been invaluable. Dr Tan also introduced me to the writings of Fr Luigi Giussani and the Communion and Liberation Movement, which will have an impact on my faith life long after this project is completed.

They say it takes a village to raise a child. I would add that it takes a tribe to complete a thesis. To my friends Debra Vermeer, Lana Turvey-Collins and Sarah Reeves, who were available to catch up for a coffee or a meal, for their support and words of encouragement when the going was tough. To my extended family, on both sides, for excusing me from many gatherings and for welcoming my little family into your homes when I needed to study.

I am most grateful to my husband Bernie for his unfailing support. He has given witness to the theological virtues of faith, hope and love in the context of our family life, believing in me and encouraging me every step of the way, trusting that one day the thesis would be finished and he would get his wife back, and making many sacrifices for this project. He willingly took our two daughters, Elizabeth and Grace, out weekend after weekend to give me study time, giving rise to the now famous ‘Bernie’s big adventures’. I am looking

forward to having more time to now join in these family activities. I hope our daughters, having lived with me through this study, also grow up with a life-long love of learning.

Finally, I am grateful to God for the gift of faith and for the opportunities to grow in that faith through the process of writing this thesis.

Introduction

In 2013, a conference titled *The Great Grace* was held in Sydney to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council and to celebrate all that has been achieved in the Church in the intervening years. I was invited to deliver a workshop at the conference, on the evangelizing thrust of the Council, and thus was challenged to read and learn more about the Council and its teachings.¹ That workshop was one of the factors that inspired the further research and thinking towards this thesis.

The Second Vatican Council is not just an event that was held in the middle of last century and is now long forgotten. Rather, it is the most significant landmark in the life of the Church since the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century. This thesis will demonstrate that the reform brought in by the Council was within the Tradition of the Church rather than a rupture of that Tradition, as is argued from some quarters. And yet the implementation of the Council is still unfolding. The Church has had to contend with implementing the teachings of the Council amid interpretations of its work that the Council Fathers could not have foreseen, as well as rapid changes taking place in the world. Yet the renewal of the Church will come through Jesus Christ who is ‘the same yesterday, today and forever’ (Heb 13:8).²

This thesis will firstly consider the Council’s recovery of the understanding of the nature of the Church came from Scripture and the Tradition of the early Church. It reflected a significant shift in the Church’s understanding of her nature from the pre-conciliar period, and, and has continued to be developed in light of the Council. The Johannine image of the vine and branches is an analogy for this ecclesiology. Jesus is the vine, and his followers are invited to be the branches. Through his incarnation, Jesus invites all mankind into the relationship of love that exists between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Church, which draws its life from the divine love of the Trinity, must continue to call mankind to renewal.

¹ This thesis will spell ‘evangelization’ as the official Church teaching documents do.

² Biblical references not cited from Church teaching documents and other secondary sources are taken from *The Bible*, Revised Standard Version (Canberra: William Collins Sons and Co. Ltd, 1971).

Secondly, it will trace the development of three key principles of evangelization evident in conciliar teachings, which continue the Church's mission of going into the world and making disciples. These principles are that encountering Christ leads to witness and proclamation; the rediscovery of the Church as the 'People of God' leads to an understanding of the co-responsibility of all the faithful to evangelize; and that the universal call to holiness gives rise to the universal call to mission.

Having understood anew the Church's nature and mission, the Council was able to establish the framework for mission and evangelization in the modern world as it looked forward to the celebration of the third millennium of Christianity. An important development in the post-conciliar period was the need for a New Evangelization identified by Pope John Paul II. This imperative came about as the Church sought to remain faithful to Christ's call to proclaim the Gospel in the face of increasing secularisation.³ John Paul II understood that 'communion represents both the source and the fruit of mission: communion gives rise to mission and mission is accomplished in communion.'⁴ Pope Benedict XVI continued to echo this call to the New Evangelization. In his turn, Pope Francis recognises the missionary imperative is as great now as ever, and while he does not use the term New Evangelization, he asks that there be an eternal newness to every effort towards evangelization. In fact, Francis calls Christians to be 'missionary disciples'.⁵

Since Vatican II, a theology of communication has developed, tracing the trajectory from connection to communication, to community in order to reach communion. Thus communication provides a helpful means by which the Church can reach the goal of communion. Because communication builds communion, consideration will then be given to the developments in the means of social communications since the Council and their impact on the world. The most dramatic technological development around the turn of the century was the advent of the Internet and the creation of digital media, effecting dramatic changes in how and what is communicated. The Church is continually

³ Rino Fisichella, *The New Evangelization Responding to the Challenge of Indifference* (Balwyn: Freedom Publishing Australia, 2012) p. 80–82.

⁴ Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, 30 December 1988 (hereafter, CL) 32. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici_en.html.

⁵ Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation: *Evangelii Gaudium*, 24 November 2013 (hereafter, EG) 24. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium_en.html.

challenged to evangelize the media and communicate the Gospel message in order that all may encounter Christ.

The final chapter will consider communion lived in the context of the community of the faithful. In particular, it will look at how the lay faithful have taken up their place in the evangelizing mission of the Church by being present in the world. A fruit of the Council has been the rise of new ecclesial movements alongside religious communities and other forms of association of the laity who are making Christ present in the world. These new ecclesial movements are the embodiment of communion ecclesiology.

Thus the aim of the thesis is to demonstrate how the particular shift in ecclesiology, evident at the Second Vatican Council, laid the foundation for the New Evangelization and to show that the theology of communication developed since the Council contributes to the mission of building communion. In so doing, the thesis will show how the Second Vatican Council continues to be a great grace for the Church as she seeks to live as a communion of persons brought together in Christ to share in the divine love of the Trinity. The practical application of this research can be applied to parish outreaches, catechetical programs, as well as marriage preparation and guidance.

Chapter 1. Exploring the Church as Communion

1.1 Introduction

The Church is the gathering of God's holy people, and its history is traced from the Old Testament. After the coming of Christ and his foundation of the Church, the believers understood they were the heirs to this heritage, with the story captured in the New Testament. This chapter will first consider, in a broad way, the beginnings of the Church as described in the Sacred Scripture, where God gathers his people together. It will also explore the nature of the Church, its ecclesiology, as encapsulated at the Second Vatican Council. The Council showed a return to the understanding of the early Church which recognised the person of Jesus at the heart of the Church and a renewed understanding of the mission to proclaim Christ to all people. With this, there was a rediscovery of the Church as communion, through participating in the divine love of the Trinity. The Second Vatican Council was the most significant council to bring about reform of the Church since the Council of Trent. It finally overcame the Church's defensiveness, which had been designed over hundreds of years to protect the hierarchical institution in the face of challenges since the time of the Reformation in the sixteenth century.

During the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II), one of the fundamental concerns of the Council Fathers was to revisit the theological foundations of the Church which had been defined, for example, as a juridic institution by St Robert Bellarmine in light of the Reformation. Pope Pius XII's encyclical reflecting on the Church as the Mystical Body in 1943 represented a shift in ecclesiology, but Vatican II went further. The two Conciliar Constitutions which dealt with the nature of the Church and her pastoral role in the world are *Lumen Gentium*¹ and *Gaudium et Spes*.² It is important that they be considered in this order as *Gaudium et Spes* can only be understood in light of *Lumen Gentium*. The key to

¹ Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 21 November 1964 (hereafter, LG). http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm

² Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, 7 December 1965 (hereafter, GS). http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm.

understanding the ecclesiology of the Council, particularly evident in these conciliar documents, was given during the Extraordinary Synod in 1985 to mark the twentieth anniversary of the close of the Council. In the Final Report, titled *The Church, in the Word of God, Celebrates the Mysteries of Christ for the Salvation of the World*, the Synod Fathers presented the ecclesiology of ‘*Communio*’,³ communion in English, as being ‘the central and fundamental idea of the Council’s documents’.⁴ Later, Pope John Paul II explained communion ecclesiology in his post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*⁵ using the biblical image of the vine and the branches, as given in John 15.

1.2 What is the Church?

This chapter will firstly explore the biblical notion of communion, then how communion is reflected in the nature of the Church and, finally, where communion ecclesiology can be identified in the major documents of the Council. Due to the limits of this paper, a more extensive ecclesiological overview is not possible.

The word ‘church’ means ‘a convocation or an assembly. It designates the assemblies of the people, usually for a religious purpose’.⁶ The Latin word for church is *ecclesia*, which comes from the Greek *ekklēsiā*, to ‘call out of’.⁷ In the Septuagint, or LXX, this Greek word is frequently used to refer to ‘the assembly of the Chosen People before God, above all for their assembly on Mount Sinai where Israel received the Law and was established by God as his holy people’.⁸ The first community of Christian believers used the term ‘Church’, thereby understanding itself to be ‘heir to that assembly’.⁹ An equivalent Greek

³ *Communio* is the Latin term for Communion. Many use this Latin term to denote the ecclesiology of the Church rediscovered by the Second Vatican Council. When referring to the ecclesiology in this thesis, the English word *Communion* will be used in place of the Latin term. There is also a scholarly journal entitled *Communio*, which was founded by several leading thinkers of the *Communio* school who have contributed to developing the Church’s understanding of this ecclesiology in the years since the Council. In this thesis, then, *Communio* will refer to the theological school and their journal.

⁴ Synod of Bishops, Final Report 1985, *The Church, in the Word of God, Celebrates the Mysteries of Christ for the Salvation of the World, Origins*, 15:27 (December 1985), II, C, 1.

⁵ Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, 30 December 1988 (hereafter, CL)19. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici_en.html.

⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd edition (Strathfield: St Paul’s Publications, 2000) (hereafter, CCC) 751.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Cf Ex 19.

⁹ CCC 751.

term, *Kyriakē* – from which the English *Church* and the German *Kirche* are derived – means ‘what belongs to the Lord’.¹⁰

An important part of the formation of the Church of the New Testament was Jesus’ institution of the Eucharist in the Upper Room with his disciples at the Last Supper.¹¹ Then followed Jesus’ death on the cross and resurrection. After Jesus Christ had ascended to his Father’s throne, the disciples gathered in Jerusalem, as instructed, and God gave them the gift of the Holy Spirit. There was a ‘sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind’ and ‘tongues as of fire’.¹² This sending of the Holy Spirit was an essential part of God’s plan for humanity, and on that Day of Pentecost the Church of God was born. This was necessary for God’s people, as through the Holy Spirit they were called into unity with the Trinitarian Godhead: ‘This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us, that he has given us of his Spirit’.¹³ The disciples were also empowered to proclaim the kingdom of God and grow the Church. Through the Church, God is calling together his people from all the ends of the earth.

In the New Testament, the word ‘church’ refers to a number of different gatherings: the liturgical assembly,¹⁴ all believers in Christ throughout the world,¹⁵ or a specific community of believers,¹⁶ as well as to those who gather in a house-church.¹⁷ While ‘church’ is used only twice in the Gospels (both times in Matthew),¹⁸ it occurs sixty-two times in the Letters believed to have been written by St Paul.¹⁹ Brian Gleeson indicates that this is not surprising, as ‘the issues which Paul encountered in his ministry to the churches made him think deeply about the nature, mission and operation of the churches’.²⁰ In his Letters, Paul uses various images to describe the Church. The first is

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Mk 14:22–24 quoted in John Paul II, Encyclical, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 17 April 2003 (hereafter, EE) 5. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/special_features/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_20030417_ecclesia_eucharistia_en.html. ‘By the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost the Church was born and set out upon the pathways of the world, yet a decisive moment in her taking shape was certainly the institution of the Eucharist in the Upper Room.’

¹² Acts 2:1–4.

¹³ 1 Jn 4:13.

¹⁴ See 1 Cor 11:18, 14:19, 28, 34, 35.

¹⁵ Mt 16:18; 1 Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13; Phil 3:6.

¹⁶ Acts 11:26.

¹⁷ Rom 16:5.

¹⁸ Jerome Hamer OP, *The Church is a Communion*. Translated by Ronald Matthews (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1964), p. 35.

¹⁹ Brian Gleeson CP, ‘Images and Understandings of the Church in the New Testament: An Overview’, in *Australian eJournal of Theology*, vol. 8, No 1 (2006), p. 9.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 10, 11.

the Body of Christ. To the Church at Corinth Paul writes: ‘For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ’,²¹ and ‘Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it’.²² This analogy is developed in the letters to the Colossians and Ephesians, where Christ the head is set apart from the body. Referring to Christ’s Eucharistic body, St Paul writes: ‘The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread’.²³ Gleeson notes that ‘[t]he resulting relationship between Christ and Christians is a dynamic, active relationship.’²⁴ St Paul also takes up Jesus’ reference to himself as the Bridegroom,²⁵ giving rise to the analogy of the Church as the Bride of Christ.²⁶ After his death on the cross, Christ unites himself bodily to the Church through the Eucharist, a total gift of himself in love.

The understanding of the nature of the Church as communion, also referred to as communion ecclesiology, is a recovery of the ancient biblical concept of *koinonia* (*communio* in Latin, ‘communion’ in English), which was present in the ecclesiology of the early Church.²⁷ It is seen in the writings of the apostle Paul noted above, as well as in the Gospel according to John, the First Letter of John and the Acts of the Apostles. Through his incarnation, Jesus Christ entered the world and made the invisible God visible. By his presence in the world, Jesus invites all of mankind into the relationship of love that exists between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

In John’s Gospel, Jesus describes himself as ‘the vine’ with his followers invited to be ‘the branches’.²⁸ The real importance of this Johannine imagery, notes Raymond E. Brown, is ‘the union of the Christian with Jesus—the branches must remain on the vine which is Jesus’.²⁹ This biblical allegory is important for this thesis, as it indicates that it

²¹ 1 Cor 12:12.

²² 1 Cor 12:27.

²³ 1 Cor 10:16–17.

²⁴ Mk 2: 19, 20; Jn 3:29. This image of the Church as the Body of Christ will be further considered later in this chapter and again in Chapter 3.

²⁵ Eph 5.

²⁶ It is this analogy that gives rise to the Church being referred to by the pronoun ‘her’ rather than the more impersonal term ‘it’. This convention will be followed in this thesis.

²⁷ In this thesis, reference to the Church specifically refers to the Roman Catholic Church.

²⁸ Jn 15:1–6, with its extended application in 15:7–17.

²⁹ Raymond E. Brown SS, ‘The Kerygma of the Gospel According to John. The Johannine View of Jesus in Modern Studies’, in *Interpretation*, vol. 21, no. 4 (October 1967) p. 389.

is Christ who makes present the Trinitarian God, draws the faithful into the divine communion of the Trinity and helps his disciples to live in communion with one another, bearing witness and testifying to the saving power of God. It was also chosen by Pope John Paul II as a framework in *Christifideles Laici* in 1988, in the Church's continuing examination of the mystery that is the Church. This Apostolic Exhortation will be considered in further detail in later chapters.

The image of the vine used in the Johannine writings was very familiar to the Chosen People of God.³⁰ The people of Israel were known as 'the vineyard of the Lord'³¹ but, when they were unfaithful to God and failed to produce the good fruit He intended, there was often a strong note of lament that the vine was not strong and therefore could not withstand destruction.³² For the new People of God, Jesus Christ tells them that 'I am the true vine', explaining that his Father is the vinedresser,³³ tending the vine and helping it to grow. Jesus had already represented himself as the fulfilment of other Old Testament images (including the Temple), and here he declares that as the true vine he is replacing fruitless Israel. The vine – Jesus – is made up of branches – the disciples – and the sap travels up from the roots, enabling it to bear fruit. The disciples abide in Jesus and he abides in them;³⁴ they are united in Jesus and with one another. Their life comes from being part of the vine; cut off from Jesus there is no life, only death.³⁵ And the unity of the disciples, as branches of the vine, comes from their sharing in the life of the vine.³⁶ It is also a communal life, as the vine has many branches.

Jesus stresses that the Father expects the vine to bear much fruit. 'By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples'.³⁷ Because the Father is glorified in the Son,³⁸ the Father is also glorified when the disciples do as Jesus did. Jesus echoes his earlier promise that the Holy Spirit will be sent from the Father as a

³⁰ Jean-Marie-Roger Tillard, *Flesh of the Church, Flesh of Christ. At the Source of the Ecclesiology of Communion*. Translated by Madeleine Beaumont (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2001) p. 13. Tillard notes that further reference can be found in Isa 5:1–7; 27:2–3; Jer 2:21; 12:10; Ezek 15:1–8; 17:6; 19:10–14; Ps 79:9–13; Cant 1:5–9.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Jn 15:1

³⁴ Jn 15:4

³⁵ Jn 15:6

³⁶ Tillard, *Flesh of the Church, Flesh of Christ*, p. 14.

³⁷ Jn 15:8

³⁸ Jn 14:13

helper and advocate who will remain with the disciples forever.³⁹ It is the Holy Spirit who will testify about Jesus and enable the disciples to do the same. This same Spirit, the communicator, helps the disciples to know the truth, and will also help them to dwell in the divine love of the Trinity.⁴⁰ Tillard notes that it is this perfect love, known as *ágapē*, that unites the faithful in communion with the Trinity, making them ‘[n]ot an armful of cut branches, but one plant, one vine whose many branches are united by the same sap and destined to bear the same fruit’.⁴¹

The concept of communion was also addressed in the First Letter of John, where the author testifies that the ‘source and breadth’⁴² of this communion is through Jesus’ death and resurrection. ‘But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of his Son Jesus cleanses us from all sin’.⁴³ The communion of believers is only possible because of the communion of God. Believers are invited to share in the divine communion through an encounter with Jesus, often through the witness of one who is already living the communion. ‘What we have seen and heard we proclaim now to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; for our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ’.⁴⁴ The ecclesiology of communion as reflected at the Council will be developed later in this chapter.

1.3 Pre-Vatican II

In the period from the second to the fifth centuries, the Church was described using the terms *diakonía* or *ministerium*, understood as service, and *kóinonia*, meaning communion. The term Church ‘denoted a participatory community of all the baptized’.⁴⁵ This was the same sense of communion, described above in the sacred scripture, lived in the Church. It is this sense of communion that was recovered at Vatican II.

During the Middle Ages, considered to extend from approximately the fifth to the end of the fourteenth centuries, a number of events led to a decisive rupture in Christianity. The

³⁹ Jn 15:26–27 repeated the sentiment from Jn 14:16, 17.

⁴⁰ Jn 16: 13–15

⁴¹ Tillard, *Flesh of the Church, Flesh of Christ*, p. 16.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁴³ I Jn 1:7.

⁴⁴ I Jn 1:3.

⁴⁵ Bernard P. Prusak, *The Church Unfinished. Ecclesiology through the Centuries* (NY/NJ: Paulist Press, 2004) p. 266.

first was the schism between the Eastern and Western churches, often dated to 1054.⁴⁶ After a period of considerable tension, excommunications were exchanged between Rome and Constantinople, one tangible sign of the resultant breaking of the communion of the Church.⁴⁷ At the time, western Christendom occupied a small corner of the globe and ‘in many ways was a shrinking religion’.⁴⁸ Tanner notes that, at that time, pastoral care meant care of a religion in a society that was perceived to be fragile.⁴⁹ The Lateran Council IV, held in 1215, expressed the concern that Christianity ‘wasn’t doing better in spreading the faith and converting people’.⁵⁰ Yet this was the era that saw the emergence of the Franciscan, Dominican, Carmelite and Augustinian orders, whose friars were sent out to spread the Gospel and do apostolic works. For more on this, see Chapter 2.

In the fourteenth century, there was further division in Christendom due to the papacy being split between Avignon and Rome. Once healed, the way the pope, bishops and the baptised faithful related in the Church was restructured into a vertical hierarchy from top to bottom. This shift came about, according to Prusak, because of factors including the ‘monarchical worldview of that era’,⁵¹ when ‘priesthood or *sacerdotium* was not only the source of spiritual power over the Church but of the temporal rule exercised by emperors and kings’.⁵² This paradigm positioned the pope at the apex of a pyramid of authority and jurisdiction, for ruling and teaching.

1.3.1 The Church as Visible Institution

From the sixteenth century, Christianity developed into a world religion. Yet further rupture occurred in Christendom during the Protestant Reformation, when significant elements of the Roman Catholic Church as a visible institution came under attack, including the efficacy of the sacraments, the ministerial priesthood and the authority of the pope and bishops. The Reformation and the forces of the modern world, such as ‘the

⁴⁶ Norman Tanner, *The Councils of the Church: A Short History* (New York: The Crossroads Publishing Company, 2013) p. 54.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 57–59. Tanner describes that, in contrast to western Christendom, Byzantium considered itself the true heir to the ancient world of Rome, and other religions such as Islam demonstrated significant religious and material success, particularly across Africa, while Judaism was an older religion than Christianity and its believers excelled in many areas of life. He notes that this led to western Christianity acting defensively.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Prusak, *The Church Unfinished*, p. 267.

⁵² *Ibid.*

sciences of observation, primacy of the individual personality, the passion for invention and continual progress, historical and philosophical criticism, perhaps even the beginning of rationalism',⁵³ presented a direct challenge to the Church. The Council of Trent, convoked by Pope Paul III to address the issues raised by the Reformers, met in three sessions, 1545–47, 1551–52 and 1562–63.⁵⁴ The Council of Trent considered at length all seven sacraments (the Reformers focussed only on Baptism and Eucharist), with the Eucharist considered in significant detail as a result of the disputes about its nature by the Reformers, 'repeating and strengthening the doctrine of transubstantiation first introduced at Lateran Council IV in 1215'.⁵⁵ It also considered the nature of the priesthood and the authority of the successors of the Apostles. It did not issue a decree on the nature of the Church or on the papacy. In spite of disruptions and changes of leadership, the Council of Trent 'was successful in clarifying Catholic teaching, responding to the Protestant Reformers, and establishing a program of reform and organisation that would last for centuries'.⁵⁶

As a result of Trent, the Church reasserted her authority, in her own right, as well as in the name of God, of his revelation, of Christ as King, over the state and even the authority of parents.⁵⁷ It was to the papacy that the weight of this responsibility was handed, considered as *episcopus universalis*,⁵⁸ that is, having authority over the universal Church. The Church also revised the exercise of authority in such areas as morality and pastoral care, with the pope issuing instructions about sacramental life, recognising and approving saints, founding seminaries for the formation of priests and authorising rules of religious congregations and secular institutes, as well as intervening 'in the question of adapting apostolic methods to the needs of the times'.⁵⁹

St Robert Bellarmine, a Jesuit cardinal and theologian, was an important figure in the Roman Catholic Church's response to the Reformers, the Counter-Reformation.

⁵³ Yves Congar, *Power and Poverty in the Church*. Translated by Jennifer Nicholson (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1964) p. 69, 70.

⁵⁴ Joseph Francis Kelly, *The Ecumenical Councils of the Catholic Church: A history*. (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2009) p. 7. Due to frequent disruptions caused by political events, the Council of Trent stretched over the pontificates of Paul III (1534–49), Julius III (1550–55), Marcellus II (1555), Paul IV (1555–59), and Pius IV (1559–65).

⁵⁵ Tanner, *The Councils of the Church: A Short History*, p. 81, 82.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

⁵⁷ Congar, *Power and Poverty in the Church*, p. 70.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

Bellarmino emphasised the visibility of the Church and is an iconic example of the Church's understanding of itself as a juridic institution.⁶⁰ In his greatest work, *Disputations on the Controversies of the Christian Faith*, he addressed in three volumes the sources of revelation and scripture, the Church and the sacraments, as well as grace and justification.⁶¹ In his writings on the Church, Bellarmine treats Christ as its head, and the supreme pontiff as head of the Church Militant; the Church united in councils and dispersed throughout the world; and clergy, monks and laity as members of the Church Militant.⁶² Bellarmine famously defined the Church as a juridic institution thus: 'The Church is indeed a community [*coetus*] of humans, as visible and palpable as the community of the Roman people, or the kingdom of France, or the Republic of Venice'.⁶³ Further countering the controversies with the Reformers, he also described where the Church could be found in these terms:

The one and true Church is the community of men [*coetus hominum*] brought together by the profession of the same Christian faith and conjoined in the communion of the same sacraments, under the government of the legitimate pastors and especially the one vicar of Christ on earth, the Roman pontiff'.⁶⁴

Bellarmino's description above contributed to the Church's understanding of itself as a *societas perfecta*, a perfect society.⁶⁵ This notion of a perfect society did not imply that the institution was righteous and faultless, but instead that it was complete and self-sufficient, having within itself all the resources necessary to fulfil its mission. Dulles comments that according to this prevailing ecclesiology,

Christ was seen as the founder of the Church; the Church was presented as a 'perfect society' in which the officeholders had jurisdiction over the members; the pope, as vicar of Christ, was depicted as ruler of the entire society. The bishops were seen as deriving their jurisdiction from the pope.⁶⁶

In the centuries that followed, the Church's defensive position was directed not just against the Reformers but also against other parties understood to be threatening the

⁶⁰ Prusak, *The Church Unfinished*, p. 248.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*, citing *De Controversiis Christianae fidei adversus nostril temporis haereticos*, vol. 2, *Prima controversia generalis*, Book 3: *De Ecclesia militante*, Chapter 2, 'de definitione Ecclesiae' (Ingolstadt, 1601), cols 137–138.

⁶⁴ Avery Dulles SJ, *Models of the Church* (London: Gill and Macmillan, 1976) p. 14.

⁶⁵ Richard R. Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making – Lumen Gentium, Christus Dominus, Orientalium Ecclesiarum* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2006) p. 2.

⁶⁶ Avery Dulles SJ, 'A Half Century of Ecclesiology', in *Theological Studies* Issue 50, (1989) p. 420.

Church's mission, or indeed her very existence.⁶⁷ The Church came under attack from monarchs who sought to impose their power over the ecclesiastical power of the papacy in France, Germany and Austria.⁶⁸ The Enlightenment project, which encouraged the autonomy of human reason, presented a sustained challenge to 'the Bible, church tradition, and the legitimacy of an authoritative church teaching office'.⁶⁹ And in the wake of major revolutions in France and North America a number of problems arose, including a strong anti-clerical sentiment.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Pope Pius IX convoked the Twentieth Ecumenical Council which has become known as the First Vatican Council.⁷⁰ It opened on 8 December 1869 at St Peter's Basilica and promulgated two doctrinal constitutions. The first, *Dei Filius*,⁷¹ dealt with faith, reason, and the relationship between them. It stated that the Church 'holds and teaches that God, the first principle and last end of all things, can be known with certainty from the created world by the natural light of human reason'.⁷² The second was *Pastor Aeternus*⁷³ and its purpose, as stated in the Prologue, was to consider the primacy of the pope; the body of the text was dedicated to explaining the content or extent of this power. Paul McPartlan comments that *Pastor Aeternus* gave a 'starkly juridical definition of papal primacy'⁷⁴ whereby the pope 'has "ordinary" and "immediate" episcopal jurisdiction over the whole Church'.⁷⁵ He further notes that *Pastor Aeternus* acknowledges that bishops have 'ordinary and immediate episcopal jurisdiction over their own flocks', a power that is verified and reinforced by that of the pope.⁷⁶ This Council was interrupted by the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War; it was never resumed, nor was it ever officially closed.⁷⁷

⁶⁷ Richard R. Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making*, p. 2.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 3.

⁷⁰ Previous ecclesial councils had been held at the Lateran Palace next to the Lateran Basilica in Rome and are referred to as Lateran Councils. This council, held at St Peter's Basilica, is the first to be known as a Vatican Council.

⁷¹ First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Filius*, 24 April 1870, 2 as cited in CCC 36. The Vatican website has only Latin and Italian translations of this Constitution.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution *Pastor Aeternus*, 18 July 1870, as cited in Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *The Primacy of the Successor of Peter in the Mystery of the Church*, 31 October 1998, 5. The Vatican website has only Latin and Italian translations of this Constitution.

⁷⁴ Paul McPartlan, *Sacrament of Salvation: An Introduction to Eucharistic Ecclesiology* (Edinburgh, UK: T & T Clark Ltd, 2000), p. 69.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Guiseppe Alberigo, *History of Vatican II*, vol. 1. English version edited by Joseph Komonchak (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995) p. 33.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Church again set herself apart from the world as she was generally critical of what was unfolding, with papal reproach of ‘modern capitalism, socialism, industrialism, and the continued program of state encroachment in church matters’.⁷⁸ Dominating the twentieth century were the two wars that engaged and devastated much of the world. The First World War took place across Europe in 1914–18, while the Second World War in 1939–45 was the culmination of the challenge presented by communism and fascism in the early 1930s. These two events ‘represented the collapse of Christian civilization as it had been known, at least in Europe’.⁷⁹

This very brief history highlights the defensiveness and introversion that saw the Church understand herself as a juridic institution, and as a perfect society with the successor of Peter, the pope, having legitimate power to govern the faithful. This lasted from the Council of Trent through the First Vatican Council and into the early part of the twentieth century when, notes Dominican priest Yves Congar, there were signs of returning to the sources of the Church’s heritage: rediscovering scripture, tradition, the Church Fathers, and the liturgy.⁸⁰ In addition to Congar, others who contributed to the development of a deeper understanding of the invisible nature of the Church through *nouvelle theologie* included Jesuit priests Henri de Lubac and Hans Urs von Balthasar. This development brought about a *ressourcement* in theology, a recovery and renewal in the Church’s understanding of her history.⁸¹ It was a further fifty years before the announcement of the Second Vatican Council, a Council influenced by the *ressourcement* movement. More on this can be found further in this chapter as well as in Chapter 3.

1.3.2 The Church as Mystical Body of Christ

A significant development in ecclesiology came when Pope Pius XII issued the encyclical *Mystici Corporis*,⁸² in which he countered what he referred to as ‘*popular naturalism*, which see(s) in the Church nothing but a juridical and social union’ (emphasis in

⁷⁸ Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making*, p. 4.

⁷⁹ Mark Coleridge, ‘A different fire: Vatican II and new evangelisation’, in *Pacifica*, vol. 26, no. 2 (2013) p. 124.

⁸⁰ Congar, *Power and Poverty in the Church*, p. 78.

⁸¹ D. Grumett, ‘Nouvelle théologie’. in I. A. McFarland, D. A. S. Fergusson, K. Kilby et. al. (eds.), *Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011) <http://ipacez.nd.edu.au/>.

⁸² Pope Pius XII, Encyclical: *Mystici Corporis*, 29 June 1943 (hereafter, MC).

http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi.html

original).⁸³ Drawing on the Pauline image of the Church as the Body of Christ outlined earlier in this chapter, Pius XII explained how ‘the Mystical Body is identical with the Catholic Church’.⁸⁴ He noted that ‘the society established by the Redeemer of the human race resembles its divine Founder, who was persecuted, calumniated and tortured by those very men whom He had undertaken to save’.⁸⁵ Then, referring to the Johannine analogy of the vine and the branches, Pius XII went on to affirm that

Christ our Lord wills the Church to live His own supernatural life, and by His divine power permeates His whole Body and nourishes and sustains each of the members according to the place which they occupy in the body, in the same way as the vine nourishes and makes fruitful the branches which are joined to it.⁸⁶

Pius XII thus provided a definition of the Church that encapsulated all the biblical imagery underpinning her nature as communion:

Although the juridical principles, on which the Church rests and is established, derive from the divine constitution given to it by Christ and contribute to the attaining of its supernatural end, nevertheless that which lifts the Society of Christians far above the whole natural order is the Spirit of our Redeemer who penetrates and fills every part of the Church’s being and is active within it until the end of time as the source of every grace and every gift and every miraculous power.⁸⁷

In so doing, Pius XII was able to blend the concept of Mystical Body with that of Bellarmine’s perfect society.⁸⁸ Dulles comments that this was ‘the most comprehensive official Catholic pronouncement on the Church prior to Vatican II’.⁸⁹ On the view in *Mystici Corporis* that all the faithful have a responsibility for building up the Church, Rowland notes that there is no distinction between ‘an active and a passive element, for example, the clerical as the active element, the laity as the passive element, but rather all members of the Church are called to work on the perfection of the Body of Christ’.⁹⁰

McPartlan notes that *Mystici Corporis* taught that ‘the Church has both inner and outer aspects, being patterned upon Christ, “who is not complete if we consider in Him only

⁸³ MC 9.

⁸⁴ Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 48.

⁸⁵ MC 3.

⁸⁶ MC 52.

⁸⁷ MC 63.

⁸⁸ Jerome Hamer OP, *The Church is a Communion*. Translated by Ronald Matthews (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1964), p. 86. Hamer remarks that Bellarmine, a saint, ‘was not unaware of the mystical character of the Church; he merely omitted discussing it’.

⁸⁹ Dulles, ‘A Half Century of Ecclesiology’, p. 422.

⁹⁰ Tracey Rowland, *Catholic Theology* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017), p.134.

His visible humanity or only His invisible divinity, but is one, from and in both natures”⁹¹ Congar and de Lubac, both part of the *ressourcement* movement, contributed to the development of a deeper understanding of the invisible nature of the Church. Congar’s contribution was, broadly, the historical development of ecclesiology and the connection of the Church to the Trinity, with implications for the laity, ecumenism and structural reform,⁹² while de Lubac understood the Church as being multi-layered, both a mystery revealed by God and a social body in the world.⁹³ The thinking of both these theologians, and others who promoted the return to the sources, later found expression in the documents of Vatican II, especially in regard to the ecclesiology of communion expressed in *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*.

1.4 Vatican II

1.4.1 Historical Context – An unexpected illumination for the Church

The conviction that the world needed to hear the message of the Good News of Jesus Christ preached by the Church inspired Pope John XXIII to convene the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council.⁹⁴ The pope, less than ninety days after his election on 28 October 1958, announced ‘a general Council for the Universal Church’.⁹⁵ News of the Council spread across the world in just a few hours, eliciting wide-ranging attention, anticipation and expectation. The overwhelming sense was that ‘a profound change was taking place in the heart of Catholicism’.⁹⁶ Most striking of all was the hope and expectation created in so many circles.

⁹¹ MC 62, cited in McPartlan, *Sacrament of Salvation, An Introduction to Eucharistic Ecclesiology*, p. 66.

⁹² Dennis M. Doyle, ‘Journet, Congar and the Roots of Communion Ecclesiology’, in *Theological Studies*, vol. 58, no. 3 (1997) p. 471.

⁹³ Dennis M. Doyle, ‘Henri de Lubac and the Roots of Communion Ecclesiology’, in *Theological Studies*, vol. 60, no. 2 (1999) p. 211.

⁹⁴ Alberigo, *History of Vatican II*, p. 4. According to Alberigo, Pope John XXIII believed that ‘the Church was on the threshold of an historical juncture of extraordinary intensity... We are entering a period that might be called one of universal mission... and we need to make our own the admonition of Jesus to recognise the “signs of the times”... and to discern amid such great darkness the many indications that give good cause for hope’.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1. The announcement was made to a small group of cardinals gathered in the Roman Basilica of St Paul’s Outside the Walls on 25 January 1959, to mark the conclusion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, a significant ecumenical event in the Church’s calendar. The website for the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, www.vatican.va, notes that the traditional date for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is 18–25 January. Those dates were proposed in 1908 by Paul Wattson to cover the days between the feast of St Peter and the feast of St Paul, and therefore have a symbolic meaning.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19. However, Alberigo goes on to note that, in light of this interest, *L’Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican’s newspaper, published only the press release from the secretariat of state, and *La Civiltà Cattolica* – the Jesuits’ authoritative biweekly magazine – completely ignored the announcement during

Pope John XXIII said on a number of occasions that the Council was intended to be ‘an unexpected illumination’,⁹⁷ that the Church needed ‘to define clearly and distinguish between what is sacred principle and eternal Gospel and what belongs rather to the changing times’.⁹⁸ He had also referred to it as ‘a new Pentecost’,⁹⁹ and in his prayer for the Council asked the Holy Spirit to ‘renew Thy wonders in this our day, as by a new Pentecost’.¹⁰⁰ The pope was, according to Alberigo, attentive to the theological and historical significance of Pentecost, and to refer to its being repeated was to underscore

the exceptional character of the present historical juncture, the extraordinary prospects which it opened up, and the obligation of the Church to face it through a radical renewal, so that the Church would be able to present the gospel message to the world and explain it to human beings with the same power and immediacy that marked the first Pentecost.¹⁰¹

The reference to Pentecost, moreover, brought to the forefront the action of the Holy Spirit rather than of the pope, the Church or even the Council assembly itself.¹⁰² This prayer for ‘a new Pentecost’ for the Church will be explored in detail in Chapter 3.

That the Council was to renew the emphasis on encountering Christ became evident just prior to its opening when Pope John XXIII delivered a radio message to all the Christian faithful, posing the question: ‘What in fact has an Ecumenical Council ever been but the renewing of this encounter with the face of the risen Christ, glorious and immortal king, shining upon the whole Church for the salvation, joy and splendour of the human race?’¹⁰³ He then went on to focus on the Church *ad extra* and her evangelizing thrust, calling for an enthusiastic renewal in the response of the entire modern world to the Lord. The ecumenical spirit of the Council was evident from the outset, as the Pope’s message was given not just to Bishops, nor only to Catholics, but to all believers in Christ, for the whole world was being invited to a renewed encounter with him who is the Word of God.

the first three months of 1959, apart from reproducing the same meagre press release in its news summary. See also pp. 17–20.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 6.

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 3, 4.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 42.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 42, 43.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 43.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 436.

1.4.2 Vatican II, 1962–65

Upon arrival in Rome in October 1962, the Council Fathers were presented with 70 prepared schemata, seven of which had been printed and distributed ahead of the opening of the Council.¹⁰⁴ The quantity of materials was thus overwhelming and most of the 2500 bishops participating did not know each other – and yet there was a ‘certain feeling of exhilaration at the Opening of the Council in Rome, the mysterious sense of new beginnings’.¹⁰⁵ Father Joseph Ratzinger, a *peritus* or expert theological advisor for his bishop at the Council, records that Pope John XXIII ‘had insisted that the Church was no longer to condemn but rather to dispense the medicine of compassion, that the Council was not to speak negatively but to present the faith in a new and positive way’, with the effect that things were going to be done differently at this Council.¹⁰⁶

Pope John XXIII’s death on 3 June 1963, after only one session, called into question the future of the Council, but the election of Cardinal Montini as Pope Paul VI signified both continuity with the vision of John XXIII and a fresh start.¹⁰⁷ At the opening of the second session in October 1963, the newly elected Pope Paul VI outlined a four-point program for the reconvened Council, which echoed the thinking of his predecessor. He noted that the primary task of the Council was ‘to deal with the Church’s interpretation of its own nature’,¹⁰⁸ an issue that still had not been resolved after centuries. Many of the initial schemata were rejected, the number of texts reduced to 16, with a seventeenth text added to deal with ‘the Church’s presence in the modern world and the burning issues of the times’.¹⁰⁹ As the Council deliberations unfolded, there was a slow but steadily growing recognition by a significant number of bishops that this event was an opportunity to bring about renewal in the Church, much of it informed by the work over previous decades of the liturgical, biblical and ecumenical movements.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ The Council Fathers had been surveyed in preparation for the Council.

¹⁰⁵ Joseph Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI), *Theological Highlights of Vatican II*, p. 20.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 57–66. This section details Pope Paul VI’s approach to curial reform, particularly the creation of a new consultative body representing the episcopacy, and revisions to the Statutes of the Council which led to significant procedural changes.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 68. Here it is worth noting that Pope Paul VI ‘saw the coming of the Spirit to Christ’s disciples at Pentecost as an antetype of the Church. Thus the Christological and Holy Spirit-centred elements were given pre-eminence’ in the definition of the Church.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

¹¹⁰ For more on these movements see Alberigo, *History of Vatican II*, vol. 1. pp. 85–87.

In documenting the renewal taking place, Fr Ratzinger noted the Council's purpose was 'to think through and to speak the Gospel of Christ in a way understandable to contemporary man – i.e. in a contemporary fashion', with the objective being 'precisely that Christ may be understood'.¹¹¹ Further, he noted that as a consequence, 'the person to whom Christ has been taken can now begin to betake himself to Christ – he who encompasses our yesterday and our tomorrow in the today of his everlasting life'.¹¹² The Council issued two significant documents specifically addressing how the Church brings the Gospel to the contemporary world in order that man can encounter Christ. The first, the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, had the twofold purpose of revealing more fully 'to the faithful of the Church and to the whole world its own inner nature and universal mission'.¹¹³ The second, the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, provided the pastoral and practical application of the teaching of *Lumen Gentium*. It addressed the mission of the Church in the world in general and her role in light of particular pastoral situations. The teaching on the Church outlined in these documents demonstrates a continuity with that of previous Councils, while showing an unequivocal return to the full biblical testimony about the Church and drawing anew on the wisdom of the early Church Fathers.

Yet Vatican II did not mandate a single definition of the Church. The one Church of God is a mystery that has many different aspects to her nature but is still one Church. Henri de Lubac, also a *peritus* at the Council, compared the Church to the famous coat worn by Joseph – it was one coat consisting of many colours.¹¹⁴ *Lumen Gentium* proposed a variety of biblical images to describe the Church's visible and invisible nature. The Church is at the same time the Mystical Body of Christ, the new People of God, and a sacrament. There was also recognition that the Church has 'pneumatological as well as Christological elements'¹¹⁵ which demonstrated a return to her proper reliance on Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Church is also communion, addressing in particular the relational dimension of the Church. *Lumen Gentium* recognised that it was in the Father's plan that mankind be raised to participation in the divine communion, and that all who believe in His Son,

¹¹¹ Ratzinger, *Theological Highlights of Vatican II*, p. ix.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ LG 1.

¹¹⁴ Dennis M. Doyle. *Communion Ecclesiology*. (Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, 2000), p. 174. See also Tracey Rowland, *Catholic Theology*, p. 135, for a contemporary analogy: a characteristic of communion ecclesiology is that the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, is a 'symphony of different spiritual missions, all reliant on each other'.

¹¹⁵ Ratzinger, *Theological Highlights of Vatican II*, p. 7.

Jesus, would assemble in the Church.¹¹⁶ It also noted that the Church is herself a unity, ‘one complex reality which coalesces from a divine and a human element’ rather than consisting of two separate parts, one earthly and visible and the other spiritual and invisible.¹¹⁷ The communion of the Church is so important that it is actually its deepest vocation: ‘For all of us, who are sons of God and constitute one family in Christ, as long as we remain in communion with one another in mutual charity and in one praise of the most holy Trinity, are corresponding with the intimate vocation of the Church’.¹¹⁸ *Gaudium et Spes* notes that it is through the Church as communion that the world is transformed into God’s family, stating that the Church is at the same time ‘a visible association and a spiritual community’¹¹⁹ that progresses with humanity and shares that which the world experiences. The Church is called to serve ‘as a leaven and as a kind of soul for human society as it is to be renewed in Christ and transformed into God’s family’.¹²⁰

As outlined above, I contend that the metaphor of Church as communion integrates elements of all the other biblical images of the Church; it organises all the other images because of the union of God with His people.

1.4.3 The Church as Communion

Lumen Gentium states that the Church is ‘a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit’.¹²¹ Thus, the necessary starting point for communion ecclesiology is the communion between Father, Son and Holy Spirit, rather than the communion of the Church.¹²² There is no hierarchy among the Divine Persons. God the Father is not superior to God the Son nor to God the Holy Spirit. They are equal but different, and together are one true God. The Trinitarian communion is then reflected in

¹¹⁶ LG 2.

¹¹⁷ LG 8.

¹¹⁸ LG 51.

¹¹⁹ GS 40.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ LG 4.

¹²² Charles Morerod, ‘The Trinity and the Unity of the Church’ in *Nova at Vetera*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2004) p. 119. Morerod includes an English translation of a quote from St Thomas Aquinas, in which Aquinas explains the significant theological difference between divine unity and the unity of persons in this way: ‘Now there is a twofold unity in the divinity; to wit [the unity] of nature, “The Father and I are one” (Jn 10:30), and the unity of the love in the Father and the Son, which is the unity of the Spirit. And both of these are in us, not indeed in the self-same way but through a certain resemblance; for the Father and the Son are numerically of the same nature, while we are one in nature according to species. Likewise, they are one through a love that does not participate in someone else’s gift, but which proceeds from themselves; for the Father and the Son love each other through the Holy Spirit, but we love one another with a love that participates in a higher love’.

the Church. Communion in the Church is, therefore, derived from participation in the divine love of the Trinity, and through the Church there is communion among the believers. Thus the Church as communion has a vertical dimension – relationship with the Trinitarian God, and a horizontal dimension – relationship with fellow believers.

