Synodality and Authenticity: Towards a Contemporary Ecclesiology for the Catholic Church

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to establish foundations from which an ecclesiology of synodality can be developed. Synodality marks a new era of meaning for the Catholic Church and work in this area is breaking ground every day.

The unique contribution of this thesis to the field of ecclesiology is through its engagement with Lonergan's insights into transcendental consciousness and its relationship to theological method, in order to investigate and provide foundations for synodality, and to define synodality as the Catholic Church being authentic in the contemporary world.

The self-understanding of the Catholic Church in the contemporary world requires development of an ecclesiology that is dynamic and relational, and supportive of a vision of mature and co-responsible members of the Church. Foundations for such an ecclesiology will ground this vision, pointing to it as a journey that supports growth in authenticity, and therefore the healing, co-responsibility, and missionary activity of the People of God. This thesis describes what it means for the Catholic Church to exercise synodality in its praxis and governance, while demonstrating that synodality is already emerging and impacting upon all of the Church's relationships.

Bernard Lonergan's transcendental method is used by the researcher. Lonergan's theology is used as a framework for developing foundations that can appreciate human intentional consciousness and historicity, and enable ecclesial meaning to be articulated in language and imagery that is fundamentally relational and dynamic. This new ecclesiological era began with the Second Vatican Council which overcame to a great extent the long reign of static and hierarchical meaning.

This thesis identifies and explores key elements of synodality in order to build up a comprehensive understanding of the Catholic Church as synodal and authentic. Selective scriptural and historical analysis investigates the roots of synodality, and contextualises its emergence in the contemporary Church. Finally, using the foundations previously established, the thesis attends to the practicalities of synodality. The major challenges to the contemporary Church are articulated, and the path forward is revealed with synodal solutions.

Declaration of Originality

I, Elissa Roper, hereby certify that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution and affirm that to the best of my knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

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Abbreviations

ACBC	Australian Catholic Bishops Conference
ARCIC III	Third Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission
AUSCP	Association of US Catholic Priests
CAM	Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne
CDF	Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
CELAM	Conselho Episcopal Latino-Americano
CPS	Catholic Partnership Summit
CPSL	Catholic Professional Standards Ltd
CRA	Catholic Religious Australia
FABC	Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences
GRPT	Governance Review Project Team
ISMAPNG	Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea
ITC	International Theological Commission
LEM	Lay Ecclesial Minister
NCPR	National Centre for Pastoral Research
NCSS	National Catholic Safeguarding Standards
PJP	Public Juridic Person
RE	Receptive Ecumenism
REPAM	Red Eclesial Pan-Amazónica
USCCB	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
WCC	World Council of Churches

Introduction

The contemporary Catholic Church is experiencing a break-through into a fuller stage of self-understanding and meaning, known as *synodality*. This context is marked by Pope Francis, who proclaims that the path of synodality is precisely the path "which God expects of the Church of the third millennium."[1] Responding within an era of abuse, scandal and distress, his papacy is continually shaped by identifying and promoting various elements of synodality. Synodality is being proposed as a radical renewal of self-understanding, heralding the journey to transformation that the Catholic Church so desperately needs. In this context the field of ecclesiology, which is concerned with the nature, identity, and functioning of the Church, is moving into a new consciousness of *what it means to be Church*. Ecclesiology has an opportunity to use a new lens through which to perceive and explore the identity and nature of the people who together are called Church, their common meaning, and how they understand and live this meaning together.[2] The necessary ecclesiological foundations for synodality, however, are yet to be firmly established. Without foundations, synodality risks being a mere movement within the Church, rather than a unifying force of renewal that builds an authentic People of God in the contemporary world. The purpose of this thesis is to establish foundations from which an ecclesiology of synodality can be developed.

The work of Bernard Lonergan informs the theology and methodology of this thesis. His definition of *foundations* as a functional speciality of theology clarifies the activity of this thesis:

A note on inclusive language: the majority of primary texts used in this thesis do not use inclusive language, in particular the documents of the Second Vatican Council, papal and curial documents, and the books and articles of Bernard Lonergan. The original language is maintained because it is important to appreciate the context in which they were produced. It also serves to emphasise the contrast that this thesis establishes between the language, expression, and meaning that is *hierarchical*, and that which is *synodal*.

1. "It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium." Francis, "Address at the Ceremony Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops," *Holy See Press Office,* 17 Oct 2015, accessed 7 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/october/documents/papa-francesco_20151017_50-anniversario-sinodo.html.

2. The root of the word ecclesiology is the Greek word *ekklēsia*: the assembly or congregation. *Strong's Concordance*, via Bible Hub, accessed 3 Sept 2020, https://biblehub.com/greek/1577.htm, s.v. "*ekklēsia*." *Ekklēsia* is used interchangeably with "Church" in this thesis to speak of the people of the Catholic Church; as is "the faithful," which is preferred by Pope John Paul II. From chapter two, the "People of God" will be used more frequently. This phrase, rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures, is inclusive of all humanity: "All men are called to this catholic unity of the People of God. . . . And to it, in different ways, belong or are ordered: the Catholic faithful, others who believe in Christ, and finally all mankind, called by God's grace to salvation." *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls Publications, 2000), n.836. Hereafter *CCC*.
A list of abbreviations for documents used in this thesis is provided in Appendix A.