1.4.3.1 Communion Ecclesiology is Trinitarian

In articles 2–4, *Lumen Gentium* relates the beginnings of the Church to the Trinitarian activities of creation, incarnation and sanctification.¹²³ In his creation of the world, and of human persons in particular, the Father invites them into the divine life, offering them adoption as sons and daughters.¹²⁴ Then, through the incarnation, all humanity is drawn into unity with the Son, Jesus, who, in his life, death and resurrection, is ‘the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation’.¹²⁵ It is the Holy Spirit who sanctifies, guiding the Church in the Truth, unifying it ‘in communion and in works of ministry’ and endowing the Church with ‘hierarchical and charismatic gifts’.¹²⁶ The Holy Spirit is responsible for the unity of the body, particularly producing and urging love among the believers.¹²⁷

Lumen Gentium further recognises the role of both Christ and the Holy Spirit in the Church: ‘As the assumed nature inseparably united to Him, serves the divine Word as a living organ of salvation, so, in a similar way, does the communal structure of the church serve Christ’s Spirit, who vivifies it by way of building up the body’.¹²⁸ The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in individual persons had always been understood – St Paul speaks of the body of each believer as a temple of the Holy Spirit¹²⁹ – yet, for much of its recent history in the Western Church as outlined above, there is little evidence of attention to Pentecost and the ongoing role of the Holy Spirit in guiding and building up the Church.

Writing on the Holy Spirit, Yves Congar emphasised that the Spirit has a distinct role to play in the Church, one that was always in accord with the Christological nature of the

¹²³ Prusak, *The Church Unfinished*, pp. 278–80.

¹²⁴ Eph 1:4–5.

¹²⁵ Col 1:15.

¹²⁶ LG 4. The hierarchic gifts refer to the structure of the Church, while the charismatic gifts refer to the many charisms that the Spirit distributes among the faithful, and the two types of gifts are complementary rather than contradictory. There must always be discernment of the charisms, a grace and task which the Church entrusts to the bishops, successors to the apostles.

¹²⁷ LG 7.

¹²⁸ LG 8.

¹²⁹ 1 Cor 3:16, 6:19

Church and never in opposition to it.¹³⁰ The Holy Spirit was sent as the advocate following Christ's death on the cross and his resurrection and ascension to the Father.¹³¹ The unity of the Trinity, which is synonymous with love, is thus shared with believers:

This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us, that he has given us of his Spirit. Moreover, we have seen and testify that the Father sent his Son as saviour of the world. Whoever acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.¹³²

Doyle notes that Henri De Lubac emphasises that Christ created mankind to be brought together into the heart of the life of the Trinity, and offered himself on the cross so that humanity might be incorporated into the unity of the divine Persons.¹³³ In his systematic work *The Splendour of the Church*, de Lubac argues that:

God did not make us 'to remain within the limits of nature', or for the fulfilling of a solitary destiny; on the contrary, He made us to be brought together into the heart of the life of the Trinity. Christ offered himself in sacrifice so that we might be one in the unity of the divine Persons... But there is a place where this gathering-together of all things in the Trinity begins in this world; 'a family of God', a mysterious extension of the Trinity in time... 'The people united by the unity of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost'; that is the Church. She is 'full of the Trinity'.¹³⁴

Just as the Trinity shares its life and love with believers, so too does the Church need to share this with others; it is for all people. The Church must be an instrument for the redemption of all people, stepping out into the world and communicating the Word and inviting others to share in the Trinitarian communion. In the conciliar document on ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, the unity of the persons of the Trinity in one God is the source of unity of the Church:

This is the sacred mystery of the unity of the Church, in Christ and through Christ, the Holy Spirit energizing its various functions. It is a mystery that finds its highest

¹³⁰ Yves Congar, *The Mystery of the Church*. Translated by A.V. Littledale (Baltimore: Helicon, 1969) p. 160.

¹³¹ Yves Congar, *Laity, Church and World*. Translated by Donald Attwater (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1960) pp. 71, 72. Congar makes the theological point that the nature of God is both unity and plurality: 'absolutely one in nature and perfection, in life and glory; more than one in the Three persons who share fully and completely this nature and perfection'.

¹³² 1 Jn 4: 13–16

¹³³ Dennis Doyle, 'Henri de Lubac and the roots of communion ecclesiology', p. 218.

¹³⁴ Henri de Lubac, *Splendour of the Church*. Translated from the French edition 1953 by Michael Mason. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956) pp. 174–75.

exemplar and source in the unity of the Persons of the Trinity: the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit, one God.¹³⁵

Thus the communion ecclesiology evident at the Council also made a positive contribution towards ecumenical relations.¹³⁶

1.4.3.2 Communion Ecclesiology is Christocentric

It is Jesus who reveals the Trinitarian Godhead through incarnate presence on earth. This is encapsulated in the prologue of John's Gospel, which states that 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'.¹³⁷ Jesus, the Word, enters the world to invite us to enter his world because it is he who unveils the great plan of God: 'If you knew the gift of God...'.¹³⁸ For it is through an encounter with Jesus that a person is invited to enter into a relationship with Jesus and share in his life with the Father and the Spirit.¹³⁹

Romano Guardini, one of the theologians influential in the *ressourcement* movement, taught that 'the essence of Christianity is not an idea, not a system of thought, not a plan of action. The essence of Christianity is a Person: Jesus Christ himself'.¹⁴⁰ This principle, which profoundly influenced the young Fr Ratzinger, found its way into *Dei Verbum*:

Through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God (see Col. 1:15, 1 Tim. 1:17) out of the abundance of His love speaks to men as friends (see Ex. 33:11; John 15:14–15) and lives among them (see Bar. 3:38), so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself.¹⁴¹

¹³⁵ Second Vatican Council, Decree on Ecumenism: *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 21 November 1964 (hereafter, UR) 2. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19641121_unitatis-redintegratio_en.html.

¹³⁶ Ibid. For more on the ecumenical view of communion ecclesiology, see John Zizioulas, in *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's, 1985), and *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, ed. P McPartlan (London: T & T Clark, 2006). In a later development, the World Council of Churches issued a discussion paper for member churches on communion ecclesiology titled *The Nature and Mission of the Church – A Stage on the Way to a Common Statement* [Faith and Order Paper no. 198], 15 December 2005.

¹³⁷ Jn 1:1.

¹³⁸ Jn 4:10.

¹³⁹ Tillard, *Flesh of the Church, Flesh of Christ*, pp. 143, 144.

¹⁴⁰ Joseph Ratzinger (now Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI), 'Guardini on Christ in our Century', in *Crisis Magazine* (June 1996), p. 14.

¹⁴¹ DV 2. This idea is also the fundamental theme of Pope Benedict XVI's first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est*, promulgated in 2005.

Jesus reveals the invisible God because he is both truly divine and truly human. He is the perfection of humanity and so reveals true humanity. This truth is encapsulated in *Gaudium et Spes*:

The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light. For Adam, the first man, was a figure of Him Who was to come, namely Christ the Lord. Christ, the final Adam, by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and His love, fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear.¹⁴²

This, according to Cardinal Walter Kasper, was the kernel of the Pastoral Constitution. Kasper notes that in recognising that Christ represents true humanity, ‘the anthropology of the Second Vatican Council [is] not only a Christian but also a Christological anthropology’.¹⁴³ In fact, *Gaudium et Spes* states that not only was Jesus Christ the answer to mankind’s deepest questions, but that without Christ even the questions themselves were not clearly known.¹⁴⁴ Further, Pope John Paul II believed this paragraph (22) from *Gaudium et Spes* to be the theological lynchpin of the entire Council.¹⁴⁵ This paragraph will be discussed again in Chapter 2 and considered in Chapter 3.

The Church as a body of people finds her identity in Christ, who is the head of the Church: ‘He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he himself might be preeminent’.¹⁴⁶ Because he is the head of the body of people who are his disciples, the Church is rightly called the Mystical Body of Christ. Congar notes that the Mystical Body ‘is realized once our life belongs to Christ. Then it is that we lead, in this life, a life which is his, his life in us, his life in humanity; then it is that we are truly his members’.¹⁴⁷ Therefore, Jesus Christ must also be the starting point when considering the nature of the Church. *Lumen Gentium* reflects this with its opening statement that ‘Christ is the Light of nations’,¹⁴⁸ making it clear that it is only Christ’s light that illuminates the Church, no other. This was understood in the first millennium of the Church, encapsulated in a favourite image of the early Church Fathers that ‘the

¹⁴² GS 22.

¹⁴³ Walter Kasper, ‘The Theological Anthropology of *Gaudium et Spes*’, *Communio* vol 23, (Spring 1996), p. 137.

¹⁴⁴ GS 21.

¹⁴⁵ George Weigel, *Witness to Hope. The Biography of Pope John Paul II* (New York: HarperCollins, 1999) p. 158. Even at the time of the Council he believed that its vision of the human person would benefit from being given ‘a deeper philosophical foundation’ and consequently he wrote the major philosophical work, *Person and Act*, which was published in Poland in 1969.

¹⁴⁶ Col 1:18.

¹⁴⁷ Yves Congar, *The Mystery of the Church*, p. 118.

¹⁴⁸ LG 1.

Church is like the moon, all its light reflected from the sun'.¹⁴⁹ It is this light of Christ that needs to be taken out to all people by proclaiming the Gospel to every person.¹⁵⁰

Gaudium et Spes insisted that the mission of the Church for all time is to evangelize, with the Gospel being expressed in ways that reach people from diverse cultures. This mission of communicating Jesus Christ, who is the Good News, requires the cooperation of all the faithful.¹⁵¹ This mission of the Church was also addressed in detail in the Conciliar Decree *Ad Gentes*.¹⁵² Cardinal Francis George OMI, writing on *Ad Gentes*, comments that 'by situating mission in the plan of the Father and the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit, the decree put mission in the theological context of the key ecclesiological image of the council'¹⁵³ (i.e. communion). To offer the mystery of salvation and the new life in Christ to all people, the Church must do as Christ did, dwell among people in particular social and cultural conditions in order to share in their life and circumstances.¹⁵⁴ Thus, communion means inviting others to participate in the fellowship of Christ with other believers.

The Council underscored that the Church was no longer thought of as the *societas perfecta*, as St Robert Bellarmine had understood, but as on pilgrimage itself, seen from the eschatological perspective as a body in need of restoration in the fullness of time; *Lumen Gentium* states that it is by the power of the resurrected Christ that the Church

is given strength that it might, in patience and in love, overcome its sorrows and its challenges, both within itself and from without, and that it might reveal to the world, faithfully though darkly, the mystery of its Lord until, in the end, it will be manifested in full light.¹⁵⁵

It is Christ who calls believers to the Church, through which they will be sanctified by the grace of God, and will be made perfect in the fullness of time when 'the human race as well as the entire world, which is intimately related to man and attains to its end through

¹⁴⁹ CCC 748.

¹⁵⁰ LG 1.

¹⁵¹ GS 44.

¹⁵² Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church: *Ad Gentes*, 7 December 1965 (hereafter, AG). http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_ad-gentes_en.htm. See particularly 1–9.

¹⁵³ Francis George OMI, 'The Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, *Ad Gentes*', in Matthew L. Lamb & Matthew Levering (eds.), *Vatican II: Renewal Within Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) p. 290.

¹⁵⁴ AG 10.

¹⁵⁵ LG 8.

him, will be perfectly re-established in Christ'.¹⁵⁶ The fulfilment of the Church is, therefore, in process but not complete. The anticipated restoration 'has already begun in Christ, is carried forward in the mission of the Holy Spirit and through Him continues in the Church'.¹⁵⁷ This theme of the Church itself being on pilgrimage towards communion is also noted in *Unitatis Redintegratio*. It is Christ who calls the Church towards 'continual reformation as she sojourns here on earth',¹⁵⁸ a renewal that is 'essentially grounded in an increase of fidelity to her own calling', a 'movement toward unity'.¹⁵⁹ Schindler remarks that '[i]n Jesus Christ, heaven has come to earth, in order that earth might now be open to heaven – that earth might now, already in this life and not merely in anticipation of the life to come, begin bearing and thus revealing heaven'.¹⁶⁰

1.4.3.3 Communion Ecclesiology is Sacramental

The Council developed the teaching on the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ found in *Mystici Corporis*, and brought to light the sacramental foundation of the Church as communion. *Lumen Gentium*, in its opening paragraph, recognises that 'the Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race'.¹⁶¹ In indicating that the Church is like a sacrament, the Council Fathers stated the basic principle that underscores the nature of the Church: 'the invisible saving grace of God is encountered through visible means'.¹⁶²

In so saying, *Lumen Gentium* was possibly influenced by sources including Henri de Lubac's work *Catholicism*, in which he stated that Christ is made present and his saving work continues in the Church:

If Christ is the sacrament of God, the Church is for us the sacrament of Christ; she represents him, in the full and ancient meaning of the term, she really makes him present. She not only carries on his work, but she is his very continuation, in a sense

¹⁵⁶ LG 48.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ UR 6.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ David L. Schindler, *Heart of the World, Center of the Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B Eerdmans, 1996) p. xiii.

¹⁶¹ LG 1.

¹⁶² Dennis M Doyle, 'Otto Semmelroth and the Advance of the Church as Sacrament at Vatican II', in *Theological Studies*, vol. 76, no. 1 (2015) p. 67.

far more real than that in which it can be said that any human institution is its founder's continuation.¹⁶³

Lumen Gentium, the Council's foremost document on the Church, repeated this fundamental idea three times (LG 1, 9, 48). Thus, the Church carries on the saving work of Jesus Christ through its sacramental ministry. Further, in defining the Church's nature and mission, *Lumen Gentium* speaks primarily of the 'mystery' of the Church, pointing to the unity that derives from the communion of the Trinity.¹⁶⁴ The sacraments are visible signs that communicate Christ and the reality of his saving love expressed in words and matter.

Each of the seven sacraments of the Church was instituted by Christ and is an encounter with Christ. They are received through the ministry of the Church, and they 'touch all the stages and all the important moments of Christian life'.¹⁶⁵ Reception of the sacraments conforms a person more fully to Christ, helping one to overcome weaknesses in order to live the Christ-life and reflect the Trinity. In particular, it is through the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist that a person takes on Christ's character. Since the time of the early Church, the sacrament of Baptism has been the beginning rite of initiation into the Christian community of the Church. Through baptism, a person becomes a new creation in Christ, united with him in his death and resurrection, and incorporated into the one Body of Christ that is the Church.¹⁶⁶ Baptism brings the new Christian into communion with the Trinity and opens the door to access the other sacraments.¹⁶⁷

Through the sacrament of Confirmation, a person is sealed with the Holy Spirit and becomes 'more perfectly bound to the Church'.¹⁶⁸ Further, the person is confirmed in the faith of the Church and endowed 'with special strength so that they are more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith, both by word and by deed, as true witnesses of Christ'.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶³ Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism. Christ and the Common Destiny of Man* (London: Burns and Oates, 1962) p. 28. For more on the influence of de Lubac's thinking on *Lumen Gentium*, see Dennis M. Doyle, *De Lubac and Communion Ecclesiology*, p. 221.

¹⁶⁴ LG 4.

¹⁶⁵ CCC 1210.

¹⁶⁶ LG 7.

¹⁶⁷ CCC 1213.

¹⁶⁸ LG 11.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

In the sacrament of the Eucharist, a person is taken up into communion with Christ and with other believers.¹⁷⁰ St Paul and the early Church Fathers understood that a relationship exists between Christ's mystical body, the Church, and the Eucharistic body of Christ. The ecclesiology of communion has within it the sacramental dimension which appears explicitly in St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, as noted earlier. It is in the Eucharist that the unity of the Church is both effected and represented. Henri de Lubac made a significant contribution to the understanding of the sacramental nature of the Church, stating explicitly that '[t]he Eucharist makes the Church'.¹⁷¹ This was in direct contrast to Bellarmine's definition of the Church, described earlier, which reflected the perspective of the Middle Ages in which the Eucharist was seen as 'one of the things done by the juridically defined Church: the Church makes the Eucharist'.¹⁷² Instead, de Lubac's position brought back the understanding that the Church and the Eucharist are almost inseparable, as was taught in the early Church. For example, St Augustine stated that to receive the body of Christ in the Eucharist is, in fact, to be received by him into his body, which is the Church.¹⁷³ He relates the process of the forming of the Eucharistic bread to the initiation of new Christians in his teaching on the reception of the Eucharist:

'The Body of Christ', you are told, and you answer 'Amen'. Be members then of the Body of Christ that your Amen may be true. Why is this mystery accomplished with bread? We shall say nothing of our own about it, rather let us hear from the Apostle [Paul], who speaking of this sacrament, says: 'We being many are one body, one bread'. Understand and rejoice. Unity, devotion, charity! One bread: and what is this one bread? One body made up of many. Consider that the bread is not made of one grain alone, but of many. During the time of exorcism, we were, so to say, in the mill. At baptism you were wetted with water. Then the Holy Spirit came into you like the fire which bakes the dough. Be then what you see and receive what you are.¹⁷⁴

St Thomas Aquinas wrote that 'the Eucharist is the sacrament of the unity of the Church, which results from the fact that many are one in Christ'.¹⁷⁵ The Eucharist is the sacrament of communion with one another in the one body of Christ and, therefore, the ecclesiology of communion is a profoundly Eucharistic ecclesiology.

¹⁷⁰ LG 7.

¹⁷¹ Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum. The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages*. Translated by Gemma Simmonds CJ (Indiana: University of Notre Dame, 2007) p. 104. This principle is stated, with emphasis, in CCC 1396.

¹⁷² McPartlan, *Sacrament of Salvation*, p. 39.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹⁷⁴ Augustine, Sermons, 272 and 234 (PL 38, 1247 and 1116), quoted in De Lubac, *Catholicism*, p. 92 and CCC 1396.

¹⁷⁵ ST III, 82. 2 ad 3; cf. 82. 9 ad 2.

The ‘preeminent manifestation of the Church’, according to the Council’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*,¹⁷⁶ consists in

the full active participation of all God’s holy people in these liturgical celebrations, especially in the same eucharist, in a single prayer, at one altar, at which there presides the bishop surrounded by his college of priests and by his ministers.¹⁷⁷

Furthermore, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* states that the liturgy is the high point towards which all the activity of the Church is directed, as well as the source from which her power flows, and that participation in the liturgical life of the Church is the goal of apostolic activities.¹⁷⁸

Building on the Church’s great tradition, the relationship between the Church and the Eucharist is recognised as one of reciprocal causality. In the words of de Lubac, ‘each has been entrusted to the other, so to speak, by Christ: the Church produces the Eucharist, but the Eucharist also produces the Church’.¹⁷⁹ *Lumen Gentium* repeats this theme of the Eucharist effecting and expressing the communion of the Church:

As often as the sacrifice of the cross in which Christ our Passover was sacrificed, is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemption is carried on, and, in the sacrament of the eucharistic bread, the unity of all believers who form one body in Christ is both expressed and brought about. All men are called to this union with Christ, who is the light of the world, from whom we go forth, through whom we live, and toward whom our whole life strains.¹⁸⁰

Lumen Gentium also demonstrated an important re-thinking of an issue that arose in the Middle Ages by confirming the presence of Christ in the local community and, therefore, acknowledging its validity as the mystical Body of Christ:

In any community of the altar, under the sacred ministry of the bishop, there is exhibited a symbol of that charity and ‘unity of the mystical Body, without which there can be no salvation’. In these communities, though frequently small and poor, or living in the Diaspora, Christ is present, and in virtue of His presence there is brought together one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. For ‘the partaking of the body and blood of Christ does nothing other than make us be transformed into that which we consume’.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁶ Second Vatican Council, Constitution: *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963 (hereafter, SC). http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.html.

¹⁷⁷ SC 41.

¹⁷⁸ SC 10.

¹⁷⁹ Henri de Lubac, *The Splendor of the Church*, p. 134.

¹⁸⁰ LG 3. See also LG 11.

¹⁸¹ LG 26.

In recognition of the developments that took place in the post-conciliar period regarding the relationship between the local and the universal Church, this issue will be considered further in Chapter 3.

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter has explored communion ecclesiology, where the nature of the Church is to be a body of people brought into communion with the Trinity and to live that communion with one another. This was the central and fundamental idea of the Second Vatican Council. It is into a relationship with Christ that the new People of God are called, a relationship that includes fellowship with the unity of the Blessed Trinity, which is lived sacramentally in the Church. This represented a return to the understanding of the early Church, and a significant shift from the understanding that had existed since the time of the Reformation, when the Church sought to protect herself as a visible institution and considered herself as the *societas perfecta*, possessing within herself all that was needed for her continuation.

The Church as communion draws together some of the images of Church, such as the Mystical Body of Christ, the new People of God, and sacrament. Communion ecclesiology begins with the divine love of the Trinity into which the People of God are called, a relationship that includes fellowship with other Christians. With a return to the biblical and patristic sources, the Church reclaimed her Christological and pneumatological foundations, which were evident from the second to the fifth centuries. The sacraments of the Church are occasions for the faithful to encounter Christ, and to participate in the communion of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is the Eucharist, in particular, that is the source of strength for the Christian journey, uniting a person most fully to Christ through receiving his Body and Blood.

Communion ecclesiology has specific implications for the Church's mission of evangelization if the communion is to be fruitful. It is through the Church that Christ is revealed to the world, both as a reflection of his glory and in the proclamation of the Gospel. *Lumen Gentium* states, 'The Church... receives the mission to proclaim and to spread among all peoples the Kingdom of Christ and of God and to be, on earth, the initial budding forth of that kingdom'.¹⁸² David Schindler believes that the Council's

¹⁸² LG 5.

communion ecclesiology brings with it ‘an astonishing shift in the way we understand the world and the Church’s mission to the world’.¹⁸³ For communion ecclesiology understands that the Church, in Christ Jesus, ‘is to be intrinsically oriented towards the world, because and insofar as it extends Christ’s own incarnational mission’.¹⁸⁴

Communion in the Church bears fruit when it is shared with others. The communion with Christ is for all people and, therefore, it has specific implications for evangelization. Believers are called to proclaim Christ so that others may encounter him, to come to know and love him and thereby share in the communion. The Church as communion must be open to creating new Christians and nurturing them in the body of Christ. That evangelization is a fruit of communion will be considered in the following chapter.

¹⁸³ David L Schindler, *Heart of the World, Center of the Church*, p. xi.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Chapter 2. Evangelization as fruit of Communion

2.1 Introduction

As addressed in the previous chapter, Vatican II recovered the understanding of the Church as communion, as sharing in and deriving its life from the communion of the divine love of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This ecclesiological shift also brought the understanding that the Church was to go out to all the world and tell the Good News. That Vatican II was to have an evangelizing thrust was made clear by Pope John XXIII even as the Council was beginning. It was seen in the openness of the Church to go out to the world in new ways, including looking beyond its traditional Eurocentrism and inviting bishops from mission countries to participate in the Council, thereby giving a voice to the Church in those lands. It was also seen in the Church's developing engagement with the media during the three-year event. During the Council, the Fathers addressed the Church's internal nature as well as its mission to the world. The texts developed by the Council acknowledged in a renewed way the primacy of Jesus Christ and the role of the Holy Spirit as the principal agent of evangelization, and demonstrated three theological principles. These are found primarily in the key Constitutions, *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*, as well as in *Dei Verbum*¹ and *Ad Gentes*. The first is that encountering Christ leads to witness and proclamation. The second is that the rediscovery of the Church as the new People of God leads to the co-responsibility of all the faithful to evangelize. And the third is that the universal call to holiness gives rise to the universal call to mission. Together, these principles demonstrate that all who encounter Christ are called to live their life within the community of the Trinitarian God, which in turn gives life to the community of the Church present in the world. Communion with Christ bears fruit through evangelization.

¹ Second Vatican Council, Constitution: *Dei Verbum*, 18 November 1965 (hereafter, DV). http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.html.

2.2 What is evangelization?

The term ‘evangelization’ is found in both the Old and New Testaments.² The verb ‘evangelize’ in the Septuagint means to proclaim good news. The term appears in the historical books, in the Psalms, and most notably in Deutero-Isaiah.³ This last passage, which declares ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’,⁴ describes the herald running ahead of the people on their return from exile in Babylon to Jerusalem, proclaiming that Yahweh is victorious over his enemies and bringing about his kingdom. In the New Testament, the word ‘evangelize’ is found frequently in Luke and Acts as well as the writings of St Paul. It is Jesus who is himself both the Good News and the one anointed to proclaim the kingdom of God and share the Good News with the poor.⁵ He instructs his disciples by the example of his life and ministry that they must do the same. Following Jesus’ ascension, the role of ‘preaching Jesus Christ’ is handed on to the Apostles.⁶ St Paul, too, after his life-changing encounter with Christ,⁷ embarks on a life dedicated to evangelization, proclaiming the risen Christ.⁸ He understands his call is to evangelize the Gentiles,⁹ a divine mandate that he takes very seriously: ‘Woe to me if I do not evangelize!’.¹⁰ In the New Testament, therefore, to evangelize means ‘to proclaim with authority and power the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ’.¹¹

Those who encounter Christ are then invited to share in the communion of the Trinity. Evangelization in effect is communicating the Word who is Jesus. It is making him known so that he might break into the world. The message proclaimed is of God’s saving love, and the person who hears and believes is given the gift of faith. This is how the early Church spread after the first Pentecost, when the disciples were emboldened by the Holy Spirit to tell the people about their experience of Jesus, encouraging them to encounter him and then follow him. These first followers of Christ ‘received the call as individuals,

² Evangelization is defined as ‘[t]he proclamation of Christ and the Gospel (Greek: *evangelion*) by word and the testimony of life, in fulfilment of Christ’s command’; CCC, Glossary, p. 877. This thesis will spell ‘evangelization’ as the official Church teaching documents do.

³ Avery Dulles SJ, *Evangelization for the Third Millennium* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2009) p. 1.

⁴ Is 52:7.

⁵ Lk 4:18 and 7:22.

⁶ Acts 5:42.

⁷ Acts 9:1–19.

⁸ Rom 1:1–6.

⁹ Rom 15:20; 2 Cor 10:16; Gal 1:16, 2:27.

¹⁰ 1 Cor 9:16.

¹¹ Dulles, *Evangelization for the Third Millennium*, p. 1.

but were then formed in the faith through life in common'.¹² For faith is not an individual gift but participation in the common gift of faith of the Church. Dulles notes that 'Christian faith has a divinely given content that can be known only through reliance on the community that already professes it'.¹³

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the sacraments are the unique occasions by which a person encounters Christ. Evangelization can lead a person to formally accept becoming part of the faith community. It is through the sacrament of Baptism that a person is welcomed into the faith life of the Church and incorporated into the Body of Christ. Baptism is the key that unlocks the other gifts of the Church. Once incorporated into communion with Christ, which is lived out in the Church, and being immersed in the faith community, the evangelized then becomes the evangelizer. The one evangelized in their turn is sent by Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to then go out to the world as per the divine mandate.¹⁴ As in Acts, this is how the Church fulfils its mission of creating new Christians and nurturing them in the Body of Christ.

2.3 Pre-Vatican II

2.3.1 Formation for the already baptised

As mentioned in the previous chapter on ecclesiology, during the thirteenth century there formed a number of orders of friars known for their religious fervour. The friars lived in evangelical poverty and blended the contemplative and the apostolic life. Four well-known such orders are the Friars Minor (Franciscans), the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), the Hermits of St Augustine (Augustinians) and the Carmelites.¹⁵ The friars were sent out on apostolic missions as per the Gospel imperative to preach the Gospel in words and deeds, calling on the already baptised to reform their ways.

In light of the Protestant Reformation, and the rupture that ensued, the Catholic Church focussed on teaching, the moral law and the sacraments rather than emphasising the proclamation of the Gospel and the message of salvation in Jesus Christ.¹⁶ Then, from 1545, the Council of Trent brought in reforms for the renewal of the Church in the Christian west, including the promotion of religious instruction for the faithful with the

¹² Dulles, 'The Ecclesial Dimension of Faith', in *Communio*, vol. 22, no. 3 (1995) p. 419, 420.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 420.

¹⁴ Mk 16:18 and Mt 28:19–20.

¹⁵ Tanner, *The Councils of the Church*, p. 63, 64.

¹⁶ Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 14.

Catechism of Trent.¹⁷ This Council ‘gave Roman Catholicism a platform and a confidence, ending years of defensiveness in the face of the Reformation’.¹⁸ The Council sounded a surprisingly evangelical note in its confirmation that preaching the Word of God was the principal task of the bishop and pastor,¹⁹ declaring that ‘the gospel was the source of all saving truth and moral discipline, and was to be preached to every creature’.²⁰ The education of clergy was formalised through the founding of seminaries. Thus there began the creation of a ‘new clergy’²¹ who were called to a life of prayer, mortification and renunciation of worldliness, such that their office and personal life were as one. They were set apart from the friars and monks of early medieval times who did not have to ‘go out in search of their flock’;²² these clergy of the modern world were required to be zealous in seeking out and forming the faithful.

God’s providence was evident in raising up charismatic leaders such as St Charles Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, and St Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). These were two of the men instrumental in leading the Counter-Reformation movement in the sixteenth century.²³ The strong evangelizing push of this movement came with the rise of new missionary orders, most notably the Jesuits, who travelled around Europe preaching retreats for faith communities.²⁴ To strengthen the provision of religious instruction to the faithful in Rome, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) was formed in 1562.²⁵ This association received support from significant figures such as St Robert Bellarmine, St Charles Borromeo and St Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva.²⁶

The burden of preaching was borne by religious orders in the seventeenth century, especially for the Lenten and Advent series of sermons in the towns and cities.²⁷ To continue the task of forming the faithful, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine or other

¹⁷ Tanner, *The Councils of the Church*, p. 86.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Robert Bireley SJ, *Refashioning of Catholicism 1450–1700* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998) p. 100.

²⁰ Council of Trent, DS1501.

²¹ Congar, *Power and Poverty in the Church*, pp. 73–75.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

²⁵ ‘Confraternity of Christian Doctrine’, *New Catholic Encyclopedia: Vol. IV Com to Dys* (Washington: McGraw-Hill Books, 1967) p. 155.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

lay associations were often introduced to ensure the faith continued to grow. As a result of the advent of the printing press, the production of catechisms became easier and therefore a popular means for instructing the faithful in the content of the faith and in the ways of the Church, for, effectively, '(e)vangelization meant raising the level of religious knowledge and practice'.²⁸ The second half of the seventeenth century became the great age of popular missions, where preachers went to towns and villages, staying for a few days, a few weeks or even months.²⁹ At the close of the eighteenth century in France, when the church was recovering after the upheaval of the French Revolution, a number of new missionary and teaching orders were also founded.

2.3.2 Forming new Christians

The renewal brought to the Catholic Church by the Council of Trent had a profound impact, not just on European civilisation but on the wider world. At a time when much of Europe was still ostensibly Christian, the Church placed strong emphasis on the mission of spreading the faith to those countries that had not previously been Christianised. A significant part of the evangelizing activity of the Church is the presentation of the Gospel to peoples and nations who have not heard it before with the intent of forming new Christians. *Propaganda Fide*³⁰ was formed in Rome in 1622 to support missionaries who were sent to far-off countries to bring the message of Christ. This led to the practice of pontifical governance and leadership of missionaries in mission lands, who were independent of diocesan bishops and religious superiors. These missionaries 'engaged the changing culture in new ways and undertook missions of a new kind, even evangelizing newly found continents'.³¹ For example, under instruction from Pope Paul III, newly ordained Jesuit priest Francis Xavier and others were sent off to the New World of Asia, to East India and Japan in particular,³² in the mid-sixteenth century, and were ultimately responsible for baptising thousands. There was also the evangelization of the Americas and Canada.³³

²⁸ Bireley, *Refashioning of Catholicism 1450–1700*, p. 96.

²⁹ Congar, *Power and Poverty in the Church*, p. 98.

³⁰ Propaganda Fide, the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, is now known as the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

³¹ Coleridge, *A New Fire*, pp. 128, 129.

³² Pope Benedict XV, Apostolic Letter on the Propagation of the Catholic Faith Throughout the World *Maximum Illud*, 30 November 1919 (hereafter, MI) 7. https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xv/it/apost_letters/documents/hf_ben-xv_apl_19191130_maximum-illud.html This is available online in Latin, Italian and Spanish only.

³³ Karen Melvin, *Building Colonial Cities of God: Mendicant Orders and Urban Culture in New Spain* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), p. 4.

In the early nineteenth century, a devout young lay woman from Lyon in France, Pauline Jaricot, learned about the crisis facing the missions as her brother, Philéas, was a student preparing to depart as a missionary to China.³⁴ In 1816, at the age of 17, Pauline took a private vow of chastity and resolved to do all she could to support the activity of missionaries. The following year she organised the first collections for the missions and, five years later, founded a great missionary movement – the Pontifical Mission Societies – that soon moved beyond the borders of France and out across the world. In the late nineteenth century, Pope Leo XIII’s first letter on mission, *Sancta Dei civitas*,³⁵ sought to modernise mission thinking by recalling the universality of mission, whereby the faithful were encouraged to support the missionary clerics and religious through almsgiving and prayer, including through mission societies.³⁶

During the twentieth century, a large body of papal teaching addressed significant shifts in understanding the various contributions to missionary activity. In the Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud*, Pope Benedict XV addressed the propagation of the Faith across the world. This Letter had a substantial impact, due to the pope’s condemnation of ‘missionary ethnocentrism’ and recognition of the need for indigenous clergy in mission lands to be given formation and responsibility so they could minister to their own people.³⁷ Another important document promoting Catholic missions was Pope Pius XII’s encyclical *Evangelii Praecones*,³⁸ which reiterated that while the object of missionary activity is to share the Gospel message with new races and to form new Christians, the underlying goal of the missionary activity ‘which should never be lost sight of, is to

³⁴ For more, see the official Pontifical Mission Societies website: <http://www.ppoomm.va>.

³⁵ Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical: *Sancta Dei Civitas*, 3 December 1880 (hereafter, SDC). http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_03121880_sancta-dei-civitas.html

³⁶ Pontifical Mission Societies website. According to this official website of the Pontifical Mission Societies, there were four societies founded in France in 1822 through Pauline Marie Jaricot’s intuition.

³⁷ MI 14,15.

³⁸ Pope Pius XII, Encyclical: *Evangelii Praecones*, 2 June 1951 (hereafter, EP). http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_02061951_evangelii-praecones.html. EP 1 noted the significant increase in the missionary activity of the Church, stating that it ‘has gained such force and momentum and is of such proportions as perhaps was never witnessed before in the annals of Catholic missions’. The growth in missionary activity is specified in paragraph 5: ‘In 1926 the number of Catholic missions amounted to 400, but today it is almost 600. At that date the number of Catholics in the missions did not exceed 15,000,000 while today it is almost 20,800,000. At that time the number of native and foreign priests in the missions was about 14,800; today their number is more than 26,800. Then all Bishops in the missions were foreigners; during the past 25 years 88 missions have been entrusted to native clergy; moreover, with the establishment of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the appointment of native Bishops in quite a few places, it has become more apparent that the religion of Jesus Christ is really Catholic and that no part of the world is excluded from it’.

establish the Church on sound foundations among non-Christian peoples, and place it under its own native Hierarchy'.³⁹ This involvement of local clergy, especially in leadership within their territory, showed quite a marked change in the Church's attitude. Pius XII also presented a broader vision of evangelization that included the work of Catholic Action and the contribution of the laity generally,⁴⁰ the rise of associations and guilds of the faithful,⁴¹ schools and educational facilities⁴² and newspapers and periodicals.⁴³ These elements of evangelization were to be significantly developed by the Second Vatican Council, as will be seen in later chapters. *Evangelii Praecones* referred to the ecclesiology of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ which had been developed in *Mystici Corporis*, already discussed in Chapter 1. This was to remind the faithful that the whole body of the Church was responsible for supporting and rebuilding those parts, especially the missions, that were suffering most.⁴⁴

With the dawning of a renewed understanding of the nature of the Church, there was a significant change in the language the Church used to refer to those who are the recipients of the Church's evangelizing efforts. Once spoken of as 'infidels',⁴⁵ 'heathens',⁴⁶ and 'those unfortunate souls who live in error outside the Fold',⁴⁷ the billion souls who had not heard the message of the Gospel were addressed in a more welcoming tone as 'Sheep that are not of the fold'.⁴⁸ Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Princeps Pastorum*,⁴⁹ sounded an even more hopeful note, stating that the Church's missionary activity was directed to extending God's kingdom in order that new branches of the Church might grow and produce wholesome fruits.⁵⁰ For John XXIII, the ultimate goal of evangelization was the unity of all the sheep under the one Shepherd.⁵¹ With *Princeps Pastorum*, he laid the

³⁹ EP 22.

⁴⁰ EP 30–40.

⁴¹ EP 38.

⁴² EP 42–43.

⁴³ EP 44. Overcoming communism and anti-Catholic sentiments was part of the 'evangelizing' mandate at this time.

⁴⁴ EP 69.

⁴⁵ MI 10.

⁴⁶ Pius XI, Pope, Encyclical: *Rerum Ecclesiae*, 28 February 1926 (hereafter, RE) 7.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_28021926_rerum-ecclesiae.html.

⁴⁷ RE 5.

⁴⁸ EP 16.

⁴⁹ Pope John XXIII, Encyclical: *Princeps Pastorum*, 28 November 1959 (hereafter, PP).

https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_28111959_princeps.html. This encyclical was issued on the 40th anniversary of *Maximum Illud*.

⁵⁰ PP 4.

⁵¹ PP 5.

foundation of the Church's later recognition of cultural diversity in her task of mission, asserting that the Church 'does not identify itself with any one culture, not even with European and Western civilisation, although the history of the Church is closely intertwined with it'.⁵² As the twentieth century wore on, countries that were traditionally Christian also began to experience a dechristianisation, which had implications for sharing the faith and the role of the Church. As there were insufficient clerical and religious missionaries to reach to the ends of the earth, the missionary task was increasingly seen as the responsibility of all the faithful, including the laity.

2.4 Vatican II

The Church has always understood that its role, indeed part of its mission, is to instruct people in what they ought to believe.⁵³ In the present era, religion is often identified as a private matter for the believer alone.⁵⁴ While individual assent to religious belief is required, there is also a communitarian dimension that is just as important, and the two must be held in balance.⁵⁵ At the Second Vatican Council there was a renewed recognition that everybody shares in the common gifts of the Church, that faith is not a gift for the individual alone. For 'faith cannot long survive, still less flourish, without the support of a like-minded community, which provides symbols, rituals and traditions'.⁵⁶ Dulles makes it clear that the Christian faith 'is the common property of the whole Church'.⁵⁷ He goes on to note that 'by allowing the mystery of Christ to take hold of us, we enter into solidarity with the faithful of all nations and of all ages, including those that are yet to be'.⁵⁸

The ecclesiology of communion recovered at Vatican II brought the understanding that the Church, through Jesus Christ, 'is to be turned intrinsically toward the world, because and insofar as it extends Christ's own incarnational mission'.⁵⁹ It is the Church that participates in Christ's own act of redeeming, that is meant to draw individuals, indeed the whole world, into the communion Christ shares with his Father in the Spirit.⁶⁰

⁵² PP 19.

⁵³ Dulles, *The ecclesial dimension of faith*, p. 418.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 419.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 420.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 432.

⁵⁹ Schindler, *Heart of the World, Center of the Church*, p. 9.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

The Council also understood that a significant contribution towards the Church's evangelizing efforts could be made by the means of social communications, which were continually advancing. This understanding came through practical experience - even in the 1890s when the Church was still thought of as *societas perfecta*, the Church used mass media, including the press and radio, to communicate with the world. During the years of the Council, between 1962 and 1965, the two significant international events that received ongoing media coverage were the Council and the Vietnam War. The advent of television had a big impact, with this electronic and highly visual media presenting new access to news of the world for all. Vatican II was the most widely reported ecumenical council that had ever been held.⁶¹ The Decree on the Media, *Inter Mirifica*,⁶² was the second document approved by the Council in December 1963, and in it the Church recognised that the media can be of great service to the world if used effectively because the media not only contribute to entertainment and instruction but also to spreading and proclaiming the Kingdom of God. This document, and the use of traditional and new forms of media that can contribute to and build upon the Church's evangelizing efforts, will be considered in Chapter 4.

Three theological principles evident in the conciliar documents relating to the mission of the Church point to the evangelizing thrust of Vatican II. These are found in the key Constitutions, *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*, as well as in the Decrees *Ad Gentes*, *Dei Verbum*, *Dignitatis Humanae*⁶³ and *Presbyterorum Ordinis*.⁶⁴ The principles are underpinned by the Trinitarian, Christological and sacramental elements of the Church as communion considered in the previous chapter.

The first is that encountering Christ leads to witness and proclamation. This announcement of the message of salvation is necessary to lead people to encounter Jesus. The second principle is the rediscovery of the Church as the new People of God, which leads to an understanding of the co-responsibility of all the faithful to evangelize. A person who has encountered Jesus is called to evangelize others; this implies that they

⁶¹ Lamb & Levering (eds.), *Vatican II: Renewal Within Tradition*, p. 3.

⁶² Second Vatican Council, Decree *Inter Mirifica*, 4 December 1963 (hereafter, IM).
http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19631204_inter-mirifica_en.html.

⁶³ Second Vatican Council, Declaration: *Dignitatis Humanae*, 7 December 1965 (hereafter, DH).
http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651207_dignitatis-humanae_en.html.

⁶⁴ Second Vatican Council, Decree: *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 7 December 1965 (hereafter, PO).
http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm.

have been evangelized themselves and are witnessing to their experience of their encounter with Christ. The obligation of spreading the faith is imposed on every disciple of Christ in a different way, according to his or her vocation.⁶⁵ It is the Holy Spirit who continues to empower disciples to undertake their particular mission. And, thirdly, there is the principle that the universal call to holiness gives rise to the universal call to mission. Holiness arises from the indwelling of the Trinity in a person. The idea that the call to holiness is for all the chosen in the new People of God rather than only for certain members only was a significant accomplishment of the Council. *Lumen Gentium* states that holiness is the vocation of the whole Church, detailing the different elements of this in Chapters 5–8.

2.4.1 Encountering Christ leads to witness and proclamation

This first evangelizing principle indicates that, having encountered Christ, a person is drawn into the life of the Trinitarian God and, in turn, is impelled to witness with his or her life and proclaim the One encountered. It is communion ecclesiology in practice, and reflects both the Trinitarian and Christological dimensions of the Church as communion. This principle – that hearing the Word of God precedes proclamation of that Word – is encapsulated in *Dei Verbum*'s opening sentence,⁶⁶ citing the prologue to 1 John where the Evangelist declares

We announce to you the eternal life which dwelt with the Father and was made visible to us. What we have seen and heard we announce to you, so that you may have fellowship with us and our common fellowship be with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.⁶⁷

The Council further taught that God's search for us and our response in faith – that is, salvation – is at the centre of the Church. The Church needs to be reoriented to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the Gospel shared with all people for all ages according to Jesus' missionary mandate.⁶⁸

Vatican II, in continuity with the First Vatican Council, affirmed that 'faith' made in response to God's revelation is not just intellectual assent but a decision of the whole

⁶⁵ LG 17.

⁶⁶ Francis Martin, 'Revelation and its Transmission', in Lamb & Levering (eds) *Vatican II: Renewal Within Tradition*, p. 56. See also DV 10.

⁶⁷ 1 Jn 1:2–3, cited in DV 1.

⁶⁸ See Mt 28:19, 20 and Mk 16:15, 16.

person, including ‘the full submission of intellect and will to God’.⁶⁹ To reach this assent, the person is given the assistance of God’s grace and the interior help of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁰ Cardinal Wojtyla noted in *Sources of Renewal, The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council*⁷¹ that, prior to the Council, this acceptance of what God reveals and the Church teaches ‘implied a rather passive and mainly receptive notion of “acceptance” which was more or less identified as the basic element of a profession of faith’.⁷² *Dignitatis Humanae* makes explicit that the human person has the right to seek the truth before making their profession of faith, a key element of religious freedom that recognises the ‘dignity of the human person and his social nature’.⁷³ The Declaration affirms that seeking the truth is to be an act of freedom, with the benefit of teaching or formation, with communication and open dialogue, listening to others explain the truth they have discovered, or believe they have discovered, in order that the enquirer may also find the truth.⁷⁴

Christ’s revelation of himself throughout the generations usually occurs in the following ways. In the first instance, it is through his continuing presence and activity in the world for the Church. It occurred through the Apostles who were commissioned by Christ to preach the Gospel, ‘which is the source of all saving truth and moral teaching’.⁷⁵ The Apostles, with the power of the Holy Spirit, shared what they had heard from and witnessed while living with Jesus. Among the Apostles were those men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit to leave written accounts of the salvation story, and these Sacred Scriptures reveal Christ. It continues through the ongoing activity of the Apostles’ successors, the bishops, who preach and teach and guide the whole Church. These ways of encountering Christ, notes *Dei Verbum*, ‘are like a mirror in which the pilgrim Church on earth looks at God, from whom she has received everything, until she is brought finally to see Him as He is, face to face (1 John 3:2)’.⁷⁶ Rene Latourelle, in *Theology of*

⁶⁹ DV 5.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Karol Wojtyla (later Pope John Paul II), *Sources of Renewal, The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council*. Translated by P. S. Falla (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1980). Originally published in October 1972 on the 10th Anniversary of the inauguration of the Council, this was Wojtyla’s pastoral plan for implementing the Council in the Diocese of Krakow. In the Introduction (p. 11), Wojtyla says ‘This book is rather to be thought of as a *vade-mecum* introducing the reader to the relevant documents of Vatican II, but always from the point of view of translating them into the life and faith of the Church.’