> [Foundations] is a decision about whom and what you are for and, again, whom and what you are against. It is a decision illuminated by the manifold possibilities exhibited in dialectic. It is a fully conscious decision about one's horizon, one's outlook, one's world-view. It deliberately selects the frame-work, in which doctrines have their meaning, in which systematics reconciles, in which communications are effective.[3]

This definition helps to identify the questions to be addressed: if synodality is the framework chosen for the contemporary Church's horizon and worldview, what does this mean? An historical approach will appropriate and appreciate the ecclesiological meaning lived by the early Church, for it is here that synodality's connection with key ecclesiological themes, as a sign of authentic development, is to be identified. Subsequently, ecclesiology has experienced decline, evidenced by corruption and clericalism. The questions of how and why are addressed in a critical analysis of the Council of Trent, which brings insight into the decline of ecclesiological meaning, its sources and key characteristics, and its definition as *hierarchical meaning*. The overcoming of long-term decline is identified as the theological

3. Lonergan defines eight functional specialities within theology. Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 1972), 127. Building upon the first four specialities (research, interpretation, history and dialectics), foundations is described as: "seeking the foundations, not of the whole of theology, but of the three last specialities, doctrine, systematics, and communications." Ibid., 267. This division recognises that each specialty has its own data, tasks and theological operations. These occur in one of the two basic phases of *oratione obliqua* (or engagement: the first four specialties), and *oratione recta* (the response which emerges out of the converted theologian: the second four specialties). It is also a division based on the four distinct levels of conscious intentionality (discussed in chapter three of this thesis), with foundations requiring all four levels. Ibid., 133. Lonergan stresses the need for each speciality to operate in the light of the data and insights from other specialties, and to recognise that it is in the last field of communications that theological fruit is to come to maturity. Ibid., 355.

and pastoral renewal of the Second Vatican Council, with advancement into new, shared space a sign of a renewed ecclesial paradigm.[4]

Considering the contemporary emergence of synodality out of Vatican II raises questions around the fullness of reform accomplished by the Council. What evidence do the primary sources of conciliar and post-council papal and curial documents reveal of progress in ecclesiological renewal? Is there evidence of resistance, or a pattern of refusal to undergo authentic renewal? The insights that emerge from this analysis shape both the foundational requirements of synodality, and the final, practical discussion of its challenges and solutions for the contemporary Church.

Thesis Methodology

The self-understanding of the Catholic Church in the contemporary world requires development of an ecclesiology that is dynamic and relational, and supportive of a vision of mature and co-responsible faithful. Foundations for such an ecclesiology will ground this vision, pointing to it as a journey that supports growth in authenticity, and therefore the healing, co-responsibility, and missionary activity, of the People of God.

The epistemological and hermeneutical grounds for this thesis are provided by the work of Bernard Lonergan, who has defined a new age of philosophical and theological endeavour through his explanations of human intentional consciousness and historicity. Lonergan's transcendental method is a "framework for collaborative creativity," and involves

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4. While Receptive Ecumenism (RE) remains outside the scope of this thesis, I believe that its emergence at this time, bringing a swift and remarkable impact upon ecumenical relationships, is both a sign of the value of a synodal Church, and of its actualisation. Paul Murray developed the concept and method of RE and is responsible for founding the Centre for Catholic Studies at Durham University, England. Murray understands the concepts of "Catholic learning" (i.e. healthy progress within ecclesiology and indeed any other theology) as inseparable from a process of receptive dialogue with ecumenical partners. RE stands as an example par excellence of synodality operative in the *ad extra* relations of the Catholic Church (the concept of synodality within the Orthodox tradition is an example of the potential of RE, but is also outside this thesis' scope.) Without acknowledging the importance of ecumenical and interfaith relations - and indeed all relationships within human society, as well as with Creation and Creator - the vision of a synodal Church as healthy, responsible and loving, will remain only partial.

For further information on RE see: University of Durham Centre for Catholic Studies, accessed 9 Oct 2020, https://www.dur.ac.uk/theology.religion/ccs/. And: Paul D. Murray, "Receptive Ecumenism and Catholic Learning - Establishing the Agenda," in *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning: Exploring a Way for Contemporary Ecumenism*, ed. Paul D. Murray, 5-25 (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008).

For an example of an ecumenical statement prepared through an RE process see the recently published Agreed Statement of the Third Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC III): ARCIC III, *Walking Together on the Way: Learning to Be the Church - Local, Regional, Universal, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity*, 2017, accessed 14 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/angl-comm-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20180521_walking-together-ontheway_en.pdf. Note how the title uses "walking" - a key theme of synodality.

the appropriation and development of one's own intentional consciousness, thereby promoting intelligence, reasonableness, and responsible judgements.[5] This is the basis of the methodological framework used to explore, question, research, focus, synthesise, and draw conclusions in this thesis.

In order to build an understanding of the developments of ecclesiology through history towards synodality, a number of key documents and events are examined. The methodology in selecting and analysing these involves cultivating an historical consciousness, and appreciating, appropriating and critiquing each text within its historical context.

This thesis contributes to the existing body of knowledge in the field of ecclesiology through its engagement with Lonergan's work to investigate and provide foundations for synodality, and its definition of synodality as the Catholic Church being authentic in the contemporary world.

Thesis Structure

Prior to any exploration of synodality and authenticity, this thesis reviews selected history that has led to the contemporary era. This approach begins with the key ecclesiological insights of Saint Paul and the Corinthian community, and the Gospel of John. These biblical texts were chosen for how they reveal and develop two major ecclesiological concepts - *community* and *conversion* - which prove to be elemental to the foundations of synodality that are built up throughout the thesis. Attention is then given to the Council of Trent and the era of the early twentieth century, in response to the question of where the roots of decline lie for the Catholic Church and its ecclesiology. This analysis builds insights and understanding into how the various aspects of hierarchical theology, a commitment to classical theology, and a long era without consistent reform or renewal, led the Church to deny itself ongoing conversion. The pent up need for transformation was released by the Second Vatican Council, which was the herald of a new era of ecclesiology.