⁷² Ibid., p. 209.

⁷³ DH 3.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ DV 7.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Revelation, notes that *Dei Verbum* is the first occasion on which any document of the Church's extraordinary Magisterium has proposed such an elaborate text on the nature, object and importance of the Church's Tradition.⁷⁷ The 'connection and communication' between Sacred Scripture and Tradition is reinforced, with both to be accepted with the same reverence because they flow from the same 'divine wellspring' and are united in leading to the same end.⁷⁸

Cardinal Wojtyla, reflecting on the conciliar teachings in *Sources of Renewal*, noted that Vatican II made it clear that the faith consists in accepting revelation as Jesus Christ giving witness to the Father, and in being ready to proclaim and bear witness oneself.⁷⁹ He also highlighted that, after Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension, he draws to himself those who are saved, inviting them to become part of his body, the Church, and to share in the communion which is exemplified in the Blessed Trinity.⁸⁰ Jesus continues to raise up apostles and prophets to preach this message of salvation in order that successive generations have the opportunity to encounter him.

2.4.2 The rediscovery of the Church as the new People of God leads to the co-responsibility of all the faithful to evangelize

Through encountering Christ, a person is drawn into the communion that exists among the Blessed Trinity, and this invitation is for all people, for 'Christ instituted this new covenant, the new testament, that is to say, in His Blood, calling together a people made up of Jew and gentile, making them one, not according to the flesh but in the Spirit. This was to be the new People of God'.⁸¹ *Lumen Gentium* further expounded on the nature of the Church in Chapter 2:

For those who believe in Christ, who are reborn not from a perishable but from an imperishable seed through the word of the living God... are finally established as 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people... who in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God'.⁸²

All people from all nations are called to belong to this new people of God, whereby they are united as 'citizens of a kingdom which is of a heavenly rather than of an earthly

⁷⁷ Rene Latourelle. *Theology of Revelation*, 1966, p. 476, cited in Francis Martin, 'Revelation and its Transmission', p. 63.

⁷⁸ DV 9.

⁷⁹ Wojtyla, *Sources of Renewal*, pp. 207, 208.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 206–07.

⁸¹ LG 9.

⁸² Ibid.

nature'.⁸³ This second principle of evangelization is underpinned by communion ecclesiology in its Trinitarian, Christological and sacramental dimensions.

With *Lumen Gentium*, the Council returned to prominence the understanding within the early Church that through baptism every person is consecrated to a holy priesthood.⁸⁴ The Council Fathers stated that all who are baptised as disciples of Jesus Christ must persevere in prayer and praise of God, and 'should present themselves as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God'.⁸⁵ They must 'bear witness to Christ' throughout the world, and 'give an answer to those who seek an account of that hope of eternal life which is in them'.⁸⁶ While there is a common priesthood of the faithful, the new people of God has from the beginning been made up of various ranks and different ministries.⁸⁷

Lumen Gentium taught that the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood of the ordained are interrelated but quite different, and that the differences are in essence and not only in degree.⁸⁸ The ministerial priest, because of his sacred power, is called to teach, to sanctify and to govern the people of God.⁸⁹ Acting *in persona Christi*,⁹⁰ he makes the Eucharistic sacrifice present, offering it to God in the name of all the people.⁹¹ The faithful, for their part, because of their participation in the royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist, receiving the sacraments, offering prayers and thanksgiving, leading a life of holiness, self-denial and charitable activity.⁹² David L. Schindler notes that the ordained minister is drawn out of the experience of the common priesthood of the faithful and from the community of the Church:

The man who is eventually ordained a priest is first 'received' into the Church through baptism, which means through the faith of the Church that always precedes him. In a

⁸³ LG 13.

⁸⁴ LG 10. See also Avery Dulles 'Nature, Mission and Structure of the Church' in *Vatican II: Renewal Within Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) p. 32. Dulles comments on the re-emergence of 'the biblical and patristic notion of the baptismal priesthood', noting that 'After undergoing at least a partial eclipse, the notion re-emerged in the early twentieth century. Fruitfully used by Pius XII in his encyclical on the Liturgy, *Mediator Dei* [1947], the theme was extensively studied in theology during the next decade'.

⁸⁵ LG 10.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ LG 13.

⁸⁸ LG 10.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ This phrase translated into English as 'in the person of Christ'.

²⁷⁷ LG 10.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

word, the man who eventually becomes ordained priest must first participate in the 'common priesthood' of all believers.⁹³

The way a person communicates the Word in the person of Jesus Christ and facilitates the communion of the Church is differentiated according to their role and ministry, as bishop, priest or deacon, religious or lay person. The next section will consider the understanding of these roles and ministries expressed in the documents of Vatican II. Chapter 3 will consider developments in these since the Council.

2.4.2.1 Bishops

The Second Vatican Council saw a return to the vision of the first millennium in which the primary focal point of ordained ministry was that of the bishop rather than the priest, teaching that the episcopacy constituted the fullness of the sacrament of Holy Orders.⁹⁴ In a mandate received from the Lord, bishops are charged with the mission 'to teach all nations and to preach the Gospel to every creature, so that all men may attain to salvation by faith, baptism and the fulfilment of the commandments'.⁹⁵ By virtue of the apostolic office they hold, bishops have a duty to be 'a witness of Christ before all men'.⁹⁶ The bishops are called to be more than mere administrators; according to the Decree *Christus Dominus*, they are to 'see to it that the faithful know and live the paschal mystery more deeply through the Eucharist, forming one closely-knit body, united by the charity of Christ; devoting themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word'.⁹⁷ They were also to form the faithful that they may in their turn be witnesses to Christ and his gospel.⁹⁸

Bishops have responsibility for their own diocese and are also called to work collegially with all other bishops in 'solicitude for all the Churches'.⁹⁹ This doctrine of collegiality, detailed in *Lumen Gentium* in Chapter 3 on the hierarchy, was taken up from the unfinished First Vatican Council. However, it was couched in language retrieved not from previous councils but from patristic sources.¹⁰⁰ With the shift to communion ecclesiology evident at Vatican II, the understanding of the papacy was no longer as akin to monarchic

⁹³ Schindler, *Heart of the World, Center of the Church*, p. 253.

⁹⁴ Richard R. Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church* (Maryknoll, NY, Orbis Books, 2008) p. 138.

⁹⁵ LG 24.

⁹⁶ LG 11.

⁹⁷ Second Vatican Council, Decree: *Christus Dominus*, 28 October 1965 (hereafter, CD) 15.

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ LG 23.

²⁸⁶ Avery Dulles, 'Nature, Mission and Structure of the Church', p. 33.

rule, but rather as ‘coordination of the plurality which belongs to the Church’s essence’.¹⁰¹ Further, Fr Ratzinger identified that in the Church, which consists of communities who gather for divine worship, the central idea of collegiality is leadership ‘built up from a community of bishops, one of whom as successor of Peter is responsible for the unifying function’.¹⁰² Drawing from the Gospel and the situation of the first Apostles, *Lumen Gentium* recognises that, just as St Peter and the other Apostles comprise one apostolic college, so St Peter’s successor, the pope, and the successors of the Apostles, the bishops, together constitute one apostolic college. But this body of bishops ‘has no authority unless it is understood together with the Roman Pontiff, the successor of Peter as its head. The pope’s power of primacy over all, both pastors and faithful, remains whole and intact’.¹⁰³ When representatives of the apostolic college come together to discuss doctrinal or pastoral issues, as they did at the Second Vatican Council, this is collegiality in action.

Christus Dominus also recognised from the early Church the ‘communion of fraternal charity and zeal for the universal mission entrusted to the Apostles’, which resulted in the sharing of ‘abilities and their wills for the common good and for the welfare of the individual churches’, has given rise from time to time to ‘synods, provincial councils and plenary councils’.¹⁰⁴ This was given form in the Church of the modern era, when Pope Paul VI established the Synod of Bishops.¹⁰⁵ He gave the explanation of the Synod of Bishops as:

an ecclesiastic institution, which, on interrogating the signs of the times and as well as trying to provide a deeper interpretation of divine designs and the constitution of the Catholic Church, we set up after Vatican Council II to foster the unity and cooperation of bishops around the world with the Holy See. It does this by means of a common study concerning the conditions of the Church and a joint solution on matters concerning Her mission. It is neither a Council nor a Parliament but a special type of Synod.¹⁰⁶

In *Christus Dominus*, the Council also endorsed the gathering of bishops in ‘episcopal conferences’ within a country or a region. Ferme comments that the establishment of the

¹⁰¹ Ratzinger, *Theological Highlights of VII*, p. 138.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ LG 22.

¹⁰⁴ CD 36.

¹⁰⁵ Pope Paul VI, *Motu proprio Apostolica sollicitudo*, 15 September 1965. http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19650915_apostolica-sollicitudo.html.

¹⁰⁶ The announcement was given at the Sunday Angelus of 22 September 1974. For more, see the website of the Vatican Press Office under Synod of Bishops.

episcopal conference has become ‘one of the most significant and important developments of Vatican II’ and, essentially, ‘has become the expression of the synodal element of the Church, thereby replacing the more formal council or synod’.¹⁰⁷ For more on the ways the bishops act together in their leadership of the Church, and of collegiality and synodality among the successors of the Apostles in the post-Vatican II period, see Chapter 3.

2.4.2.2 Priests

Priests, as co-workers of the bishops, also have a role in proclaiming Jesus Christ: ‘All priests, whether diocesan or religious, share and exercise with the bishop the one priesthood of Christ. Thus they are constituted providential co-operators of the episcopal order’.¹⁰⁸ In a special way diocesan clergy

have a primary role in the care of souls because, being incardinated in or appointed to a particular church, they are wholly dedicated in its service to the care of a particular section of the Lord’s flock, and accordingly form one priestly body and one family of which the bishop is the father.¹⁰⁹

They do this by witnessing to their life in Christ and explicitly preaching the mystery of Christ and by bringing Christ’s light to bear on contemporary issues. For preaching which leads to conversion, ‘the word of God ought not to be explained in a general and abstract way, but rather by applying the lasting truth of the Gospel to the particular circumstances of life’.¹¹⁰ Priests also provide spiritual light and nourishment to encourage mankind to conversion and holiness, and by engaging in fruitful dialogue seek to invite people to worship of God.

2.4.2.2 Deacons

The role of deacons as co-workers of the bishop and his priests was recognised again and ‘restored as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy’¹¹¹ within the Latin Church at Vatican II. *Lumen Gentium* confirmed that deacons are ordained for the ‘ministry of service’, and are called to ‘serve in the diaconate of the liturgy, of the word, and of charity

¹⁰⁷ Brian Ferme, ‘The Decree on the Bishops’ Pastoral Office in the Church, *Christus Dominus*’, in Lamb, & Levering (eds.) *Vatican II: Renewal Within Tradition*, p. 199.

¹⁰⁸ CD 28.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ PO 4. See also PO 11 and 12.

¹¹¹ LG 29.

to the people of God'.¹¹² A particular form of evangelization that is afforded to deacons is the preaching of the homily.

2.4.2.3 Religious

The contribution of those in religious or 'consecrated' life is considered in Chapter VI of *Lumen Gentium*. The Council Fathers were clear that, from the viewpoint of the divine and hierarchical structure of the Church, religious life was a 'particular gift to the Church' in its own right rather than being 'an intermediate state between the clerical and lay states'.¹¹³ The desire for 'perfection of charity' is at the heart of those who join a religious institute, hermitage or secular institute or become a consecrated virgin.¹¹⁴ The Council acknowledged and praised the contribution of brothers and sisters in monasteries or on mission, working in education or in healthcare, who 'adorn the Bride of Christ by their unswerving and humble faithfulness in their chosen consecration and render generous services of all kinds to mankind'.¹¹⁵

Lumen Gentium notes that the evangelical counsels that the religious profess, of poverty, chastity dedicated to God, and obedience, have their foundations in the words and examples of Christ. These were 'further commanded by the Apostles and Fathers of the Church, as well as by the doctors and pastors of souls. The counsels are a divine gift, which the Church received from its Lord and which it always safeguards with the help of His grace'.¹¹⁶

The Council also issued the Decree *Perfectae Caritatis*, which recognised that the more fervently religious men and women live the evangelical counsels they profess, the more 'they are joined to Christ by this total life-long gift of themselves, the richer the life of the Church becomes and the more lively and successful its apostolate'.¹¹⁷ The Decree acknowledged that religious life 'is a special consecration, which is deeply rooted in that of Baptism and expresses it more fully',¹¹⁸ within which members of the laity and clerics are invited to find a place to participate in the life and holiness of the Church and

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ LG 43.

¹¹⁴ 'Consecrated life', in Christopher O'Donnell OCarm, *Ecclesia, A Theological Encyclopedia of the Church* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1996) p. 104.

¹¹⁵ LG 46.

¹¹⁶ LG 43.

¹¹⁷ Second Vatican *Perfectae Caritatis*, Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life, 28 October 1965 (hereafter, PC) 1. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm.

¹¹⁸ PC 5.

contribute to the Church's salvific mission. Further, *Perfectae Caritatis* addressed the requirement that religious life be adapted and renewed both through the constant return to the sources of all Christian life and to the original spirit of the institutes in accordance with the changed conditions of the times. From these two broad categories, the decree drew out five principles for this renewal, which was to be undertaken under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Church.¹¹⁹

2.4.2.4 Laity

The term 'laity' was defined in Chapter 4 of *Lumen Gentium*, as 'all the faithful except those in holy orders and those in the state of religious life specially approved by the Church. These faithful are by baptism made one body with Christ and are constituted among the People of God'.¹²⁰ By virtue of their baptism, the laity are incorporated into the body of Christ, and they, too, have a particular way of sharing in the mission of the Church: 'they are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ; and they carry out for their own part the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world'.¹²¹

When speaking about the laity, *Gaudium et Spes* warned against them living a religious life on one hand and an earthly life on the other. Rather, they are called to a synthesis of life, with all their endeavours giving glory to God. *Gaudium et Spes* also recognised that the laity have a specific role in taking the Church out into the world and making Christ present by the example of their life. 'Since they have an active role to play in the whole life of the Church, laymen are not only bound to penetrate the world with a Christian spirit, but are also called to be witnesses to Christ in all things in the midst of human society'.¹²² The laity's role in expressing communion ecclesiology in the world is to transform earthly life. By the believer being present in the world as Church, all the worldly affairs – political, economic and cultural – are drawn into the communion of God.¹²³ Developments in the role of the laity in the evangelizing mission of the Church will be further considered in detail in Chapter 5.

¹¹⁹ PC 2.

¹²⁰ LG 31.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² GS 43.

¹²³ Schindler, *Heart of the World, Center of the Church*, p. xi.

2.4.2.5 All united in Christ

All the faithful are united in sharing responsibility for building up the Church in unity and assisting in the Church's mission in the world. It is Christ who is the source of the unity of the people of God, despite that people consisting of many members who are responsible for different functions.¹²⁴ The Holy Spirit distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank, appropriate to a person's vocation. 'By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices which contribute toward the renewal and building up of the Church'.¹²⁵ All the members of the Church are called to communion as they are united through 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism'.¹²⁶ The communion of the people of God is necessary because the world needs the Church to be united:

Because the human race today is joining more and more into a civic, economic and social unity, it is that much the more necessary that priests, by combined effort and aid, under the leadership of the bishops and the Supreme Pontiff, wipe out every kind of separateness, so that the whole human race may be brought into the unity of the family of God.¹²⁷

It is evident that all people share a 'common dignity as members from their regeneration in Christ, having the same filial grace and the same vocation to perfection; possessing in common one salvation, one hope and one undivided charity'.¹²⁸ In summary, Vatican II called on the whole people of God, according to their vocation, to make Christ known in the Church and in the world.

2.4.3 Universal call to holiness leads to the universal call to mission

All those who have encountered Christ, whose lives are transformed by the love they have received, participate in the life of the Triune God. The invitation to share in the one communion of the Blessed Trinity is a call to both holiness and mission. Holiness is the indwelling of Christ in the human person, and leads to fruitfulness of life. The life of a person of holiness reflects more profoundly the divine love of the creator. Mary, Mother of God, is the perfect example of holiness.¹²⁹ *Lumen Gentium* puts it this way:

In the lives of those who, sharing in our humanity, are however more perfectly transformed into the image of Christ, God vividly manifests His presence and His face

¹²⁴ Gal 3:28; Col 3.11.

¹²⁵ LG 12.

¹²⁶ Cf. Eph 4:5

¹²⁷ LG 28.

¹²⁸ LG 32.

¹²⁹ See LG 61 and the whole of Chapter 8.

to men. He speaks to us in them, and gives us a sign of His Kingdom, to which we are strongly drawn, having so great a cloud of witnesses over us and such a witness to the truth of the Gospel.¹³⁰

Reflecting on this passage, Cardinal Wojtyla wrote in *Sources of Renewal*: ‘Human sanctity brings God into man’s presence in a particular way, becomes a living witness to him and confirms the truth of the Gospel. Thus it does more than anything else to attract others to the way of salvation’.¹³¹ He also noted that holiness is always personal, and each and every man and woman is called to it. All members of the people of God are called, but in a manner that is unique and unrepeatable.

Holiness is at the heart of the formation of the community of the people of God, particularly richly expressed in the communion of the saints. In the Apostles’ Creed, after confessing ‘the holy catholic Church’ next comes ‘the communion of saints’.¹³² The Church is, in fact, the assembly, or communion, of all the saints.¹³³ *Lumen Gentium* explains that there are three states of the Church, all united, whereby

some of His disciples are exiles on earth, some having died are purified, and others are in glory beholding ‘clearly God Himself triune and one, as He is’; but all in various ways and degrees are in communion in the same charity of God and neighbor and all sing the same hymn of glory to our God.¹³⁴

While the recognised saints come from all states of life, many Christians thought it was only those who were consecrated religious who showed the fullness of Christian life. *Lumen Gentium* confirms that ‘all the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity’.¹³⁵ Sanctification occurs through the ordinary circumstances of life and happens differently depending on the person’s vocation. Bishops and priests, whose ministry is for their own sanctification, live their pastoral charity through care and service, prayer, sacrifice and preaching. They are also called by ‘sacramental grace... to lay down their lives for their sheep’ witnessing to their flock by their example.¹³⁶ Married couples and Christian parents are called to faithful love for each other, to welcome children as gifts from God, bringing them up in the faith, and to be witnesses to the fruitfulness of the Church. Single people and widows

¹³⁰ LG 50.

¹³¹ Wojtyla, *Sources of Renewal*, p. 189.

¹³² CCC 946.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ LG 49.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ LG 41.

are also called to holiness and contribute to the Church's apostolic endeavours.¹³⁷ Particular witness is given by the poor, the infirm and the sick, whose suffering is united with Christ's for the salvation of the world.¹³⁸

It is thus the vocation of the Church that all the faithful are called to holiness.¹³⁹ It is not just for the hierarchy but the whole people of God, and it is possible only because of redemption in Christ. 'They are justified in the Lord Jesus, because in the baptism of faith they truly become sons of God and sharers in the divine nature. In this way they are really made holy. Then too, by God's gift, they must hold on to and complete in their lives this holiness they have received'.¹⁴⁰ Yet this gift of holiness is not a gift of perfection, and all must be aware of the offences they cause daily, remembering always to seek God's mercy.¹⁴¹

Further, the ways and means to reach holiness are detailed in article 42 of *Lumen Gentium*: it is through charity that the love of God is poured into the hearts of the faithful through the Holy Spirit, allowing a person to love God and one another. That love is grown and nurtured by hearing God's word and accepting His will, participating in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, as well as prayer and self-denial, serving those in the community and exercising the virtues.

Holiness, or Christian perfection, corresponds fully to the dignity of the human person enunciated so often in the Council documents, particularly in *Gaudium et Spes*. In articles 12–22, a theological anthropology is developed that begins with the dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God. This Christological anthropology, introduced in Chapter 1, states that the dignity to which God calls human beings can only be understood when illuminated by Jesus Christ, who is the incarnate Word. 'The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of the human person take on light'.¹⁴² The Council Fathers concluded that the Church's mission could only be fulfilled by an integrated proclamation of the Gospel in word and deed. This has been taken up and developed significantly in the post-conciliar period, as discussed in Chapter 3.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ LG 11.

¹⁴⁰ LG 40.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² GS 22.

Similarly, the call to mission is not an optional extra. Cardinal Wojtyla wrote that ‘[t]he human being who commits himself entirely to God accepts with his whole self the divine testimony made known in Jesus Christ, and is thus prepared to bear witness to Christ and to God’.¹⁴³ *Lumen Gentium* presents a very strong rationale for the Church’s missionary activity, for it is through the Apostles she has received the solemn mandate to evangelize the whole world, a task she is impelled to embrace because of the inner compulsion of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁴ *Ad Gentes* reminds the Church that it is ‘from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father’.¹⁴⁵ The decree begins with an urgent appeal to ‘save and renew every creature, that all things may be restored in Christ and all men may constitute one family in Him and one people of God’.¹⁴⁶ It is in God’s plan to ‘call men to share His life, not just singly, apart from any mutual bond, but rather to mold them into a people in which His sons, once scattered abroad might be gathered together’.¹⁴⁷ After establishing this as the principle for mission, the decree sets out in six chapters the criteria for a radical renewal of missionary spirit and activity. Francis Cardinal George OMI notes that *Ad Gentes* provided the Church with a charter for mission arising from the living tradition and missionary practice from the beginning, all of which was now being directed to the future development of mission:

The decree was the fruit of the ferment of questions and ideas already present through the first part of the twentieth century; though it provided material for solid solutions and healthy development, it was to stimulate an even more intense discussion among the bishops of the Church, missionaries, and missiologists. This discussion, however, became notably affected by the growing secularism of Western society and, to some degree, elsewhere.¹⁴⁸

The unfolding of this will be considered in the next chapter.

The obligation to evangelize also has an important element of religious freedom. *Dignitatis Humanae* outlines that all Christians are to more fully understand the truth revealed by Christ, to proclaim it faithfully, and energetically defend it, without ever having to resort to means that are the antithesis of the spirit of the Gospel.¹⁴⁹ They are

¹⁴³ Wojtyla, *Sources of Renewal*, p. 207.

¹⁴⁴ LG 17.

¹⁴⁵ AG 2.

¹⁴⁶ AG 1.

¹⁴⁷ AG 2.

¹⁴⁸ George, ‘The Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity, *Ad Gentes*’, p. 300.

¹⁴⁹ DH 14.

also urged to love and be patient with those who are ‘in error or in ignorance with regard to the faith’¹⁵⁰ and to show the courage of the Apostles, even to accepting martyrdom for the sake of God’s kingdom.

Ultimately the universal call to holiness is the call to the perfect love that underpins the Christian state of life.¹⁵¹ The mission is firstly to live communion with the Triune God and with fellow believers. Schindler remarks that ‘[s]ainthood in this comprehensive sense thus makes up the content of the Christian’s proposal for the world: sainthood is meant to *inform* a Christian’s “worldly” morality and social justice, indeed all of his or her “worldly” being and acting’.¹⁵² Holiness is, therefore, a form of evangelization of the baptised; they give the witness of their life.

2.5 Conclusion

Evangelization in effect is proclaiming Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God. It is the mandate given to the Apostles, who were empowered by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. It is same the mandate given to every Christian, according to his or her vocation. Under attack from the Reformation, the Church became focussed on preserving its institutional identity. Yet, as part of the Counter-Reformation, there were missionaries sent to those countries that had not heard of the Gospel message, often under pontifical instruction rather than diocesan bishops and religious orders. There was early involvement of lay people in supporting this outreach through prayer and almsgiving. As those countries with traditional Christian heritage lost their focus on Christ, the Church came to understand the necessity of sharing the Gospel with people of all nations.

The Second Vatican Council brought a significant development in this understanding of mission and evangelization, the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ, as the Church sought to invite believers into the communion of the Trinity and thus into the communion among the body of Christ. This major development was enabled by the recovery of communion ecclesiology. At the time of the Council, this meant reaching out to those who had not heard the message of Jesus Christ and forming them as new Christians, but also going into countries undergoing a radical separation from their Christian roots and re-presenting the Gospel.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Schindler, *Heart of the World, Center of the Church*, p. 254.

¹⁵² Ibid., Introduction, pp. 39, 40.

It has been shown that it is the Trinitarian God who is the initiator of evangelization. All the faithful who encounter Christ and follow him are, in their turn, called to share him with others. In the Church, all people of all vocations are called to share in the common gift of the faith. With the understanding of the Church as the People of God came a renewed sense in which the missionary mandate was shared by all the faithful, in a way specific to the individual's vocation.

The bishops, who are successors to the Apostles, are commissioned by Jesus to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth. They, and the priests who assist them in representing the Church, act *in persona Christi*, in a particular way when offering the Eucharistic sacrifice. Religious who live the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience give witness by their life of prayer and charity. The laity have the important role of taking Christ and the Church into the world. All people are called to participate in the common gift of the Church. The more a follower of Christ is drawn into the communion of the divine persons, the more they will be in communion with others, the more their life is made holy, and they will bear witness by their life.

The next chapter will consider further developments in the Church in the post-conciliar period, as she grew in her understanding of her nature as communion in the light of the communion of the divine persons. First it will look at how communion ecclesiology has been taught and lived in the Church since the Council. Then it will consider how the Church's understanding of her missionary nature has developed and how these principles of evangelization outlined above have been further incorporated into the life of the Church up to and including the present time.

Chapter 3. Communion in the Church and in the World after the Council

3.1 Introduction

The foundations laid during the Council with respect to the nature of the Church were consolidated in the post-conciliar period, particularly regarding the ecclesiology of communion, in which the Church participates in the communion of the Father with the Son through the Holy Spirit. The Church's leaders, especially those elected as successors to St Peter in the years since the Council, have sought to ensure its correct interpretation while responding to the signs of the times,¹ at all times drawing on the power of the Holy Spirit as on the first Pentecost. Pope John Paul II believed that Vatican II was '*the great grace bestowed on the Church in the twentieth century*' [emphasis in original] and the 'sure compass by which to take our bearings in the century now beginning'.² The Church has recognised – with increasing urgency – its mission to evangelize, to communicate Christ that he may be known and loved and be present in the world, and to invite others to share in that life of communion in the Church. Following the Council there began a period of 'New Evangelization' to re-evangelize those from countries with a strong Christian heritage, as well as to proclaim Christ to those peoples and lands that have not yet heard the Good News.

This chapter will begin by focussing on the deepening understanding of communion ecclesiology in the post-conciliar period in its Trinitarian, Christological and sacramental dimensions, and then look at the imperative to evangelize, to communicate Christ so that all might be invited to share in the divine love of the Blessed Trinity. Pope John Paul II understood the interconnectedness of the nature and mission of the Church as communion:

¹ There are conflicting interpretations of the term 'signs of the times'. For more, see Jose Comblin, 'The Signs of the Times' in *Concilium* 4 (2005), pp. 73–85.

² Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 6 January 2001 (hereafter, NMI) 57.

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20010106_novo-millennio-ineunte_en.html.

Communion and mission are profoundly connected with each other, they interpenetrate and mutually imply each other, to the point that communion represents both the source and the fruit of mission: communion gives rise to mission and mission is accomplished in communion.³

The developments in both ecclesiology and evangelization are reflected in many of the magisterial documents promulgated over the more than fifty years since the Council. The inclusion of teaching documents from the pontificates of John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis are to show the developments in the Church over time and according to new social conditions, including new developments in communication. Particular teachings have been chosen for inclusion in this chapter for the clarity they provide in relation to the Church's nature and mission. There has also been significant development in the strategic nature of communications from the Church in its efforts to build communion in the Church and to evangelize the world; this will be considered in Chapter 4. Communion lived among the community of the faithful, especially the new ecclesial movements that are considered a fruit of Vatican II, will be considered in Chapter 5.

3.2 Post Vatican II

Unlike previous Councils, which pronounced anathemas, creeds and canons that clearly defined their teaching, Vatican II did not provide any keys to its own interpretation. Even before its conclusion, Council Fathers, *periti* and observers at all levels of the Church began to debate how Vatican II should be interpreted. Two schools of thought emerged, and by 1966 the standard perspectives of 'progressive' and 'conservative' could already be identified.⁴ Pope Benedict XVI described in 2005 the dichotomous views of the Council, which have endured since the Council: on one hand, there is the progressive view of 'a hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture', which is often reflected in the mass media and as one trend of modern theology.⁵ On the other hand, there is the more conservative view, which is the understanding of the

'hermeneutic of reform', of renewal in the continuity of the one subject-Church which the Lord has given to us. She is a subject which increases in time and develops, yet always remaining the same, the one subject of the journeying People of God.⁶

³ CL 32.

⁴ Fr Joseph Ratzinger, *Theological Highlights of Vatican II*, p. vii.

⁵ Pope Benedict XVI, Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia offering them his Christmas greetings, 22 December 2005. http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2005/december/documents/hf_ben_xvi_spe_20051222_roman-curia.html

⁶ *Ibid.*

These two perspectives have been promoted and explored through separate theological journals. The first, the *Concilium International Journal for Theology*, was founded in 1965, even before the Council closed. Established by Yves Congar OP, Edward Schillebeeckx and Hans Kung among others, *Concilium* states that is known ‘for cutting-edge critical and constructive theological thinking.’⁷ Seven years later, Henri de Lubac, Hans urs von Balthasar and Fr Joseph Ratzinger founded *Communio International Catholic Renewal* which, like the earlier *ressourcement* movement considered in Chapter 1, promoted a return to the sources and renewal within the Tradition of the Church.⁸ As the name suggests, this school seeks to further the understanding of communion ecclesiology in academia and throughout the Church.

Cardinal Ratzinger describes the work of the *Communio* school not as offering an alternative systematic theology but, rather,

thinking in communion with the faith of the Church, and that means above all to think in communion with the great thinkers of the faith... The point of departure is first of all the word. That we believe the word of God, that we try really to get to know and understand it, and then... to think together with the great masters of the faith.⁹

The *Communio* school received ‘logistical assistance’¹⁰ in its early endeavours from Communion and Liberation, the Italy-based renewal movement founded by Monsignor Luigi Giussani, which promotes the encounter with Christ as the source of man’s freedom. Rowland further records that, according to Cardinal Ratzinger, ‘the name *Communio* was of CL [Communion and Liberation] provenance’.¹¹ Cardinal Karol Wojtyla was instrumental in establishing the Polish edition of *Communio*. It is this school of thought that has been dominant through the papacy and leadership of the Church in the years since the Council. It is the *communio* or communion promoted by this school of thought that is foundational to this thesis.

⁷ *Concilium International Journal for Theology* website, <https://concilium.hymnsam.co.uk>.

⁸ *Communio – International Catholic Renewal* website, <https://www.communio-icr.com>. From 1930–60 Henri De Lubac and Hans urs Von Balthasar were instrumental in the *ressourcement* movement, which profoundly influenced the Council.

⁹ Joseph Ratzinger, *Salt of the Earth: The Church at the End of the Millennium* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1997), p. 66. Cited in Rowland, *Catholic Theology*, p. 95.

¹⁰ Rowland, *Catholic Theology*, p. 92.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

While the Council was still in progress, Pope Paul VI issued his inaugural encyclical on the Church, *Ecclesiam Suam*.¹² In this, Paul VI set out the three priority areas of his pontificate, these being that the Church would deepen her self-knowledge,¹³ that renewal would happen through the introduction of appropriate reforms,¹⁴ and that together these would lead to greater dialogue with the world.¹⁵ These indicated the depth of communion between Paul VI and John XXIII, and a similar vision for the Church unfolding at the Council – that is, the Church as communion. In *Ecclesiam Suam*, Paul VI set out to demonstrate the necessity of the Church being an active presence in the world.¹⁶ He sounded a note of warning against those who sought reform of the Church that consisted predominantly of changing its way of thinking and acting to accommodate the norms of the modern secular world,¹⁷ insisting that appropriate reform must maintain the characteristic features with which Christ has endowed his Church.¹⁸ Paul VI also noted that the Church needed to understand the dialogue of salvation, which comes about through the initiative of the Trinitarian Godhead in order to better serve the world: the Church must imitate this dialogue in its engagement with the human race.¹⁹

3.2.1 (Re)interpreting the Council

In the post-conciliar period, the Church sought to correct some of the misinterpretations of the Council, as well as call the faithful again to deepen their understanding of the Church as a communion of believers with the mission to take Christ into the world. Along the way there were milestone events held to mark each passing decade since the opening and closing of the Council. The defining characteristic of these was the focus on the mysteries of the Trinity, the incarnation and the sacramental life of the Church.

Ten years after the Council closed, and with many voices speaking about how the Council should be interpreted, Paul VI declared in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* that all the objectives of the Council are consolidated into just one: ‘to make the Church

¹² Paul VI, Pope, Encyclical: *Ecclesiam Suam*, August 6, 1964 (hereafter, ES).

http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_06081964_ecclesiam.html.

¹³ ES 9, 10.

¹⁴ ES 11.

¹⁵ ES 12–15.

¹⁶ ES 3.

¹⁷ ES 48.

¹⁸ ES 47.

¹⁹ ES 71. Karl A. Schultz, in *Pope Paul VI. Insights from Christian Values and Virtues*, states that ‘Paul VI exemplified this throughout his life and papacy, and thus the encyclical stands as a person testament and key to understanding the way and direction in which he led the Church’ (pp. 42–43).

of the twentieth century ever better fitted for proclaiming the Gospel to the people of the twentieth century'.²⁰ Paul VI affirmed that evangelization is 'the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity'.²¹ He went on to note that the Exhortation was responding to the request of the Fathers during a Synod of Bishops²² to collect 'the fruits of all their labors', asking of him 'a fresh forward impulse' that would usher in 'a new period of evangelization'.²³ This Exhortation was a decisive marker on the way towards the Church's renewed missionary impulse of the latter part of the twentieth century. It will be considered in some detail in this chapter.

An Extraordinary Synod of Bishops was convoked by Pope John Paul II in 1985 to mark the twentieth anniversary of the closing of the Council, held for 'the celebration, verification and promotion of Vatican Council II'.²⁴ Significantly, this Extraordinary Synod confirmed that communion ecclesiology was the Council's essential and foundational idea. Further on, this chapter notes additional recommendations arising from this 1985 Synod for setting the course for the translation of the Council 'into the practice and life of the Church'.²⁵ There, John Paul II acknowledged 'the special grace of participating in (the Council) and actively collaborating in its development'.²⁶ He also summed up the impetus it gave to his pontificate:

Vatican II has always been, and especially during these years of my Pontificate, the constant reference point of my every pastoral action, in the conscious commitment to implement its directives concretely and faithfully at the level of each Church and the whole Church.²⁷

²⁰ Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 8 December 1975, (hereafter, EN) 2.

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi_en.html.

²¹ EN 14.

²² Pope Paul VI, *Apostolica Sollicitudo*, 5. http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19650915_apostolica-sollicitudo.html. 'The Synod of Bishops, itself a fruit of the Second Vatican Council, is a permanent Council of Bishops for the universal Church under the authority of the pope'. This document brought into effect the decision of the Council concerning the establishment of the Synod of Bishops which was also noted in *Christus Dominus*.

²³ EN 2.

²⁴ Synod of Bishops, Final Report, I, 2.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 1.

²⁶ John Paul II, Address of 25 January 1985, *L'Osservatore Romano*, 27 January 1985. Quoted in John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution *Fidei Depositum*, 11 October 1992 (hereafter, FD) I. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_19921011_fidei-depositum_en.html.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

The Synod Fathers requested the compilation of the Church's doctrine, or a new catechism, dealing with both faith and morals, such that it might serve as 'a point of reference for the catechisms or compendiums that are prepared in various regions'.²⁸ Moreover, they noted that the 'presentation of doctrine must be biblical and liturgical. It must be sound doctrine suited to the present life of Christians'²⁹ in order to serve as a corrective to some elements of the interpretation of Vatican II. Pope John Paul II had earlier brought to fruition the revision of the *Code of Canon Law* initiated by Pope John XXIII.³⁰ This new Code of Canon Law, promulgated on 25 January 1983, was a work of collegiality in which bishops and episcopal conferences collaborated with experts in 'theology, history, and especially in canon law' from across the world. It was an example of the ecclesiological developments since the Council.³¹

In 1992, on the thirtieth anniversary of the opening of the Council, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* was published. It presents a synthesis of the teachings important to Church tradition as well as inspiring quotes from the early Church Fathers, prayers from the liturgy and writings of the saints.³² When the *Catechism* was published, John Paul II wrote that '[g]uarding the deposit of faith is the mission which the Lord has entrusted to his Church and which she fulfils in every age'.³³ In fact, the *Catechism* adheres exactly to 'the fourfold order of topics treated in the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, promulgated in 1566 by Pope Pius V, that order being first, the Creed, then the sacraments, the ten commandments, and finally, the Our Father'.³⁴ McPartlan further remarks:

Implicitly countering the Reformers who alleged that the Catholic Church had forgotten the priority of God's graceful initiative in salvation, this order significantly dealt first with God's gift to us in faith and the sacraments, and only then with how we respond in action and prayer... the new *Catechism*, by its very structure, offers the

²⁸ Final Report, II, B, 4. Also quoted in FD.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution *Sacrae Disciplinae Leges*, 25 January 1983, 1. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_25011983_sacrae-disciplinae-leges.html. Pope John Paul II stated that the process of the new Code of Canon Law began on 25 January 1959 when Pope John XXIII announced the Ecumenical Council and 'announced for the first time his decision to reform the existing corpus of canonical legislation which had been promulgated on the feast of Pentecost in the year 1917'.

³¹ Ibid., 9.

³² Charles E. Bouchard OP, 'Life in Christ: The new Catechism and Christian ethics', in *Theology Today*, vol. 53, no. 2 (1996) p. 158.

³³ FD I.

³⁴ McPartlan, *Sacrament of Salvation*, p. 60.

same assurance as its predecessor that the Catholic Church itself firmly believes that *all is grace*.³⁵ [emphasis in original]

At the same time, according to Avery Dulles, the *Catechism* reflected the spirit of Vatican II in that it sought to recover the hierarchy of truths, which are not all equally fundamental. 'It accorded primacy to the mysteries of the Trinity and the incarnation. It made extensive use of the Holy Scripture and dropped the polemical stance of post-Tridentine catechisms'.³⁶ This teaching document, therefore, would seem to have communion ecclesiology as its framework. It was a fundamental resource for teaching and formation, a major development in the project of evangelization in the post-conciliar period, and has been positively received.

McPartlan makes the link between the new *Catechism* and its Trinitarian and Christological elements and the new *Roman Missal* of 1969, which updated the Church's sacramental theology – an update called for as a result of Vatican II's liturgical reforms, whereby the Church understood anew that the liturgy is 'the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed' and also as 'the fount from which all her power flows'.³⁷ A further catechetical development, to ensure that the teachings of the Church are communicated in a language more accessible to all, was the production of the question-and-answer style *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* in 2005. For younger members of the faithful – those born around the turn of the new millennium – the *Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church*, or 'YouCat' as it became known, was launched at World Youth Day in Madrid in 2011.

In 2005, the year the Church marked the fortieth anniversary of the closing of the Council, Pope John Paul II died.³⁸ As has already been mentioned, a major goal of his pontificate was to clarify, develop and implement the Council's decrees in order to perfect, rather than destroy, components of theology prior to the Council.³⁹ John Paul II's successor, Pope Benedict XVI, continued to lead the Church in correcting the interpretation of the

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Dulles, *Evangelization for the Third Millennium*, 2009. p. 104.

³⁷ McPartlan, *Sacrament of Salvation*, p. 62.

³⁸ Pope John Paul II. Biography. http://www.vatican.va/special/canonizzazione-27042014/documents/biografia_gpII_canonizzazione_en.html. He was the second longest-serving pope in modern history. He was canonised on 27 April 2014 (Divine Mercy Sunday) together with Pope John XXIII.

³⁹ Tracey Rowland, 'Reclaiming the Tradition: John Paul II as the authentic interpreter of Vatican II' in *John Paul the Great. Maker of the post-conciliar Church* (London: Catholic Truth Society and The Catholic Herald, 2003) pp. 31, 32.

Council. Benedict XVI reiterated that it should be interpreted under the ‘hermeneutic of reform’ within the Tradition of the Church, rather than the ‘hermeneutic of rupture’, elucidating this in an address to members of the Roman Curia on 22 December 2005:

The Second Vatican Council, with its new definition of the relation between the faith of the Church and certain essential elements of modern thought, has revised and even corrected some historical decisions, but in spite of this apparent discontinuity it has maintained and deepened its inner nature and its true identity. The Church is, as much before as after the Council, the same Church, one, holy, catholic and apostolic on a journey across time.⁴⁰

To mark the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council, a number of actions were taken. The whole Church was called to celebrate a Year of Faith from 11 October 2012 to 24 November 2013. In the *Motu Proprio Porta Fidei*, Pope Benedict XVI outlined the Church’s need for the focus the Year of Faith provided, indicating the ‘need for stronger ecclesial commitment to new evangelization in order to rediscover the joy of believing and the enthusiasm for communicating the faith’.⁴¹ He went on to note that ‘[f]aith grows when it is lived as an experience of love received and when it is communicated as an experience of grace and joy’.⁴²

There was also a Synod of Bishops held in October 2012 to discuss the theme ‘The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Faith’.⁴³ Further detail on this Synod will be found later in this chapter. During the Synod, the Fathers agreed to publish the body of Church teaching on evangelization.⁴⁴ As the year also marked the twentieth anniversary of the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Benedict XVI issued a renewed call to the faithful to make use of it for prayerful study and reflection.

⁴⁰ Joseph A. Komonchak, ‘Benedict XVI and the Interpretation of Vatican II’, in Michael J. Lacey & Francis Oakley (eds.), *The Crisis of Authority in Catholic Modernity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) p. 102.

⁴¹ Pope Benedict XVI, *Motu Proprio Porta Fidei*, 11 October 2011 (hereafter, PF) 7. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/motu_proprio/documents/hf_ben-xvi_motu-proprio_20111011_porta-fidei_en.html.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Synod of Bishops, *Lineamenta*, XIII Ordinary General Assembly: ‘The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith’, 2 February 2011. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20110202_lineamenta-xiii-assembly_en.html. Due to the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI, his successor Pope Francis was charged with communicating the outcome of the Synod on the New Evangelization.

⁴⁴ This has now been published by the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, albeit in Italian: ‘*Enchiridion della nuova evangelizzazione. Testi del Magistero pontificio e conciliare 1939–2012*’. Available from <http://www.novaevangelizatio.va/content/nvev/en/pontificio-consiglio/pubblicazioni.html>

When it came to the fiftieth anniversary of the closing of the Council on 8 December 2015, Pope Francis [the first pope since the Council who was not actually present at it] opened an Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, in which the whole world was invited to participate. The Year of Mercy was an occasion to encounter the mercy of God the Father, revealed through his Son, Jesus. Pope Francis led the Church in its implementation, showing through his preaching and writing what was called for in *Gaudium et Spes*: ‘the Church has always had the duty of scrutinising the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel’.⁴⁵ And so the Church continues to draw inspiration from the Council and mark significant milestones related to it over the decades, with its leaders reforming the Church in continuity with more than two thousand years of Tradition and calling the faithful to participate in the communion of the Trinity and in communion with one another.

3.2.2 The Church goes out to the whole world

The mission of the Church to ‘bring the Light of Christ to men’⁴⁶ and make the Church present in the world was advanced when Pope Paul VI actively took the Church beyond the western world. He named bishops and cardinals from Africa, Asia, Oceania and Latin America at a rate unprecedented in the Church. In Rome, he began to appoint non-Italians to positions in the Curia. It has even been suggested that Paul VI set the stage for the election of his successors, from Poland, Germany and Argentina successively.⁴⁷ He literally took the Church and the Gospel into the world because he understood that ‘the Church is God’s gift to all people at all times, because Christ is God’s gift to all people in every time’.⁴⁸ Paul VI was the first bishop of Rome since the Apostle Peter to set foot in Jesus’ homeland, visiting Israel and Jordan in 1963. He was also the first reigning pontiff to visit every continent, including Australia in 1970, and he even glimpsed China, albeit from the island of Hong Kong.⁴⁹ One memorable journey was to Colombia in Latin America in 1963 to preside over the first continental assembly of South America’s bishops, known as CELAM,⁵⁰ the pope’s presence giving legitimacy to this new body.