Chapter two analyses the question of how an ecclesiology that perceives the Church as dynamic and relational overturned the static and juridical paradigm inherited from Trent. Evidence is analysed in relevant conciliar documents, paying close attention to the concepts

5. For Lonergan's description of his method in theology see: Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, xi.

of renewal, participation, dialogue, encounter, and self-understanding. Along with collegiality, these concepts prove to be the roots of the contemporary emergence and development of synodality. Chapter two proceeds to review the growth of a theology of the laity, along with concerns and correctives on the notion of communion, as major movements of post-conciliar ecclesiology. In this review key papal and curial documents are critically analysed for the questions they raise about the comprehensiveness of ecclesial renewal initiated by the Second Vatican Council. The chapter concludes with a description of institutional bodies and meetings at the various levels of the Catholic Church, in order to provide a foundation for later chapters to engage with key ecclesiological elements. The historical analysis thus far identifies these elements to be *participation*, *responsibility*, and *authority*. Having described the inadequacy of a hierarchical ecclesiology to realise these in a dynamic and inclusive way, the next chapter pursues such a path.

Chapter three moves to ground synodality in an understanding of human consciousness - the cognitional, epistemological and metaphysical process of knowing - that is beyond the classicist worldview that formed the foundations of hierarchical theology. Instead, synodality is to be understood, and developed further, by a consciousness that is both historical and transcendental.[6] It is revealed that what has in previous chapters been referred to as a "paradigm" or "perspective" is actually *meaning*. Thus the chapter establishes that Vatican II marked a pivotal movement of the Church from hierarchical meaning to an appropriation of dynamic and relational meaning. Synodal meaning is a deepening of relational meaning, the explanation and exploration of which are made possible by Lonergan's theology and transcendental method. With these insights, key concepts and their meaning within foundations for an ecclesiology of synodality may now be defined; concepts such as meaning, community, being responsible, conversion, and transformation. This enables the thesis to move towards a comprehensive understanding of the Catholic Church as authentic and synodal.

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6. Bernard Lonergan describes the two positions as enormously different: "one may be named classicist, conservative, traditional; the other named modern, liberal, perhaps historicist." Bernard Lonergan, "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness," in *A Second Collection: Papers,* vol. 13, ed. William F. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell, 1-10 (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 2. All of these terms are ambiguous and shall be clarified in chapter two. The important point is that "classical" and "transcendental" represent different standpoints taken by theologians that result in incompatible mentalities and separate horizons. The theologians' work will be very different and the one almost unintelligible to the other.

Many elements are emerging and providing glimpses as to what a contemporary ecclesiology of synodality may look like, but it is yet to be expressed clearly and systematically, and is in need of foundations before this can be achieved. Chapter four breaks open the vision of synodality in order to identify the theological foundations of an authentic and synodal Catholic Church. With synodality at the core of his papacy, analysis of relevant speeches and documents of Pope Francis enables some key concepts to be identified. These are then drawn out alongside the notion of authenticity, so that together they may reveal harmony between the meanings of synodality and authenticity (or not, if such is the case). Building upon the historical and hermeneutical groundwork of earlier chapters, chapter four explores how the identity and nature of the Catholic Church may be expressed within synodal meaning.

Chapter five attends to the practicalities of synodality. It explores what it means for the Catholic Church to exercise synodality in its praxis and governance, while demonstrating that synodality is already emerging and impacting upon all of the Church's relationships. While the previous chapters have engaged with the practical reality of the human person as possessing intentional consciousness and historicity, it is necessary to articulate the major challenges to synodality for the whole Church, and point to the way forward. The key challenges of the contemporary Catholic Church are identified as *clericalism* and *hierarchicalism*. With long, deep roots in hierarchical meaning and the slow corruption brought about by bias and lack of renewal, these two factors greatly impact the life of the People of God and their ability to be missionary disciples today. Building on the work of the previous chapters, it can be concluded that authenticity is desperately needed to overcome decline and promote progress. The authentic Catholic Church of the contemporary era - mature, responsible, and participating in Christ's redemptive work - can be achieved through synodal ecclesiology, governance, and praxis at all levels of ecclesial life.

Chapter 1
Historical Roots of a Contemporary Ecclesiology

Introduction

The International Theological Commission has declared the contemporary era a "*kairós* of synodality" for the Catholic Church.[1] A *kairós* is a time of crisis wherein God's salvation breaks into human history with greater urgency.[2] It is an important time for ecclesiology; an opportunity to renew and develop the Church's understanding of its identity, nature and mission. Ecclesiology is ecclesial self-examination and self-expression, seeking the meaning of being Church within the contemporary milieux of the other functional specialities of theology, science, technology, philosophy, anthropology, and so forth. Contemporary meaning is always informed by the past, and so the emergence of synodality has a place within the larger story of salvation history. An ecclesiology of synodality explores and explains the meaning of the Church as it has been lived in history, as it is lived now, and how it can be lived more authentically in the future. Therefore, an appropriation, appreciation and critique of relevant historical moments is essential to the purpose of this chapter, which is to reveal and analyse major ecclesiological insights of the early Church, and to seek the source of the decline that has become evident in the contemporary Church.