⁴⁵ GS 4.

⁴⁶ LG 1.

⁴⁷ Owen F. Campion, ‘Blessed Paul VI peacemaker, advocate for downtrodden’, in *The Priest*, vol. 70, no. 10 (2014) p. 12.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵⁰ CELAM is the *Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano* – the Latin American Conference of Bishops. It is also the name by which the assembly of that group is known.

Pope John Paul I, in his *Urbi et Orbi* message after his election on 26 August 1978, vowed to recognise that his predecessor ‘extended himself to carry into effect the Second Vatican Council and to seek world peace, the *tranquillity of order*’ [emphasis in original] and affirmed that ‘our programme will be to continue his... We wish to continue to put into effect the heritage of the Second Vatican Council’.⁵¹ His untimely death after only 33 days meant that this program was to be taken up by others.

The Pope from Poland was elected on 16 October 1978. He, too, took up the mantle of continuing the program of his predecessors, evidenced by his assuming the same name and becoming Pope John Paul II. He, in fact, intensified the international reach of the Church begun by Paul VI, visiting 129 different countries during 104 international apostolic journeys, ‘the equivalent of circumnavigating the globe more than thirty times’.⁵² John Paul II explained that preaching the Gospel to all was the motivation for his frequent and extensive travel. ‘From the beginning of my pontificate I have chosen to travel to the ends of the earth in order to show this missionary concern’.⁵³ John Paul II was particularly concerned with the spread of secularism throughout the world, which he defined as the ‘dechristianization within Christian countries’.⁵⁴ The method, practices and rituals of these pastoral visits were designed to meet the crisis posed by increased secularisation.⁵⁵ During the pastoral visits of John Paul II he also turned to the field of social communications to promote Church teaching in a public sphere increasingly hostile to the Christian message.⁵⁶ Further consideration of communication through the media of social communications can be found in Chapter 4.

It is now commonplace that the pope travels the world to minister to and engage with the faithful of the universal Church and the world generally. As important as it is that the Church goes out into the world, the Church has also been enriched by the wisdom of popes from outside Italy; from Poland, then Germany – Pope Benedict XVI – and, most recently, the first non-European pope of the modern era, Pope Francis from Argentina.

⁵¹ Pope John Paul, Message *Urbi et Orbi*, 27 August 1978.

⁵² George Weigel, *The end and the beginning, Pope John Paul II – The Victory of Freedom, the Last Years, the Legacy* (New York: Doubleday, 2010) p. 434.

⁵³ Pope John Paul II, Encyclical: *Redemptoris Missio*, 7 December 1990 (hereafter, RM) 1. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html.

⁵⁴ RM 36.

⁵⁵ Paul Anyidoho, ‘Pope John Paul II and Media Effects Theory: Audiences and Messages Interface’, in *International Journal of Scientific Footprints*, vol. 4, no. 2 (2016) p. 4.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

As these disciples have in their turn been installed as Bishop of Rome and Supreme Pastor of the Universal Church, they have brought into the heart of the Church the culture of their homeland and its various expressions of the faith. The popes have also ordained successors of the Apostles from all corners of the globe, thereby continuing to incorporate the world into the heart of the Church.

3.2.3 'A New Pentecost'

The Council's orientation, as has been described in the previous chapters, was both Trinitarian and Christological and included a renewed pneumatology. This desire for 'a new Pentecost' was first introduced by Pope John XXIII with his prayer for the Council, calling on the Holy Spirit to renew the Church. This became Pope John XXIII's daily prayer for the Council, from the time he made the announcement in 1959: 'O Holy Spirit, renew thy wonders in this our day, as by a new Pentecost'.⁵⁷ Thus he sought to link the events taking place in the Church in Rome during the 1960s with the Pentecost event soon after Jesus' death and resurrection.⁵⁸ It signalled the restoration of the recognition of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church, especially in mission for the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of evangelization. Hughson argues that the phrase 'a new Pentecost,' linking the Council with the Pentecost event described by St Luke in Acts 2 rather than with the First Vatican Council, is a decisive theme which can help to interpret the Second Vatican Council. He notes, however, that it was not approved as a shorthand description of the Council by the Council.⁵⁹

Yet the prayer for a new Pentecost was pointing to something greater; while the Church was instituted by Christ at his death and resurrection, it was the Holy Spirit who caused the Church to go out, to be missionary:

Before Pentecost Christ's followers lived a condition of faith in the risen Christ (though not everyone had direct experience of Christ risen) that left them inactive in communicating the gospel. In that sense they were not yet followers of Jesus in his defining purpose and direction. Their discipleship and the content of their faith and love was Christocentric... After the descent of the Holy Spirit the believing community took up Christ's mission by starting to witness in public in Jerusalem. This made them followers, not merely devotees, of Christ.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Giuseppe Alberigo, *History of Vatican II, Vol. 1*, p. 42.

⁵⁸ Thomas Hughson SJ, 'Interpreting Vatican II: "A New Pentecost"', in *Theological Studies*, vol. 69, no. 1 (2008) p. 6.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 31–32.

The believers lacked courage and boldness until the coming of the Holy Spirit empowered them to communicate the Gospel to those around them both with the witness of their lives and preaching. Therefore, ‘a new Pentecost’ does not primarily refer to Church teaching about the Holy Spirit, or the number of textual references to the Spirit in conciliar documents, but to the influence of the Spirit. It is oriented towards the dramatic action of the Spirit in and on the Church, because after the incarnation of Christ, the Word, ‘communication of his good news becomes the Spirit-led task of the Church’.⁶¹

One of the four Moderators of the Council, and a member of the Coordinating Commission of the Council after 1964, Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenens, understood this as a desire of the Council for the renewal of the Church. He wrote a book titled *A New Pentecost?* and in it reflected:

Everything points to the fact that we are living at the turning point in the history of the Church, in which the Holy Spirit is revealing, to a degree never seen before, a mystery of death and resurrection... The Holy Spirit is inaugurating a spiritual renewal of exceptional richness.⁶²

This desire for a new Pentecost, a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit to form the Church and guide her as she engages with the world, has also been shared by all the popes since the Council as the Church sought to communicate the faith to the world. Pope Paul VI testified to his confidence in the Spirit’s active presence in both the Church and the world, writing in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* that the Church was living in a ‘privileged moment of the Spirit’ where ‘people are trying to know Him better, as the Scripture reveals Him. They are happy to place themselves under His inspiration. They are gathering about Him; they want to let themselves be led by Him’.⁶³ He further taught that it is the Holy Spirit who is the key to the mission of the Church:

Now if the Spirit of God has a preeminent place in the whole life of the Church, it is in her evangelizing mission that He is most active. It is not by chance that the great inauguration of evangelization took place on the morning of Pentecost, under the inspiration of the Spirit.⁶⁴

The Final Report from the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops referred to this in the concluding remarks, noting the hope that there ‘may there come in our day that “new

⁶¹ Daniella Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion: The church and social communication in the Digital Age*. (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2014) p. 2.

⁶² Léon-Joseph Suenens, *A New Pentecost?* Translated by Francis Martin (New York: Seabury, 1975); originally published as *Une nouvelle Pentecôte* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1974) p. xii.

⁶³ EN 75.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

Pentecost” of which Pope John XXIII had already spoken and which we, with all of the faithful, await from the Holy Spirit’.⁶⁵

Pope John Paul II, in a special way, shared John XXIII’s vision of ‘a new Pentecost’. He believed that the Holy Spirit ‘was the protagonist of the Council from the time the Pope convoked it’,⁶⁶ and saw Vatican II as a providential event whereby the Church began the more immediate preparation for the beginning of the third millennium. There was a sense of urgency attached to the coming of this ‘Great Jubilee’, and thus John Paul II in his turn repeated John XXIII’s prayer.

John Paul II’s vision for the Great Jubilee of 2000 was that it would be a Pentecost experience of the Holy Spirit for the Church of the whole world.⁶⁷ He set out a period of preparation encompassing two phases, the first to raise awareness among the faithful generally, the second being a three-year period of intense study. It is the Holy Spirit, who ‘makes present in the Church of every time and place the unique Revelation brought by Christ to humanity, making it alive and active in the soul of each individual.’⁶⁸ He also noted that it is the Spirit who ‘is *the principal agent of the new evangelization*’ [emphasis in original].⁶⁹ Peter John MacGregor argues that John Paul II held that, through a new Pentecost, the Holy Spirit ‘is not only empowering the Church with a new ardour to evangelize, but also forming a new depth of self-understanding in the Church which is a prerequisite for a new evangelization’.⁷⁰ This self-understanding is of the Church’s divine mystery and human mission.⁷¹ While John Paul II invited all the faithful to pray for the preparations and celebrations of the Jubilee, he issued an extraordinary and specific appeal directed to both the Church hierarchy and the new associations of the laity known

⁶⁵ Final Report, 1985 Synod, II, D,7.

⁶⁶ Pope John Paul II, Homily: Mass of Pentecost, 2 June 2001. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_20010603_pentecoste.html.

⁶⁷ Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 10 November 1994 (hereafter, TMI) 17-20. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_10111994_tertio-millennio-adveniente.html

⁶⁸ TMI 45.

⁶⁹ Ibid. For a definition of New Evangelization, see 3.5.1 What is the ‘New Evangelization?’. See also George Weigel, ‘The Wojtyla Difference’ in *Final Revolution: The Resistance Church and the Collapse of Communism*, 2003, p. 100. Weigel notes that Pope John Paul II had extensive experience with the impact of great anniversaries for personal and social renewal, citing the ‘nine-year-long Great Novena that preceded the celebration of the millennium of Polish Christianity in 1966’ which led to the resurgence of the Church in Poland so that it was ready to play a critical role in the Revolution of 1989.

⁷⁰ Peter John MacGregor, ‘New World, New Pentecost, New Church: Pope John Paul’s II’s understanding of “New Evangelization”’, in *Compass*, vol. 46, no. 1 (2012) p. 27.

⁷¹ Pope John Paul II, Encyclical: *Redemptor Hominis*, 4 March 1979 (hereafter, RH) 3. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_04031979_redemptor-hominis.html.

as new ecclesial movements: ‘I exhort my venerable Brothers in the Episcopate and the ecclesial communities entrusted to them to open their hearts to the promptings of the Spirit’.⁷² In this, John Paul II pointed to the source, as he understood it, of the spiritual energy for the celebration of the Jubilee, and indeed for the whole of his pontificate. For more on new ecclesial movements, see Chapter 5.

Pope Benedict XVI also called for ‘a new Pentecost’ and a new outpouring of grace for the Church when he visited New York in 2008: ‘Let us implore from God the grace of a new Pentecost for the Church... May tongues of fire, combining burning love of God and neighbour with zeal for the spread of Christ’s Kingdom, descend on all present!’.⁷³

Pope Francis, in turn, has prayed for ‘a new Pentecost’. To the universal Church he wrote ‘I once more invoke the Holy Spirit. I implore him to come and renew the Church, to stir and impel her to go forth boldly to evangelize all peoples’.⁷⁴ In so doing, he is not only following in the footsteps of his predecessors, but is also drawing on the work of the CELAM meeting at Aparecida,⁷⁵ recognising that it is the Holy Spirit who is the soul of the Church and the inspiration to go out beyond the Church into the world.

3.3 Developments in Communion Ecclesiology

As introduced in Chapter 1, the ecclesiology of communion recovered at the Council has become the predominant framework for understanding the nature of the Church.⁷⁶ In the year after the Council closed, Pope Paul VI addressed the faithful about the Church as communion in the following words:

The Church is a communion. In this context what does communion mean? ... ‘Communion’ speaks of a double, lifegiving participation: the incorporation of Christians into the life of Christ, and the communication of that life of charity to the

⁷² TMI 59.

⁷³ Pope Benedict XVI, Homily at St. Patrick’s Cathedral, New York, 19 April 2008. https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2008/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20080419_st-patrick-ny.html.

⁷⁴ EG 261.

⁷⁵ CELAM, *Message of the Fifth General Conference to the Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean*, 29 May 2007. <http://www.aecrc.org/documents/Aparecida-Concluding%20Document.pdf>. The Message was issued during the meeting of CELAM in Brazil in 2007. In Article 5 it remarks that ‘At the closing of this Conference of Aparecida, in the vigor of the Holy Spirit, we summon all our brothers and sisters so that united, with enthusiasm, we may carry out the Great Continental Mission. It will be a new Pentecost that impels us to go, in a special way, in search of the fallen away Catholics, and of those who know little or nothing about Jesus Christ, so that we may joyfully form the community of love of God our Father. A mission that must reach everyone, be permanent and profound’.

⁷⁶ Final Report, 1985 Synod, II, C, 1.

entire body of the Faithful, in this world and in the next, union with Christ and in Christ, and union among Christians, in the Church.⁷⁷

The study of ecclesiology in the decades after the Council was given great impetus through the influential work of Cardinal Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church*, originally published in 1974. In this, he named five models of the Church he believed reflected ‘an authoritative summation of the self-understanding of the Catholic Church in our time’.⁷⁸ In 1987, Dulles added a further model of the Church as ‘Community of Disciples’, inspired by this ‘passing remark’⁷⁹ in Pope John Paul II’s inaugural encyclical *Redemptor Hominis*:

It is the community of the disciples, each of whom in a different way – at times very consciously and consistently, at other times not very consciously and very inconsistently - is following Christ. This shows also the deeply ‘personal’ aspect and dimension of this society, which, in spite of all the deficiencies of its community life - in the human meaning of this word - is a community precisely because all its members form it together with Christ himself, at least because they bear in their souls the indelible mark of a Christian.⁸⁰

The introduction of the concept of discipleship specifically drew on the communion ecclesiology present in the documents of Vatican II. It has been further developed by CELAM, and taken up for the universal Church by Pope Francis who called all Christians to be ‘missionary disciples’.⁸¹

Pope John Paul II describes how the Council enlivened communion ecclesiology in the Church in the present era in the post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*. In this Exhortation, John Paul II utilises the framework of the Johannine image of the vine and the branches discussed in Chapter 1, emphasising its basis in the Trinitarian bond of love and Christology, and experienced in the sacramental life of the Church. *Christifideles Laici* acknowledges the source of ‘*koinonia*–*communion*’ in scripture, noting that this concept was held in great honour in the early Church.⁸² The ecclesiology of communion is considered so important as to be ‘the central content of the “mystery”, or rather, the

⁷⁷ Pope Paul VI, Wednesday General Audience Talk, 8 June 1966, cited in CL 19. Original available in Italian on the Vatican website.

⁷⁸ Dulles, *Models of the Church*, p. 204.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁸⁰ Pope John Paul II, Encyclical: *Redemptor Hominis*, 4 March 1979 (hereafter, RH) 21.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_04031979_redemptor-hominis.html.

⁸¹ EG 24.

⁸² CL 19.

divine plan for the salvation of humanity’.⁸³ Therefore, the Exhortation continues, ‘ecclesial communion cannot be interpreted in a sufficient way if it is understood as simply a sociological or a psychological reality’⁸⁴ rather than as the new People of God established by Christ:

The Church as *Communion* is the ‘new’ People, the ‘messianic’ People, the People that ‘has, for its head, Christ... as its heritage, the dignity and freedom of God’s Children... for its law, the new commandment to love as Christ loved us... for its goal, the kingdom of God... established by Christ as a communion of life, love and truth.’⁸⁵

Further, *Christifideles Laici* recognised that the communion of the Church is a ‘*great gift of the Holy Spirit*’ [emphasis in original].⁸⁶ It is marked by ‘a *diversity* and a *complementarity* of vocations and states in life, of ministries, of charisms and responsibilities’ [emphasis in original].⁸⁷ In light of this diversity and complementarity, ‘every member of the lay faithful is seen *in relation to the whole body* and offers a *totally unique contribution* on behalf of the whole body’ [emphasis in original], which is the Mystical Body of Christ.⁸⁸ The lay faithful are called to ‘participation in the life and mission of the Church’ by contributing their ‘varied and complementary ministries and charisms’ to live communion ecclesiology.⁸⁹ This gift of communion in the Church is both a gift to be accepted and a reality to be lived with a profound sense of responsibility.

Communion ecclesiology has underpinned other teaching documents of the Church since the Council. A number are mentioned throughout this thesis. These developed the Trinitarian, Christological and Sacramental elements of communion.

3.3.1 Trinitarian Catechesis leading to Great Jubilee

As part of the preparations for the Great Jubilee of 2000, the Trinitarian nature of communion in the Church was expounded by John Paul II, who issued a teaching document on each of the three Persons of the Godhead, Father, Son and Spirit,. With these encyclicals, the Church was presented with a profound and prolonged catechesis on the Trinity, who draws us into the communion of divine love. In the first, *Redemptor*

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ CL 20.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Hominis, John Paul II reminded the Church that it is Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Man, who is the very centre of the world for all time. Nichols comments that the ‘mystery of Christ’ constitutes ‘the basis of the Church’s mission and of Christianity’,⁹⁰ and the Christ in question is not the wandering prophet of exegetical scepticism, but the ‘Son of the living God’ who ‘became our reconciliation with the Father’.⁹¹ John Paul II included reference to the Holy Spirit with the Sequence for Pentecost, noting that this prayer of supplication

addressed to the Spirit to obtain the Spirit is really a constant self-insertion into the full magnitude of the mystery of the Redemption, in which Christ, united with the Father and with each man, continually communicates to us the Spirit who places within us the sentiments of the Son and directs us towards the Father.⁹²

The two later encyclicals further expounded this reality of Christology situated in the framework of the entire Blessed Trinity.

The Father was the subject of the second encyclical, *Dives in Misericordia*.⁹³ The important contribution of this encyclical, according to Aidan Nichols OP, is that it affirms that Christ is the revealer of the Father’s face: ‘The more the Church’s mission is centred upon man – the more it is, so to speak, anthropocentric – the more it must be confirmed and actualised theocentrically, i.e. be directed with Jesus Christ to the Father’.⁹⁴ *Dives in Misericordia* captured this unity of theocentrism and anthropocentrism by repeating *Gaudium et Spes* 22, which was ‘one of the basic principles, perhaps the most important one, of the teaching of the last Council’.⁹⁵ John Paul II further taught ‘that openness to Christ, who as the Redeemer of the world fully reveals man himself, can only be achieved through an ever more mature reference to the Father and His love’.⁹⁶ The parable of the Prodigal Son, or the Merciful Father, was a central text in the Pope’s presentation, leading Nichols to comment that ‘the more the secularised world distances itself from “the

⁹⁰ RH 11.

⁹¹ Aidan Nichols, ‘Pastor and Doctor’, in William Oddie (ed.) *John Paul the Great. Maker of the post-conciliar Church* (London: Catholic Truth Society and The Catholic Herald, 2003) pp. 170, 171. In this passage, Nichols cites RH 9.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Pope John Paul II, Encyclical: *Dives in misericordia*, 30 November 1980 (hereafter, DM). http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30111980_dives-in-misericordia.html.

⁹⁴ DM 1. For more, see Nichols, ‘Pastor and Doctor’, p. 172.

⁹⁵ DM 1.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Mystery of Mercy” [the Pope’s name, in effect, for the Father], the more earnestly the Church has to invoke mercy on all’.⁹⁷

Completing the trilogy was the encyclical *Dominum et Vivificantem*,⁹⁸ which repeated the call of the Church over many centuries for God’s people to awaken to the presence of the Holy Spirit who is ‘the one in whom the inscrutable Triune God communicates himself to human beings, constituting in them the source of eternal life’.⁹⁹ The pope acknowledged the Holy Spirit as the ‘uncreated Love-Gift’ of God who ‘derives as from its source all giving of gifts vis-à-vis creatures... the gift of existence to all things through creation, the gift of grace to human beings through the whole economy of salvation’.¹⁰⁰ Nichols notes that ‘The “price” of the Spirit’s coming on the Church at Pentecost, in John Paul’s exegesis of the Fourth Gospel, is the death of the Son who gives his disciples the Spirit “through the wounds of his Crucifixion”’.¹⁰¹ Christians must be inspired but ‘at a level deep enough to cost, for the way of the faith is a road of redemptive suffering’.¹⁰² The theology of the cross which John Paul II enunciated will be addressed in the next section.

A period of intense preparation for the Great Jubilee of 2000 was prescribed for the Church in the Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*¹⁰³ in the three years immediately leading to the new millennium. The pope drew on St Paul’s presentation of the mystery of the incarnation (Gal 4: 4, 6-7) which ‘contains the revelation of the mystery of the Trinity and the continuation of the Son’s mission in the mission of the Holy Spirit’.¹⁰⁴ To help the Church reflect on this, three years of preparation were called, ‘the thematic structure of which was centred on Christ, the Son of God made man, and in order

⁹⁷ Nichols, ‘Pastor and Doctor’, p. 173.

⁹⁸ Pope John Paul II, Encyclical: *Dominum et Vivificantem*, 18 May 1986 (hereafter, DEV). http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_18051986_dominum-et-vivificantem.html.

⁹⁹ DEV 1.

¹⁰⁰ DEV 10.

¹⁰¹ Nichols, ‘Pastor and Doctor’, p. 174.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter: *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* 10 November 1994 (hereafter, TMI). https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_10111994_tertio-millennio-adveniente.html. TMI 15 states that ‘the two thousand years which have passed since the Birth of Christ (prescinding from the question of its precise chronology)’ which ‘represent an extraordinarily great Jubilee, not only for Christians but indirectly for the whole of humanity, given the prominent role played by Christianity during these two millennia’.

¹⁰⁴ TMI 1.

to be theological, was therefore Trinitarian'.¹⁰⁵ In 1997, the focus was on the Person of Jesus; in 1998, on the Holy Spirit; and in 1999, on God the Father. Thus, the Church was called to greater awareness of the Trinity into whose life-giving communion the faithful are invited to share.

3.3.2 Christology as an encounter with Christ

In the years since the Council the Christological foundation of communion ecclesiology was developed and taught to the faithful. In particular, Pope John Paul II developed the Christological anthropology found in *Gaudium et Spes* 22 in his first encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*, reminding the faithful that 'Jesus Christ is the centre of the universe and of history'.¹⁰⁶ It is the same Christ, Redeemer of the world, who is intimately connected to each person, 'who penetrated in a unique and unrepeatable way into the mystery of man and entered his "heart"'.¹⁰⁷ John Paul II addressed the divine and human dimensions of the mystery of the Redemption, concluding that

The man who wishes to understand himself thoroughly – and not just in accordance with immediate, partial, often superficial, and even illusory standards and measures of his being – he must with his unrest, uncertainty and even his weakness and sinfulness, with his life and death, draw near to Christ. He must, so to speak, enter into him with all his own self, he must 'appropriate' and assimilate the whole of the reality of the Incarnation and Redemption in order to find himself.¹⁰⁸

Aidan Nichols comments that it was 'an index of how far things had degenerated in substantial areas of Western Catholicism' by the end of Paul VI's pontificate in the late 1970s that John Paul II felt the need to make the point that 'unless we assimilate as thoroughly as possible the truths of the Incarnation and Atonement, no Christian account of how human beings are meant to live will be forthcoming'.¹⁰⁹ Human beings who do not know Christ will fail to flourish in their humanity. John Paul II then reminded the Church that just as Christ unites himself to each person, the Church must show concern for man's vocation by being united with every person.¹¹⁰

The 1985 Extraordinary Synod taught that, in a special way, Christ unites himself to those who are suffering, for 'God wishes to teach us more deeply the value, the importance and

¹⁰⁵ TMI 31.

¹⁰⁶ RH 1.

¹⁰⁷ RH 8.

¹⁰⁸ RH 10.

¹⁰⁹ Nichols OP, 'Pastor and Doctor', p. 171.

¹¹⁰ RH 18.

the centrality of the cross of Jesus Christ'.¹¹¹ This promotion of the theology of the cross does not exclude the theology of the creation and incarnation, but rather presumes it, for it is through Christ's death on the cross that mankind was redeemed; the Paschal mystery helps to explain the relationship between human history and salvation. It is not pessimistic to reflect on the cross; it is to base one's faith on the very reality of Christian hope.¹¹² A specific reflection on this theme of the theology of the cross had been given earlier by Pope John Paul II in the Apostolic Letter *Salvifici Doloris*. In it, he taught that Christ redeems human suffering when it is united with his suffering on the cross:

Christ causes us to enter into the mystery and to discover the 'why' of suffering, as far as we are capable of grasping the sublimity of divine love. In order to discover the profound meaning of suffering... we must above all accept the light of revelation... Love is also the fullest source of the answer to the question of the meaning of suffering. This answer has been given by God to man in the cross of Jesus Christ.¹¹³

For Benedict XVI, the necessity of encountering God in Christ was the starting point of the Christology. The inaugural encyclical of his pontificate, *Deus Caritas Est*, opens with an expression of love at the heart of the Christian faith: 'Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction'.¹¹⁴ Here he is pointing to the encounter with Jesus Christ through which a person is drawn into the love of God. This is one of the defining themes of Benedict XVI's pontificate, reflecting the influence of Romano Guardini.¹¹⁵ This theme is also found in the writings of Fr Luigi Giussani and in the methodology of the Communion and Liberation movement, which was involved at the outset of the *Communio* school and will be considered later in this chapter and again in Chapter 5.

This strong Christological teaching is also evident in Pope Benedict XVI's own trilogy of encyclicals, these being on the theological virtues of faith, hope and love. *Deus Caritas Est*, on love, presents in the first section a theological and philosophical consideration on the different dimensions of 'love' – *eros*, *philia* and *agape* – explaining that God's love

¹¹¹ Final Report, 1985 Synod, II, D, 2.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹² Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter: *Salvifici Doloris*, 11 February 1984. 13.
https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1984/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_11021984_salvifici-doloris.html

¹¹³ Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical: *Deus Caritas Est*, 25 December 2005 (hereafter, DCE) 2.
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est_en.html.

¹¹⁴ Ratzinger, 'Guardini on Christ in our Century', p. 14.

for humanity is inherently connected with human love. In the second section, it considers the practical dimension of how that love is shared with others in the Church, which is a community of love. This reflects both the vertical and horizontal axes of communion ecclesiology: that communion comes from encountering Christ and being drawn into the communion of the triune God, and, having received the gift of God's love, communicating that love among the faithful in the Church and in the world.

Benedict XVI's second encyclical in the trilogy, *Spe Salvi*, addressed the biblical teaching on hope. This was to remind the Church that 'To come to know God – the true God – means to receive hope,'¹¹⁶ teaching that those who have always lived with 'the Christian concept of God, and have grown accustomed to it, have almost ceased to notice that we possess the hope that ensues from a real encounter with this God'.¹¹⁷ Benedict XVI points the way to Jesus Christ, who 'tells us who man truly is and what a man must do in order to be truly human. He shows us the way, and this way is the truth. He himself is both the way and the truth, and therefore he is also the life which all of us are seeking'.¹¹⁸ He reflects that in the modern era it is no longer held that faith will lead to restoration of the lost 'Paradise'; rather, salvation is sought 'from the newly discovered link between science and praxis'.¹¹⁹ Faith is not simply denied, it is pushed into the realm of the private and is considered irrelevant to the world. The antidote to this, writes Benedict XVI, is found in communion with Christ:

Being in communion with Jesus Christ draws us into his 'being for all'; it makes it our own way of being. He commits us to live for others, but only through communion with him does it become possible truly to be there for others, for the whole.¹²⁰

In the final of the series on the theological virtues, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis completed an encyclical on faith titled *Lumen Fidei*.¹²¹ This encyclical states the urgent need 'to see once again that faith is a light, for once the flame of faith dies out, all other lights begin to dim'¹²² and notes that the uniqueness of the light of faith is so powerful

¹¹⁶ Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical: *Spe Salvi*, 30 November 2007 (hereafter, SS) 3.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20071130_spe-salvi.html.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ SS 6.

¹¹⁹ SS 17.

¹²⁰ SS 28.

¹²¹ Pope Francis, Encyclical: *Lumen Fidei*, 29 June 2013 (hereafter, LF).

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20130629_enciclica-lumen-fidei.html. This was finalised and promulgated by Pope Francis due to the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI.

¹²² LF 4.

that it can only come from God.¹²³ It is the risen Christ who is ‘the supreme manifestation of God’s love; he is also the one with whom we are united precisely in order to believe. Faith does not merely gaze at Jesus, but sees things as Jesus himself sees them.’¹²⁴ The encyclical teaches that people are called not just to believe Jesus and accept his word because he is trustworthy, but to ‘believe in’ Jesus, to ‘personally welcome him into our lives and journey towards him, clinging to him in love and following in his footsteps along the way’.¹²⁵

The Christological basis of communion ecclesiology recovered by the Council has thus been communicated to the faithful in several magisterial teachings during the post-conciliar period. For one must encounter Christ in order to be drawn into the communion of the Trinity and, through incorporation into Christ, to share the communion of the faithful in the Church.

3.3.3 The Sacraments communicate the mystery of the Trinitarian God

In the years since the Council, the Church has sought to deepen her understanding of her sacramental nature as communion. As described in Chapter 1, it is through reception of the sacraments that a person is drawn into communion with Christ and the Church. In particular, there has been a concerted push to renew the sense of wonder at the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. Even before the close of the Council, Pope Paul VI sought to ensure that the hope arising from the Council ushered in a ‘new wave of Eucharistic devotion’ across the Church in an encyclical entitled *Mysterium Fidei*.¹²⁶ He also refuted issues raised by some about so-called ‘private masses’, insisting that ‘each and every Mass is not something private, even if a priest celebrates it privately; instead, it is an act of Christ and of the Church’.¹²⁷ He went on to speak of the salvific power of Christ in the Eucharist:

In offering this sacrifice, the Church learns to offer herself as a sacrifice for all and she applies the unique and infinite redemptive power of the sacrifice of the Cross to the salvation of the whole world. For every Mass that is celebrated is being offered not just for the salvation of certain people, but also for the salvation of the whole world.¹²⁸

¹²³ LF 7.

¹²⁴ LF 18.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Pope Paul VI, Encyclical: *Mysterium Fidei*, 3 September 1965 (hereafter, MF) 13.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-i_enc_03091965_mysterium.html.

¹²⁷ MF 32.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

Pope John Paul II reiterated in *Christifideles Laici* the teaching from *Lumen Gentium* 11 that the Eucharist is ‘the source and summit of the whole Christian life’.¹²⁹ The encyclical went on to note that ‘[t]he Body of Christ in the Holy Eucharist sacramentalizes this communion, that it, it is a sign and actually brings about the bond of communion among the faithful in the Body of Christ which is the Church (1 Cor 10:16)’.¹³⁰ It was also noted in *Christifideles Laici* that ‘the door and foundation of *communion* in the Church’ [emphasis in original] is sacramental baptism.¹³¹

As the Church sought to form the faithful in the sacramental nature of the Church as communion, a comprehensive collation of Church teaching on all seven sacraments was set forth in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. The sacraments of the Church, ‘manifest and communicate to men, above all in the Eucharist, the mystery of communion with the God who is love, One in three persons’.¹³² The *Catechism* devotes Part II, Section II to expounding on the sacraments of the Catholic Church, noting that they are “‘powers that come forth” from the Body of Christ, which is ever-living and life-giving. They are actions of the Holy Spirit at work in his Body, the Church’.¹³³ While the *Catechism* was not specifically requested by the Council, it ‘can be rooted there in that it was the idea of the Synod of Bishops, a body established by the will of the Council, when it met in 1985 to assess the implementation of Vatican II twenty years after its close’.¹³⁴

In 2003, Pope John Paul II again addressed the renewal of a sense of amazement at the gift of the Eucharist in the Encyclical Letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*. It began by reaffirming that ‘[t]he Church draws her life from the Eucharist. This truth does not simply express a daily experience of faith, but recapitulates *the heart of the mystery of the Church*’ [emphasis in original].¹³⁵ Cardinal Marc Ouellet remarks that the publication of *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* made a significant contribution to the development of communion ecclesiology, filling a ‘lacuna left by the Council, which had exalted the pre-eminence of the Eucharist in the Church’s life but had not systematically defined its relation to the Church’.¹³⁶ Ouellet explains further:

¹²⁹ CL 19.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² CCC 1118.

¹³³ CCC 1116.

¹³⁴ McPartlan, *Sacrament of Salvation*, p. 62.

¹³⁵ EE 1.

¹³⁶ Marc Ouellet, ‘The Ecclesiology of Communion, 50 Years after the Opening of Vatican Council II’, in *Adoremus Online Edition*, vol. XVIII, no. 6 (2012).

This relation is now defined in the sense of a reciprocal dependence, in which the Church receives the Eucharist as the ‘gift par excellence’ (EE 11), a gift that presupposes incorporation into Christ through baptism but also “reinforces” this incorporation, because it is the unifying power of the body of Christ’ (EE 24).¹³⁷

This encyclical affirmed that ‘the Eucharist builds the Church and the Church makes the Eucharist’,¹³⁸ demonstrating this by drawing on biblical and patristic teachings as well as the work of de Lubac and others who influenced the Council. *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* also recognises that the Church is dependent upon the Eucharist to fulfil its mission of evangelization: ‘The Eucharist... appears as both the source and the summit of all evangelization, since its goal is the communion of mankind with Christ and in Him with the Father and the Holy Spirit’.¹³⁹ This intervention of Pope John Paul II confirms the importance of the ecclesiology of communion in understanding not only the nature of the Church but also its evangelizing mission.

Pope Benedict XVI explained in *Deus Caritas Est* that, through Christ’s gift of himself on the Cross, *eros–agape* reaches its most profound form and, by participating in the Eucharist, each person participates in ‘the very dynamic of his self-giving’.¹⁴⁰ Jesus’ act of oblation was given ‘an enduring presence through his institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper’, whereby he gives himself in the form of bread and wine as ‘the new manna’ through which man is united with him.¹⁴¹ Through this union with Christ in the Eucharist, each participant is also united with other participants, and thus we become ‘one body’ and one communion. Benedict XVI explains:

Love of God and love of neighbour are now truly united: God incarnate draws us all to himself. We can thus understand how agape also became a term for the Eucharist: there God's own agape comes to us bodily, in order to continue his work in us and through us. Only by keeping in mind this Christological and sacramental basis can we correctly understand Jesus’ teaching on love.¹⁴²

The implementation of the liturgical renewal introduced by the Council was synthesised in *Sacramentum Caritatis*,¹⁴³ in which Benedict XVI presented a complete program

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ EE 26.

¹³⁹ EE 22.

¹⁴⁰ DCE 13.

¹⁴¹ DCE 14.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Pope Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 22 February 2007 (hereafter, SCar). http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20070222_sacramentum-caritatis.html.

intended to realise the Church's identity as the Body and Bride of Christ, as well as the universal scope of her mission as the sacrament of unity. In *Sacramentum Caritatis*, Benedict XVI made a link to *Deus Caritas Est*, outlining the pastoral and ecumenical consequences of the foundational relationship between the Eucharist and the Church. In particular, the pope encourages 'Christian people to deepen their understanding of the relationship between the Eucharistic Mystery, the liturgical action and the new spiritual worship which derives from the Eucharist as the sacrament of charity'.¹⁴⁴ The centrality of the Eucharist in relationship to the other sacraments is examined in depth in articles 16–29, with pastoral advice given concerning their reception in the life of the Church.

In *Lumen Fidei*, Pope Francis reminds the faithful that it is in the Eucharist that 'the sacramental character of faith finds its highest expression', for '[t]he Eucharist is a precious nourishment for faith: an encounter with Christ truly present in the supreme act of his love, the life-giving gift of himself'.¹⁴⁵ Thus, the Church continues to help the faithful to deepen their understanding that the Eucharist is the source and summit of the life of the Church and of the individual Christian. Pope Francis notes that it is through baptism that a person is incorporated into the divine love of the Trinity and into the corporate faith of the whole Church:

Faith is not the achievement of isolated individuals; it is not an act which someone can perform on his own, but rather something which must be received by entering into the ecclesial communion which transmits God's gift. No one baptizes himself, just as no one comes into the world by himself. Baptism is something we receive.¹⁴⁶

In the sacraments, most especially in the Eucharist, the faithful participate in Christ's self-giving love and form a unity, a body in communion with one another in Christ's body that is the Church. Each of the sacraments provides a practical experience of ecclesial communion as they 'communicate an incarnate memory, linked to the times and places of our lives, linked to all our senses'.¹⁴⁷ Rowland comments that 'in them the whole person is engaged as part of a network of communitarian relationships, including, of course, the relationships with the Persons of the Trinity'.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ SCar 5.

¹⁴⁵ LF 44.

¹⁴⁶ LF 41.

¹⁴⁷ LF 39.

¹⁴⁸ Rowland, *Catholic Theology*, p. 103.

3.3.4 The Relationship of the Universal Church and the local or particular Churches

The relationship between the universal Church and the particular Churches has been discussed throughout the history of the Church, and is closely tied to the relationship between the pope and bishops and authority in the Church. This has been discussed briefly in earlier chapters. In the early twentieth century, Henri de Lubac, in *The Motherhood of the Church*, recognised that ‘at the heart of each particular Church, all the universal Church is present in principle’.¹⁴⁹ The particular or local Church is ‘not merely an administrative division of the total Church, like a province or state in a federal union’.¹⁵⁰ In the post-conciliar period, following the recovery of the ecclesiology of communion, this issue arose once again.

In 1992 the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, under the leadership of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, issued the *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion*, in which it raised the matter of ‘approaches to ecclesiology [that] suffer from a clearly inadequate awareness of the Church as a *mystery of communion*’ [emphasis in original].¹⁵¹ This letter argued that ‘some present the communion of the local churches “in such a way as to weaken the concept of the unity of the Church at the visible and institutional level”’.¹⁵² It insisted, using a quote from Pope John Paul II to the Roman Curia, ‘that particular Churches are formed “out of and in the universal Church”’.¹⁵³ This elicited a response from Cardinal Walter Kasper, then Bishop of Rottenburg-Stuttgart. This and subsequent exchanges are detailed by Killian McDonnell OSB, who noted that they were touching on ‘what may be the most important theological issue’ which he predicted the Church would address ‘in the coming conclave’.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ Henri De Lubac, *The Motherhood of the Church*. Translated by Sr Sergia Englund OCD (San Francisco: St Ignatius Press, 1982) pp. 201, 202.

¹⁵⁰ Rowland, *Catholic Theology*, p. 135.

¹⁵¹ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion*, 28 May 1992, 1. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_28051992_comm_unionis-notio_en.html.

¹⁵² Killian McDonnell OSB, ‘The Ratzinger/Kasper Debate: The Universal Church and Local Churches’, in *Theological Studies* vol. 63 (2002) p. 228.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

This conclave, which was held in 2005, saw Cardinal Ratzinger elected to the papacy. Subsequently, *Sacramentum Caritatis* clarified the situation with regard to the relationship between the universal Church and the particular Churches:

The unity of ecclesial communion is concretely manifested in the Christian communities and is renewed at the celebration of the Eucharist, which unites them and differentiates them in the particular Churches, ‘*in quibus et ex quibus una et unica Ecclesia catholica existit*’ [in which and from which the one and unique Catholic Church exists]. The fact that the one Eucharist is celebrated in each diocese around its own Bishop helps us to see how those particular Churches subsist *in* and *ex Ecclesia*.¹⁵⁵

Referring to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s 1992 document, *Sacramentum Caritatis* reiterated that ‘the oneness and indivisibility of the Eucharistic body of the Lord implies the oneness of his mystical body, which is the one and indivisible Church’.¹⁵⁶ Cardinal Marc Ouellet remarks that ‘[t]his principle of unity leads to the openness of each community and of every particular Church to all the others that celebrate the Eucharist in the Lord’.¹⁵⁷ Thus, the faithful participate in union with each other in the same Church when gathered around the Eucharist, whether experienced in the local church or at the level of the Universal Church.

3.4 Crisis of humanity and crisis of faith

In the years since the Council, the Church has expressed concern about situations and events that are leading to a crisis of humanity and crisis of faith, the effects of which are being played out in the Church and in the world. The role of the pope is to ‘keep alive the dynamism of the Church’s mission *ad extra* and *ad intra*’¹⁵⁸ and each incumbent has sought to do this through many teaching documents.

Pope Paul VI noted in *Ecclesiam Suam* the serious and urgent problem of world peace,¹⁵⁹ and in *Humanae Vitae* he addressed the questions of increasing population, the desire of

¹⁵⁵ SCar 15.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ouellet, ‘The Ecclesiology of Communion’.

¹⁵⁸ Joseph Ratzinger, ‘Theological Locus of Ecclesial Movements’, Address to World Congress of the Ecclesial Movements in Rome 27-29 May 1998. Translated Adrian Walker. Available from www.crossroadsinitiative.com.

¹⁵⁹ ES 16.

humanity to want to control its destiny, with a specific focus on married couples seeking recourse to artificial means of regulating births.¹⁶⁰

Pope John Paul II raised the matter of the dechristianisation of Christian countries in *Redemptoris Missio*. He addressed this again in the encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*, in which he named secularism as one of the most serious pastoral concerns of the Church ‘wherein many, indeed too many, people think and live “as if God did not exist”’.¹⁶¹ This mentality, it was noted, has profound and all-encompassing effects on the opinions and actions of Christians, ‘whose faith is weakened and loses its character as a new and original criterion for thinking and acting in personal, family, and social life’.¹⁶² Some of the issues John Paul II identified as having become the ‘preoccupation of secular commentators’ include

inauthentic and illusory versions of freedom, the alienated character of much human work, technology’s threat to the natural environment, lack of respect for human rights, exaggerated nationalism, consumerism, and ‘slavery’ to economic systems at large, as well as totalitarianism with its indifference to the common good.¹⁶³

John Paul II, in the encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, raised the alarm about emerging and devastating new threats to humanity including scientific and technological developments which give rise to the creation of life using artificial means and the prioritisation of the rights of individual freedom over human life.¹⁶⁴ He noted that these options are only acceptable to those immersed in what he termed a ‘culture of death’,¹⁶⁵ a phrase that has since made its way into common parlance. In the encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, John Paul II issued a stark warning that the crisis of humanity had reached a new level. The philosopher pope acknowledged that ‘on the one hand, philosophical thinking has succeeded in coming closer to the reality of human life and its forms of expression’, while on the other it has ‘tended to pursue issues – existential, hermeneutical or linguistic – which ignore the radical question of the truth about personal existence, about being and

¹⁶⁰ Pope Paul VI, Encyclical: *Humanae Vitae*, 25 July 1968 (hereafter, HV) 2.
http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html.

¹⁶¹ Pope John Paul II, Encyclical: *Veritatis Splendor*, 6 August 1993 (hereafter, VS) 88.
http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor.html.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Nichols, ‘Pastor and Doctor’, p. 170.

¹⁶⁴ Pope John Paul II, Encyclical: *Evangelium Vitae*, 25 March 1995 (hereafter, EV) 4.
http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html.

¹⁶⁵ Nichols, ‘Pastor and Doctor’, p. 181.

about God'.¹⁶⁶ This has resulted in a 'widespread distrust of the human being's great capacity for knowledge'.¹⁶⁷

The matter has also been addressed in other teaching documents of the Church. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* addresses the issue thus:

Man's faculties make him capable of coming to a knowledge of the existence of a personal God. But for man to be able to enter into real intimacy with him, God willed both to reveal himself to man, and to give him the grace of being able to welcome this revelation in faith.¹⁶⁸

A compilation of the foundation of Catholic Social Teaching published by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in 2004, titled *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*,¹⁶⁹ also shines the light of the Gospel on the human person and society. This document encapsulates the crisis of humanity in this way: 'The first of the great challenges facing humanity today is that of *the truth itself of the being who is man*' [emphasis in original].¹⁷⁰ It goes on to note that it is up to individuals and society to take steps to correctly understand the interplay between 'nature, technology and morality' so that the world can address 'what human beings are, what they are able to accomplish and what they should be'.¹⁷¹

While the Church has kept enunciating the factors in the crisis of humanity, she has also kept proposing the answer: the person of Jesus Christ. This is because the human person is created *imago Dei*, in the image of God.¹⁷² This text, central to *Gaudium et Spes* 22, has already been discussed in the first two chapters. It states that Christ, by revealing 'the mystery of the Father and his love', also 'reveals man to himself and brings to light his most high calling'.¹⁷³ Pope Paul VI cited it in a message he gave to the Sacred College of Cardinals on 22 June 1973, stating that the present conditions of the society implied an obligation for a review of methodology and study on how to communicate the message

¹⁶⁶ Pope John Paul II, Encyclical: *Fides et Ratio*, 14 September 1998 (hereafter, FR) 5.
http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091998_fides-et-ratio.html.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ CCC 35.