Section 1.1 engages with ecclesiological foundations present in the New Testament. This would be an exhaustive task without careful selection of what has particular relevance.[3] Saint Paul's first letter to the Corinthians has been chosen because, out of his concern for his fractious community, come great insights into unity as an achievement of a healthy, dynamic, diverse and loving community. The Gospel of John illuminates the centrality of encounter,

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1. International Theological Commission (ITC), *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, *Holy See Press Office*, 2 Mar 2018, accessed 23 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20180302_sinodalita_en.html, nn.1, 113. Hereafter *SYN*.

2. Karl Rahner and Herbert Vorgrimler, eds., *Dictionary of Theology,* 2nd ed. (New York, NY: the Crossroad Publishing Company, 1981), s.v. "kairos."

3. The ITC's document on synodality undertakes a wide-ranging survey of the authoritative sources of scripture, tradition and history, to illustrate the origins and developments of the concepts of synod and synodality. It aims to reveal the nature and identity of the Catholic Church as rooted in these concepts, and therefore: the pilgrim People of God on a journey, and an "assembly convoked by the risen Lord" (*SYN* n.42). The document establishes clearly that: "synodality is not simply a working procedure, but the particular form in which the Church lives and operates." Ibid. Chapter three of this thesis will explore "meaning" and "knowing," using the definitions of Bernard Lonergan, so that the notion of "control of meaning" can break open how synodality brings new meaning to ecclesiology.

transformation, and mission to the Christian journey. Together these two examples reveal how deep the foundations of synodality are, and suggest how much more the riches of other scripture will contribute to understanding the Catholic Church as synodal.

Section 1.2 identifies the Council of Trent as the marked beginning of a long era of stagnation for Catholic ecclesiology. The hierarchical ecclesial paradigm used by this Council focused narrowly on the clergy with regard to authority and agency, and its language was defensive and juridical. Without the renewal and diverse participation brought by synods, and especially ecumenical councils, the legacy of Trent continued deep into the twentieth century, ultimately declining into corruption.

A survey of the historical movements of Catholic ecclesiology through the twentieth century in section 1.3 provides insight into the context from which synodality has emerged. Pope Francis may be "setting the scene" in the contemporary era for a synodal Catholic Church, however there is a long history of popes, theologians, documents, councils, social upheaval, global movements, new voices and old concerns that have led to this time. The common thread through this chapter is the desire of the Church *to be who God wants the Church to be*. The aim is to explore the nature and identity of the Church through theology, and to provide a foundational perspective, language and metaphors for this work and its expression. The popes of the early twentieth century solidified the Church's self-understanding as a perfect society, with clear delineations between those who have power, authority, responsibility and agency, and those who do not. Through the use of a hierarchical paradigm, ecclesial language remained defensive and juridical; by the middle of the century the need for renewal created its own *kairós*.

The key metaphor of synodality is that of journey, implying the importance of hospitality, humility, and companions for the Catholic Church. Developing an historical consciousness through the methodology of this thesis will enable an appropriation and critique of the Catholic ecclesiological journey that has led to the movement towards synodality, in order to bring about a holistic and historical understanding of the Catholic Church as synodal.

1.1 New Testament Insights into Unity

This section focuses upon two contributions from the New Testament towards understanding the concept of *unity*. Unity is a central concept within Christian foundations which cannot be understood apart from *community* (in fact, the two words are interchangeable with the definition developed in chapter three).

The first contribution is by Saint Paul, who understands unity as building up the Body of Christ, and the second is the theme of transformation within the Gospel of John.

1.1.1 Saint Paul: Unity and Building up the Body of Christ

Saint Paul's experience with the disagreements and divisions in his gentile Christian communities led to a strong emphasis upon unity in his letters. Paul's corporeal understanding of the ekklēsia as the "Body of Christ" enabled him to explore and encourage deeper dimensions to unity. Unity is a concept that has always been central to ecclesiology, and Paul places it firmly in the midst of community life. Paul's letters to the Corinthians explain how the Body's unity is established through baptism and the Spirit, and then requires "building up" through maturity, discernment and growth in knowledge. He insists that discipleship is life in the crucified Christ, and thus eschatological and Trinitarian. The unity of a community is dependent on transformation: both for its creation through the Spirit in Baptism, and for its continued health and development towards maturity. The community were continually instructed to live their unity by walking together and attending to those things that build each other up. Paul's emphasis on diversity rejects bland uniformity and promotes love as the participatory means of communal discipleship.

Paul intends the construction of the Corinthian community into a mature and spiritual group of Christians. He uses the Greek word *oikodomē* - the act of building, or a building as object - frequently in his letters to the Corinthians.[4] "Building up" has a paraenetic purpose for Paul; it is the work of the community, himself as *architektōn* (skilled builder, 1 Cor 3:10), and of the Spirit (6:11), and it is always found within the context of unity. Paul's vision of

4. *Oikodomē* is used by Paul fifteen times in the first letter to the Corinthians and five in the second. Strong's Concordance, s.v. "*Oikodomē*." Scripture references in sections 1.1.1-6 are from 1 Corinthians, unless otherwise indicated. The bible used is the NRSV: Wayne A. Meeks, ed., *The HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version*, rev. ed. (London, UK: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993).

unity incorporates both the present and the eschatological future. Various issues are addressed within the context of building up within the *ekklēsia*: factions, gifts, marriage, food for idols, worship and etiquette.