¹⁶⁹ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, Strathfield: St Paul's Publications, 2004) (hereafter, CSD). Pope John Paul II requested a systematic presentation of the foundation of Catholic social teaching.

¹⁷⁰ CSD 16.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² The full answer was already presented in the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes* 22.

¹⁷³ GS 22.

of Christ to modern man. ‘For it is only in the Christian message that modern man can find the answer to his questions and the energy for his commitment of human solidarity’.¹⁷⁴ Pope John Paul II believed *Gaudium et Spes* 22 was a fundamental truth that needed to be known by all humanity, and he therefore cited it prominently in virtually every one of his encyclicals.¹⁷⁵ Pope Benedict XVI’s focus on faith, hope and love invited the faithful to deepen their understanding of the person of Jesus Christ, and to participate in the communion of the Church that is found in the communion of the Blessed Trinity.

Yet the Church is present in the world in which there is so much conflict. Even after the devastation wrought by the two world wars during the twentieth century, seen in the collapse of Christianity in Western Europe, death and destruction continues across the world. In fact, Pope John Paul II suggested that ‘perhaps as never before in history, humanity is daily buffeted by *conflict*’ [emphasis in original].¹⁷⁶ It is seen in many forms, expressed in the deadly opposition of individuals, groups, nations and coalitions of nations. Opposition is dispensed in acts of violence, terrorism and war. John Paul II noted that ‘diverse sectors of humanity today, wishing to show their “omnipotence”, renew the futile experience of constructing the “Tower of Babel” (cf. Gen 11:1-9), which spreads confusion, struggle, disintegration and oppression’.¹⁷⁷ The effect is that the human family is thus radically shaken and wounded.

Pope Francis, too, has recognised the many nations and territories of the world that are affected by conflict and war. He sees these tensions leading to a Third World War, fought piecemeal, and appeals for the terror to stop. He has mentioned it on numerous occasions, crying out for ‘No more war. Never again war’.¹⁷⁸ After praying the midday Angelus in July 2014, Pope Francis made one of his most heartfelt appeals:

Brothers and sisters, no more war! No more war! Above all, I think of the children, those who have been denied hope of a decent life, of a future: dead children, wounded children, maimed children, orphaned children, children who have remnants of war as

¹⁷⁴ EN 3.

¹⁷⁵ Schindler, *At the Heart of the World, from the Center of the Church*, p. 13, footnote 17.

¹⁷⁶ CL 6.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Kathleen Naab, ‘Pope Francis, a Pope who sees a WWII and pleas for it to stop’, *Zenit*, 16 November 2015. This article was published in *Zenit* following a terrorist attack on Paris on Friday 13 November 2015, which is just one of so many instances of violence and destruction around the world.

toys, children who don't know how to smile. Please stop! I ask you with all my heart, it's time to stop! Stop, please!¹⁷⁹

As the world of the twenty-first century faces a crisis of humanity and a crisis of faith, there is conflict on many fronts. The antidote is the communion that comes from the Trinity, for the gift of the three Persons in one God is a relationship of life-giving love. David Schindler proposes that 'being receives its basic order and meaning from love. All of being from its beginning is ordered to, and invited in truly analogous ways to share in, the communion whose reality in history is the Church'.¹⁸⁰ The Church must continue to proclaim Christ, who is the One who can bring healing, love, and unity to the world.

3.5 Developments in Evangelization

The Church has prioritised making Christ known to new generations of people who have not heard of his love. Evangelization is the mission of the Church and of all those who have been baptised into the life of the Trinitarian God. In his Message for World Mission Day 1972, Pope Paul VI recognised the importance of spreading the Gospel far and wide:

How many internal tensions, which weaken and divide certain local churches and institutions, would disappear before the firm conviction that the salvation of local communities is procured through cooperation in work for the spread of the Gospel to the farthest bounds of the earth!¹⁸¹

As a consequence of the significant and rapid changes in societies and cultures across the world in the post-modern era, the Church's evangelizing mission has become more urgent with each passing decade. It even led to the call for a 'New Evangelization'; this will be defined in the next section.

In *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Pope Paul VI stated that 'the Church exists to evangelize'.¹⁸² He also acknowledged that in defining evangelization 'in terms of proclaiming Christ to those who do not know Him, of preaching, of catechesis, of conferring Baptism and the other sacraments', these elements 'basically follow the lines of those transmitted to us by the Second Vatican Council, especially in *Lumen Gentium*, *Gaudium et Spes* and *Ad*

¹⁷⁹ Pope Francis, *Angelus*, 27 July 2014.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2014/documents/papa-francesco_angelus_20140727.html.

¹⁸⁰ David L. Schindler, *Heart of the World, Center of the Church*. 1996. Preface, xi

¹⁸¹ RM 2. footnote 1.

¹⁸² EN 14. The full quotation is 'She exists in order to evangelize, that is to say, in order to preach and teach, to be the channel of the gift of grace, to reconcile sinners with God, and to perpetuate Christ's sacrifice in the Mass, which is the memorial of His death and glorious resurrection'.

Gentes'.¹⁸³ It thus has strong Trinitarian, Christological and sacramental dimensions. According to Dulles, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* further developed the missionary thrust of the Council, gave new expression to the role of the Church in responding to the dechristianisation being experienced in the world, and 'presented for the first time in history a magisterial treatment of the nature, aims, and methods of evangelization'.¹⁸⁴

The Church's evangelizing mission is undertaken in imitation of Jesus, who is 'the very first and the greatest evangelizer'.¹⁸⁵ In his evangelizing, Christ proclaims the kingdom of God and the salvation that was attained by his death and resurrection but which must continue throughout all of history. These two elements, God's kingdom and salvation, are freely given but hard won. They

are available to every human being as grace and mercy, and yet at the same time each individual must gain them by force – they belong to the violent, says the Lord, through toil and suffering, through a life lived according to the Gospel, through abnegation and the cross, through the spirit of the beatitudes. But above all each individual gains them through a total interior renewal which the Gospel calls metanoia; it is a radical conversion, a profound change of mind and heart.¹⁸⁶

Evangelii Nuntiandi sounds a very strong pneumatological note. It is the Holy Spirit who is responsible for all evangelization, 'for without the action of the Holy Spirit evangelization will never be possible'.¹⁸⁷ It was the Holy Spirit who descended on Jesus at his baptism and was with Paul as he preached the Gospel after the first Pentecost. As 'the soul of the Church', the Holy Spirit helps the faithful understand Jesus and his teachings, guides the evangelizer in the right words to use and opens the ears and the heart of the hearer of the Word.¹⁸⁸ Thus, the Holy Spirit is 'the principal agent of evangelization'.¹⁸⁹

This task of evangelization is for the whole Church, and every member of the Church has a role to play in it. The Church is living as a community most fully when it witnesses to what it believes and preaches the Gospel as the foundation of that belief. It is incumbent upon every member of the Church to contribute to this mission.¹⁹⁰ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*

¹⁸³ EN 17.

¹⁸⁴ Dulles, *Evangelization for the Third Millennium*, p. 15.

¹⁸⁵ EN 7.

¹⁸⁶ EN 10.

¹⁸⁷ EN 75.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ EN 15.

also advocates the use of all modern means to spread the Gospel message among all people and all strata of every society, including dechristianised lands and non-Christian peoples, whilst giving due respect to followers of other traditions.¹⁹¹ Dulles comments that *Evangelii Nuntiandi* recognises that the media is particularly useful in allowing a person to encounter Christ and his message of salvation but is not sufficient to deliver a fully active Christian:

The mass media may and should be used for a kind of ‘first proclamation’ (EN 45), sometimes called ‘pre-evangelization’ (EN 51), as well as for catechesis and the further deepening of the faith (EN 45), but to obtain fully personal adherence and commitment it is important for broadcasts to be followed up by personal instruction and direction as well as active participation in the church’s life (EN 23, 46).¹⁹²

Evangelii Nuntiandi is the foundational teaching document on evangelization in the modern era, and has had significant influence on all the subsequent teachings on evangelization detailed below. Pope John Paul II believed that while *Evangelii Nuntiandi* is not an encyclical, it is of such great importance that it may surpass many encyclicals. ‘It can be considered the interpretation of the Council’s teaching on the essential duty of the Church: “Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!”’.¹⁹³

3.5.1 What is the ‘New Evangelization’?

By 1979, as the pontificate of John Paul II was beginning, it had become clear that countries with a Christian heritage needed to hear the message of the Gospel proclaimed anew, a situation that led to the call for a ‘New Evangelization’. The ‘new’ is indicative of the changed social and cultural circumstances of the post-modern world, requiring an updated response from the Church. As mentioned previously, John Paul II believed that the mission of the Church was intimately connected with her nature as communion: in summary, that ‘communion gives rise to mission and mission is accomplished in communion’.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ EN 51–54.

¹⁹² Dulles, *The Reshaping of Catholicism. Current challenges in the Theology of Church* (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1988) p. 124.

¹⁹³ Pope John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*. Translated by Jenny McPhee and Martha McPhee (London: Jonathon Cape, 1994) p. 114. Cardinal Wojtyla was an enthusiastic contributor during the 1974 Synod of Bishops which led to the exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*.

¹⁹⁴ CL 32.

The term ‘New Evangelization’ was first mentioned in the *Concluding Document* emerging from CELAM, the Assembly of the Latin American bishops in Puebla, Mexico, in 1979 and was defined in these terms:

New situations, merging from socio-cultural changes require a *new evangelization*: emigrants to other countries, large urban conglomerates in our own countries, masses from all levels of society in a precarious situation as to the faith, groups exposed to the influence of sects and of ideologies which do not respect their identity, causing confusion and provoking division.¹⁹⁵ [emphasis in original]

Implicit in this definition is the evangelization or missionary activity in the Church undertaken in responding to the Great Commission given by Jesus.

Pope John Paul II himself used the expression during a visit to Nova Huta, Poland, on 9 June 1979, identifying this as the urgent need for apostles who will go out and once again proclaim the Gospel.¹⁹⁶ Then, speaking to the bishops of Latin America in Haiti in 1983, John Paul II famously describes the New Evangelisation as being ‘new in its ardour, new in its methods, and new in its expressions’.¹⁹⁷ Thus, he was calling for innovation in the way the perennial Gospel of Jesus Christ was shared as a response to the signs of the times, encouraging a new apostolic fervour, new ways and means of proclaiming Christ and communicating in a language and style accessible to the present generation.

With his gaze directed to the dawning of the third millennium, and sixteen years into his pontificate, John Paul II issued the encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*, which provided the Church with a new synthesis of the teaching about evangelization in the modern world. In it, John Paul II addressed the new situation in the world: in this way, *Redemptoris Missio* updated, and therefore surpassed, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*. John Paul II stressed the urgency of this mission for the whole Church: ‘I sense that the moment has come to commit all the Church’s energies to a new evangelization and to the mission *ad gentes*. No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to

¹⁹⁵ CELAM, *Concluding Document to Third General Conference of Latin American Bishops at Puebla*, Chapter 2, 1.3, p. 366, cited in Fisichella, *The New Evangelization*, p. 19.

¹⁹⁶ Pope John Paul II, Homily of His Holiness at Holy Mass at the Shrine of the Holy Cross, Mogila, Poland, 9 June 1979. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19790609_polonia-mogila-nowa-huta.html.

¹⁹⁷ Synod of Bishops, Lineamenta for the Synod of Bishops on ‘The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith’, 2 November 2011. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20110202_lineamenta-xiii-assembly_en.html. The Lineamenta cites Pope John Paul II’s Discourse to the XIX Assembly of CELAM at Haiti on 9 March 1983, 5 which is available on the Vatican website in Italian, Spanish and Portuguese.

proclaim Christ to all peoples'.¹⁹⁸ *Redemptoris Missio* then addressed the main issues in evangelization and the obstacles to its achievement. John Paul II noted that the Church of today must 'push forward to new frontiers, both in the initial mission *ad gentes* and in the new evangelization of those peoples who have already heard Christ proclaimed'.¹⁹⁹ This was the task for all Christians, at the levels of the local churches and the universal Church – to have the same courage today as did the missionaries of ages past, responding to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.²⁰⁰

In *Redemptoris Missio*, John Paul II noted that throughout the Church's history, 'missionary drive has always been a sign of vitality, just as its lessening is a sign of a crisis of faith',²⁰¹ and admonished that, with the new millennium a decade away, '[d]ifficulties both internal and external have weakened the Church's missionary thrust toward non-Christians, a fact which must arouse concern among all who believe in Christ'.²⁰² Pope John Paul II repeatedly exhorted the Church to take up the urgent mandate from Christ for the New Evangelization in many encyclicals, speeches and other documents throughout his pontificate. Pope Benedict XVI continued to echo the call for the New Evangelization during his pontificate.

Pope Francis has brought to the universal Church the term 'missionary disciples',²⁰³ which was already used extensively across Latin America. While he does not use the term New Evangelization, he continues to encourage 'the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church's journey in years to come'.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁸ RM 3.

¹⁹⁹ RM 30.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ RM 2.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ CELAM, Fifth Conference of Latin American and Caribbean Bishops, Aparecida, 'Concluding Document'. Missionary Discipleship is mentioned in this Concluding Document, initially in the Message to the People, 29 May 2007, p. 16: 'We see how the path of missionary discipleship is a source of renewal of our ministry in the Continent and a new starting point for the New Evangelization of our peoples'.

²⁰⁴ EG 1.

3.5.2 Further developments in evangelization

Pope John Paul II asserted that ‘missionary evangelization’, that is, facilitating an encounter with Christ, is ‘the primary service which the Church can render to every individual and to all humanity in the modern world’.²⁰⁵ Aidan Nichols comments:

As much as any Evangelical, and for the same reason (it is the plain testimony of Scripture), the Pope confessed Christ as the only Mediator: ‘the only one able to reveal God and lead to God’. There are no parallel or complementary mediators, but only agents who share Christ’s mediatorial activity in such a way that everything they do takes its significance and value from what he is and does. Jesus Christ alone is the definitive self-revelation of God which is why the Church is ‘missionary by her very nature’.²⁰⁶

The Church’s missionary imperative arises from the divine commandment issued at the end of Jesus’ earthly ministry and the impulse of the Spirit flowing from Pentecost – in short, from its participation in the communion of the Blessed Trinity. This proclamation originates not in the Church but in Christ.

In particular, John Paul II clarified terms and defined the areas of the world where evangelistic efforts should be directed: The first is the mission to people and communities where Christ is not known, the second is to active Catholic communities who are living out the faith, and the third is particularly in countries with ancient Christian roots, and occasionally in the younger Churches as well, where there are groups of the baptised who are no longer actively participating in the life of the Church.²⁰⁷ This latter group is where the new evangelization is to be directed, particularly ‘the *areas of the world* (for example, the post-Communist countries) where the truth of the Gospel is anxiously awaited’[emphasis in original].²⁰⁸ These countries are among those that were evangelized by the missionary orders mentioned in the first two chapters. For other countries that have had a long history of Christianity, a kind of ‘re-evangelization’ is called for.²⁰⁹ In addition, *Redemptoris Missio* makes clear that there are new mission fields which need to be evangelized, including new worlds and social contexts, and cultural sectors which

²⁰⁵ RM 2.

²⁰⁶ Nichols, ‘Pastor and Doctor’, p. 176. The same point was made by Avery Dulles in *Evangelization for the Third Millennium*, pp. 88, 89.

²⁰⁷ RM 33. See also John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, pp. 114–15.

²⁰⁸ John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, p. 115.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.* For a contemporary analysis of what Pope John Paul II may have intended, either a ‘new evangelization’ or a ‘re-evangelization’, see Fisichella, *The New Evangelization*, pp. 20–24.

represent ‘the new Areopagus’.²¹⁰ Here John Paul II makes the point that the first Areopagus of the modern age is the world of social communications; this will be considered in detail in Chapter 4. Other areas mentioned are culture, scientific research and international relations.²¹¹

John Paul II called *every* Christian to participate in the Church’s mission to evangelize. The pope affirmed this in *Christifideles Laici*, noting that the desired outcome of the Synod ‘is the lay faithful’s hearkening to the call of Christ the Lord to work in his vineyard, to take an active, conscientious and responsible part in the mission of the Church in this great moment in history’, a particular reference to the coming of the third millennium.²¹² He was insistent that ‘*It is not permissible for anyone to remain idle*’ [emphasis in original].²¹³ This evangelizing mission of the laity will be considered further in Chapter 5.

As the third millennium drew near, John Paul II convened continental synods for Africa, Asia, the Americas and Oceania, to address the evangelization needs of different continents with respect to their specific situations. The first of these Synods, the Special Assembly for Africa, was held at the Vatican in 1994. This was followed by the Special Assembly for America (1997), then for Asia and Oceania (1998).²¹⁴ The outcome was that the Church on each continent had a pastoral plan for evangelization in the twenty-first century.

Pope Benedict XVI continued to implement the call for the New Evangelization begun by his predecessor. He strengthened the strategic direction of the Church’s evangelizing efforts in 2010 by establishing the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization (PCPNE) as a permanent Dicastery of the Roman Curia.²¹⁵ In the Apostolic Letter in the Form of Motu Proprio *Ubicumque et Semper*, through which the PCPNE came into being, Pope Benedict XVI reiterated that the mission of evangelization

²¹⁰ RM 37.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² CL 3.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation: *Ecclesia in Asia*, 6 November 1999. 2, 3. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_06111999_ecclesia-in-asia.html.

²¹⁵ Pope Benedict XVI, Apostolic Letter *Ubicumque et Semper*, 21 September 2010. Article 1, 1. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/apost_letters/documents/hf_ben-xvi_apl_20100921_ubicumque-et-semper_en.html. There is no English-titled translation of this document.

is of the essence of the Church's nature.²¹⁶ The PCPNE operates 'by encouraging reflection on topics of the new evangelization, and by identifying and promoting suitable ways and means to accomplish it'.²¹⁷ One of this body's explicit tasks is 'studying and fostering the use of the modern forms of communication, as instruments of the new evangelization'.²¹⁸ An example of their work in using digital media to invite virtual participation in the Extraordinary Year of Mercy is given in Chapter 4.

Due to the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI, Pope Francis was charged with communicating the outcome of the Synod on the New Evangelization mentioned earlier. In March 2013, one week into his pontificate, Francis addressed the 13th Ordinary Council of the General Secretary of the Synod of Bishops. There, he introduced his own vision for evangelization in the third millennium: 'I would like to encourage the entire ecclesial community to be an evangelizing community and not to be afraid to "step out" of itself in order to proclaim, trusting above all in the merciful presence of God who guides us'.²¹⁹ In this address he made specific reference to *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, in particular to the reliance on the Holy Spirit as the principal agent of evangelization (EN 75) and holiness of life of the evangelizer (EN 76).

The post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* is significantly more than a synthesis of ideas from the Synod on the New Evangelization, drawing heavily on *Evangelii Nuntiandi* as well as from the *Aparecida Concluding Document* from May 2007.²²⁰ In this way, the pope from the Global South has brought to the universal Church

²¹⁶ Ibid. The first paragraph reads: 'It is the duty of the Church to proclaim always and everywhere the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He, the first and supreme evangelizer, commanded the Apostles on the day of his Ascension to the Father: "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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Mt 28:19–20). Faithful to this mandate, the Church—a people chosen by God to declare his wonderful deeds (cf. 1 Peter 2:9)—ever since she received the gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (cf. Acts 2:14), has never tired of making known to the whole world the beauty of the Gospel as she preaches Jesus Christ, true God and true man, the same "yesterday and today and for ever" (Heb 13:8), who, by his death and Resurrection, brought us salvation and fulfilled the promise made of old. Hence the mission of evangelization, a continuation of the work desired by the Lord Jesus, is necessary for the Church: it cannot be overlooked; it is an expression of her very nature'.

²¹⁷ Ibid., Article 1, 1.

²¹⁸ Ibid., Article 3, 4. See also Fisichella, *The New Evangelization*, p. 75.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ The documents produced by CELAM are traditionally known by the place where the conference was held. In this case, the conference was at the foot of the Blessed Virgin, *Nossa Senhora Aparecida*, in Brazil in May 2007. Pope Benedict XVI opened the conference and authorised publication of the Concluding Document. It has a very strong evangelical thrust, with Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio having a decisive role as chair of the drafting committee. According to this Concluding Document (article 9),

a renewed understanding of evangelization. In fact, with *Evangelii Gaudium* Francis set out the blueprint for evangelization in the third millennium:

The Church which ‘goes forth’ is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice. An evangelizing community knows that the Lord has taken the initiative, he has loved us first (cf. 1 Jn 4:19), and therefore we can move forward, boldly take the initiative, go out to others, seek those who have fallen away, stand at the crossroads and welcome the outcast... Let us try a little harder to take the first step and to become involved.²²¹

The basis of ‘missionary discipleship’ is the love of Jesus who impels individuals within the community of the Church to outreach. It is a joy-filled reaching out to those on the margins. Pope Francis explains further that being a missionary disciple is a result of being baptised into the life of the Trinitarian God; missionary discipleship is an outworking of communion ecclesiology. There are to be no professional evangelizers who take up the call and leave the rest of the faithful sitting on the sidelines; it is the responsibility of all the faithful regardless of their position or level of instruction in the faith. Pope Francis writes:

The New Evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization; indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God’s saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love. Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are “disciples” and “missionaries”, but rather that we are always “missionary disciples”.²²²

In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis also refined the definitions of the three principal settings for the new evangelization. The first is ordinary pastoral ministry, which includes those who are Catholic and regularly participate in the life of the worshipping community, as well as those who ‘preserve a deep and sincere faith, expressing it in different ways, but seldom taking part in worship’.²²³ The second is ‘the baptized whose lives do not reflect the demands of Baptism’, who lack a meaningful relationship to the Church and

previous conferences have been held in Rio (1955), Medellin (1968), Puebla (1979), Santo Domingo (1992).

²²¹ EG 24.

²²² EG 120.

²²³ EG 15.

no longer experience the consolation born of faith'.²²⁴ And the third is preaching the Gospel to those who do not know Jesus Christ or who have always rejected him.²²⁵

3.5.3 Evangelizing the culture

Pope Paul VI suggested in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* that cultures themselves need to be 'regenerated by an encounter with the gospel'.²²⁶ The evangelization of cultures was inspired by the example of St Paul, who preached to members of the Areopagus in Athens,²²⁷ and it is a further development of the Council's focus on culture articulated in *Gaudium et Spes*.²²⁸ In essence, it is imperative that Christ be proclaimed in the culture so that he can break into the world. Paul VI also noted that while proclamation – described as 'kerygma, preaching or catechesis'²²⁹ – is so important that it is often considered synonymous with evangelization, in fact it is only one of its aspects.²³⁰ The process of evangelization comes full circle when the person who has been evangelized goes on to evangelize others.²³¹ This is the benchmark of evangelization, and is an enunciation of the principle of encountering Christ leading to witness and proclamation.

The Pontifical Council for Culture was instituted by Pope John Paul II in 1982, with its being 'establishing dialogue between the Church and the cultures of our time, so that they could open themselves up to the Christian faith, which is a creator of culture as well as a source of science, letters and the arts'.²³² In an address to the Pontifical Council for Culture in 1985, John Paul II made this urgent request of them:

You must help the Church to respond to these fundamental questions for the cultures of today: how is the message of the Church accessible to the new cultures, contemporary forms of understanding and of sensitivity? How can the Church of

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ EN 20.

²²⁷ Acts 17:16–34

²²⁸ See GS 54–58.

²²⁹ EN 22.

²³⁰ Ibid. Other aspects of evangelization are treated in some detail, and then the exhortation provides the summation that evangelization 'is a complex process made up of varied elements: the renewal of humanity, witness, explicit proclamation, inner adherence, entry into the community, acceptance of signs, apostolic initiative. These elements may appear to be contradictory, indeed mutually exclusive. In fact, they are complementary and mutually enriching'.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Pontifical Council for Culture website, Profile.

<http://www.cultura.va/content/cultura/en/organico/profilo.html>.

Christ make itself understood by the modern spirit, so proud of its achievements and at the same time so uneasy for the future of the human family?²³³

Pope John Paul II specifically recognised through his words and actions that the media was a particular culture in need of evangelization. This will be considered in the next chapter.

John Paul II issued the Motu Proprio *Inde a Pontificatus* on 25 March 1993. In it, he joined the Pontifical Council for Culture with the Pontifical Council for Dialogue with Non-believers (established by Paul VI on 9 April 1965).²³⁴ In this way he established a single entity, maintaining its focus on ‘dialogue with people of goodwill who profess no specific religion’.²³⁵

Pope Benedict XVI was concerned that believers responding to the New Evangelization have a heart for ‘even those people who consider themselves agnostics or atheists’.²³⁶ He noted these people ‘do not want to see themselves as an object of mission or to give up their freedom of thought and will. Yet the question of God remains present even for them, even if they cannot believe in the concrete nature of his concern for us’.²³⁷ He therefore initiated a project aimed at evangelizing the culture beyond the faithful, entitled the ‘Courtyard of the Gentiles’. According to Allan Wright, ‘The Courtyard of the Gentiles amounts to a way for Catholicism to present the best of itself to the world’.²³⁸ The New Evangelization thus seeks to ‘put flesh’ on the Gospel message by ‘actively engaging into the arenas of public discourse, social gatherings, and places of work in order to engage, discuss, and proclaim Christ with zeal’.²³⁹ This Courtyard of the Gentiles project also reached out to baptised Catholics who were no longer believers and provided a way of re-engaging with them.

²³³ Pontifical Council for Culture, *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*, 23 May 1999, 1.

²³⁴ Pope John Paul II, Motu Proprio: *Inde a Pontificatus*, 25 March 1993.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/motu_proprio/documents/hf_jp-ii_motu-proprio_25031993_inde-a-pontificatus.html.

²³⁵ Pontifical Council for Culture, Profile.

²³⁶ Pope Benedict XVI, Address to the Roman Curia, 21 December 2009. The Pontifical Council for Culture website has a succinct explanation of the origins of the term ‘Courtyard of the Gentiles’ which was a space in the outer sanctum of the Temple of Jerusalem for Jews and Gentiles, learned and uneducated, to meet with rabbis to have their questions answered.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Wright, Allan F., *Jesus the Evangelist. A Gospel Guide to the New Evangelization* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Franciscan Media. 2013) p. 14.

²³⁹ Ibid.

3.5.4 Evangelization and proclamation

Pope John Paul II believed that inter-religious dialogue is included in the Church's evangelizing mission. 'This mission, in fact, is addressed to those who do not know Christ and his Gospel, and who belong for the most part to other religions'.²⁴⁰ The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID), the body charged with taking this forward, noted that in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* the terms 'evangelization' and 'proclamation' were used somewhat interchangeably. The PCID recognised and elucidated the distinction between the two terms in the document *Dialogue and Proclamation*.²⁴¹ 'Evangelization' was given the broad meaning 'to bring the Good News into all areas of humanity, and through its impact, to transform that humanity from within, making it new',²⁴² which has wide-ranging application. On the other hand, 'proclamation' covered the more limited range of 'kerygma, preaching or catechesis'. Yet proclamation 'occupies such an important place in evangelization that it has often become synonymous with it; and yet it is only one aspect of evangelization'.²⁴³

For the purposes of the PCID's dealings with other faiths, these terms were given clearer definitions. The PCID note confirms that '*evangelizing mission* is used for 'the mission of the Church in its totality' [emphasis in original].²⁴⁴ 'Proclamation' is defined as 'the communication of the Gospel message, the mystery of salvation realized by God for all in Jesus Christ by the power of the Spirit. It is an invitation to a commitment of faith in Jesus Christ and to entry through baptism into the community of believers which is the Church'.²⁴⁵

3.5.5 Developments in the Principles of Evangelization

The three principles of evangelization detailed in the previous chapter continue to be called for in the Church with ever greater urgency in the post-Vatican II period. First, it is through an encounter with Christ that a person is led to share their faith with others through witness and proclamation. Secondly, every person has a role to play in the Church's evangelizing mission, appropriate to their vocation. And thirdly, there has been

²⁴⁰ RM 55.

²⁴¹ Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, *Dialogue and Proclamation*, 19 May 1991 (hereafter, DP).

²⁴² DP 8, citing EN 18.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 8, citing EN 22.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

a greater recognition of the call to holiness and the call to mission. These principles are neither distinct nor mutually exclusive and can be identified in the teaching documents and activities of the Church.

3.5.5.1 Encountering Christ leads to witness and proclamation

That Jesus Christ is a person who could be encountered even now was understood and taught by Fr Luigi Giussani, founder of the Communion and Liberation Movement..²⁴⁶ Fr Giussani wrote that Christ ‘visibly abides in the unity of believers, which is the encounterable form of his presence. Historically speaking, this reality is called “church”’.²⁴⁷ This teaching on the importance of the encounter with Christ in and through the Church, as well as the need to share it with others, is fundamental to communion ecclesiology. As we have seen throughout this chapter, in the post-conciliar period the Church has made the encounter with Christ a hallmark of its call to evangelization. Fr Giussani had close ties with the theologians of the *Communio* school from its very beginning, and close personal and fraternal relationships with popes Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Cardinal Bergoglio (now Pope Francis).²⁴⁸ The notion of the encounter with Christ resonated with Benedict XVI in particular.

In his central text, *At the Origin of the Christian Claim*, Giussani writes that many, including those who profess to be Christian, do not understand or believe the content of the Christian message:

The Christian imperative is that the content of its message presents itself as a fact. This cannot be stressed enough. An insidious cultural disloyalty, aided by the ambiguity and fragility of Christians as well, has facilitated the dissemination of a vague notion of Christianity as a discourse or doctrine and perhaps, therefore, a fable or moral. No. First and foremost it is a fact – a man joined the ranks of men.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁶ John Zucchi, ‘Luigi Giussani, the Church, and Youth in the 1950s’, in *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture*, vol. 10, no. 4 (2007) p. 132. Giussani, a theologian, wrote widely, including three foundational texts which grew out of his Introduction to Theology lectures at the Catholic University of Milan. These are referred to as the ‘Giussani Trilogy’ – *The Religious Sense*, *At the Origin of the Christian Claim*, and *Why the Church?*

²⁴⁷ Luigi Giussani, *Why the Church?* Translated by Viviane Hewitt (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press: 2001) p. 21.

²⁴⁸ Jorge Mario Bergoglio, ‘For Man’, in Eliza Buzzi (ed.), *Generative Thought: An Introduction to the Works of Luigi Giussani* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press: 2003) pp. 79–83.

²⁴⁹ Luigi Giussani, *At the Origin of the Christian Claim* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1998) p. 34.

In this way, Giussani argues that the medium is the message – the incarnate Son of God became human in order to reveal himself to humankind:

The Christian message is this: a man who ate, walked, and lived the normal life of a man proclaimed: ‘I am your destiny’, ‘I am he of whom the whole cosmos is made’. Objectively, this is the only case in history where a man did not declare himself divine in a generic way, but substantially identified himself with God.²⁵⁰

Because Jesus is one with the Father, he knows the Father perfectly, and is therefore the one who can reveal who the Father is. Christians profess this in the Nicene Creed.²⁵¹

This Christian message, the person of Jesus, demands a response from every person. Once a person is drawn into the divine love of God through Jesus in the Holy Spirit, they are compelled to share the message with the others. Through evangelization, successive generations have been enabled to encounter Jesus. Giussani notes that:

the advent of that man is an announcement transmitted down through the years to us today. To this very day, this event has been proclaimed and announced as the event of a Presence. That one man said: ‘I am God,’ and that this is passed on as a fact, forcefully demands a personal stance... society so often turns away from this announcement and wishes to confine it to churches and the individual conscience.²⁵²

Since the Second Vatican Council, the encounter with Christ has been presented anew to the faithful as an encounter with love, and that means also an encounter with God’s mercy. John Paul II understood that Vatican II ‘was a Council *focused on the mystery of Christ and his Church and at the same time open to the world*’ [emphasis in original].²⁵³ The pope noted that this openness was ‘an evangelical response’²⁵⁴ to recent changes in the world and the death and destruction wrought during the twentieth century. The antidote he proposed was that ‘the world needs purification; it needs to be converted’.²⁵⁵ The Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 was an opportunity ‘to embrace new horizons in proclaiming the Kingdom of God’²⁵⁶ and, as a Year of Mercy, it would also be a time of repentance, both for individuals and for the Church as a whole. It was to be an ecumenical event, not only for Catholics, but for all Christians and indeed for the whole world. Thus, the three-year

²⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 35.

²⁵¹ CCC, p. 49.

²⁵² Giussani, *At the Origin of the Christian Claim*, p. 34.

²⁵³ TMI 18.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Pope John Paul II, Bull of Indiction: *Incarnationis Mysterium*. 30 November 1998. 2.

http://www.vatican.va/jubilee_2000/docs/documents/hf_jp-ii_doc_30111998_bolla-jubilee_en.html.

period of preparation leading to the Great Jubilee was established, focussed on the three Persons of the Trinity as described earlier in this chapter. The primary objective was to strengthen the faith and the witness of Christians and, for this to be achieved, all the faithful were to be inspired with ‘a true longing for holiness, a deep desire for conversion and personal renewal in a context of ever more intense prayer and of solidarity with one's neighbour, especially the most needy’.²⁵⁷

Pope John Paul II also gave to the universal Church the life and witness of Polish nun Sr Faustina Kowalska, who received from Christ the message of mercy between the First and Second World Wars. At her canonisation in 2000, he reminded the faithful that Christ pours out this mercy on humanity through the sending of the Spirit who, in the Trinity, is the Person-Love. ‘And is not mercy love’s “second name” (cf. DM 7), understood in its deepest and most tender aspect, in its ability to take upon itself the burden of any need and, especially, in its immense capacity for forgiveness?’²⁵⁸ At the same time, John Paul II instituted the celebration of ‘Divine Mercy Sunday’ for the universal Church on the Second Sunday of Easter.²⁵⁹ In his homily for this feast one year on, the pope noted that Divine Mercy is the Easter gift that the Church receives from the risen Christ and offers to humanity at the dawn of the new millennium. In 2005, on the vigil of Divine Mercy Sunday, which he had instituted, Pope John Paul II died.²⁶⁰ Pope Francis, as mentioned earlier, also called the Church to an encounter with God’s mercy in the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the closing of the Council.

An encounter with Christ’s word demands a response, Pope Francis writes in in the encyclical *Lumen Fidei*. He highlighted that the response was to both profess the faith and share it with others:

Christ’s word, once heard, by virtue of its inner power at work in the heart of the Christian, becomes a response, a spoken word, a profession of faith... Faith is not a private matter, a completely individualistic notion or a personal opinion: it comes from hearing, and it is meant to find expression in words and to be proclaimed.²⁶¹

²⁵⁷ TMI 42.

²⁵⁸ Pope John Paul II, Homily at Canonisation of Sr Faustina Kowalska, 30 April 2000. 2. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/2000/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_20000430_faustina.html.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 4.

²⁶⁰ Pope John Paul II, Biography. http://www.vatican.va/special/canonizzazione-27042014/documents/biografia_gpII_canonizzazione_en.html.

²⁶¹ LF 22.

Faith is an ecclesial reality to be lived at the heart of the Church; 'it is professed from within the body of Christ as a concrete communion of believers'.²⁶² Faith is transmitted to people in every place and time, from one generation to another, by witnesses who speak with words and the actions of their lives encouraging others to see Jesus face to face.²⁶³ It is also 'handed down in her living tradition' when the Church communicates 'the new light born of an encounter with the true God, a light which touches us at the core of our being and engages our minds, wills and emotions, opening us to relationships lived in communion'.²⁶⁴ And faith is handed on to successive generations of the Church through 'the profession of faith, the celebration of the sacraments, the path of the ten commandments, and prayer'.²⁶⁵

3.5.5.2 The rediscovery of the Church as the new People of God leads to the co-responsibility of all the faithful

As introduced in the previous chapter, since the recovery of ecclesiology of communion the Church has continued to explore how the faithful facilitate the communion of the Church according to their vocation. As 'Communion in the Church is not uniformity, but a gift of the Spirit who is present in the variety of charisms and states of life', a series of synods were held to 'clarify the specific identity of the various states of life, their vocation and their particular mission in the Church'.²⁶⁶ Each of the different vocations are an expression of the one mystery of Christ, and all people are called to proclaim Christ. Through these synods, the Church identified opportunities and challenges to each vocational group in their service of Christ and his kingdom.

3.5.5.2.1 Bishops

The sacramental foundation of collegiality arising from communion ecclesiology was underlined in the Final Report of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops.²⁶⁷ The report confirmed that 'Collegial action in the strict sense implies the activity of the whole college, together with its head, over the entire Church. Its maximum expression is found

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ LF 38.

²⁶⁴ LF 40.

²⁶⁵ LF 46.

²⁶⁶ Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation: *Vita Consecrata*, 25 March 1996 (hereafter, VC) 4. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_25031996_vita-consecrata.html. The Synod on Consecrated Life followed the Synods on the Laity and the Priesthood.

²⁶⁷ Final Report, 1985 Extraordinary Synod, II, C, 4.

in an ecumenical council'.²⁶⁸ The Synod of Bishops, another expression of collegiality that has been a permanent council since Vatican II, has contributed significantly to discerning pastoral and doctrinal matters affecting the Church from time to time. Pope Benedict XVI recognised that 'the event of the Synod was itself an experience of the communion which the Church receives from its participation in the life of the Trinity, communicated in Jesus Christ, and the fruit of this participation is joy'.²⁶⁹ According to the Vatican website, by the end of 2015 there had been three Extraordinary Synods, fifteen Ordinary Synods and at least eight Special Assemblies representing particular regions.²⁷⁰

Regarding episcopal conferences, and their nature and authority in particular, further study was called for by the 1985 Extraordinary Synod: 'It is hoped that the study of their theological status and above all the problem of their doctrinal authority might be made explicit in a deeper and more extensive way'.²⁷¹ To that end, the Congregation of Bishops prepared a working paper and circulated it in 1988, and for ten years this and related questions were considered. Then, on 21 May 1998, the instruction on episcopal conferences, *Apostolos suos*,²⁷² was published. Ferme notes that '[i]n a very real sense this instruction, along with the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*, fleshes out in both theological and legal terms the general request of *Christus Dominus* that episcopal conferences be established'.²⁷³ The establishment of episcopal conferences and the Synod of Bishops since the Council means that, as well as being responsible for the evangelizing mission of the Church in his own diocese, a bishop is called to work collegially with brother bishops across the national and universal Church.

3.5.5.2.2 Priests

Priestly formation and pastoral care was the subject of the Synod of Bishops in 1990. The post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis* acknowledged that

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Pope Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation: *Verbum Domini*, 30 September 2010 (hereafter, VDom) 123. http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20100930_verbum-domini.html.

²⁷⁰ Synod of Bishops, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/index.htm.

²⁷¹ Final Report, 1985 Extraordinary Synod, II, C, 8.

²⁷² Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio: *Apostolos Suos*, 21 May 1998. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/motu_proprio/documents/hf_jp-ii_motu-proprio_22071998_apostolos-suos.html.

²⁷³ Brian Ferme, 'The Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church, *Christus Dominus*' in Lamb & Levering (eds.), *Vatican II: Renewal Within Tradition*, p. 200, 201.

the formation of future priests, both diocesan and religious, and lifelong assiduous care for their personal sanctification in the ministry and for the constant updating of their pastoral commitment is considered by the Church one of the most demanding and important tasks for the future of the evangelization of humanity.²⁷⁴

Pastores Dabo Vobis affirmed that priests must be able to relate to others and build community within the Church because it is ‘truly fundamental for a person who is called to be responsible for a community and to be a “man of communion”’.²⁷⁵

Coinciding with the release of *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, Pope John Paul II wrote a Letter to Priests on Holy Thursday 1992,²⁷⁶ indicating that Christ, who is the true Vine, is ‘the ever-new beginning and inexhaustible source of the formation of every Christian, and especially of every priest’.²⁷⁷ Holy Thursday was the day when Christ gave his love totally for the salvation of God’s people and when the Eucharist, and the ministerial priesthood, was instituted. Pope John Paul II marked this day as a special occasion for priests to ‘grow in our awareness of this reality and in the attitude needed for us to be able to remain, in Christ, open to the breath of the Spirit of Truth, and to bear abundant fruit in God’s vineyard’.²⁷⁸

The Church relies on holy men of God to serve in the priesthood and minister to the faithful. They play an essential role in evangelizing new Christians and forming the People of God in the communion of the Church. In 2009, Pope Benedict XVI called for a Year of Priests. It was intended ‘to deepen the commitment of all priests to interior renewal for the sake of a stronger and more incisive witness to the Gospel in today’s world’,²⁷⁹ and was celebrated for twelve months from 19 June 2009.

²⁷⁴ Pope John Paul II, Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation: *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 25 March 1992 (hereafter, PDV) 2. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jpii_exh_25031992_pastores-dabo-vobis.html.

²⁷⁵ PDV 43.

²⁷⁶ Pope John Paul II continued this practice from 1992 until his death in 2005.

²⁷⁷ Pope John Paul II, *Letter to Priests*, 29 March 1992. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1992/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_19920329_priests.html There was an earlier letter, in 1991, which was only published in Italian, French and Spanish.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Pope Benedict XVI, Letter: *Anno Sacerdotale*, 16 June 2009. http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/letters/2009/documents/hf_ben-xvi_let_20090616_anno-sacerdotale.html.

3.5.5.2.3 Deacons

Pope Paul VI, with the Motu Proprio *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*,²⁸⁰ effected the restoration of the ministry of the deacons called for at Vatican II and set out the norms for its implementation. The specific ministry of the deacon is to assist the bishop and priests in the celebration of the sacred mysteries, most especially the Eucharist; in distributing Holy Communion; in proclaiming the Gospel and preaching homilies; in assisting at and blessing marriages; and in presiding at funerals and undertaking works of charity.²⁸¹

3.5.5.2.4 Religious

That consecrated life is an intimate part of the Church's life, her holiness and her mission, was recognised in the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata*.²⁸² It was also made clear that this vocation is as important in the present and for the future as it has been in the past. The exhortation also noted that 'the consecrated life is at the very heart of the Church as a decisive element for her mission, since it "manifests the inner nature of the Christian calling" and the striving of the whole Church as Bride towards union with her one Spouse'.²⁸³ It also recognised that during the years of the revitalisation of religious life there have been both joys and sorrows.²⁸⁴ Religious were encouraged to avoid discouragement in the face of difficulties, and to find 'fresh enthusiasm, for the Church needs the spiritual and apostolic contribution of a renewed and revitalized consecrated life'.²⁸⁵ Religious were reminded that they are to imitate Christ's own way of life and, thereby to be an '*Icon of the Transfigured Christ*' [emphasis in original].²⁸⁶ To live this way of life requires acceptance of the evangelical counsels, especially chastity for the sake of the Kingdom, which 'expresses in a particularly vivid way the *Trinitarian* nature of the Christian life and it anticipates in a certain way that *eschatological* fulfilment towards which the whole Church is tending' [emphasis in original].²⁸⁷

²⁸⁰ Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Letter given Motu Proprio, *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*, 18 June 1967. http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19670618_sacrum-diaconatus.html.

²⁸¹ CCC 1570.

²⁸² Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation: *Vita Consecrata*, 25 March 1996 (hereafter, VC) 3. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_25031996_vita-consecrata.html.

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ VC 13.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ VC 14.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

In particular, consecrated persons were asked to take the ecclesial communion proposed at the Council and transform it into the spirituality of communion, such that it contributes to the mission of the Church:

The sense of ecclesial communion, developing into a spirituality of communion, promotes a way of thinking, speaking and acting which enables the Church to grow in depth and extension. The life of communion in fact ‘becomes a sign for all the world and a compelling force that leads people to faith in Christ... In this way communion leads to mission, and itself becomes mission’; indeed, ‘communion begets communion: in essence it is a communion that is missionary’.²⁸⁸

There is an important and ongoing role for religious in the evangelizing mission of the Church, helping to communicate Christ’s presence in the world through both word and deed. The exhortation concluded by noting that, while vocations may be diminishing, there are expanding areas of mission, including the world of education, evangelizing the culture, and witnessing through the means of social communications.²⁸⁹

3.5.5.2.5 Laity

Evangelii Nuntiandi gave special emphasis to the role of the laity in the evangelization of the world, as their field of work is ‘the vast and complicated world of politics, society and economics, but also the world of culture, of the sciences and the arts, of international life, of the mass media’.²⁹⁰ *Christifideles Laici* further developed the role of the laity utilising the framework of the biblical image of the vine and the branches, noting that this image especially expresses ‘The Mystery of the People of God’ because it emphasises the internal nature of the Church in which the laity are ‘seen not simply as labourers who work in the vineyard, but as themselves being a part of the vineyard’.²⁹¹ John Paul II made the link to communion ecclesiology:

Only *from* inside the Church's mystery of communion is the ‘identity’ of the lay faithful made known, and their fundamental dignity revealed. Only within the context of this dignity can their vocation and mission in the Church and in the world be defined.²⁹² [emphasis in original]

Christifideles Laici emphasised and developed the teaching from *Lumen Gentium* on baptism conferring on the lay faithful the grace of participating ‘in the threefold mission

²⁸⁸ VC 46.