The proper building up of the community lies not in selfish knowledge but in the mutual building up that love serves to bring (8:1-3, 10). The example of those who deal in knowledge rather than love can bring about a building up of others that is misleading. Paul's work of engaging with tensions and solving issues was intended to help the *ekklēsia* to do this ministry of building up themselves, with an orientation that comes from knowledge of Christ crucified, and nothing else (2:2). Above all is the gift and constructive power of love; if the Corinthians want to achieve order and unity, without love they will gain nothing (13:3).[5]

1.1.2 Unity is Walking Together

Paul's keen interest in the mutual building up of his communities can be expressed as a desire for them to journey, or walk together. He addresses his first letter to the Corinthians as a group of people "sanctified" and "washed" (1:2; 6:11)[6] - with this holiness a direct result of being "called" into fellowship.[7] The tense of the Greek words suggest: "an action in the past, with Christ Jesus as the agent and with a continuing effect in the present."[8] The past event is their baptism and they can now be pronounced holy, set apart from the profane.[9] The continuing effect within the present, however, is disrupted by disunity which does not accord with the baptised life (1:10-17). According to Paul, the solution is to constantly attend to the building up of the community; from foolish to wise (2:13); of the flesh to spiritual (3:3); and from children to adults (3:2). These words and actions all require movement by the group,

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5. Love and community are concrete; they are rooted in attending to the experience and suffering of each other, and illuminated by the crucifixion of Jesus. Yung Suk Kim, *Christ's Body in Corinth: The Politics of a Metaphor* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008), 86.

6. Raymond Collins notes that this is biblical language and not typical of Hellenistic letters. Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, vol. 7, *Sacra Pagina* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 46.

7. Holiness for Paul has a particular Jewish perspective based on the orderly creation within Genesis. As described by Jerome Neyrey: "God is holy (1) when set apart from death and sin and (2) when creating order out of chaos." To be holy as God is holy (Lev 11:44) involves knowing and keeping the "maps" of order, or system of purity. Paul held a particular concern for order and purity, as evidenced by his frequent use of Jewish terms for this, and he used these systems to address the disputes within his communities. Jerome Neyrey, *Paul, in Other Words: A Cultural Reading of His Letters* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), 27, see also 31, and figure 1, 54-55.

8. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 46.

9. Ibid.

whose unity demands walking together rather than staying still - a key insight for the contemporary Church.

Paul had a special concern for the influence of impure behaviour upon others within the community. This is evident where Paul encouraged his people to consider their influence upon others: the positive influence of holy spouse and parent (7:13-16); refraining from boasting amongst each other (3:21; 4:4-7; 5:6); accepting the wisdom of each other (6:5); considering each other at the Lord's Supper (11:33-34); and especially the eating of food offered to idols (chapter 8 and 10:23-29):

> But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall (8:12-13).

The boundaries between the behaviour of one person and another within the community, were being removed by Paul. One person could even cause the pollution of another: those with a weak conscience can be "defiled" (*molynō*) in their conscience (8:7) by others. This significant insight into forms of abuse has been discovered by the contemporary Christian churches, prompting rather catastrophically the recognition that ecclesial communities must walk humbly together.

1.1.3 Unity is Life in the Crucified Christ

For the fractured Corinthian community Paul chose a rhetorical strategy of clarifying their membership before calling the factions to unite,[10] meaning that the source and functions of Christian unity had to be made clear. Paul declared that it is through baptism that an individual "lives in Christ" (Gal 2:19-20; 3:27). Michael Gorman describes this as "a life of mutual indwelling, or reciprocal residence: Christ and the Spirit of God living in and among believers, and believers living in Christ and the Spirit (see Rom 8:1-17)."[11] In the context of factions and in-fighting amongst the Corinthian *ekklēsia*, Paul challenges any selfish view of community and urges them as a group to be transformed into the crucified Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13, 27). They are to live their unity through full conformity to the crucified Christ.

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10. Margaret Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1991), 112.

11. Michael Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord: A Theological Introduction to Paul and his Letters* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 140-41.

This *cruciformity* is unity with the crucified and risen Christ; a unity that is Trinitarian and thus communal in nature, and eschatological in dimension.[12] Cruciformity calls for a humility that allows a community to be open to a process of being built up again (1:27).[13] This theology, with such vivid, relational imagery and deep Christian meaning, will be particularly useful for the contemporary Church.

1.1.4 Unity is Dynamic and Relational, Well-Ordered, and Concerned for the Least

Unity requires discerning what builds up, and what blocks or breaks down the community. Paul prioritises this through his demands for good order when building up the Body in love. The proper ordering of the Corinthians is to be a reflection of the heavenly relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the eventual "all in all" in God (15:28). Good ordering of the Body makes healthy relationships, and brings unity to its fruition in peace, love and fellowship:

> Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you (2 Cor 13:11-13).

Paul explains how greater unity with each other and Christ now is in anticipation of the fullness of unity on the Day of the Lord; "for God is a God not of disorder but of peace" (14:33). The behaviour of *now* is important to Paul because the building up of the Church through spiritual gifts and love is a sign of eschatological fellowship with Christ (1:5-9).

Walking together in fellowship with each other and in Christ, means a humble, loving and unified community concerned with building each other up. In this task Paul points beyond public appearances and sophistry to the needs of the consciences (*syneidēsis*) of the least (see 1 Cor 8). The links that Paul makes between abuses - of ritual, social status, and

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12. Paul insisted upon "countercultural cruciformity in expectation of the coming day of judgment and salvation." Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*, 237.

13. Yung Suk Kim takes the deconstruction and building up of Paul's community and places it in a modern challenge of the vision of community: "Our view of Paul changes if we conceive of the community differently, that is, as a radical community of *all*, based on Paul's deconstruction and reconstruction of the "body of Christ" in a specific historical context. In this view, one can read Paul as a strong advocate for egalitarianism based on a radical theology of Christ crucified." Yung Suk Kim, *Christ's Body in Corinth*, 17-18.

conscience - and the effect this has upon the least, is relevant to today's Christian Church. An ecclesiology of synodality that seeks a well-ordered and healthy Body would need to retrieve Paul's notion of building up the Church with a concern for the least.

1.1.5 Unity in Diversity, not Uniformity

Paul addresses the contentious (and ubiquitous) issue of how diversity fits within the unity of the whole - that is, the community - through the metaphorical imagery of *body*. He intends to demonstrate how diversity is natural and necessary for a community of people:

> But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body (12:18-20).

It is only through unity that the members would find themselves not in bland uniformity, but in a dynamic and vibrant network that is a sort of ecosystem; in the way that all members are sensitive and react to the harm or the good being done:

> …that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it (12:25-26).

Spiritual gifts are also concerned with unity, for there is a "fundamental unity of all the gifts" because of their common source in God (12:4-6).[14] Their diversity and proper ordering will bring benefit to all, working to unify and edify the people,[15] and contributing to the building up of the *ekklēsia*. Paul's understanding of Christian diversity as a necessary function of unity, and as visible and ordered in human relations, while also participating in the mystery of Trinitarian life, are important contributions to both ecclesiology and Church praxis.

1.1.6 Unity Depends on Transformation

Paul understands unity as depending on transformation. Unity is made possible through the power of the Holy Spirit in baptism, bringing persons into a radical new way of being as the Body of Christ together. Transformation is also needed for the continued health and growth towards maturity of the community. Using Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, Gorman describes the transformation of the community as inherently missional: "Spirit-

14. Stanley B. Marrow, *Paul, His Letters and his Theology: An Introduction to Paul's Epistles* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1986), 154.

15. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 512-13. Also: Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*, 323.

enabled participatory transformation in Christ… it is taking part, by grace, in the great drama of what God is doing in Christ and through the Spirit."[16] This is seen in the constant care of building up the *ekklēsia*; walking together in holiness and mature knowledge; attending to good order and good conscience; and welcoming diversity as necessary for good health. Failure in any of these tasks blocks the gradual development and transformation of the community. This failure is what brought about the divisions and factions that plagued the Corinthians and the need for Paul to demand a breakthrough in their behaviour. At the height of his warnings and pleas Paul abruptly (and appropriately) reminds his people that they need love (1 Cor 13), and its power to be creative, constructive, and effective: love brings meaning to the Body, without which there is nothing (13:1-3). These powerful insights are key to developing foundations for the Church's ecclesiology within any time or place.

Saint Paul understood the *ekklēsia* as the Body of Christ, and the building up of the Body as the loving duty of all members which, if it was grounded in the crucified Christ, would constitute their community. The corporeal metaphor enabled him to identify key aspects of Christian unity - such as dynamism and diversity, and its Trinitarian and eschatological dimensions - as signs of Christian community. Paul could illustrate how bodily health was to be taken seriously, with particular care for the least, while ecclesial growth involved discernment of pathways towards maturity. The foundational concepts to which Paul pointed his troubled communities will find a place in the contemporary search for creative and constructive processes of authentic development. Most importantly, Paul knew the awesome power of love, which lies not in superiority but in generous and joyful self-giving (13:4-7). Together, the characteristics of unity described by Paul contribute to foundations for ecclesiology that are relevant to any Christian community in history. They will also aid in identifying what is not authentic in ecclesiology, and thus reveal bias and corruption. The Gospel of John explores unity and community within the power of transformation.

1.1.7 The Gospel of John: Unity and Transformation

The Gospel of John reveals that it is personal encounter that leads to transformation and brings about unity. This is integral to understanding the Church and its development, and

16. Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord,* 141.

its need for processes of renewal, in any age. This Gospel explores the consequences of encountering the Word of God in the person of Jesus, as a journey that is provoked by questions, invitation, and the sensory acts of walking, seeing, hearing and touching:

> When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which translated means Teacher), 'where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him [Gk *menō*: abide, dwell, remain] that day (John 1:38-39).[17]

A variety of Gospel characters move from entering into belief, through stages of deeper understanding, towards knowledge of the light.[18] This Gospel seeks the transformation of the reader (or hearer) towards the unity that Jesus proclaims: the believer dwells or abides in Jesus as branches in a vine, bringing about authentic and fulfilling fruitfulness (John 15:5). Unity is not static but a dynamic abiding in Christ, and being sent in the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Exploring unity and processes of transformation within John's Gospel will assist in identifying these important ecclesial concepts within the historical journey of the Church, and its contemporary task towards synodality.

1.1.8 Encounter

The journey of transformation in John's Gospel always begins with an encounter. The characters depicted as encountering Jesus are all challenged to believe in him and in what he reveals of the Father who sent him. "You know me," Jesus prompted the crowd in the Temple, "you do not know him [who sent me]. I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me" (7:28b-29). Nicodemus enters early in the story and sets an open-ended challenge to the reader. He comes at night; his faith is symbolically in the dark, and his presence during Jesus' sermon on salvation is unknown. The reader takes the place of the shadowy Nicodemus and can choose to sit at the feet of Jesus to listen and learn (or not). Through representative individuals who meet Jesus the reader is invited: "not to return to the past but to relate here and now in faith to the risen Jesus."[19] It is intended that the Gospel reader may be able to join the characters in a journey of encounter and transformation.