²⁸⁹ VC 96–99.

²⁹⁰ EN 70.

²⁹¹ CL 8.

²⁹² Ibid.

of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King'.²⁹³ The baptised share Jesus' priestly mission by their incorporation into Christ, uniting themselves with him and his sacrifice on the cross in offering themselves and their daily activities to the Lord. They share in Christ's prophetic mission when they accept the Gospel and 'proclaim it in word and deed, without hesitating to courageously identify and denounce evil'.²⁹⁴ They are also to witness to their new life in Christ in their family and secular life. And thirdly, the laity share in Christ's kingly mission as they are called to spread that kingdom in history. The three sacraments of initiation into the faith, Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist, confer the strength and grace to live this threefold mission. It is given to each person and to all persons who make up the Body of Christ.

Christifideles Laici reiterated that the laity's co-responsibility for the Church's evangelizing mission is by virtue of their baptism, shared with but distinct from the vocational call of ordained ministers and professed religious.²⁹⁵ It notes that the Christian person is called to a life of holiness, and for the lay person this call to holiness involves 'involvement in temporal affairs and in their participation in earthly activities' [emphasis in original].²⁹⁶ The full dignity of the lay faithful, summed up in *Christifideles Laici*, is the 'vocation to holiness, the perfection of charity',²⁹⁷ encapsulated in the third principle of evangelization in this thesis.

Pope John Paul II drew attention to two temptations he believes the laity have been unable to avoid, namely, prioritising their interest in Church services and activities to such an extent that they fail to undertake their responsibilities in the world, and separating their acceptance of faith from incorporating the Gospel into their daily living in the professional, social, cultural and political world.²⁹⁸ Lay women and men are not to seek to imitate those in ordained ministry but to work alongside them, being open to the charisms given by the Holy Spirit for the particular mission to which he or she is called. In particular, it was noted that the Synod voiced 'a critical judgment' of a

too-indiscriminate use of the word 'ministry, the confusion and the equating of the common priesthood and the ministerial priesthood, the lack of observance of ecclesiastical laws and norms, the arbitrary interpretation of the concept of 'supply',

²⁹³ CL 14.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ CL 15.

²⁹⁶ CL 17.

²⁹⁷ CL 16.

²⁹⁸ CL 2.

the tendency towards a ‘clericalization’ of the lay faithful and the risk of creating, in reality, an ecclesial structure of parallel service to that founded on the Sacrament of Orders.²⁹⁹

An innovation with respect to the co-responsibility of the lay faithful in the Church’s mission came in Chapter 3 of *Christifideles Laici*, which recognised ‘a *new era of group endeavours* of the lay faithful’ [emphasis in original], evident in the ‘movements and new sodalities’ that have grown up, sometimes alongside and sometimes from within traditional associations’.³⁰⁰ This specific development in the life and mission of the Church is discussed in Chapter 5.

In *Deus Caritas Est*, Pope Benedict called on all the lay faithful, who are ‘citizens of the State’, to contribute to the just ordering of society in a personal way ‘in the many different economic, social, legislative, administrative and cultural areas, which are intended to promote organically and institutionally the common good’.³⁰¹

In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis includes the laity (as individuals rather than in groups) among those urged to evangelize:

In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients.³⁰²

The Church has continued to call on the new People of God, according to their particular vocation, to be in communion with the Father, Son and Spirit, lived in the Church and in the world.

3.5.5.3 Universal call to holiness leads to the universal call to mission

Pope John Paul II consistently emphasised the universal call to holiness he believed was necessary for the Church to fulfil the Vatican II vision of the Church as communion – ‘a communion of believers, who together form the Body of Christ in the world and who all share, by baptism, in Christ’s triple mission to evangelize, sanctify, and serve’.³⁰³ Further,

²⁹⁹ CL 23.

³⁰⁰ CL 29.

³⁰¹ DCE 29.

³⁰² EG 120.

³⁰³ Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, p. 552.

John Paul II encouraged the faithful to live a spirituality of communion which ‘indicates above all the heart’s contemplation of the mystery of the Trinity dwelling in us, and whose light we must also be able to see shining on the face of the brothers and sisters around us’.³⁰⁴ Therefore, the universal call to holiness, especially among the lay faithful, is reflected in many of Pope John Paul II’s writings. He affirmed that, since the Council, the fruits of the call to holiness of the lay faithful are evident in the active collaboration of priests, religious and laity; more active participation of the laity in the liturgy; additional services provided to the Church by the laity; the new groups, movements and associations that have grown up alongside traditional forms of lay organisation; and the role of women in developing society.³⁰⁵

Further, John Paul II articulates this principle of evangelization in full: that holiness ‘is the greatest testimony of the dignity conferred on a disciple of Christ’.³⁰⁶ Living a holy life must be a foundational presumption and essential condition for all those ‘in fulfilling the mission of salvation within the Church. The Church’s holiness is the hidden source and the infallible measure of the works of the apostolate and of the missionary effort’.³⁰⁷ It is a vocation born of the Trinitarian Godhead. John Paul II insisted that it is a matter of urgency for the Church and the world: ‘Today we have the greatest need of saints whom we must assiduously beg God to raise up’.³⁰⁸ Holiness is attained through a life according to the Spirit, which means in practical terms to

follow and imitate Jesus Christ, in embracing the Beatitudes, in listening and meditating on the Word of God, in conscious and active participation in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church, in personal prayer, in family or in community, in the hunger and thirst for justice, in the practice of the commandment of love in all circumstances of life and service to the brethren, especially the least, the poor and the suffering.³⁰⁹ [emphasis in original]

At the start of the new millennium, Pope John Paul II wrote a ‘song of praise to God’ for the events of the Great Jubilee in the Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*. He invited the People of God to ‘Start Afresh from Christ’,³¹⁰ acknowledging that the ‘programme

³⁰⁴ TMI 43.

³⁰⁵ CL 2.

³⁰⁶ CL 16.

³⁰⁷ CL 17.

³⁰⁸ CL 16.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ NMI, Chapter 3. The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference took this theme of ‘Starting Afresh from Christ’ as the impetus for a Year of Grace which ran from Pentecost 2012 to Pentecost 2013. For more, see www.yearofgrace.catholic.org.au.

for all times', found in scripture and the Church's Tradition, is centred on Christ, and is to be translated into pastoral initiatives that reflect the circumstances of each community.³¹¹ John Paul II stressed that holiness 'remains more than ever an urgent pastoral task'.³¹² He noted that the paths to holiness are personal and called for a genuine 'training in holiness', adapted to people's needs. He also added some new elements to those listed in *Lumen Gentium* regarding what is needed to attain holiness: communities becoming schools of prayer, regular participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, recognising the primacy of grace, listening to and reflecting upon the Word of God, and proclaiming the Word in order to convert hearts to Jesus.³¹³ He taught that all pastoral initiatives are to be set in relation to holiness,³¹⁴ as this will lead to a commitment to mission and evangelization for 'those who have come into genuine contact with Christ cannot keep him for themselves, they must proclaim him'.³¹⁵

While the number of saints in the Church is unknown, Pope John Paul II recognised the holiness of a significant number of men and women during his pontificate, including many laity. He celebrated 147 beatifications, during which he proclaimed 1338 individuals as blessed, and 51 canonisations, thereby giving the universal Church an additional 482 saints.³¹⁶

In 2015, the first married couple was canonised, the holy spouses Louis Martin and Marie-Azélie Guérin, parents of five daughters including Saint Therese of the Child Jesus.³¹⁷ Pope Francis honoured this couple who 'practised Christian service in the family, creating day by day an environment of faith and love which nurtured the vocations of their daughters'.³¹⁸ He also encouraged the universal Church to take renewed notice of the example of Mary Magdalene, who was the first witness to Christ's resurrection and subsequently the one to announce this event to the Apostles, making her the first

³¹¹ NMI 29.

³¹² NMI 30.

³¹³ NMI 31–41.

³¹⁴ NMI 30.

³¹⁵ NMI 40.

³¹⁶ Pope John Paul II, Biography. http://www.vatican.va/special/canonizzazione-27042014/documents/biografia_gpII_canonizzazione_en.html.

³¹⁷ Pope Francis, Homily, Holy Mass and Canonization of the Blesseds, Vincenzo Grossi, Mary of the Immaculate Conception, and Ludovico Martin and Maria Azelia Guerin, 18 October 2015. http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2015/documents/papa-francesco_20151018_omelia-canonizzazioni.html.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

evangelist.³¹⁹ Saint Mary Magdalene will henceforth be recognised with a liturgical Feast rather than a Memorial, to be celebrated by the universal Church on 22 July each year. The rationale is that the Church in the present time is invited to reflect deeply upon ‘the dignity of Woman, on the New Evangelization and on the greatness of the Mystery of Divine Mercy, (and) it seemed right that the example of Saint Mary Magdalene might also fittingly be proposed to the faithful’.³²⁰ Mary Magdalene, who is ‘known as the one who loved Christ and who was greatly loved by Christ’,³²¹ through the witness of her action is therefore an example to the whole people of God of true and authentic evangelization.

Filling a lacuna left in *Gaudium et Spes*, Pope Francis also addressed the evangelizing power of popular piety. He recognised that each culture understands the faith in a particular way, and passes on the faith to its own people in a culturally appropriate way:

One can say that ‘a people continuously evangelizes itself’. Herein lies the importance of popular piety, a true expression of the spontaneous missionary activity of the people of God. This is an ongoing and developing process, of which the Holy Spirit is the principal agent.³²²

3.6 Conclusion

The Second Vatican Council is still bearing fruit in the Church and in the world. The Church understands that ‘the message of the Second Vatican Council has already been welcomed with great accord by the whole Church, and it remains the “Magna Carta” for the future’.³²³ It was anticipated to be ‘a new Pentecost’ for the Church. The celebration of two thousand years of Christianity was the fulfilment of a goal of the Council and of Pope John Paul II. There has been a sustained focus and development of the understanding of Church’s nature and mission as communion. It is evident in the teaching documents of the Church, particularly as they have reiterated that it is Jesus Christ who calls each one into communion with the divine Trinity.

³¹⁹ Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Decree*, 3 June 2016. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/sanctae-m-magdalенаe-decretum_en.pdf

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² EG 122.

³²³ Final Report, 1985 Synod. II, D, 7.

There are many trials facing the world in this present age, as in every age. Ideologies that draw people away from faith in God, such as secularism and relativism, conflicts, and threats to the image of the human person made in the *imago Dei* are all challenges the Church has spoken out about. In the face of all trials, Christ is proclaimed as the source of salvation.

The three key principles of evangelization evident in conciliar teachings have been developed and applied to the ever-changing modern world. It is the encounter with Christ that brings one into the communion of the Godhead and thereby into the communion of the Church. It is Christ who breaks into the world to proclaim the Gospel through the Church and its members, and the Holy Spirit who is the principal agent of evangelization. But then the one evangelized is called to go out and evangelize others. The witness of a holy life and proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ are important in calling others to faith. With each passing decade, the apostolic successors have spoken with increasing urgency about the mission of evangelization, calling for a New Evangelization and for the faithful to be missionary disciples. The Church must continue to serve the world, and it does this best by being true to her nature: a missionary organism that shares what it has with others, communion with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The next chapter will focus on how the Church communicates Christ, who is the self-communication of God. Since the Second Vatican Council, a theology of communication has developed that follows the trajectory from connection to communication to community to reach communion. Since the earliest times the Church has made use of the prevailing media for the spreading of the Gospel. In the years since the Council there has also been a technological revolution, in which many new forms of media have changed the world in which we live. In making Christ present in the world, the Church has sought to engage with this culture, issuing a significant number of documents in the media, instructing the faithful in the appropriate use of the media, and proclaiming the Gospel through the mass media and digital media.

Chapter 4. Communication as a source of Communion

4.1 Introduction

Jesus Christ is the supreme self-communication of God, revealing the Father.¹ For Jesus, communication is not just sharing ideas and words, but giving the gift of God's perfect love: 'In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins'.² In imitation of Jesus, the Church communicates Christ the Word so that he might break into the world, and every person who encounters him is invited to enter into the love of the Trinity. It is the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, who both reminds the faithful what Jesus has taught and guides the Church in communicating the Good News to all the world. At Pentecost, the Church was commissioned and sent into the world to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ until the end of time; this is the evangelization imperative considered earlier in chapters 2 and 3. It could be said that the Church is itself an act of communication, as she brings about the encounter with Christ and draws the receiver into the Trinity which is a relationship of love.³ The most perfect instance of communication in the Church is in the Eucharistic sacrifice. Thus, communication of the Gospel reflects the Trinitarian, Christological and sacramental elements of communion ecclesiology that have been considered throughout this thesis.

Communicating the Word is understood in Chapter 2 as evangelization, which is a fruit of communion. The Holy Spirit, who emboldened the Apostles to testify to Jesus, continues to give the interior assistance to disciples of all generations who seek to communicate Jesus, by proclamation or witness, in order for the receiver to hear and accept the gift of faith. The faith of the community precedes the faith of the individual who gives witness to the shared faith. When the Word is communicated to a person, the

¹ Jn 14:9. See also Jn 5:19, 10:38, 12:49, 14:11ff, 15:15.

² 1 Jn 4: 9, 10.

³ Antonio Spadaro, *Cybertheology – Thinking Christianity in the Era of the Internet*. Translated by Maria Way (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014) p. 7.

receiver is invited to share in the communion of the Trinity and the communal life of the Church. As the body of Christ grows, communication of the Word is also a source of communion.

The first three chapters of this thesis demonstrated the shifts in ecclesiology culminating in the recovery of communion ecclesiology at the Second Vatican Council. They also outlined the developments in evangelization, noting the changes in the ways the Church communicated with the faithful and shared the Good News of Jesus Christ. In the pre-Vatican II era, communication was directed towards formation; the media were seen as tools of communication through which ideas were passed on. At the beginning of the Second Vatican Council, the Fathers approved a short decree on the media of social communications, *Inter Mirifica*. It was aimed at informing the faithful in the appropriate use of the media, particularly encouraging its employment for evangelization.⁴ In *Inter Mirifica*, the media of the day were identified as the press, radio, television and movies, and the faithful were instructed to choose presentations that are morally upright or demonstrate knowledge, artistic or technical merit, and to avoid those that may lead to spiritual harm or danger and promote what is evil.⁵ These media were seen as being useful for communicating information, and this is how the Church sought to employ them. While it is one of the least known of the conciliar documents, *Inter Mirifica* did call for the annual celebration of World Communications Day, the only such day called for by the Council. This Decree also called for a subsequent, more substantial, pastoral instruction. This later document, *Communio et Progressio*, reflected the communion ecclesiology recovered by the Council and recognised that, through the media, Christ can be proclaimed and the bond of communion increased among the faithful. It demonstrated for the first time the development of a theology of communication in which human contact via communication can lead to community and, ultimately, to communion.

In the post-Vatican II era, the mode of communication has shifted from communicating ideas to facilitating an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ. This has become necessary, given the increasing dechristianisation of the western world. Before the Church can form the faithful, Christ must be communicated. There has also been a revolution in the forms of media available for communication. Pope John Paul II was

⁴ Second Vatican Council, Decree: *Inter Mirifica*, 4 December 1963 (hereafter, IM) 3.
http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19631204_inter-mirifica_en.html

⁵ IM 9.

prophetic in calling for the Church to proclaim Christ through the media, emphasised through his words and deeds. The effects of John Paul II's extensive pastoral activities and travels across the world, discussed briefly in Chapter 3, were amplified by widespread media coverage, which sought to overcome the significant growth of secularisation in the world and increase the visibility of the Church.⁶ As more ways to communicate developed during subsequent pontificates, the media coverage of pastoral activities and travels has continued to expand. The changes in communications media have led to a culture of communication that is changing the world. The Church recognises the need to immerse herself in this culture of communication, and to evangelize from within the culture. The person speaking or acting through the media becomes a mediator for the encounter with Christ. It will also be argued that the invention of the Internet and the subsequent explosion of digital media platforms represent a further shift in the media culture – almost as significant as the invention of the printing press – such that there now exists a culture of digital communication. The Church continues to orient her communication efforts to building communion, and therefore reflects communion ecclesiology in action.

4.2 What is the 'media of social communication'?

The term 'media of social communication' was prophetically introduced in the conciliar decree *Inter Mirifica*.⁷ It named the most important of the inventions, including the press, movies, radio, television and the like, that 'can, of their very nature, reach and influence, not only individuals, but the very masses and the whole of human society, and thus can rightly be called the media of social communication'.⁸ Franz-Joseph Eilers SVD notes that the term social communication is broad and 'includes all forms and ways of communicating in human society from traditional forms like storytelling, rumor, drama, dance and music to the Internet and cyberspace'.⁹ He goes on to state that '[w]ith this, a fixation on only or mainly Mass Media is overcome and the ground was prepared for a broader understanding of communication as a happening and expression of human society in general'.¹⁰

⁶ Paul Anyidoho, 'Pope John Paul II and Media Effects Theory: Audiences and Messages Interface', p. 9.

⁷ Franz-Josef Eilers SVD, *Church and Social Communication. 40 Years of Inter Mirifica and Beyond*, p. 3. <http://www.intermirifica50.va/content/dam/pccs/pdf/Inter%20mirifica%2040th%20anniversary.PDF>

⁸ IM 1.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Eilers, *Church and Social Communication*, p. 3.

In every age, the Church has communicated the Good News of Jesus Christ through use of the media of the time.¹¹ In biblical times St Paul was revealed as the great communicator, who knew that personal preaching was effective but who also understood that a letter read in a Church assembly and then repeatedly copied and shared could be more effective in spreading the Christian message. He therefore wrote letters to the communities to which he was reaching out. These letters were to build up the community, form the faithful and assist them to overcome challenges within the community. In a letter to the church at Colossae, for example, Paul asked the community to share his letter with another church in Laodicea, saying: ‘And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the Church of the Laodiceans; and see that you read also the letter from Laodicea’.¹² The Pauline letters are part of sacred scripture and continue to inspire and form the faithful to the present day. This form of communication, of ideas and information being spoken or read in a communal setting, was the primary communication tool until the fifteenth century. It is still in use today.

The first major communications shift came with the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in the mid-fifteenth century. Following this invention, and the printing of his 42-line bible in 1455, religious tracts were quickly written, copied, and widely disseminated. The result was that ‘[t]he focus shifted from listening to the spoken word to reading, from the community to the individual, and from concrete images to abstract theology’.¹³ Newspapers began to circulate at the beginning of the eighteenth century, with magazines being created later in that century. At the end of the nineteenth century, Guglielmo Marconi developed a new technology called radio.¹⁴ The emergence of the film industry in the early twentieth century saw the advent of the motion picture, with sound subsequently added to the pictures. This was made available in miniature with the development of television, whereby individuals or small groups could receive programming in their own homes.

At the end of the twentieth century a media revolution occurred, with the arrival of the Internet and its World Wide Web. The Internet has revolutionised the use of computers, including hand-held devices, smartphones and tablets which allow people to be connected

¹¹ EN 45 noted that for effective evangelization, the prevailing means of social communications use must be utilised. See also Pontifical Council for Social Communications, *Ethics in Communications*, 2002, 3.

¹² Col 4:16.

¹³ Brandon Vogt, *The Church and New Media* (Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2011) p. 15.

¹⁴ Vatican Radio website, About Us: Vatican Radio, <http://en.radiovaticana.va/>. This specifically details the creation of Vatican Radio in 1931.

just about anywhere, at any time. Newcomers like Netflix, Apple TV and iView have transformed people's viewing habits so that television programs can be watched via the web at almost any time. At the beginning of the new millennium, 'New Media' (or 'digital media') platforms emerged – including blogs, email, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram as well as applications (or 'apps'). With the advent of New Media, a person can be both consumer and producer.

The use of the media in communicating Christ the Word has changed significantly since the early twentieth century, due to the impetus given by the Second Vatican Council and the recovery of communion ecclesiology, as well as the revolution which has taken place in the nature of the media of social communication. Pope John Paul II, in particular, made a significant contribution to broadening the Church's understanding of and use of the media of social communications. For the media can be effective in sharing the Good News, as well as creating an environment of belonging where there was no previous belonging. This element of forming sociality is readily seen in the use of terms such as 'social networking', or being 'connected' online. Spadaro explains that 'Social networks are not an ensemble of individuals, but an ensemble of relationships between individuals... The key concept is no longer merely *presence* on the Web but *connection*' [emphasis in original].¹⁵

Hereafter, the term 'media' will be used as a shorthand for the multiform media of social communications available, up to and including the media in popular use in 2017. Once considered tools of communication that had the potential to be used for communicating the Gospel, they are now part of the culture in which Christ must be proclaimed so that new generations can encounter Christ and be drawn into the communion of the Trinity and the communion of the Church.

4.3 Communication that builds communion

The essence of communion ecclesiology recovered by the Council described previously is that Christ makes the invisible God visible and reveals the communion of divine love of the Trinitarian Godhead, a communion into which humanity is drawn. The Pastoral Instruction *Communio et Progressio* is fully imbued with communion ecclesiology. It is the first of the Church's documents on the media in which a theology of communion is evident, underpinned, according to Daniella Zsupan-Jerome, by the Trinitarian dimension

¹⁵ Spadaro, *Cybertheology*, p. 30.

of communion. Thus, *Communio et Progressio* takes the ‘potential of human contact as a starting point on the trajectory from connection to communication to community to communion’.¹⁶ It recognised in a positive light the means of social communications and the new instruments developed through technological advances that ‘have the higher purpose of bringing people together into closer contact with one another’.¹⁷ As has already been mentioned, communication is more than the conveying of ideas and sharing emotions; ‘at its most profound level it is the giving of self in love’.¹⁸ The most wonderful example of communication is the Eucharist; in the sacrament of his body and blood, ‘Christ gave us the most perfect and most intimate form of communion between God and man possible in this life, and, out of this, the deepest possible unity between men’.¹⁹ This theological articulation of communion, introduced in *Communio et Progressio*, reflects the Trinitarian, Christological and sacramental elements dimensions of communion.

Three significant theological concepts are used in this pastoral instruction to move from connection to communion: creativity, Trinity and the image of Christ as Perfect Communicator.²⁰ First, the movement from human connectedness to communion is stirred by ‘the human spirit in cooperation with God’.²¹ The human person, because of their creation as *imago Dei*, in the image and likeness of God, has the capacity for creativity and generativity.²² Drawing on *Gaudium et Spes* 34, *Communio et Progressio* recognises the creativity of man, who is working to improve the living conditions for his fellow man, using science and technology to achieve this:

The Christian vision of man, of his motives and of his history, sees in this development a response – though usually an unconscious one – to the divine command to ‘possess and master the world’. It also sees it as an act of cooperation in the divine work of creation and conservation.²³

It is within this vision that the media of social communications find their proper place, with mankind invited to share in God’s creative work through technological innovation, thereby bringing the means of social communications into the divine plan.

¹⁶ Zsupan-Jerome, Daniella. *Connected Toward Communion: The church and social communication in the Digital Age*, p. 47.

¹⁷ CP 6.

¹⁸ CP 11.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, pp. 47–54.

²¹ Ibid., p. 48.

²² Gen 1:27.

²³ CP 7.

Secondly, the foundation of community and communion is the Trinitarian God – the communion of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. *Communio et Progressio* encapsulates this when it states: ‘In the Christian faith, the unity and brotherhood of man are the chief aims of all communication and these find their source and model in the central mystery of the eternal communion between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit who live a single divine life’.²⁴ This Trinitarian communion is both the foundation and fulfilment of human communication, and thus serves as ‘the fundamental theological standard of social communication’.²⁵ Zsupan-Jerome includes a reference to theologian Bernard Häring’s explanation of the Trinitarian dimension of communication in which Häring explores God’s essence as communication and communion between Father, Son and Spirit:

Jesus, the word incarnate, reveals the divine life as communication, sharing. He prays: ‘All that is mine is thine, and what is thine in mine’ (John 17:10). His sharing of himself and of all the truth arises from the total sharing between the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is sharing, communication... Communication is constitutive in the mystery of God. Each of the three Divine Persons possesses all that is good, all that is true, and all that is beautiful, but in the modality of communion and communication. Creation, redemption and communication arise from this mystery and have as their final purpose to draw us, by this very communication, into communion with God. Creating us in his image and likeness, God makes us sharers of his creative and liberating communication in communion, through communion and in view of communion.²⁶

The Trinitarian communion is revealed by the sharing and communication of the Son and the Spirit. One who encounters Christ through communication is drawn into the communion of the Trinity. That same communion is shared among the faithful leading to communion lived in the Church.

Thirdly, Christ is identified as ‘The Perfect Communicator’²⁷ in *Communio et Progressio*. As the incarnate Son of God and Son of Man, Jesus ‘utterly identified Himself with those who were to receive His communication’, with his message being conveyed not only in his words but also in his deeds and the way he lived his life.²⁸ He preached the message of salvation unflinchingly with boldness and courage. He spoke the words people needed to

²⁴ CP 8.

²⁵ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 49.

²⁶ Bernard Häring, ‘Ethics of Communication’ in *Free and Faithful in Christ* (New York: Seabury Press, 1979) p. 155. Cited in Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 50.

²⁷ CP 11.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

hear according to their way of thinking. And he addressed the issues of the day.²⁹ Zsupan-Jerome notes that ‘Christ the Perfect Communicator already embodies the message: his very being is communion of human and divine, immanent and transcendent, historical and eternal’.³⁰ She further comments that Christ the Perfect Communicator ‘is a symbol of the Good News, the preverbal articulation of the Gospel before it is actually made explicit by his life, ministry, and legacy’.³¹ Because Christ took on human nature, he is able to draw humankind into the divine life. Zsupan-Jerome notes that

Christ’s incarnation *is* the engaging invitation to humankind: in taking on human nature, Christ seeks to bring humankind into the divine, eternal communication of Father, Son and Spirit. As such, the Word of the incarnation brings a message that is wholly, perfectly, and fully aimed at communion.³²

Communion ecclesiology thus underpins the theology of communication first presented in *Communio et Progressio*, acknowledging that Jesus Christ showed mankind by the example of his life that communication is the gift of self in love, which leads to communion between mankind and God and unity among men. The divine communication among the Persons of the Trinity, and of Christ the Perfect Communicator, also indicates what the fullness of human communication can be. *Communio et Progressio* was acknowledged in subsequent teaching documents on media as being ‘the norm and model for the Church’s approach to communications’,³³ which is directed towards evangelization, the communication of the Good News of Jesus Christ that is ‘the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity’.³⁴

4.4 Pre-Vatican II

4.4.1 Church teaching on media, including formation of the faithful

It was not until the first half of the twentieth century that one of the first magisterial teachings on the mass media was given, and it was concerned with the formation of the faithful. In 1936, in response to the proliferation of films and the expansion of the motion

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 53.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 52.

³³ Pontifical Council for Social Communications, Pastoral Instruction: *The Church and Internet*, 28 February 2002 (hereafter, CI) 12.

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_20020228_church-internet_en.html

³⁴ EN 14.

picture industry, Pope Pius XI sent an Encyclical Letter titled *Vigilanti Cura* to the Church hierarchy of the United States of America. He requested that the Bishops of the world undertake ‘painstaking vigilance’ over the motion picture industry, in order to ‘accomplish a great work for the protection of the morality of their people in their hours of leisure and recreation’ with the effect of winning the approval of all men of goodwill.³⁵ This was reflective of the Church’s defensiveness and introversion still evident from the Council of Trent, which was described in Chapter 1. On a more positive note, Pius XI believed the Church’s vigilance was necessary to ‘assure a great international force – the motion picture – shall be directed towards the noble end of promoting the highest ideals and the truest standards of life’.³⁶ He also requested that episcopal conferences establish national offices to promote appropriate study and use of films.

His successor, Pope Pius XII, established the Pontifical Commission for the Study and Ecclesiastical Evaluation of Films on Religious or Moral Subjects, under the Secretariat of State, in January 1948. In September that same year, the pope approved the statutes of this curial office, which he renamed as the Pontifical Commission for Educational and Religious Films. Pius XII addressed the faithful about motion pictures, radio and television in his Encyclical Letter *Miranda Prorsus* in 1957. The encyclical sought to provide directions and instructions regarding both radio and television, encouraging the bishops to make appropriate plans and take actions to ensure that the faithful ‘should be protected against any errors and harm from whatever source, which the use of the arts under discussion can introduce – with serious risk – to the practices of Christian life’.³⁷ The practice established with this encyclical of the Church recognising both the positive and negative aspects of the communications media continues to the present day.

4.4.2 Communicating through the media

The Catholic Church was one of the first to communicate through the medium of radio as a means of formation for the already baptised, as well as forming new Christians. One of the earliest examples was in Australia where local priest Dr Leslie Rumble MSC provided a Christian presence on radio from 1928, shortly before the International Eucharistic Congress in Sydney.³⁸ Alan Gill, religious affairs journalist for the Sydney Morning

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Alan Gill, ‘The Turbulent Years of Doctor Rumble’, in *Compass Review*, vol. 46, no. 1 (2012) p. 14.

Herald for seventeen years, recounts the story that someone called at St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney and asked what a 'eucalyptus congress' was, prompting Congress organisers to arrange for the priest to appear on radio station 2UE and explain all about the 'Eucharistic Congress'.³⁹ Dr Rumble's early radio program became known as Question Box and lasted four years. In 1932, the program was transferred to the newly established 2SM – owned by the Archdiocese of Sydney – where it continued for a further 36 years.⁴⁰

The American evangelist Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen began hosting the weekly radio program *Catholic Hour* in 1930,⁴¹ while the Vatican's own radio station came into being in 1931, 'established by Guglielmo Marconi and inaugurated by Pope Pius XI [Radio message *Qui arcano Dei*] on February 12th 1931'.⁴² With this new medium, Pius XI was able to communicate the message of Christ 'to all nations and to every creature'.⁴³ By virtue of its statutes, Vatican Radio 'is the broadcasting station of the Holy See, legally based in the Vatican City State. It is a means of communication and evangelization created to serve the Pope's Ministry'.⁴⁴ Pius XI blessed the equipment of Vatican Radio, saying: 'bless this series of machines that serve to transmit into the waves of the ether so that, communicating the apostolic word even to peoples far away, we will be united with you in one family'.⁴⁵ Antonio Spadaro suggests that this is evidence that the pope already had in mind the virtual community mediated by technology.⁴⁶ Vatican Radio's motto is 'the voice of the Pope and the Church in dialogue with the world'⁴⁷ and it is still operating, broadcasting its programs in 45 languages.

The Vatican's first foray into transmitting information to journalists occurred on 20 February 1939, with the creation of an Information Office as part of the newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*.⁴⁸ The daily paper, founded in 1861 – even before the First

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Dr Rumble's *Radio Replies* were re-printed and slightly expanded in Church newspapers and in four book versions (the latest issued only in 2010) that achieved a staggering circulation of more than seven million copies. Gill credits Dr Rumble as being 'the world's first regular priest-broadcaster, author, and for nearly half a century the English-speaking world's most outspoken apologist for the Roman Catholic faith'.

⁴¹ Vogt, *The Church and New Media*, p. 16.

⁴² Vatican Radio website, About Us.

⁴³ Pius XII, Encyclical: *Miranda Prorsus*.

⁴⁴ Vatican Radio website, About Us.

⁴⁵ Spadaro, *Cybertheology*, p. 112, note 7.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Historical notes in *Annuario Pontificio* (2001) pp. 1619–620, cited at

http://www.vatican.va/news_services/press/documentazione/documents/sala-stampa/profilo_en.html.

Vatican Council – is ‘both for the purpose of documentation and commentary on all papal texts and documents of the Holy See in Italian as well as in the original languages in which they were spoken or written’.⁴⁹ *L’Osservatore Romano* continues to be published daily and is now available in a number of languages: an English edition was created in 1968, and there are also editions in French (1949), Italian (1949), Spanish (1969), Portuguese (1970), German (1971), Polish (1980) and Malayalam, for readers in India (2017). The newspaper launched its first local edition in 2016, published in Spanish for Argentinian readers.⁵⁰ *L’Osservatore Romano* thus remains an important tool for communicating the message of the Church to the world.

4.5 Vatican II

Upholding the Christian tradition, the Second Vatican Council reiterated that God’s self-communication is expressed through the person of Jesus Christ, who is both its mediator and fulfilment.⁵¹ When Vatican II came to consider communication for the formation of the faithful, it was drawing on the teaching of several earlier councils mentioned earlier. In many of its proclamations, the Second Vatican Council paraphrased what had been taught in previous centuries, and in all its declarations sought to avoid opposing any previous teaching.⁵² The documents of Vatican II imply the continued reliance on traditional channels of communication within the Church, namely papal encyclicals, decrees of curial congregations, pastoral letters and general catechetical instruction, seminary formation and homilies, with the understanding that these are still appropriate and valuable means of communicating to members of the faithful.⁵³

The Council, which saw the recovery of the communion ecclesiology, also introduced a significant change in communication within the liturgy. In the constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, provision was made for the use of the language of the people in the liturgy. This included in the Mass and the administration of the sacraments, in the readings and directives, and in some of the prayers and chants.⁵⁴ In this way, the Church began to communicate with the faithful in their own language, which, for many, was more accessible than Latin, the institutional language of the Church for 1500 years.

⁴⁹ *L’Osservatore Romano* website, <http://www.osservatoreromano.va/en/pages/the-newspaper>.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ DV 2.

⁵² Dulles, *The Reshaping of Catholicism*, p. 111.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ SC 36 (2).

4.5.1 Church teaching on media

A document on the media was not foreshadowed in the early preparations for the Council following Pope John XXIII's announcement in June 1959. After some deliberations, however, a Secretariat was established to consider the 'modern means of the apostolate'⁵⁵ and commissioned to draft a document for consideration at the Council.⁵⁶ Originally consisting of 114 paragraphs, the draft schema was presented to the Council Fathers after their consideration of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. After little more than three sessions, it was proposed to 'accept the document in principle but to reduce it to the essentials, and ask for a more extensive pastoral instruction to be published at a later stage'.⁵⁷ The approved version of the Decree *Inter Mirifica* has only 24 paragraphs, and became the second document promulgated by the Second Vatican Council.

Inter Mirifica begins with a positive understanding of the new technologies, noting that 'the Church welcomes and promotes with special interest those which have a most direct relationship to men's minds and which have uncovered new avenues of communicating most readily news, views and teachings of every sort'.⁵⁸ The Decree recognises both the positive and negative contributions of the media to the world, and teaches that the 'duty to preach the news of redemption' is 'the specific and proper concern of the Church with respect to the media'.⁵⁹ The document follows with some practical doctrinal foundations that flow from this vision, reiterating the Church's ethical principles on

the moral order, the formation of conscience, the common good, justice, and freedom, especially as all of these pertain to the creation, sharing, access to, and dissemination of information through the instruments of social communication.⁶⁰

Zsupan-Jerome notes that a theology of communication is not yet developed among these doctrinal principles.⁶¹

⁵⁵ Eilers, *Church and Social Communication*, p. 1.

⁵⁶ Pope John XXIII, Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio: *Superno Dei Nutu*, 5 June 1960, 8. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/es/apost_letters/1960/documents/hf_j-xxiii_apl_19600605_superno-dei.html. This document, instituting the Preparatory Commissions for the Second Vatican Council, is available in Latin and Spanish.

⁵⁷ Eilers, *Church and Social Communication*, p. 1.

⁵⁸ IM 1.

⁵⁹ Richard John Neuhaus, 'The Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication, *Inter Mirifica*', in Lamb & Levering (eds.), *Vatican II: Renewal Within Tradition*, p. 356.

⁶⁰ Zsupan-Jerome. *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 28.

⁶¹ Ibid.

Inter Mirifica was viewed negatively at the beginning; in fact, it was largely ignored, and, therefore, is probably the least known of the conciliar documents. It is known for instituting the celebration of World Communications Day, to be held in every diocese, ‘on which the faithful are instructed in their responsibilities’⁶² with regard to the means of social communications. *Inter Mirifica* 19 also proposed, in recognition of the growing importance of the means of social communications, that the already established Pontifical Commission for Film, Radio and Television be enlarged to encompass all the means of social communications.⁶³ The Commission was renamed the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications and the press was included as part of its work for the first time. Clerical as well as lay media experts from around the world were named to the Commission to share their expertise in educating the faithful in their use of the media and in furthering the Church’s engagement with and through the media.

Franz-Josef Eilers points out that the decree remains a solid base for action and structure, but it ‘demands further efforts, especially in the field of formation, considering the communication dimension in *all* pastoral and missionary activities and as an integral part of Christian life, proclamation and theology’ [emphasis in original].⁶⁴ Antonio Spadaro believes that the promulgation of *Inter Mirifica* was ‘a crucial moment in the spiritual understanding of the new technologies’.⁶⁵ For Father Richard John Neuhaus, the key point of *Inter Mirifica* is that ‘evangelization, as an ongoing task of all Christians, will be carried forth by Christians who are proficient in the instruments of communication precisely through these instruments’.⁶⁶

Two years after *Inter Mirifica* was approved, and with the benefit of significant development in the thinking of the Council Fathers, *Gaudium et Spes* addressed the issue of social communications ‘more from the perspective of human society, culture and new technical developments’.⁶⁷ Interestingly, a written intervention made by Bishop Karol Wojtyla [later Pope John Paul II] during the discussion on *Inter Mirifica* in November 1962 had proposed ‘to also consider the importance of culture for communication’.⁶⁸ This

⁶² IM 18.

⁶³ This was decreed by Pope Paul VI in the Motu Proprio *In Fructibus Multis* on 2 April 1964. http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/it/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19640402_in-fructibus-multis.html.

⁶⁴ Eilers, *Church and Social Communication*, p. 6.

⁶⁵ Spadaro, *Cybertheology*, p. 9.

⁶⁶ Lamb & Levering (eds.), *Vatican II: Renewal Within Tradition*, p. 16.

⁶⁷ Eilers, *Church and Social Communication*, p. 5.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

idea found its way into *Gaudium et Spes*, with Chapter 2 specifically considering the development of culture, particularly emphasising the positive contribution of modern media.⁶⁹ The chapter opens by recognising ‘a new age of human history’⁷⁰ because of the profound changes in social and cultural aspects of the life of humanity. It goes on:

New ways are open, therefore, for the perfection and the further extension of culture. These ways have been prepared by the enormous growth of natural, human and social sciences, by technical progress, and advances in developing and organizing means whereby men can communicate with one another.⁷¹

Further, *Gaudium et Spes* recognises that opportunities for development of culture ‘are to be found also in the societies of today, due especially to the increased circulation of books and to the new means of cultural and social communication, which can foster a universal culture’.⁷² This theme, of the effect of culture for communication, has been significantly developed in the post-conciliar period. It is closely linked with the developments in evangelizing the culture detailed in Chapter 3 and will be further addressed in this chapter and again in Chapter 5.

Other conciliar documents in which there is at least a passing reference to the communications media include the Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis*, which encourages the permeation of the educational media by a more Catholic spirit,⁷³ while the Decree *Optatam Totius* suggests that the means of social communications might be used favourably to promote vocations to the priesthood.⁷⁴ The Decree *Christus Dominus*, which details the role of the bishop as minister of the word, declares that the various media should be employed for the proclamation of the Gospel, both for preaching and doctrinal instruction.⁷⁵

4.5.2 Communicating through the media

When the Council began, Vatican Radio and *L’Osservatore Romano* were the main channels of communication for the Church. There were no specific resources devoted to communicating through the secular media. But, as noted in Chapter 2, the Second Vatican

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 5.

⁷⁰ GS 4.

⁷¹ GS 54.

⁷² GS 61.

⁷³ Second Vatican Council, Declaration: *Gravissimum Educationis*, 28 October 1965, 4. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm.

⁷⁴ Second Vatican Council, Decree: *Optatam Totius*, 28 October 1965, 2. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm.

⁷⁵ CD 13. See also Dulles, *The Reshaping of Catholicism*, pp. 122, 123.

Council received intense media scrutiny. It was both the most widely reported ecumenical council ever held and one of the two most extensively reported major international events at the time. Few journalists covering the Council had any expertise in Catholic theology and, consequently, relied upon the popularised accounts of the Council's deliberations and debates offered by *periti* and theologians with journalistic skills. Yet it was not until 1964, under Pope Paul VI, that a 'Council Committee for the Press' was constituted.⁷⁶ This Committee 'set to work, with notable success, to improve relations immediately between the Council and the world of news and journalism'.⁷⁷ It ensured a greater flow of information, first to journalists and, through them, to the public, and was a clear indicator that the Council, and the Church generally, was no longer hidden away.

4.6 Post-Vatican II – Development of a media culture

Three and a half years after the Council promulgated *Inter Mirifica*, on 7 May 1967, the first of the annual World Communications Day celebrations was held. In his message for the Day, Pope Paul VI reiterated the definition of media from *Inter Mirifica* as the press, motion pictures, radio and television, indicating that these 'form one of the most characteristic notes of modern civilization'.⁷⁸ While this message reflected the practice of balancing 'admiration and satisfaction' with 'cause for reflection and concern',⁷⁹ introduced by Pius XI in *Vigilanti Cura*, it showed a greater openness to the positive impact of the media than in the years before the Council. The message also gave due credit to the means of social communication for contributing 'to the enrichment of culture, to the spread of various artistic forms, to recreation, to mutual knowledge and understanding among peoples and also towards the spread of the Gospel message'.⁸⁰ Since then, the Church has continued to reflect that communication forms a central part of her mission and contributes to building communion.

The development in the means of social communications has led to specific changes to human culture and learning. Dr Gan refers to the present era as the *media age*, noting that

⁷⁶ Pontifical Council for Social Communications, A Brief Outline and History of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_pro_14101999_en.html. This operated under the direction of the President of the Pontifical Commission for the Cinema, Radio and Television (later the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Pope Paul VI, World Communications Day Message: *Church and Social Communications; First World Communications Day*, 7 May 1967.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

these times are different to those that have gone before. He suggests that the media age incorporates and supersedes what has come before: the *oral age* and the *literate age*.

The oral age was ‘where nearly all knowledge was communicated through seeing, hearing and touching’.⁸¹ Knowledge was memorised rather than analysed and learning took place in a communal setting. In the literate age, which came with the invention of the printing press, ‘knowledge was primarily communicated through the written word’ and, in order to share knowledge with another, logical and sequential thinking was necessary.⁸² Learning was more solitary. During the oral and literate ages, the Church had the practice of using media as a tool for communication of ideas and evangelization.

The third age, the media age, integrates the two that preceded it. Gan notes that participation and community-based learning have again become integral to passing on knowledge.

Discussion, debate and talking ideas through with others play a greater role in classrooms, as well as in online communities. The written word is still important, but accompanied by videos, interactive presentations, music and forums where they can discuss and interact.⁸³

Engaging the visual and auditory senses has again become important in communication practices. He also remarks on the engagement of the senses for learning: ‘Through media, sensorial experiences have again come to play a major role in how we acquire knowledge. We still learn through reading, but we also learn through watching, listening to and interacting with media’.⁸⁴ In the media age, the person doing the communicating becomes important, leading discussions and forming communities for learning. It is also in this culture that the encounter with Christ comes through the encounter with a person, a form of communion ecclesiology in action. The all-pervading presence of media signifies the development of a culture in which communication and evangelization take place.

In this section, which draws heavily on Church teaching, the influence of Pope John Paul II is evident. A contributing factor is the length of John Paul II’s papacy, but important too is that his papacy came at a time of significant change in ecclesiology and communication, and that he made a decisive contribution towards the change and the

⁸¹ Gan, *Infinite Bandwidth*, p. 120.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 120, 121.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Church's response. Paul Anyidoho comments that Pope John Paul II in fact 'developed systematic reflections for social communications' and, in these, he 'considered all Catholics as agents to provide the Gospel to the world through the modern media, as a continuation of the prophetic (teaching), priestly (consecrating) and kingly (governing) roles of Christ'.⁸⁵

4.6.1 Church teaching on media

The Pastoral Instruction *Communio et Progressio* set a new benchmark in Church teaching on the media. It is a 'more extensive and pastoral instruction to be worked out by professionals',⁸⁶ and its very title recognises and promotes the communion and advancement of mankind that can be achieved through the means of social communications. As described earlier in this chapter, it reflects a theology of communication in which communication leads to communion. It was ordered by the Second Vatican Council to 'ensure that all the principles and rules of the Council on the means of social communications be put into effect'.⁸⁷ Cardinal Andrzej Deskur, president emeritus of the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications, believed that *Communio et Progressio* was 'so closely aligned with the work of the council that it could be regarded as Vatican II's last document'.⁸⁸ Through reflection on specific documents of the Council, *Communio et Progressio* offers 'a deeper and more penetrating understanding of social communication and of the contribution which the media it uses can make to modern society'.⁸⁹ This Pastoral Instruction, therefore, aids in understanding and interpreting the conciliar Decree *Inter Mirifica*.

Communio et Progressio sets out basic doctrinal principles regarding the media (6–18), and it is here that reference is first made to Christ as the Perfect Communicator. This is followed with general pastoral guidelines (19–100) taken from the starting point of the contribution of communications media to human progress rather than the rights and obligations of the Church. It goes on to address the commitment of Catholics in using the media (101–180).

⁸⁵ Anyidoho, 'Pope John Paul II and Media Effects Theory', p. 9.

⁸⁶ Eilers, *Church and Social Communication*, p. 2.

⁸⁷ IM 23.

⁸⁸ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 40.

⁸⁹ CP 2 noted the conciliar documents referenced in addition to *Inter Mirifica* are *Gaudium et Spes*, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, *Dignitatis Humanae*, *Ad Gentes* and *Christus Dominus*.

The human communication practices envisioned in Part 2 of *Communio et Progressio* offer wisdom for the activity of the Church as well. Specifically, the implications for evangelization are dealt with in the section on ‘the use of the media for giving the good news’.⁹⁰ It begins with Jesus’ command to ‘the Apostles and their successors to “teach all nations”, to be “the light of the world” and to “announce the Good News in all places and at all times”’.⁹¹ Once again mention is made of Christ as the communicator par excellence, and of the Apostles who ‘used what means of social communications were available in their time’.⁹² The Pastoral Instruction speaks of the necessity of the same message being carried by the present means of social communication, noting that

it would be difficult to suggest that Christ’s command was being obeyed unless all the opportunities offered by the modern media to extend to vast numbers of people the announcement of His Good News were being used.⁹³

Communio et Progressio concludes by posing the question as to whether the future of social communications would be marked by ‘an utterly new sort of era’ or ‘merely a change in degree and not in kind’.⁹⁴ As a result, rather than being more precise and detailed, the document considered ‘the general situation that prevails in social communication’.⁹⁵ It was prophetic in recognising the potential advent of a new era in communications, which has, in fact, come to pass in recent decades.

To achieve the important task of engaging and evangelizing the media culture, Pope John Paul II elevated the Commission to a Council, re-named it the Pontifical Council for Social Communications (PCCS) and charged it with continuing the dialogue.⁹⁶ On the twentieth anniversary of *Communio et Progressio*, the PCCS published the Pastoral

⁹⁰ CP 126–134.

⁹¹ CP 126.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ CP 181.

⁹⁵ CP 183.

⁹⁶ Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution: *Pastor Bonus*, 28 June 1988 (hereafter, PB).

http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_19880628_pastor-bonus.html. Previously a Pontifical Commission, it was given an expanded role to include teaching, and elevated to the status of Council such that it became known by the Latin name of *Pontificium Concilium de Communicationibus Socialibus*, this giving the initials PCCS. According to Article 169, the PCCS is involved in matters concerning the means of social communications such that they contribute towards human progress and evangelization of cultures.

Instruction *Aetatis Novae*.⁹⁷ This ‘commemorative addendum’⁹⁸ featured quotes from a number of past documents on the media and, being shorter than *Communio et Progressio*, offers a succinct summary.⁹⁹ *Aetatis Novae* acknowledges that the capacity for human communication enabled by technological advances is influencing culture everywhere. Revolutionary technological changes have seen the emergence of new telecommunications and media technologies, including satellites, cable television, fibre optics, computerised image making and other computer and digital technology.¹⁰⁰

Aetatis Novae works from ‘a keen awareness of media not as tools for communication, but as a comprehensive, thought-shaping, and culture-making reality of our time’.¹⁰¹ This is reflected in the Introduction: ‘today, much that men and women know and think about life is conditioned by the media; to a considerable extent, human experience itself is an experience of the media.’¹⁰² Zsupan-Jerome notes that this statement ‘hints at the fundamental theological principle of mediation that is at the heart of revelation, our experiences of faith and even the concept of sacramentality... In a Christian sense, all human experience is mediated’.¹⁰³

Aside from noting developments over the twenty years since *Communio et Progressio*, *Aetatis Novae* includes a section on ‘The Work of the Means of Social Communications’ (6–11), which reiterates the emphasis in the earlier document on the trajectory from communication to community and communion. *Aetatis Novae* also echoes *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and *Redemptoris Missio* in including media among the traditional means of evangelization, alongside witness of life, catechesis, personal contact, popular piety and the liturgy.¹⁰⁴ But it is the first of the Church’s teaching documents on media to include

⁹⁷ Pontifical Council for Social Communications, Pastoral Instruction *Aetatis Novae*, 22 February 1992 (hereafter, AN).

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_22021992_aetatis_en.html

⁹⁸ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 82.

⁹⁹ AN is an ecclesial document signed by the President of the PCCS. Zsupan-Jerome remarks on p. 82 of *Connected toward Communion* that ‘In contrast with *Communio et Progressio*, *Aetatis Novae* does not come with a new papal endorsement, indicating perhaps that as a commemorative edition, *Aetatis Novae* is not to be read apart from *Communio et Progressio*, and thus implicitly carries on that older document’s mission, purpose, and approval’.

¹⁰⁰ AN 2.

¹⁰¹ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 82, 83.

¹⁰² AN 2.

¹⁰³ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 83.

¹⁰⁴ AN 11.

a reference to new evangelization and catechesis.¹⁰⁵ It also echoes *Redemptoris Missio* in acknowledging that, given the all-pervasive communications culture that has developed, the media are no longer considered mere tools of evangelization, but as a comprehensive cultural reality.¹⁰⁶ For *Aetatis Novae* states:

It is not enough to use the media simply to spread the Christian message and the Church's authentic teaching... Today's evangelization ought to well up from the Church's active, sympathetic presence within the world of communications.¹⁰⁷

Thus, evangelization and communication are presented as essential elements of Church and society, rather than just specific tools or aspects of them. *Aetatis Novae* concludes with sections on Pastoral Priorities and Responses¹⁰⁸ and The Need for Pastoral Planning,¹⁰⁹ calling for pastoral planning in the 'great contemporary "Areopagus" of mass media',¹¹⁰ as well as the appropriate resourcing and prioritising of the communications apostolate, including financially, at all levels of the Church. This must be done with a sense of urgency, for 'today the Spirit helps the Church interpret the signs of the times and carry out its prophetic task' which includes the study, evaluation, and appropriate use of communications technology and the media.¹¹¹

4.6.2 Evangelizing in the media culture

Following the general comments in the previous chapter about evangelizing the culture, this section looks at the specific advances in media and communications technologies since the Council that have impacted on the culture of the world. In response, the Church has consistently taught of its own responsibility for evangelizing the media culture through making Christ present in that culture.

In *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Pope Paul VI noted that the Church must continue to evangelize cultures which 'must be regenerated through the encounter with the good news. But this encounter will not be brought about if the good news is not proclaimed'.¹¹² The media

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. See also Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 83. While *Inter Mirifica* notes the Church's duty to proclaim the Good News (IM 2), the term 'evangelization' is not used. *Communio et Progressio* mentions this action of the Church but does not elaborate on it (CP 163).

¹⁰⁶ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 84.

¹⁰⁷ AN 11.

¹⁰⁸ AN 16–19.

¹⁰⁹ AN 20–22.

¹¹⁰ AN 20.

¹¹¹ AN 22.

¹¹² EN 20. This passage was taken up by the Synod Fathers at the Extraordinary Synod in 1985 and is cited in the Final Document, 1985 Synod, II D, 4.

can be used to communicate Christ to lead one to an encounter with him, such that the one who has the encounter can then be drawn into the communion of the Church.

John Paul II insisted in *Redemptoris Missio* that the Church is to bring Christ and his message of salvation into the media culture, directly and famously identifying social communications as ‘the first Areopagus of the modern age’ as it is contributing to the creation of a ‘global village’.¹¹³ In citing the reference to Acts 17:22–34, John Paul II was calling to mind the image of the centre of culture in Athens, at the heart of the ancient Greek world, where ideas and concepts were debated in pursuit of the truth. In his speech in the Areopagus, the apostle Paul sought to explain to those gathered the ‘unknown god’ that they worshipped with altars.¹¹⁴ He introduced them to the concept of the creator God who will stand in judgement of the whole world through his Son, Jesus. Some derided him, some expressed further interest in Paul’s presentation, and some were converted to Christ. Zsupan-Jerome comments that ‘likening the mass media to the Athenian Areopagus acknowledges the media’s sociocultural power as well as its potential openness to the truth of the Gospel’.¹¹⁵

John Paul II exhorted the Church to no longer neglect the media in preference to other ways of preaching and forming the faithful. He emphasised the need for the Church’s message of evangelization to not only be spread by the media, but for the Church to evangelize the modern culture and become immersed in that culture. He noted in *Redemptoris Missio* that ‘preference has been given to other means of preaching the Gospel and of Christian education, while the mass media are left to the initiative of individuals or small groups and enter into pastoral planning only in a secondary way’.¹¹⁶ He went on to point out that it is not enough to use the forms of communication merely to ‘strengthen the preaching of the Gospel’ and ‘spread the Christian message and the Church’s authentic teaching’.¹¹⁷ He emphasised the need for the Church’s message of evangelization to not only be spread by the media, but for the Church to evangelize the modern culture and become immersed in that culture. In order to do so,

[i]t is also necessary to integrate that message into the ‘new culture’ created by modern communications. This is a complex issue, since the ‘new culture’ originates not just from whatever content is eventually expressed, but from the very fact that there exist

¹¹³ RM 37.

¹¹⁴ Acts 17:23.

¹¹⁵ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 88.

¹¹⁶ RM 37.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

new ways of communicating, with new languages, new techniques and a new psychology.¹¹⁸

These considerations supersede the references in *Inter Mirifica* to the Church's 'birthright' and moral obligation to own and use the media.¹¹⁹ This development by Pope John Paul II in *Redemptoris Missio* 37 led, in effect, to a paradigm shift.¹²⁰ The ancient Christian message, therefore, becomes ever new as it is adapted to the new ways of communicating in the new culture.

4.6.3 Forming the faithful in the media apostolate

The media was recognised as an apostolate in both *Inter Mirifica* and *Communio et Progressio*. Both documents called for appropriately qualified priests, religious and laity to be promptly appointed to this apostolate, and training in the use of media was to be given in schools and seminaries and to lay groups.¹²¹ In this way, acknowledgement was given of its potential for communicating Christ to the faithful.

With regard to schools, *Communio et Progressio* instructed that 'training must be given a regular place in the school curricula. It must be given, systematically, at every stage of education'.¹²² At the time, in Australia Br Kelvin Canavan FMS was leading the way in implementing media education in schools. In 1978, he was invited by the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications to reflect on this issue of forming the young in responsible use of the media by writing the 1978 World Communications Day (WCD) message. He wrote the monograph *Life in the Media Age*, which focussed on the need to help young people to appreciate the media as critical consumers, having learned to 'discriminate between media alternatives and thus make responsible choices'.¹²³

Twenty-five years later, to mark World Communications Day 2003, the education arm of the Archdiocese of Sydney republished the monograph. In the introduction to the 2003

¹¹⁸ Ibid This has been repeated in a number of other documents, including AN 11 and Pope John Paul II's World Communications Day Message in 1990.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Eilers, *Church and Social Communication*, p. 5.

¹²¹ IM 15–17.

¹²² CP 69.

¹²³ Kelvin Canavan FMS, *Life in the Media Age. From 1978–2003* (Sydney: Catholic Education Office, 2003). This monograph, under the title *The Receiver in Social Communications: his expectations, his rights, his duties*, was written at the request of the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications for use on World Communications Day, 11 June 1978. It was initially published in *L'Osservatore Romano* (Rome, 18 May and 25 May 1978).

edition, Canavan details the sweeping changes in media enabled through the advent of the Internet, mobile devices and computer-based resources for learning.¹²⁴ He notes that ‘because of the increasing availability and sophistication of information technologies and the mass media, the need to assist children and young adults to live in a media-saturated culture is now greater than ever before’.¹²⁵ Despite the Church’s call for training in the media apostolate called for in *Inter Mirifica* and *Communio et Progressio* and repeated in *The Church and Internet*, Br Kelvin Canavan notes that ‘the widespread enthusiasm in the 1970s and 1980s for developing more appreciative, critical and discriminating viewers, listeners and readers appears to be waning’.¹²⁶

For seminarians, it was not until 1986 that a comprehensive program of formation in the media was prepared. Entitled *Guide to the Training of Future Priests Concerning the Instruments of Social Communication*,¹²⁷ this work was undertaken by the Congregation for Catholic Education in conjunction with the Pontifical Commission for Social Communications.¹²⁸ The *Guide* addresses the issue of formation for priests called for in the social communications documents¹²⁹ and in the Congregation for Catholic Education’s 1970 document on priestly formation, *Ratio Fundamentalis*.¹³⁰ The *Guide* is deeply infused with communion ecclesiology, demonstrated by reference to the image of Jesus who is the Perfect Communicator, and in the stated goal of communication being the most intimate communication between the divine communion of Father, Son and Spirit, in which believers are invited to share.¹³¹

The *Guide* outlines that formation must be offered to seminarians on three levels. The first is at the level of the receiver or consumer of the media, that is, ‘all readers, viewers and listeners of *mass media*’ [emphasis in original].¹³² Because every student is first a receiver, they must be trained in how to be responsible in their consumption of the media. The second level of formation is pastoral, for future priests who, in the course of their ministry, ‘are going to require to be able to train the faithful, in their turn, in the right use

¹²⁴ Canavan, *Life in the Media Age*, p. 4.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Congregation for Catholic Education, *Guide to the Training of Future Priests Concerning the Instruments of Social Communication*, 19 March 1986 (hereafter, *The Guide*).

¹²⁸ PB. See footnote 101, above.

¹²⁹ IM 16 and CP 111.

¹³⁰ *The Guide*, Presentation.

¹³¹ *The Guide* 3.

¹³² *The Guide* 9.

of *mass media*; they will also need to know how they can themselves use the media to the best advantage for the purposes of their apostolate' [emphasis in original].¹³³ The third level was 'specialist' training, for those already engaged in working in the mass media, or who, giving evidence of special talent, are being prepared to work in the field.¹³⁴ Also considered on this third level were those who are preparing to teach and give training in mass media on the first two levels.¹³⁵ With the advent of digital media in the twenty-first century, the nature of media has changed significantly from that referenced in *The Guide*, and most involved in pastoral ministry will face the need to become immersed in the culture in order to evangelize.

It is difficult to quantify the formation that may have been provided to lay groups in their use of the media. Training may have been provided by priests as envisaged in the *Guide*. It may also have been the responsibility of those employed in the national and diocesan media and film offices recommended by Pope Pius XI. For his part, Dr Eugene Gan offers seven basic philosophical principles identified in the Church's magisterial teaching since *Vigilanti Cura* to help lay people in their use of media. He calls them St Peter's Seven Media Keys, considering them as 'a foundation from which you can evaluate media and a barometer for gauging just how much the Faith informs your use of media'.¹³⁶ The seven elements are balance, awareness of the attitudes conveyed in media presentations, whether there is respect for the dignity of the human person, whether the message presented is truth-filled, how the media inspires the user, whether it is skilfully developed, and whether it is motivated and informed by experience.¹³⁷ Each of these seven areas is developed with extensive examples, resources and reflection questions, making it a useful pastoral resource for the laity.

4.6.4 Communicating through the media

The Church has consistently reflected upon the various technologies as they have been created, weighing the associated benefits and drawbacks of each, and has established a presence in those media it considers can assist in her mission to communicate Christ and thus to evangelize. As has already been mentioned, in the time since the Council the

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ See Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 67–79.

¹³⁶ Gan, *Infinite Bandwidth*, p. 8.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 3.

Church's presence in the media has changed as a result of the media available and the culture of the media age.

Since August 1971, the Church in Australia has been using the mass media to communicate with the faithful and the broader society, broadcasting 'Mass for You at Home' nationally on the Ten Network. This program uses the medium of television to communicate with viewers who are isolated from the faith community due to advanced age, distance, infirmity or imprisonment.¹³⁸ While it does not constitute full participation in the Mass, it does allow viewers to pray as they watch the Eucharist celebrated.

The Vatican Television Center (CTV) was created in 1983 and 'officially recognized as an organization fully associated with the Holy See in November 1996'.¹³⁹ Its principal aim is 'to contribute to spreading the universal message of the Gospel by using television to document the Pope's pastoral ministry and the activities of the Apostolic See'.¹⁴⁰ Through its ministry, live broadcasts are made available to television networks worldwide, of World Youth Day and papal masses, including Christmas and Easter services, and other events. It complements *L'Osservatore Romano*, Vatican Radio, the Press Office and the Vatican website as the suite of media organisations within the Church structure to promote the pastoral ministry of the Pope.

4.6.5 Media Relations

In 1984, Pope John Paul II saw the need for the Vatican press operation to be brought into the media age.¹⁴¹ The decisive move was his appointment of the first layman and professional journalist, Dr Joaquin Navarro-Valls, as papal spokesman and director of the Holy See Press Office. Navarro-Valls helped John Paul II to see that the media offered opportunity for a 'dialectic with public opinion',¹⁴² which 'could serve as an instrument for reformation in the Church and a tool for shaping the world'.¹⁴³

Pope John Paul II's openness with the media reflected a new vision of the Church and the papacy. Through the media, it was possible to make the Church more visible in the world. Weigel recounts the story that at the airport in Bogota, Colombia, in early July 1986, a

¹³⁸ Mass for You at Home website. www.mfyah.com/

¹³⁹ Vatican Television website, http://www.vatican.va/news_services/television/index.htm.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, p. 490.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 491.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

10-year-old boy managed to push through the barriers and run up to John Paul II. ‘I know you; you’re the Pope’, he said. ‘You’re the same one I saw on television’. Navarro-Valls understood that a new presentation of the papacy was essential and John Paul II had accomplished it through the media.¹⁴⁴

This new openness to the news media also saw regular briefings to journalists about events in the Vatican through the Vatican Information Service (VIS) which was founded as part of the Vatican Press Office on 28 March 1990.¹⁴⁵ VIS provides daily information regarding the magisterial and pastoral activities of the Holy Father and the Holy See to a vast audience, including Pontifical Representatives, bishops and ecclesial institutions throughout the world. It is transmitted in English, Spanish, French and Italian, initially by fax, now by email. VIS is also published on the Vatican website.

4.7 Development of a digital media culture

Around the beginning of the third millennium, the Internet became an important mediator for communication, giving rise to a range of digital media platforms that have transformed the way people communicate. This represents such a significant shift in the culture of communications that it has created a new culture, the digital media culture, and therefore is considered on its own. Rather than being a one-way flow of information, as is the case with mass media, in the digital world content is communicated through connection, sharing and dialogue.¹⁴⁶ Because the communication is personal, the witness of the communicator must be consistent with the message. Spadaro makes the point that the Internet is ‘not a new *means* of evangelization but is, above all, a context in which the faith is called to express itself not by a mere willingness to be present, but by the compatibility of Christianity with the lives of human beings’ [emphasis in original].¹⁴⁷ The witness of the Church in the digital sphere must be reflective of her witness in the world, centred as it is on making Christ present in the world.

A tangible sign of the development of the Internet for mediating communication is the many forms of digital media, or New Media, that have emerged in the twenty-first century, detailed by Brendan Vogt in his book *The Church and New Media*.¹⁴⁸ One of the

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Vatican Press Office (Sala Stampa) profile.

¹⁴⁶ Vogt, *The Church and New Media*, p. 17.

¹⁴⁷ Spadaro, *Cybertheology*, p. 8.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 16–19.

first examples were blogs (a short form of ‘web log’), an interactive website with articles posted regularly with the most recent at the top. Often feedback and comments from readers are permitted.¹⁴⁹ After that, social networks arose. Friendster was the first social network, formed in 2002, which ‘gathered real-world friends into an online community’.¹⁵⁰ The following year, MySpace was established, with a focus on youth. In 2004, Facebook came on the scene, launched at Harvard University to connect US college students. It eventually opened itself up to the whole world, and is now the Internet’s most popular website, with over 500 million users.¹⁵¹ YouTube, a video sharing site, was created in 2005. It is now ‘the most popular online video destination’, with visitors watching over two billion videos each day.¹⁵² In 2006, the micro-blogging service Twitter was introduced, inviting users to share ‘tweets’ of up to 140 characters. Vogt notes that this site ‘now has over 190 million users who generate 65 million new tweets each day’.¹⁵³

In this section, the first four of the areas addressed above – Church teaching, evangelizing the culture, forming the faithful and communicating through the media – will be considered again, showing the transformation in each area as a result of the new digital technology and the impact it has had in practice. The nature of the Vatican’s media relations, which are concerned with briefing journalists from print and television media, has not undergone as dramatic a change and so will not be discussed again.

That said, in June 2015, Pope Francis established the Secretariat for Communications, which signalled a major overhaul of the Vatican’s media operations. This new Secretariat is a singular entity for all Vatican communications services.¹⁵⁴ The motivation for this was to ensure that the ‘Holy See communications system will respond ever better to the needs of the mission of the Church’.¹⁵⁵ These new structures in the Vatican’s communications operations facilitate the Church as an act of communication that seeks to bring about an encounter with Christ and draw the believer into the life of the Trinity.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., Glossary, p. 211.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁵⁴ Pope Francis. Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio ‘*The current context of communications*’, 27 June 2015. http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio_20150627_segreteria-comunicazione.html. According to Article 1 of the Motu Proprio, the new dicastery combines a number of bodies. These include the Pontifical Council for Social Communications; the Holy See Press Office; The Vatican Internet Service; Vatican Radio; the Vatican Television Centre; *L’Osservatore Romano*; the Vatican Printing Press; the Photo Service; and the Vatican Publishing House.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

In the digital media culture, the Church continues to discern the use of the New Media by which people communicate today; the Church recognises she must be an evangelizing presence in this culture in order that people be exposed to the Gospel message, to lead from connection through communication on the trajectory towards communion. It is a similar argument to that used back in the time when the Church used printed tracts to communicate to form new Christians. The use of these channels

is to make the Christian message accessible to people in a well-known format, but also to integrate the Gospel with people's usual stream of information and communication. Both tracts and social media have the benefit, it is thought, to speak to people in a personal voice, dissolving traditional hierarchies there might be between the church and the laity.¹⁵⁶

4.7.1 Church teaching on digital media

Reflecting the growing reach of the Internet, the PCCS published companion documents on the Internet to mark the 30th and 10th anniversaries of *Communio et Progressio* and *Aetatis Novae* respectively. They are *Ethics in Internet* and *The Church and Internet*. The first, *Ethics in Internet*, notes that the Internet is the latest in a long line of media that 'for many people have progressively eliminated time and space as obstacles to communication during the last century and a half'.¹⁵⁷ *Ethics in Internet* presents the image of 'the earth as an interconnected globe humming with electronic transmissions – a chattering planet nestled in the provident silence of space'.¹⁵⁸ This view, according to Zsupan-Jerome, emphasises the extent to which our lives have become enmeshed with our social communication networks, but it also challenges our understanding beyond the present reality. 'The provident silence of space reminds us that there is a greater, infinite beyond that always humbles us here and now'.¹⁵⁹ *Ethics in Internet* sets out a Catholic view of the Internet as a starting point for dialogue with other sectors of society, especially other religious groups, concerning its development and use.¹⁶⁰ This document notes that, as with other media, the Internet can be used for good or for ill, and for its proper use it must

¹⁵⁶ Stefan Gelfgren. 'Digital Church and Media – in a historical and contemporary context', in *Masaryk University Journal of Law and Technology*, vol. 6, no.1 (2012) p. 67.

¹⁵⁷ Pontifical Council for Social Communications, Pastoral Instruction *Ethics in Internet*, 28 February 2002 (hereafter, EI) 2.

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_20020228_ethics-internet_en.html.

¹⁵⁸ EI 1.

¹⁵⁹ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 96.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

be governed by respect for the dignity of the human person, by the common good, and by the promotion of solidarity.¹⁶¹

It then addresses some areas of concern, including the ‘digital divide’ whereby some are excluded from access to the new information technology on the basis of wealth or training.¹⁶² Freedom of expression and the free exchange of ideas must be maintained in the face of sometimes sensationalist journalism and the apparent decline in serious reporting and commentary due to the blurring of lines between news, opinion, advertising and entertainment.¹⁶³ *Ethics in Internet* concludes by stressing the role of the Church as a ‘partner in the public dialogue’ with the culture of communication brought about by the new technologies.¹⁶⁴ Zsupan-Jerome notes that ‘rather than dictating decisions and choices, what the Church offers is wisdom to help uphold human and Christian values. The choice remains with each person to engage in communication practices that build up or tear down’.¹⁶⁵

The companion document, *The Church and Internet*,¹⁶⁶ is specifically concerned with the effective communication of the Good News to the world through engaging with both the modern media and the Church’s internal communications. It introduces the metaphor of the road, tracing the development of human communication to the present time, including from the story of Babel – the place and representation of communication’s collapse¹⁶⁷ – to Pentecost and the gift of tongues,¹⁶⁸ whereby human communication is restored through the power of the Holy Spirit sent by Christ.¹⁶⁹ The document describes communication as being of the essence of the Church, which is communion.¹⁷⁰ It acknowledges that the Internet provides the new rooftop from which the Good News can be proclaimed, and has the potential to convey ‘religious information and teaching’ and provide

¹⁶¹ EI 3.

¹⁶² EI 10, 11.

¹⁶³ EI 12,13.

¹⁶⁴ EI 18.

¹⁶⁵ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 99.

¹⁶⁶ Pontifical Council for Social Communications, *The Church and Internet*, 28 February 2002 (hereafter, CI).

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/pccs/documents/rc_pc_pccs_doc_20020228_church-internet_en.html.

¹⁶⁷ Gen 11:4–8.

¹⁶⁸ Acts 2:5–11.

¹⁶⁹ CI 2, cited in Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 99.

¹⁷⁰ CI 3.

direct and immediate access to important religious and spiritual resources – great libraries and museums and places of worship, the teaching documents of the Magisterium, the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church and the religious wisdom of the ages.¹⁷¹

Further, the Internet ‘has a remarkable capacity to overcome distance and isolation, bringing people into contact with like-minded persons of good will who join in virtual communities of faith to encourage and support one another’.¹⁷² This advantage goes beyond conveying information to connect people, echoing the trajectory from connection to communion introduced in *Communio et Progressio*. The Internet, offering two-way interaction, means each person can be both giver and receiver through the medium, ‘blurring the old distinction between those who communicate and those who receive what it communicated... this is not the one-way, top-down communication of the past’.¹⁷³

And yet there is a distinction drawn between the physical interaction of persons and interaction mediated by the Internet. The core example given is the experience of the community gathered for sacramental worship. *The Church and Internet* states that

Virtual reality is no substitute for the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the sacramental reality of the other sacraments, and shared worship in a flesh-and-blood human community. There are no sacraments on the Internet; and even the religious experiences possible there by the grace of God are insufficient apart from real-world interaction with other persons of faith.¹⁷⁴

The PCCS encouraged pastoral planning to be undertaken to consider ‘how to lead people from cyberspace to true community and how, through teaching and catechesis, the Internet might subsequently be used to sustain and enrich them in their Christian commitment’.¹⁷⁵ Responding to this need to lead people from cyberspace to real community, Meredith Gould, in *The Social Media Gospel*, presents a ‘trajectory of engagement’¹⁷⁶ that includes social media, email, telephone conversations and face-to-face encounters as ways of nurturing a connection in order for it to become a relationship. She elaborates that any one of these could be the starting point, and together these means of engagement can contribute to growing and deepening the relationship.

¹⁷¹ CI 4–5.

¹⁷² CI 5.

¹⁷³ CI 6.

¹⁷⁴ CI 9.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Meredith Gould, *The Social Media Gospel: Sharing the Good News in New Ways* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013) p. 29. Cited in Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 103.

Other recommendations and conclusions in *The Church and Internet* are directed to Church leaders, pastoral personnel, educators, parents and, especially, young people. Educators and catechists, in particular, are exhorted to take seriously the ‘urgent duty’ called for in *Communio et Progressio* to provide media training for staff and students, as discussed earlier in this chapter, especially with the enormous outreach and impact of the Internet.

Pope John Paul II wrote to those responsible for communications in the Apostolic Letter *The Rapid Development* in 2005.¹⁷⁷ In what turned out to be his final document, he acknowledged the radical transformation of technology in the field of media as a particular sign of progress, and reflected on the ‘fruitful progress’ in the forty-plus years since *Inter Mirifica*.¹⁷⁸ He acknowledged that the communications media are now so important ‘as to be the principal means of guidance and inspiration for many people in their personal, familial, and social behaviour’,¹⁷⁹ and again urged the Church to integrate into this culture the message of salvation. Reiterating his earlier teaching from *Redemptoris Missio* that the media is transforming the world into ‘a global village’, Part II offers a Gospel reflection and missionary commitment¹⁸⁰ that reflects the theology of communication enunciated since *Communio et Progressio*. Eilers notes that this document repeats many things from earlier teachings but ‘rightfully underlines stronger than ever the need for a deeper communication spirituality based on the life and example of Jesus Christ himself’.¹⁸¹ Reflecting communion ecclesiology, *The Rapid Development* reiterates that humanity is invited to participate in ‘the intimate life of the Trinity, which is continuous and circular communication of perfect and infinite love among the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit’.¹⁸² Here, too, John Paul II recognises that ‘a culminating moment in which communication becomes full communion’ is the Eucharistic encounter. ‘By recognizing Jesus in the “breaking of the bread,” believers feel themselves urged on to announce his death and resurrection, and to become joyful and courageous witnesses of his Kingdom’.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter: *The Rapid Development*, 24 January 2005 (hereafter, TRD). https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/2005/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20050124_il-rapido-sviluppo.html. This Apostolic Letter does not have a Latin-titled version.

¹⁷⁸ TRD 2, 3.

¹⁷⁹ TRD 3.

¹⁸⁰ TRD 4–6.

¹⁸¹ Eilers, *Church and Social Communication*, p. 6.

¹⁸² TRD 4.

¹⁸³ TRD 5.

The Rapid Development echoes *Aetatis Novae* in acknowledging that the Church finds in the communications media ‘a precious aid’ for evangelization and religious formation, for promoting dialogue, ecumenical and inter-religious relations, and for defending the dignity of the human person and enhancing the common good.¹⁸⁴ As part of a pastoral renewal ‘everything possible must be done so that the Gospel might permeate society, stimulating people to listen to and embrace its message’.¹⁸⁵

The final section is one of inspiration, with the title ‘To Communicate with the Power of the Holy Spirit’.¹⁸⁶ The document affirms that Christ the Word communicates himself, and the Father, and is assisted by the Holy Spirit. In highlighting the role of the Holy Spirit, John Paul II urged everyone to foster an ‘attentive discernment and constant vigilance, developing a healthy critical capacity regarding the persuasive force of the communications media’.¹⁸⁷ Zsupan-Jerome reflects that through the Holy Spirit, Christ the Word is made discernible, shareable: ‘it moves fully from content to communication as hearers of the Word understand it and are compelled to share the Word with others’.¹⁸⁸ Further, Zsupan-Jerome draws a parallel with the Pentecost moment in Acts 2:4 when the disciples are gathered in the Upper Room and they are filled by the Spirit and enabled with the power to speak in a manner understandable to others. Pope John Paul II concluded by encouraging those who work in the field of communications: ‘Do not be afraid’ of the new technologies, of being opposed by the world, and even of one’s own weaknesses and inadequacy.¹⁸⁹ How fitting it was that this pope, who prayed throughout his pontificate for ‘a new Pentecost’, would conclude his final document on communications with an exhortation to do as he had done, to be courageous and rely on the help of the Holy Spirit!

4.7.2 Evangelizing in the digital media culture

Pope John Paul II was concerned that Christ be made present in and through the digital culture. In his Message for World Communications Day 2002, entitled ‘Internet: A New Forum for Proclaiming the Gospel’, he said:

The Internet causes billions of images to appear on millions of computer monitors around the planet. From this galaxy of sight and sound will the face of Christ emerge and the voice of Christ be heard? For it is only when his face is seen and his voice heard that the world will know the glad tidings of our redemption. This is the purpose

¹⁸⁴ TRD 7.

¹⁸⁵ TRD 8.

¹⁸⁶ TRD 13,14.

¹⁸⁷ TRD 13.

¹⁸⁸ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 113.

¹⁸⁹ TRD 14.

of evangelization. And this is what will make the Internet a genuinely human space, for if there is no room for Christ, there is no room for man.¹⁹⁰

A Catholic social media platform akin to Facebook was created by the Archdiocese of Sydney ahead of the World Youth Day hosted in Sydney in 2008, seeking to build a community of the faithful in an environment regulated by the Church. It is called 'Xt3' which stands for 'Christ for the third millennium'.¹⁹¹ It offers an interactive social media platform featuring live webcasts, Calendar Apps for observing Lent and Advent, youth ministry resources and ongoing news about World Youth Days.

All the faithful are called to evangelize and bring Christ into the digital culture. Blogger Eric Sammons cites the example of a number of lay people publishing reflections on their websites in response to Pope Benedict XVI's Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini* in 2010. He notes that these commentaries pointed the way to the official Church document and, because different voices highlighted different aspects of the document, 'blogging allows Catholics to more fully appreciate the Church's teachings'.¹⁹² Similarly, Jennifer Fulwiler, writing on blogging as a means of sharing the spiritual journey, names sites such as www.whyImCatholic.com and www.ConvertJournal.com as offering a modern day equivalent to St Augustine's *Confessions* or Blessed John Henry Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*.

Blogging, in particular among New Media tools, has transformed spiritual conversion into a communal experience. Instead of reading about someone's conversion in solitude through a non-interactive book, blogs allow questions, reflections, experiences, and insights to be shared not only by bloggers but also by readers, through discussions in the blogs' comment boxes.¹⁹³

A worldwide endeavour to bring Christ into this digital culture is Word on Fire Ministries, created by Robert Barron.¹⁹⁴ Bishop Barron has been compared with Archbishop Fulton J Sheen, who was prominent in the media during the last century. In 2011, Word on Fire released 'Catholicism', an innovative documentary series and multimedia study guide.¹⁹⁵ The ten-part DVD series offer viewers an insight into the faith from a global perspective.

¹⁹⁰ Pope John Paul II, World Communications Day message: *Internet: A New Forum for Proclaiming the Gospel*, 22 January 2002. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/communications/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_20020122_world-communications-day.html

¹⁹¹ Xt3 website, www.xt3.com.

¹⁹² Brandon Vogt, *The Church and New Media*, p. 81.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

¹⁹⁴ www.WordOnFire.org, cited in Vogt, *The Church and New Media*, p. 32.

¹⁹⁵ Word on Fire Ministries website, www.wordonfire.org, 'Catholicism' Fact Sheet.

Word on Fire also utilises a number of New Media tools to communicate about the faith, including ‘a blog, an interactive website, YouTube videos, Facebook pages, and a podcast featuring over 500 homilies’ from Bishop Barron.¹⁹⁶ This ministry is doing what Pope John Paul II called for in the New Evangelization: ‘Proclaiming Christ in the culture’.¹⁹⁷

Another who is engaged in the digital media space is Fr Roderick Vonhogen, known as the ‘podcasting priest’, is inspired and informed by ‘the Church’s Trinitarian doctrine as well as her theological sense of divine revelation’.¹⁹⁸ He is also putting into practice the theology of communication discussed throughout this Chapter, focussing on connecting with those who are living in the digital generation and drawing them into the communion of the Church. Detailed in his book entitled *Geekpriest: Confessions of a New Media Pioneer*, Fr Vonhogen speaks of introducing the ‘young, secularized generation to an experience of God at work in the Church and in individual lives’.¹⁹⁹ He does so by drawing parallels with Star Wars, Spiderman and the Hobbit.

4.7.3 Forming the faithful in the digital media apostolate

Developments in the media over the decades have seen the focus shift from training clergy so they could form the faithful in the use of the media, to a recognition of the need to form the faithful in living in the digital culture. Antonio Spadaro reflects that the Internet is ‘an anthropological space that is deeply entwined with our everyday lives. Instead of making us leave our world to delve into the virtual world, technology has made the digital world penetrate our ordinary world’.²⁰⁰ Since 2009, under Benedict XVI and Francis, there has been a shift in focus of the World Communications Day messages that is ‘pedagogically significant’:²⁰¹ rather than viewing the digital media as instruments, these messages have ‘recognised the overall cultural shift wrought by digital communication and thus examine key topics in the context of a broader, digitally shaped culture’.²⁰²

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. Front page slogan, 4 December 2016.

¹⁹⁸ John Paul Shimek. ‘Meet Fr Roderick Vonhogen, the “podcasting priest”’, in *The Catholic World Report*, 26 March 2013. Available at www.catholicworldreport.com.

¹⁹⁹ Roderick Vonhogen. *Geekpriest: Confessions of a New Media Pioneer*. (Cincinnati, Servant Books, 2013). P1.

²⁰⁰ Spadaro, *Cybertheology*, p. 3.

²⁰¹ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 115.

²⁰² Ibid.

In the 43rd WCD Message for 2009, titled *New Technologies, New Relationships. Promoting a Culture of Respect, Dialogue and Friendship*, Pope Benedict XVI identified that the new digital technologies are introducing ‘fundamental shifts in patterns of communication and human relationships’, noting that it is among young people that these changes are most evident given they are ‘at home in a digital world’.²⁰³ These young people, whom the pope named ‘the digital generation’, have adopted the New Media and all their capacities for connecting, communicating, seeking news and sharing opinions. Yet Benedict XVI lamented that if the desire to pursue on-line friendships replaces engaging with family, neighbours, and the people who make up a person’s local community of work, education and recreation, ‘it may in fact function to isolate individuals from real social interaction while also disrupting the patterns of rest, silence and reflection which are necessary for healthy human development’.²⁰⁴

Directly addressing young Catholic believers, Pope Benedict asked them to introduce their Christian values into the culture of this new environment of communications and information technology, just as ‘in the early Church, the great Apostles and their disciples brought the Good News of Jesus to the Greek and Roman world’.²⁰⁵ Zsupan-Jerome reflects that, in this environment, communication of the Gospel requires

a standard of encounter and integration, of participating with people in the digital sphere. To return to the ancient Athenian metaphor, the digital culture invites us to consider not only the Areopagus but also the agora found downhill from it, and bring the Gospel, as Paul did, to both.²⁰⁶

Pope Benedict XVI challenged participants at the Plenary Session of the Pontifical Council for Social Communication on 28 February 2011 to continue to reflect on the challenges for faith and theology raised by the contemporary means of social communications. He noted it is not just about presenting the Gospel in today’s language; rather, ‘we have to have the courage to think in a way that is more profound, as happened at other times, about the relationship between the faith, the life of the Church, and the

²⁰³ Pope Benedict XVI, World Communications Day Message 2009, *New Technologies, New Relationships. Promoting a Culture of Respect, Dialogue and Friendship*, 24 January 2009. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/communications/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20090124_43rd-world-communications-day_en.html.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 89.

changes that man is living'.²⁰⁷ Benedict XVI asked members of the PCCS – the group tasked with helping the Church's leaders to 'be able to understand, interpret, and talk this "new language" of the media in pastoral situations (cf. AN 2) and in dialogue with the contemporary world'²⁰⁸ – to consider: 'What are the challenges that the so-called "digital thought" puts on the faith and theology? What questions are needed? The world of communication interests the whole of the cultural universe, social and spiritual, of the human being'.²⁰⁹

Truth, Proclamation and Authenticity of Life in the Digital Age was the subject of Benedict XVI's message for the 45th WCD in 2011. He noted that we are living through 'a period of vast cultural transformation. The means of spreading information and knowledge is giving birth to a new way of learning and thinking, with unprecedented opportunities for establishing relationships and building fellowship'.²¹⁰ There is a change, too, in that information in the digital world is shared as a personal exchange: 'The clear distinction between the producer and consumer of information is relativised and communication appears not only as an exchange of data, but also as a form of sharing'.²¹¹ Vogt comments that where traditional media presents 'static content and one-way flow of information... "New Media" transmits content through connection and conversation'²¹² because the communication is two-way. He continues by noting that 'a primary, defining characteristic of all New Media is *dialogue*'²¹³ [emphasis in original], which is one of the building blocks of communion.

Benedict XVI highlights a significant implication of this communication through sharing and dialogue, stating that proclaiming the Gospel through the New Media means not only to promote explicitly religious content on the different media platforms,

but also to witness consistently, in one's own digital profile and in the way one communicates choices, preferences and judgements that are fully consistent with the Gospel, even when it is not spoken of specifically. Furthermore, it is also true in the

²⁰⁷ Pope Benedict XVI, Address to the Plenary Session of the Pontifical Council for Social Communication, 28 February 2011. Also cited in Spadaro, *Cybertheology*, p. ix.

²⁰⁸ Spadaro, *Cybertheology*, p. ix.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Pope Benedict XVI. World Communications Day Message 2011, *Truth, Proclamation and Authenticity of Life in the Digital Age*, 24 January 2011. http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/messages/communications/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20110124_45th-world-communications-day.html

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Vogt, *The Church and New Media*, p. 17.

²¹³ Ibid.

digital world that a message cannot be proclaimed without a consistent witness on the part of the one who proclaims it.²¹⁴

This alludes to the importance of the personal witness in evangelization, as given in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 21, and echoes *Communio et Progressio* in that communication needs to happen in the manner of Christ's perfect communication as a 'giving of self in love'.²¹⁵ It is a reminder that even with Internet-mediated communication, the person's relationship with Christ must be communicated.

Building the culture of encounter has been the prism through which Pope Francis has considered communication, which echoes the thought of Romano Guardini and the teaching of Fr Luigi Giusanni. In his message for 48th World Communications Day in 2014, titled *Communication at the Service of an Authentic Culture of Encounter*, Francis suggested that the parable of the Good Samaritan can help us understand how communication can serve an authentic culture of encounter:

It is not enough to be passers on the digital highway, simply 'connected'; connections need to grow into true encounters... Media strategies do not ensure beauty, goodness and truth in communication. The world of media also has to be concerned with humanity, it too is called to show tenderness. The digital world can be an environment rich in humanity; a network not of wires but of people.²¹⁶

Incorporating a theme of which he has often spoken – keeping the doors of our churches open in welcome – he notes that this 'also means keeping them open in the digital environment so that people, whatever their situation in life, can enter, and so that the Gospel can go out to reach everyone'.²¹⁷ The use of digital media, individually and corporately, can open up the Church to allow people to encounter Christ and draw them into the communion of the faithful.

4.7.4 Communicating through the digital media

This section will consider some of the programs, platforms and initiatives that have been developed as the Church communicated through the digital media, as well as through traditional media such as print, radio and television. The use of digital media to

²¹⁴ Pope Benedict XVI, World Communications Day Message 2011.

²¹⁵ CP 11.

²¹⁶ Pope Francis, World Communications Day Message 2014, *Communication at the Service of an Authentic Culture of Encounter*, 24 January 2014.

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/messages/communications/documents/papa-francesco_20140124_messaggio-comunicazioni-sociali_en.html

²¹⁷ Ibid.

communicate Christ and evangelize, which began during the papacy of John Paul II, has accelerated during the papacies of Benedict XVI and Francis. This is not an exhaustive study, but reflects the transition that has taken place in communicating through the media at all levels of the Church, from the focus on communicating ideas to the communication of the faith by the witness of the communicator.

While the Vatican created one of the earliest Internet sites in 1995²¹⁸ (www.vatican.va, which allowed access via this new platform to many Church teaching documents), it was simple in its design and capacity. It has undergone a number of revisions over the intervening years, with a significant upgrade as a result of the advent of Web 2.0 technology, which introduced more interactivity.²¹⁹ A more recent addition to the Vatican's web presence is www.news.va, launched in June 2011. It is a news information portal that features the latest news collated from various Vatican media departments, each of which continue to operate their own unique websites.²²⁰ In January 2013, News.va launched 'The Pope App',²²¹ which allows a person to focus on the figure of the Pope, follow his events in real time and receive alerts when papal events are to begin.