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17. Scripture references in sec.1.1.7-10 are from the Gospel of John, unless otherwise indicated.

18. In the Gospel of John the light is Jesus, see John 1:1-5.

19. Gerald O'Collins, *Believing in the Resurrection: The Meaning and Promise of the Risen Jesus* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2012), 8.

Key characters demonstrate a positive and fruitful response to Jesus' invitation. When quizzed on their radical transformations they can only speak of their experience and personal encounter with Jesus. It is clearly important to them to share their experience with the community:

> Philip found Nathanael and said: 'We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote' (1:45).
>
> The Samaritan woman to the people of her city: 'Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done!' (4:29).
>
> The paralysed man told 'the Jews': 'The man who made me well said to me, "Take up your mat and walk"' (5:11).
>
> To his neighbours the formerly blind man explained his experience: 'The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, "Go to Siloam and wash." Then I went and washed and received my sight' (9:11).

These examples demonstrate the invitational nature of the Gospel of John, whereby the characters are pointing out to the reader: "Look, here is the Lamb of God!" (1:36). Encounters with Jesus offered the possibility of entrance into new life - although not all at once. Characters question and grapple with their emerging knowledge, revealing a personal and dynamic development of faith that is oriented to oneness with Jesus through the Spirit (7:37-38). The historical development of the Christian religion can likewise be recognised as stages of invitation, of re-orientation and further development, as led and effected by the Spirit.

1.1.9 Transformation

The Gospel of John illustrates how unity, after being entered through encounter, is further deepened through stages of transformation. These insights of the early Church are foundational to understanding the contemporary task of synodality as journeying, and the intervening history as one of unfolding development of the Church's self-understanding. The reader of the Gospel has their conventional religious knowledge and commitments shaken up and "destabilized" by the Gospel's literary techniques of double meanings, literal

misunderstandings, irony, paradox and dialectical tensions.[20] The purpose of this destabilizing is to bring the reader to the point where they sense the: "dismantling of their former limited horizons, only to be drawn into an unrestricted horizon illumined by the Father's love."[21] While literary techniques were used to shake accepted conventions and commitments, events within (and outside) the Church that reveal the inadequacy of the way in which the Church understands and conducts itself, have that same destabilizing - and potentially beneficial - effect on the Church as it moves through history; an invitation to a better self-understanding and a more authentic way of being and operating.

Jesus reveals that it is God's will that all who believe will participate in the transforming experience of realised and future eschatology (both new life and new death):

> This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day (6:40).

Anthony Kelly and Francis Moloney examine the transformation offered in John's Gospel: "It entails a continuing conversion, a renunciation of other 'paternities' for the sake of the paternity of the Father whom Jesus reveals."[22] Not just conversion but new meaning and identity is possible:

> The experience of God in the Gospel is informed by a constitutive meaning, a remaking and transformation of our identity by the 'Father who is still working.'[23]

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20. Sandra M. Schneiders, *Written That You May Believe: Encountering Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2003), 29. Sandra Schneiders points out the literary techniques that are used to draw the reader into the story as a participant: paradox, irony and the anonymity of many characters (such as the blind man (9:1-41), Samaritan woman (4:1-42), the royal official (4:46-54), the paralysed man (5:1-18), the Beloved Disciple (13:23-25; 19:26-27; 20:2; 21:24), the "other" disciple (1:35; 18:15; 21:2)). These techniques lead the reader into a personal journey with various characters who are at different stages in their transformative journey. Ibid., 154-56.

21. Anthony Kelly and Francis J. Moloney, *Experiencing God in the Gospel of John* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2003), 6.

22. Ibid., 203.

23. Ibid.

This working upon identity is revealed through the use of rich symbols of John's Gospel, which act as powerful tools with the dual purpose of narrating stories of *transformation of meaning*, and enabling entry into this meaning by the reader.[24]

In chapter nine of the gospel the blind man encounters Jesus, and is questioned by non-believers. His story demonstrates the stages of transformation required for deeper entry into new identity, new meaning, new life; he "experienced, step by step, a process of being taken out of himself."[25] He was mocked (9:16,24), doubted (9:18,26), and reviled (9:28-34); in the low point of isolation and despair a moment of revelation occurred for this man within another encounter with Jesus (9:35-38). The man's new sight brought him challenges, the need for further understanding, and ultimately a new life:

> He now had to step out into a new identity, and a new world of relationships oriented in accord with the light that had entered his life... And in that new attentiveness, he sees, hears, believes and adores the one in whom God is revealed.[26]

The man was transformed from disability and darkness into one who "can see" (9:25b). The enlightenment of the blind man was a gradual process and no quick miracle, but rather a revealing of the Johannine community's understanding of the deep meaning of symbol and encounter with Jesus.[27] The greatest sign of Jesus is his glorification on the cross.[28] Jesus' glory (*doxa*) reveals the relationship with the Father in love (1:18; 3:35; 5:20; 17:24),[29] which culminates in the loving "laying down" of his life (15:13) on the cross: Jesus' ultimate

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24. Schneiders demonstrates that the one-syllable words in Greek which are used for most of the pivotal terms in this Gospel (life, death, love, hate, light, dark, see, hear, and more) are deceptively simple for the reader. The meaning of these words is layered as the narrative unfolds until their meaning is rich and deep. Most important is the impact upon the reader: "what is being proposed through the 'simple' language is earth-shaking in its implications." Schneiders links the transforming of language to the transforming of the reader's life: "for those willing to immerse themselves contemplatively in the Johannine text, the artistry of the Gospel will draw them into the mystery of divine union." Schneiders, *Written That You May Believe*, 27.