While social media site Facebook is the Internet's most popular website, and many Church leaders have a presence on Facebook, there is no official Facebook account for the pope. The reason for this is 'because ugly comments are harder to monitor on Facebook', according to Archbishop Celli, President-Emeritus of the PCCS, in a speech to digital media executives in New York in 2014. He further noted that 'Vatican officials spend enough time as it is "cleaning up" the Facebook page of the Vatican's news portal'.²²²

Instead, the Vatican chose Twitter as the communication tool by which the Pope can 'communicate with the faithful and answer their questions on faith'.²²³ Pope Benedict XVI sent the first tweet from the official papal Twitter account, [@pontifex](https://twitter.com/pontifex), on 12 December 2012. Questions could be sent to the Pope using the hashtag #AskPontifex.

²¹⁸ Vogt, *The Church and New Media*, p. 17.

²¹⁹ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 95.

²²⁰ Zenit News Agency, 'Papal Tweet Launches News Portal', 28 June 2011. It is provided by the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, in cooperation with the media offices of the Holy See, including Fides News Agency, *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Holy See Press Office, the Vatican Information Service, Vatican Radio, the Vatican Television Center (CTV) and the Internet Office of the Holy See.

²²¹ The Pope App. www.thepopeapp.com/.

²²² David Gibson, 'Vatican says the church can't ignore social media', in *Christian Century*, 25 June 2014, pp. 17, 18.

²²³ Junno Arocho, 'Benedict XVI Sends Out Inaugural Tweet', *Zenit*, 12 December 2012.

Zsupan-Jerome recounts that ‘the invitation lit up the Twittersphere, and @Pontifex gained a million followers from the time of the launch to the date set for Pope Benedict to reply, nine days later’.²²⁴ She further notes that the account gathered tweets that ranged from ‘genuine to irreverent, affirming to angry, pious to rude; all were welcome’.²²⁵ Father Vonhogen believes that in using Twitter, Pope Benedict XVI ‘went a long distance’ in catching up with the use of the new digital media.²²⁶

Pope Francis sent his first tweet (from the same papal account) on 17 March 2013.²²⁷ During Pope Francis’ visit to Mexico on 18 February 2016, the official papal Twitter account @pontifex reached more than 27 million followers in nine languages.²²⁸ With a message communicated to his followers each day and the faith being shared in the marketplace of ideas that is the Twittersphere, this represents a significant outreach and evangelizing opportunity for the Church.

Other initiatives in the use of digital media are happening at a great rate under Pope Francis. In a first for the Church, Pope Francis’s daily homilies are broadcast on Vatican Radio and through *Zenit* (the official news service of the pope). While previous popes celebrated a daily private Mass, it was only for those present and the papal homilies were not published. The effect of the communication of Pope Francis’s homilies is that there is much more spontaneous comment from Pope Francis on all manner of matters readily available. The difficulty is placing the comments in context in order to understand their importance, for a reflection given in the context of a private Mass, often in response to the readings, does not carry the same weight as an encyclical or other official document in which the message is more nuanced. It is for this reason that these homilies have not been quoted in this thesis.

A deliberate social media strategy was employed for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, which opened on 8 December 2015. The organisation of this year-long event was undertaken by the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization mentioned in the previous chapter. According to the official website of the Jubilee,

²²⁴ Zsupan-Jerome, *Connected Toward Communion*, p. 98.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ John Paul Shimek, ‘Meet Fr Roderick Vonhogen, the “podcasting priest”’.

²²⁷ Vatican Radio report, ‘Pope Francis’ followers on Twitter now exceed 27 million’, 18 February 2016.

²²⁸ The most popular language is Spanish, then English (then 8.68 million followers) and the third Italian. The other languages in order of popularity are Portuguese, Polish, French, Latin, German and Arabic.

The Holy Year of Mercy will in fact be the first in the era of the Internet and of social media... This site, translated into seven languages, was to allow those who could not be physically present in Rome to participate in the Major Jubilee events that will take place there.²²⁹

Thus those among the faithful who could not travel to Rome were still able to share in the Internet-mediated sense of community.

The latest initiative in digital media has seen Pope Francis join Instagram, an image-sharing site, with the user name *@Franciscus*. This account was launched on 19 March 2016, driven by the pastoral imperative arising from the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy to communicate tenderness and mercy through images. According to a report from *Zenit* on 4 April 2016, this new Instagram account of the pope reached one million followers faster than any other account in history.²³⁰ By 4 December 2016, the account had 3.4 million followers.²³¹

Pope Francis has also begun to promote his monthly prayer intentions by video message using the video-sharing site YouTube.²³² This ministry of the Apostleship of Prayer, which began in 1844, commits to praying for specific prayer intentions each month requested by the Pope.²³³ Prior to using YouTube, these prayer intentions were communicated in text form via the various Vatican news services, as well as through the Apostleship of Prayer Network in print and digital form. Not only does the video convey the prayer intention for the month, it demonstrates Pope Francis engaging in the activity for which he is calling people to pray. There is one intention prepared in advance, and each month another is added in response to current events or urgent needs.²³⁴

In the twenty-first century's culture of digital communication, Pope Francis's ready comments during his morning homily or his daily inspiration on Twitter indicate that in using the New Media, he is finding new ways of helping people to encounter Christ by encountering him.

²²⁶ Jubilee of Mercy official website, <http://www.iubilaeummisericordiae.va/content/gdm/en.html>.

²³⁰ *Zenit*, 4 April 2016.

²³¹ *@franciscus* Instagram account, 4 December 2016.

²³² Staff reporters, 'Pope Francis reveals January Prayer intentions in Video message' in *Zenit*, 7 January 2016.

²³³ Apostleship of Prayer website. <http://www.apostleshipofprayer.org/2017-intentions>.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

4.8 Conclusion

Communication is the gift of the self in love, and this is seen in its most perfect form in Jesus, whose communication reveals the Father and the relationship of love that exists within the Trinitarian Godhead. Therefore, communication by the Church takes as its starting point the communion of love among the divine Persons. The foundation, then, of community and communion is the Trinity, and the Church understands that communication is a source of communion.

In all ages the Church has made use of the prevailing means of social communication to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. This chapter has shown that since the Second Vatican Council there has been a monumental shift arising from the radical transformation in the technology and platforms of media enabling communication. Pope John Paul II, in particular, was instrumental in broadening the Church's understanding of the means of social communication and their necessity for evangelization. From the means of social communication being understood as mere tools, an understanding has developed that evangelization takes place within a culture of communication. A further dramatic change in this culture occurred with the advent of the Internet and digital media, which have given rise to a new way of thinking, a new language and new platforms for communication.

Many Church documents, beginning with *Communio et Progressio*, address the necessity of Christ being made present in the means of social communication, noting that unless the Church uses all the opportunities offered by the New Media it would not be obeying Christ's command to announce his Good News.²³⁵ Since the Second Vatican Council, a theology of communication has developed that reflects the trajectory from human contact to connection through communication, which is an encounter with Christ, towards community and, finally, to communion. In the culture of communication in the digital world, the witness of the one communicating is important for facilitating an encounter with Christ. It is increasingly common for suitably qualified and experienced lay people to contribute their voices in communicating and evangelizing as part of the Church.

Previous chapters have touched on the growing call from the time of the Second Vatican Council for the laity to take their place in the world, especially in making Christ known.

²³⁵ CP 126.

The next chapter will look at the specific role of the laity in the mission to communicate Christ to the world. Since the Council and the rediscovery of the ecclesiology of communion, there has been a significant development in the organisation of the lay faithful and their contribution to the evangelizing mission of the Church. New ecclesial movements have grown up alongside other expressions of association of the lay faithful. These movements offer formation for the faithful and call them to lead holy lives so that they can give personal witness and lead others to Christ. A hallmark of the new movements is their desire to build communion among the community of the faithful, beginning with promoting an encounter with Christ through communicating the Word and making him present in the Church and in the world. These elements are seen in all the new ecclesial movements, which are living communion ecclesiology in community.

Chapter 5. Communion lived in the community of the Faithful

5.1 Introduction

As has been demonstrated throughout this thesis, the Second Vatican Council restored to the Church the understanding of her nature as a communion of persons brought together in Christ to share in the divine love of the Trinity and with fellow believers. The Church's mission, then, is to invite all people to encounter Christ in order that they may also participate in this communion. As discussed in Chapter 3, the Council called the lay faithful to take up co-responsibility for the mission of the Church arising from their baptism, by which they are incorporated into Christ and the Church. Recalling the Pauline image of the Body of Christ being one body with many parts, the specific role of the laity is to engage with the secular world. The laity's task is making Christ and the Church present in the world, in the spheres of politics, society, culture and business. This is complementary to the roles of clergy and religious within the life and mission of the Church.

In fact, the Second Vatican Council heralded a new way for the faithful to live the communion of the Church. The mobilisation and organisation of the lay faithful had begun in the early twentieth century with Catholic Action, considered by Pius XI and his successor Pius XII to be the 'the oldest and noblest of Catholic laity' in a Church still Eurocentric.¹ Since the Council, and particularly during the pontificates of John Paul II and Benedict XVI, there has been a rise in the prevalence and recognition of new ecclesial movements,² many of which identify themselves as a 'fruit of Vatican II'.³ These new ecclesial movements promote the communion of the Church by a life lived in community. They are often lay-led, but can and do include members of all vocations, and bring a

¹ Massimo Faggioli, 'The New Elites of Italian Catholicism: 1968 and the New Catholic Movements', in *The Catholic Historical Review*, vol. 98, no. 1 (2012) p. 23.

² Pope John Paul II, *Message for the World Congress of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities*, 27 May 1998. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1998/may/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19980527_movimenti.html.

³ Massimo Faggioli, 'Between Documents and Spirit: The Case of the 'New Catholic Movements'', in James L. Heft SM (ed.), *After Vatican II: Trajectories and Hermeneutics* (Cambridge, UK: William B Eerdmans, 2012) p. 1.

diversity of charisms and gifts into the communion of the Church. Through these movements, the laity are not only involved in secular affairs, but are also taking their place at the heart of the Church and communicating Christ through proclamation and witness of a life of holiness, so integral to the Church's mission of evangelization.

Like the earlier movements in the Church from the time of the Apostles, such as the Franciscans and Jesuits mentioned in earlier chapters, 'the apostolic movements appear in ever new forms throughout history—necessarily, because they are the Holy Spirit's answer to the changing situations in which the Church lives.'⁴

5.2 What are the new ecclesial movements?

Pope John Paul II gave a definition of new ecclesial movements during the first World Congress of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities in Rome in 1998, stating they are 'a concrete ecclesial reality with predominantly lay membership, a faith journey and Christian witness which bases its own pedagogical method on a precise charism given to the person of the founder in specific circumstances and ways'.⁵ John Paul II noted that, within the diversity of their forms, these new ecclesial movements are

marked by a common awareness of the 'newness' which baptismal grace brings to life, through a remarkable longing to reflect on the mystery of communion with Christ and with their brethren, through sound fidelity to the patrimony of the faith passed on by the living stream of Tradition.⁶

In a particular way the new ecclesial movements live the communion of the Church in community. The movements exhibit a 'renewed missionary zeal which reaches out to the men and women of our era in the concrete situations where they find themselves, and turns its loving attention to the dignity, needs and destiny of each individual'.⁷

The movements provide formation for their members in the faith, through the study of scripture and the teachings of the Church as well as the writings of the founder of the movement. Within the movements there are many opportunities for lay leadership, including in small groups in which the community life is experienced in microcosm. The members of the movements, having encountered Christ, in turn become the

⁴ Ratzinger, 'Theological Locus of Ecclesial Movements', 27-29 May 1998, C.

⁵ Pope John Paul II, *Message for the World Congress of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities*, 27 May 1998, 4.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷ *Ibid.*

communicators and evangelizers who promote the encounter with the person of Christ, and through their personal witness, others are invited to ‘come and see’. The communicators make Christ present. In this way they are demonstrating their co-responsibility for the evangelizing mission of the Church. Many also immerse themselves in the communications media so that technology can be used for building community.

The new ecclesial movements that have arisen since the Council are a manifestation of the communion ecclesiology recovered at the Council. They promote the encounter with Christ and the incorporation of a person of faith into the life of the Trinity and fellowship with other believers. This is explained by Piero Coda, a theologian belonging to the Focolare movement, who describes how these movements:

represent the concrete realisation – undecreed, unplanned by the councils or synods or committees – of that idea of communion that lies at the heart of Vatican II’s understanding of the Church. What we see in them... is the actuality of communion among the baptised, whereby ‘the equal baptismal dignity and the complementarity of the various vocations, ministries and charisms’ are made authentically possible ‘in an organically and hierarchically structured communion’.⁸

The new ecclesial movements evident after the Council stand alongside religious communities in witnessing to Christ. Members of the movements live the communion ecclesiology recovered at the Council and exhibit the evangelizing principles incorporated in the conciliar documents.

5.3 Pre-Vatican II

The lay apostolate in the early twentieth century was largely organised under the banner of Catholic Action. This name was first used by Pope Pius X, and his successor Pius XI famously defined it in 1927 as ‘the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the Church’s Hierarchy’.⁹ Overall, Catholic Action had as its immediate aim the spiritual and moral formation of the members themselves. Pope Pius XI issued this instruction to the world’s bishops:

Tell your faithful children of the laity that when, united with their pastors and their bishops, they participate in the works of the apostolate, both individual and social, the

⁸ Quoted in Ian Ker, ‘The Radicalism of the Papacy: John Paul II and the New Ecclesial Movements’, in William Oddie (ed.), *John Paul the Great. Maker of the Post-Conciliar Church* (London: CTS/The Catholic Herald, 2003) p. 63.

⁹ Pope Pius XI, Discourse to Young Women’s Section of Italian Catholic Action, March 1927, quoted in Jeremiah Newman, *What is Catholic Action? An Introduction to the Lay Apostolate*, (Dublin: M. H. Gill and Son Ltd, 1958) p. 38.

end purpose of which is to make Jesus Christ better known and better loved, then they are more than ever 'a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people,' of whom St. Peter spoke...¹⁰

Specifically, Catholic Action was founded to educate lay men and women in a society threatened by fascist and communist ideologies.¹¹ Pius XI wanted Catholic Action to be implemented across the world, based on the model of *Azione Cattolica Italiana* (ACI), 'to provide cadres of Catholic lay people trained to engage with secular society, and all its challenges and evils'.¹² Catholic Action enrolled its members through the structures of the Church, that is, in parishes and dioceses.

A number of other significant lay movements were founded in the first decades of the twentieth century. One of the more famous movements is *Jeunesse Ouvriere Chretienne* (JOC, or Young Christian Worker Movement), founded for the evangelization of factory workers after the First World War by Canon (later Cardinal) Joseph Cardijn in Belgium in 1925.¹³ Opus Dei was another, founded by Saint Josemaria Escrivá in Spain in 1928. Yet because Catholic Action received approval from, and was promoted at, the highest levels of the Church, it spread widely through various manifestations.

There were generalist Catholic Action organisations that were open to all Catholics over a given age, such as the Holy Name Society and the Legion of Mary. There were also specialist Catholic Action groups that were targeted at members of the same gender or vocation, such as women or married couples, and those with a professional interest, such as doctors, lawyers or students. From the 1930s to the 1950s, Catholic Action incorporated practically all lay Catholic organisations and activities for student, youth, adult, male and female groups across western Europe.

As Catholic Action took on the universal apostolate of the Church, it sought to contribute to fulfilling the specific aims of cooperating with clergy in parish life, bringing a Christian culture to bear in society, strengthening family life, defending the rights and freedoms of the Church, ensuring a strong education system (especially in the form of the Catholic

¹⁰ Pope Pius XI, Encyclical: *Ubi Arcano Dei Concilio*, 23 December 1922, 58.

¹¹ Faggioli, 'The New Elites of Italian Catholicism', p. 23.

¹² John Pollard, 'Pius XI's promotion of the Italian model of Catholic Action in the world-wide church', in *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 63, no. 4 (2012) p. 759.

¹³ Young Christian Workers (YCW) movement website. Fr Cardijn was given responsibility for a girls' youth club in 1912, and after the First World War this was developed into the Movement for the support of the factory workers.

school), and fostering decent standards of behaviour.¹⁴ In addition to participation in the evangelizing mission of the Church, the laity were asked to ‘exercise a vigilant surveillance of the press, cinema and radio’.¹⁵ This co-operation with the media apostolate of the Church also included supporting the Catholic press, distributing pamphlets and placing Catholic literature in libraries and other public spaces.

Faggioli notes that Catholic Action contributed to the renewal of the Church in the spirit of *ressourcement* discussed in earlier chapters. He remarks on the impact:

The intellectual sources of Catholic Action put this new kind of laity front and centre in the attempt to renew the language of Catholic theology vis-à-vis the modern world, as seen in the writings of Jacques Maritain, the new ecclesiology overcoming the idea of the Church as a *societas perfecta*, and the cautious but attentive approach to the nouvelle théologie.¹⁶

Yet in the aftermath of the Second World War, as the political environment around Europe underwent further changes, a transformation was taking place in the organised Catholic laity. On one hand, Catholic Action’s original mission to educate the faithful and protect the laity from the attacks coming from the liberal ideologies and totalitarian regimes in Europe became less necessary. On the other, as the Church became more open to the world in an environment less politically and socially hostile, Catholic Action was not needed in the same way as it was before the war.¹⁷ Catholic Action had developed differently across the different parts of the world and, as such, a change in terminology and structure was required.¹⁸ At the same time, many leaders from Catholic Action moved on and set up new apostolic endeavours in line with contemporary needs, often with parochial, diocesan or national rather than pontifical recognition.¹⁹ These groups drew ‘inspiration from the “reform movements” of the later nineteenth and early twentieth century... recognising the need to reorganise the Catholic laity on a more participative basis’.²⁰ Still, in both his first encyclical *Ad Petri Cathedram*²¹ and in the encyclical concerning the missions, native clergy and lay participation, *Princeps Pastorum*, Pope

¹⁴ Newman, *What is Catholic Action?*. For a comprehensive description of each of these aims, see pp. 84–104.

¹⁵ Pollard, ‘Pius XI’s promotion of the Italian model of Catholic Action’, p. 759.

¹⁶ Faggioli, ‘The New Elites of Italian Catholicism’, p. 24.

¹⁷ Faggioli, ‘Between Documents and Spirit’, p. 13.

¹⁸ Newman, *What is Catholic Action?*, p. 113.

¹⁹ For a detailed explanation of other forms of the Organised Lay Apostolate, see Newman, pp. 119–53.

²⁰ Faggioli, ‘Between Documents and Spirit’, p. 12.

²¹ Pope John XXIII, Encyclical: *Ad Petri Cathedram*, 29 June 1959. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_29061959_ad-petri.html.

John XXIII commended Catholic Action for its role in furthering the work of the Church's missionary outreach. In the latter encyclical, he noted how important it was that Catholic Action be carefully adapted to local conditions and needs, rather than carrying over practices from one country to another.²² He also indicated there was more development needed in this area for mission territories, leadership and education.

5.4 Vatican II

When Pope John XXIII convoked the Second Vatican Council in 1961, he continued to recognise the significance of the laity by reiterating that the Church is made up of all 'the People of God'.²³ This elevated status of laity within the Church 'marked the fulfilment of three decades of development that followed Pius XI's embrace of Catholic Action'.²⁴ The Second Vatican Council subsequently took a broad view of the lay apostolate. As described in Chapter 2 of this thesis, the term 'laity' is defined in *Lumen Gentium* as referring to all the faithful except those in Holy Orders and those in the state of religious life specifically approved by the Church.²⁵ The specific apostolic work of the laity is to take the Church into the world and evangelize, doing so as a complement to the hierarchy of the Church. Because the laity live in the world, they are called to bring Christ into the world. They are to make the Church present in the world through their family and social networks as well as in their work in the professions and other occupations. The laity, by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God. In this way, they may make Christ known to others, especially by the testimony of a life lived in faith, hope and love.²⁶

The Second Vatican Council Decree, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, also spoke about the presence of the Christian in the world²⁷ and the role of the laity in the work of evangelization.²⁸ The imperative for the laity to evangelize was said to come from the new situation in the world, where 'new problems are arising and very serious errors are circulating which tend to undermine the foundations of religion, the moral order, and

²² Pope John XXIII, Encyclical: *Princeps Pastorum*, 28 November 1959, 43-47.
http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_28111959_princeps.html,

²³ Jeremy Bonner; Christopher D. Denny and Mary Beth Fraser Connolly (eds.), *Empowering the People of God: Catholic Action before and after Vatican II* (Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2013) p. 3.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ LG 31.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ AA 5.

²⁸ AA 6.

human society itself'.²⁹ Lay men and women were encouraged to use their intellect and life circumstances to do their bit to 'explain, defend, and properly apply Christian principles to the problems of our era in accordance with the mind of the Church'.³⁰ *Apostolicam Actuositatem* also addressed the issue of the organisation of the laity, mentioning only Catholic Action.³¹ However, Faggioli notes it did leave some room for other lay organisations:

Organisations in which, in the opinion of the hierarchy, the ensemble of these characteristics is realized, must be considered to be Catholic Action even though they take on various forms and titles because of the needs of different regions and peoples.³²

Four particular characteristics had to be exhibited by all forms of lay organisations: that the organisation have the apostolic aim of evangelizing others, the lay leaders work in cooperation with the hierarchy, there is unity among the laity, and the organisation operates under a mandate of the hierarchy.³³ Alberigo notes that many Council Fathers believed that those lay organisations, like Catholic Action, that were prevalent across the Church and whose outreach was effective in the past were not the only models for the future. He writes, '[c]onferring this exclusivity upon them brought the risk of locking in and generalizing the responses that has arisen in very specific historical and social situations'.³⁴

The Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* warned the laity to be diligent in their earthly duties, as the fulfilment of these is connected with their eternal destination. There was to be no unnecessary dichotomy between personal and professional activities on one hand and religious activities on the other.³⁵ Other documents that mention the laity include *Sacrosanctum Concilium*³⁶ and *Presbyterorum Ordinis*.³⁷ These documents recognise the essential place of the laity in the Church and in the world.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ AA 20.

³² Faggioli, 'Between Documents and Spirit', p. 6,7.

³³ AA 20.

³⁴ Alberigo, *History of Vatican II*, p. 71.

³⁵ GS 43.

³⁶ SC 14.

³⁷ PO 9.

5.5 Post Vatican II

A number of new expressions of lay associations arising out of Catholic Action came to prominence between the 1960s and the end of Paul VI's pontificate in 1978. Even if they were founded before the Council, most defined themselves as 'the fruit of Vatican II'.³⁸ Catholic Action started losing members to these new movements immediately after the Second Vatican Council, according to Massimo Faggioli, just as it was 'accepting the Second Vatican Council, its ecclesiology of the Church as a communion, and the need to reconcile the Catholic laity with a more democratic organizational model'.³⁹ Included among these groups were Communion and Liberation, Community of Sant' Egidio, Focolare, Neocatechumenal Way, Cursillos de Cristiandad, Legionaries of Christ, Opus Dei and the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. These ecclesial movements struggled to gain recognition and support, both from within the Catholic community and from the local hierarchy.⁴⁰

5.5.1 Recognition of the Laity

Pope Paul VI brought to fruition the proposal called for in *Apostolicam actuositatem* for the establishment of a body that represented the laity at the highest level of the Church. The Council for the Laity was created on 6 January 1967 through the Motu Proprio *Catholicam Christi Ecclesiam*.⁴¹ The history of the Council for the Laity states explicitly that its theological underpinnings have come from Vatican II, from the ecclesiology of communion and the renewed sense of mission and evangelization to which the Church was called:

We have also to realize that the laity can only be rightly understood in the light of an ecclesiology of communion and mission and with reference to the concrete situations existing in the world. It is not by chance that the decree *Apostolicam actuositatem* is strictly related to the conciliar constitutions *Lumen gentium* on the Church and *Gaudium et spes* on the Church in the modern world.⁴²

³⁸ Ian Ker, 'The Radicalism of the Papacy', p. 60, 61. Ker notes that regarding these movements, some of which predate Vatican II, the founders were not responding to the teachings of *Lumen Gentium*, but rather to the Holy Spirit 'in putting, as it were, flesh and blood on the conciliar text'.

³⁹ Faggioli, 'The New Elites of Italian Catholicism', p. 24.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁴¹ Pope Paul VI, Motu Proprio *Catholicam Christi Ecclesiam*, 6 January 1967.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/it/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19670106_catholicam-christi-ecclesiam.html. This same Motu Proprio also brought into effect the Pontifical Commission of Studies for Promoting Justice and Peace.

⁴² Pontifical Council for the Laity website, <http://www.laici.va/content/laici/en.html>.

This Council was reformed ten years later, on 10 December 1976, when Paul VI renamed it the Pontifical Council for the Laity (hereafter PCL) and included it among the permanent dicasteries of the Roman Curia.⁴³ As the laity were called to cooperate anew with the hierarchy, the PCL Secretariat had separate sections that dealt with specific groups within the laity: international movements and associations of the lay faithful, the vocation and mission of women in Church and society, and youth ministry.⁴⁴

Archbishop Karol Wojtyła, who had been a consultor to the PCL during his time as Archbishop of Krakow, had experienced in his archdiocese the creative tension as new forms of lay association sought to find their place in the local Church. As pope, he sought to reform the working of the Roman Curia with the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus* in 1988. John Paul II affirmed the PCL and set out its responsibility in relation to the new expressions of lay participation in the Church:

...the Council performs all activities regarding lay associations of the Christian faithful; it erects associations of an international character and provides approval or *recognitio* for their statutes, without prejudice to the competence of the Secretariat of State. As for secular third orders, the Council deals only with those matters concerning their apostolic activities.⁴⁵

Thus, these new ecclesial lay movements received support from the highest levels of the Church, as Catholic Action did decades earlier.

But there is still some way to go in the role of the laity in the Church. Pope Benedict XVI said as much, in an address given at the opening of the Pastoral Convention of the Diocese of Rome on the theme ‘Church Membership and Pastoral Co-responsibility’ in 2009, recognising that

[t]oo many of the baptized do not feel part of the ecclesial community and live on its margins, only coming to parishes in certain circumstances to receive religious services. Compared to the number of inhabitants in each parish, the lay people who are ready to work in the various apostolic fields, although they profess to be Catholic, are still few and far between. Of course, social and cultural difficulties abound but faithful to the Lord's mandate, we cannot resign ourselves to preserving what exists.⁴⁶

⁴³ Pope Paul VI, Motu Proprio *Apostolatus peragendi*, 10 December 1976. http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/it/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19761210_apostolatus-peragendi.html.

⁴⁴ Pontifical Council for the Laity website.

⁴⁵ Pope John Paul II, *Pastor Bonus*, 28 June 1988, art 134. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_19880628_pastor-bonus.html.

⁴⁶ Pope Benedict XVI, Address to Opening of the Pastoral Convention of the Diocese of Rome: ‘*Church Membership and Pastoral Co-responsibility*’, 26 May 2009.

In his encyclical *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis acknowledges that, while there ‘has been a growing awareness of the identity and mission of the laity in the Church’, there are insufficient numbers who ‘have a deeply-rooted sense of community and great fidelity to the tasks of charity, catechesis and the celebration of the faith’.⁴⁷ Francis goes on to note that, in some parts of the Church, the laity are not well formed in their baptismal responsibility, and in other places the laity are excluded ‘because in their particular Churches room has not been made for them to speak and to act, due to an excessive clericalism which keeps them away from decision-making’.⁴⁸ The more urgent task, according to Pope Francis, is ‘a greater penetration of Christian values in the social, political and economic sectors... The formation of the laity and the evangelization of professional and intellectual life represent a significant pastoral challenge’.⁴⁹

Pope Francis further refined the work of the PCL in 2016, creating the new Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life. In the Motu Proprio *Sedula Mater*,⁵⁰ Francis indicates that the dicasteries of the Roman Curia needed to be updated to reflect the situations of the present times and to be adapted to the requirements of the universal Church. With this new dicastery, Francis recognises that, in bringing these areas together, the Church wishes to ‘offer support and help, because they are active witness to the Gospel in our time and an expression of the goodness of the Redeemer’.⁵¹

5.5.2 New Ecclesial Movements and New Evangelization

Pope John Paul II saw the rise of the new ecclesial movements and the increased role of the laity in the mission of the Church as being at the forefront of the New Evangelization. In particular, John Paul II understood the flourishing of the ecclesial movements as a confirmation of the teaching in *Lumen Gentium* that charismatic gifts, ‘special graces’ given by the Holy Spirit to individuals or groups, were for ‘the renewal and building up of the Church’.⁵²

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2009/may/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20090526_convegno-diocesi-rm_en.html.

⁴⁷ EG 102.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Pope Francis, Motu Proprio *Sedula Mater*, 15 August 2016.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio_20160815_sedula-mater.html.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² LG 12.

In *Redemptoris Missio*, John Paul II specifically recognised the gift that the new ecclesial movements are to the Church for their significant role in the Church's mission to evangelize and build communion in the Church. As Pius XI had done in promoting the spread of Catholic Action, so John Paul II was doing for the new ecclesial movements:

I call to mind, as a new development occurring in many churches in recent times, the rapid growth of 'ecclesial movements' filled with missionary dynamism. When these movements humbly seek to become part of the life of local churches and are welcomed by bishops and priests within diocesan and parish structures, they represent a true gift of God both for new evangelization and for missionary activity properly so-called. I therefore recommend that they be spread, and that they be used to give fresh energy, especially among young people, to the Christian life and to evangelization, within a pluralistic view of the ways in which Christians can associate and express themselves.⁵³

He reiterated this in *Christifideles Laici*, stating 'Indeed, the Church is directed and guided by the Holy Spirit, who lavishes diverse hierarchical and charismatic gifts on all the baptized, calling them to be, each in an individual way, active and co-responsible'.⁵⁴ Following the promulgation of *Christifideles Laici*, an online directory of lay associations and new ecclesial movements approved by the Vatican was published.⁵⁵

Pope John Paul II reached out to the movements, inviting members to a meeting in Rome. The inaugural World Congress of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities was a four-day congress held in May 1998. It culminated in a gathering in St Peter's Square on the eve of Pentecost to 'celebrate a new moment of "ecclesial maturity", gathered together around Peter, the symbol of the Church's unity'.⁵⁶ On 30 May, half a million people filled not only St Peter's Square but all the way down Via Della Conciliazione. Testimonies were given by Monsignor Luigi Giussani, founder of Communion and Liberation;⁵⁷ Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare movement, whose mission is to foster the unity of the human race;⁵⁸ Kiko Arguello, leader of the Neocatechumenal Way, which is focussed on evangelization of the unchurched and the re-evangelization of the poorly catechised;⁵⁹ and Jean Vanier, founder of the L'Arche Community, whose spirituality is

⁵³ RM 72.

⁵⁴ CL 21.

⁵⁵ Pontifical Council for the Laity, Associations of the Faithful Directory, <http://www.laici.va/content/laici/en/sezioni/associazioni/repertorio.html>.

⁵⁶ Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, p. 838.

⁵⁷ Communion and Liberation website, <http://english.clonline.org/>.

⁵⁸ Focolare website, <http://www.focolare.org/en/>.

⁵⁹ The Neocatechumenal Way website, <http://www.camminoneocatecumenale.it/new/default.asp?lang=en>.

to work and live with people with an intellectual disability.⁶⁰ It was a significant gathering, the first time the movements and new ecclesial communities had met in such a way with a pope. This meeting also formed an integral part of John Paul II's three-year preparatory journey to the Great Jubilee of 2000, considered in Chapter 3. It was held in the year dedicated to the Holy Spirit, the principal agent for evangelization. John Paul II recounted the words from the Acts of the Apostles regarding the Pentecost event and remarked, 'It is as though what happened in Jerusalem 2000 years ago were being repeated this evening in this square'.⁶¹ It was, in a sense, the fulfilment of 'the new Pentecost' first prayed for by Pope John XXIII and regularly repeated by Pope John Paul II. He challenged those present, stating that the Church expects from them the 'mature fruits of communion and commitment'⁶² and went on to exhort:

...the urgent need for powerful proclamation and solid, in-depth Christian formation. There is so much need today for mature Christian personalities, conscious of their baptismal identity, of their vocation and mission in the Church and in the world! There is great need for living Christian communities! And here are the movements and the new ecclesial communities: they are the response, given by the Holy Spirit, to this critical challenge at the end of the millennium. You are this providential response.⁶³

Cardinal Ratzinger also spoke at this gathering of the wonderful personal experience it was for him in the 1980s to come into close contact with key movements, to sense the energy and enthusiasm with which they lived and shared their faith.⁶⁴

With the support of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, the International Forum for Catholic Action continued gathering at regular intervals.⁶⁵ In 2004, Pope John Paul II addressed their gathering, challenging the organisation at the dawn of the new millennium to face the future courageously, draw strength from its strong heritage and seek the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for its future growth and mission. He told them:

⁶⁰ L'Arche website, <http://www.larche.org.au/>.

⁶¹ Pope John Paul II, *Address, First World Meeting with Ecclesial Movements and New Communities*, 30 May 1998, 1.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 6.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁶⁴ Ker, 'The Radicalism of the Papacy', p. 50. Ratzinger noted 'that was the period in which Karl Rahner and others were speaking of a winter in the Church; and indeed, it did seem that, after the great flowering of the Council, spring had been reclaimed by frost, and that the new dynamism had succumbed to exhaustion'.

⁶⁵ The International Forum for Catholic Action (IFCA) was established by the Catholic Action movements of Argentina, Spain, Austria, Malta, Mexico and Italy in 1991, inspired by the 1987 Synod on the vocation and mission of the laity in the Church and in the world, and the publication of the Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*.

Today I am eager to repeat once again: the Church needs Catholic Action! Our memories of it must not be reduced to a nostalgic withdrawal into the past but must grow into awareness that the Holy Spirit has made a precious gift to the Church, a heritage that is called, at the dawn of this third millennium, to bring forth new fruits of holiness and of the apostolate, extending the 'implantation' of the Association to many other local Churches in different countries.⁶⁶

Pope John Paul II gave great encouragement to laity, and the new ecclesial movements in particular, because he saw them as a lived reality of the communion to which the Church was called. He understood it was from these new movements that much of the energy for the New Evangelization would come. He offered pontifical support when diocesan and national support was not available or forthcoming.

Pope Benedict XVI was as one with his predecessor in encouraging the laity's role in the Church's mission to communicate Christ, which is evangelization. He presided over the Second World Congress of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities on the eve of Pentecost in 2006. In his address, he spoke on the Trinitarian nature of God, noting that it is the Holy Spirit who brings life, freedom and unity. He concluded his address with an emphatic invitation for the movements and communities to contribute to the evangelizing mission of the Church in collaboration with the Holy Father: 'Dear friends, I ask you to collaborate even more, very much more, in the Pope's universal apostolic ministry, opening doors to Christ'.⁶⁷

He delivered a similar message in 2012 to the Sixth Ordinary Assembly of the International Forum of Catholic Action. Pope Benedict XVI reminded participants that the encounter with Christ is the goal of mission:

Guiding people to the encounter with Christ, proclaiming his Message of salvation in languages and ways understandable to our time, marked by social and cultural processes in rapid transformation, is the great challenge of the new evangelization. I encourage you to persevere generously in your service to the Church.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Pope John Paul II, Message to the participants in the International Congress of Catholic Action, 10 August 2004. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/pont_messages/2004/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_20040810_catholic-action.html.

⁶⁷ Pope Benedict XVI, Homily at Meeting with the Second World Meeting of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities, 3 June 2006. http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2006/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20060603_veglia-pentecoste.html.

⁶⁸ Pope Benedict XVI, Message on the occasion of the sixth ordinary assembly of the International Forum of Catholic Action, 10 August 2012. https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/messages/pont-messages/2012/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20120810_fiac.html.

Pope Francis, in turn, addressed participants in the Third World Congress of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities at their meeting in November 2014. He reiterated the need for ‘ecclesial maturity’ as both John Paul II and Benedict XVI had done, while emphasising the need to

maintain the freshness of your charism, respect the freedom of each person, and always strive for communion. Do not forget, however, that to reach this goal, conversion must be missionary: the strength to overcome temptations and insufficiencies comes from the profound joy of proclaiming the gospel, which is the foundation of your charisms.⁶⁹

In 2016, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a letter, *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, which sought to ‘underline those theological and ecclesiological elements whose comprehension will encourage a fruitful and ordered participation of the new groups in the communion and the mission of the Church’.⁷⁰ This letter reflects anew on the flourishing of the many ‘groups of the faithful, ecclesial movements, and new communities’⁷¹ that have grown up alongside the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life both before and after the Council. It acknowledged that these groups and movements represent the ‘multiform richness of the ecclesial communion’ and are testimony that the Church grows as result of attraction rather than proselytism.⁷² This was important recognition that the promotion of the encounter with Christ by witnesses to the faith, living the communion of the Church in community, was bearing fruit.

These new ecclesial movements which have come to prominence in the post-Vatican II period are an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in keeping with the evangelizing thrust of Vatican II and the New Evangelization for the renewal of the Church.

⁶⁹ Pope Francis, Address to participants in the Third World Congress of Ecclesial Movements and New Communities, 22 November 2014.

⁷⁰ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 16 May 2016, 3. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20160516_iuvenescit-ecclesia_en.html. (Hereafter IE).

⁷¹ IE 2.

⁷² IE 2 quoting EG 14; cf. Benedict XVI, Homily in the Holy Mass of inauguration of the Fifth General Conference of the Latin-American Episcopacy and of the Caribbean at ‘La Aparecida’ (13 May 2007), 43.

5.6 Conclusion

All the elements of communion ecclesiology, evangelization and communication described in the previous four chapters are synthesised in this final chapter, which shows communion lived in the community of the faithful. There has been a significant shift from the pre-eminence of Catholic Action in the early twentieth century to the new ecclesial communities that came to the fore in the spirit of the Council. These new movements show the laity making Christ and the Church present in the world, in the fields of society and politics, business and culture, promoting the encounter with the person of Jesus Christ, who then draws the hearer into the communion of the Trinity. They also demonstrate the evangelizing principles evident since the Council, that the encounter with Christ leads to witness and proclamation, that all the faithful have the responsibility to evangelize, and that holiness of life leads to the mission to evangelize. Just as the Church is a communicative act, so too are the new ecclesial movements a communicative act as the members of the movement evangelize the culture.

The new movements proclaim Christ and witness to him by their living in communion with the Church in an intentional community. These movements serve communion ecclesiology by living it in community. They also undertake to provide significant formation and catechesis for their members, thereby incorporating them more deeply into Christ and the communion of the Trinity. Because of their formation, the lay people are well formed in the faith and empowered to play a significant role in the Church's evangelizing mission. The movements participate in the culture of communications to spread the message of the faith, with an online presence, publications and events. All of these point to opportunities for individuals to give witness to the presence of Christ in their life, so that others might encounter Christ too.

Conclusion

This thesis described how the Second Vatican Council has contributed to a new focus on communicating Christ who makes the invisible God visible and invites humankind into an encounter with himself and, ultimately, into the communion which exists in the Trinity. Since the Council there has been a link between communion ecclesiology, evangelization and communication.

Firstly the paper established that the recovery of communion ecclesiology evident at the Second Vatican Council changed the way the Church communicates. Communion, or *koinonia*, recovered from Scripture and the early Church, indicates that through his incarnation, Jesus Christ entered the world and revealed the invisible God. By his presence in the world, Jesus, the Perfect Communicator, draws the Church into the love relationship that exists between Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This communion of the Trinity gives rise to communion in the Church.

The goal of evangelization is to lead people to an encounter with Christ, who reveals the Father, and the Spirit of love is poured into the heart of the believer and they become united with God and with fellow believers. The New Evangelization designates the urgency with which the Church must respond to the dechristianisation of the world, countering the secularisation that is leading to a crisis of humanity and a crisis of faith.

The theology of communication developed in the post-conciliar period provides a helpful trajectory for the Church to reach the goal of communion. Making contact leads to establishing connection and through communication, leads to community and ultimately to communion. Since the Council all the faithful have been encouraged to contribute to promoting the encounter with the person of Christ. The one communicating becomes a mediator for the encounter with Christ. And the one who encounters Christ is drawn into the life of the Trinity and into the fellowship of the community of believers in the Church.

Further, this research recognised that the Holy Spirit has raised up new ecclesial movements in the life of the Church, thereby forming and empowering the new evangelizers needed to undertake this mission of the New Evangelization. These new movements, which are a fruit of the Council, see their mission as facilitating the encounter

with Christ in the form of an encounter with a person. They are a new communicative act in the life Church, an outworking of communion ecclesiology.

A number of findings became evident in researching and writing this thesis. First, it became evident that to really understand the Church's mission to evangelize, it was crucial to first understand the nature of the Church. The initial research proposal had been focussed only on exploring the evangelizing mission of the Church since the Second Vatican Council. This realisation led to exploring the nature of the Church before considering evangelization, which is the outreach of the Church.

Secondly, I came to understand the significance of the impact of Vatican II in bringing about a shift in ecclesiology which had been developing for five centuries. Since the Reformation in the sixteenth century, the Church had considered herself as *societas perfecta*, possessing within herself all that was necessary for her continuation as a visible institution. The Church's understanding from the Council of Trent proceeded via the First Vatican Council and came to fruition with the Second Vatican Council. This saw the recovery from the early Church of the ecclesiology of communion, which again emphasised the invisible part of the Church's nature. This is recognition that the Second Vatican Council was in continuity with the Tradition of the Church, rather than a rupture from Tradition. The *Communio* school has carried this thinking into academia, while Popes Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis have carried this into the official teaching of the Church.

This research is important because the renewal evident at the Second Vatican Council is still being implemented; the goal of communion in the Church is still being realised. The research is also important for making the teachings of the Council accessible to new generations of Catholics, linking these conciliar teachings with subsequent teachings of the Church to deepen understanding and appreciation of the impact of this event in the life of the Church. Having worked in media and evangelization in the Church for nearly twenty years, this research project was underpinned by my own desire to understand more deeply the theory underpinning the praxis.

There are a number of recommendations for practitioners contained within this thesis, especially when it comes to parish ministry. The parish, a subset of the diocese, is the ordinary form of community life in the Church, the place for the faithful to gather for worship. There is work to be done for practitioners to focus on how the parish can build communion. Pope Francis recognises this in *Evangelii Gaudium*:

The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God's word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration. In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelizers. It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink amid their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach. We must admit, though, that the call to review and renew our parishes has not yet sufficed to bring them nearer to people, to make them environments of living communion and participation, and to make them completely mission-oriented.¹

While in the process of finishing this thesis, I was invited to deliver a presentation to a diocesan clergy conference on the topic 'Evangelical Accompaniment of Laity and Families'.² This theme was inspired by Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* in which he recognised that the family is the 'living reflection' of the communion of love that is the Trinitarian God.³

In my presentation, I drew heavily on the research in this thesis. My proposal was that the goal of the accompaniment of laity and families is drawing them into the communion of the Church – not just Holy Communion, received when participating in Mass every Sunday, but union with Christ and the Blessed Trinity. This is because, by his presence in the world, Jesus invites all of humankind into an encounter with the relationship of love which exists between the Trinity.

I presented the theology of communication as providing a useful framework for practitioners to reach this goal of communion. This indicates that the person making contact with the Church ought to be accompanied on their trajectory from connection through communication in order to bring them into the community, which ultimately leads to communion with the Church. Practical examples of pastoral situations encountered in a parish were given for each stage of this process, including an engaged couple contacting the Church for their wedding, support for a couple experiencing difficulties in their marriage, a couple wanting to have their child baptised into the Church, and families seeking to enrol their children in a parish primary school. With the new media tools available at the present time there are a myriad of ways in which to reach out to those loosely connected with the Church and with the wider community.

¹ EG 28.

² Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation: *Amoris Laetitia*, 19 March 2016 (Hereafter AL).
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20160319_amoris-laetitia.html.

³ AL 11.

Sacramental preparation for a media-savvy generation can include solid theological formation as well as clever use of new media tools. With this framework, the Clergy were given a process by which they can accompany the laity and families as they are invited to encounter Christ such that they live in communion with Christ and the Church.

Finally, I have discovered what a great grace the Second Vatican Council is for the Church of today. In opening the windows of the Church to rediscover its nature and mission, the Council brought renewal to the Church in order that it continue to give witness to and proclaim Jesus Christ who draws each into the communion of the Trinity.

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