25. Kelly and Moloney, *Experiencing God in the Gospel of John*, 213.

26. Ibid.

27. The signs (*sēmeion*) of Jesus work towards the transformation of the believer and are ultimately only truly understood through the eyes of faith (2:11). Jesus' first sign is in itself a transformation: "the purifying water of the Old Testament (2:6) will be changed into the wine of the New Covenant." Ibid., 70. The stories of the representative characters demonstrate the transformed foundational images and message of salvation that Jesus gives. New birth, new vision, new witness, new worship are present in the stories of Jesus' signs. *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005), s.v. "sign."

28. Schneiders, *Written That You May Believe*, 25. Jesus has conquered the world (16:33) and this includes transforming power over death: "Indeed, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomever he wishes" (5:21). Jesus' power over death is the part of the "here and not yet" eschatology that permeates this Gospel. Death is not abolished but transformed into eternal life (*zōē*).

29. *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990-1993), s.v. "*doxa*."

transformation was through death. Jesus' entry into where his disciples "cannot come" (7:34) made possible a new union between Father, Son, Spirit, and believers (17:1-5; 19:26-27).

Jesus' death was a departure from this world to the Father (13:1) and an event which completed the full transformation of Jesus and of his mission (19:30).[30] The traditional ascent to heaven by the revelation figures of the past (Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Enoch) is now a "unique descent into the reality of this world" by the Son of Man (1:51).[31] John's Gospel points to a future reality for believers as a lifting up by Jesus to eternal communion with Jesus and the Father (14:3). The present hope for a believer is eternal life where Jesus, the Father and Spirit come to the believer in love and abide in them (14:23).[32] The time in between the departure of the risen Jesus and his future coming in glory will have the gift of the presence of "another Paraclete" (*allon paraklēton*, 14:16b). The gradual transformation that can result from true encounter with Jesus is, however, not limited to the lives of individuals. The Holy Spirit's transformative role in the Church is evidenced by the dynamism of ecclesial life through history, which is ever deepened by transforming - and often disrupting and disturbing - social, cultural, religious and all elements of human community.

1.1.10 Spirit of Love: Communion and Sending

The Spirit works to effect the transformation that gives light and life to believers, as well as to enable them to identity as "children of God" (1:12).[33] The effects of mutual love - which Paul describes as building up an inclusive and diverse community - will also transform the disciples so that they act as light and invitation to life to the world: "Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (13:34b-35). Jesus' death and glorification on the cross at the "hour" is Jesus' own transformation into resurrection (20:17a) and "ascending to my Father" (20:17b). Jesus' communion with the Father is extended to his believers, as branches in the vine with the vinegrower (15:1). The new life, identity and meaning of a disciple of

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30. Kelly and Moloney, *Experiencing God in the Gospel of John*, 160.

31. Ibid., 162-63.

32. See the discussion on the dwelling of God in believers presented in John 14 in Mary L. Coloe, *God Dwells with Us: Temple Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2001), 157-78.

33. Marianne Meye Thompson, *The God of the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001), 170.

Jesus have the purpose of abiding in Jesus, a destiny of abiding in the Father, and the means of doing so through the power of the Spirit.

The symbol of the vine in chapter fifteen reveals that authentic transformation of disciples will be fruitful (v5), generous (v7), within the loving communion of Jesus and the Father (v9), joyful (v11), challenging (v13), heeding a call to service (v14), friendship (v15), mission (v16), and in loving communion with each other (v17). The communion of disciples is rightfully vibrant and diverse; this imagery is providing contemporary ecclesiology with indicators of good health through progress in communion, as opposed to decline. The Gospel describes how when the glorified Jesus greets the disciples they are given peace and *sent out*: "as the Father sent me, so I send you" (20:21) (recalling the Gospel's explanation that Jesus was sent to save the world because the Father loved the world so much (3:16-17)). The disciples' close union with Jesus involves them in his mission of redemption of the whole world:

> Jesus' desire that they all be one, in him, in the Father and among themselves is for the purpose of the mission. The revelation of God cannot occur from the outside, but only from within the Father-Son-disciples relationship.[34]

This is a process that begins with encounter, consists of stages of entering into belief and deeper understanding, and is ultimately transformative through a life that abides in Christ. The disciples then receive the Holy Spirit (20:22), the Advocate (*paraklētos*), who brings unity, memory of Jesus' teachings, and the peace of Jesus (14:20, 26-27). These insights into transformation and unity - identified deeply with the mission of Jesus, the mission of the Spirit, and the communion of the Trinity - provide the foundation for exploring such concepts through history, and in particular in the contemporary Church as moving towards synodality.

Saint Paul and the Gospel of John bring significant insights into the relationship between unity and transformation. Both sources indicate this relationship as being a journey of stages, including failures or backwards steps, that with continual reorientation to Christ (conversion) bring about Christian community. Encounter is demonstrated to be both entry into new life and meaning, and the means by which a community may continue to develop its communion. John's Gospel and Paul's letter both recognise the intensely personal and

34. Mary L. Coloe, "John 17:1-26: The Missionary Prayer of Jesus," *Australian Biblical Review*, n. 66 (2018): 10.

communal aspects of transformation. The journey of faith is dynamic and relational, requiring development rather than stagnation. Faith offers a continual invitation to abide with each other and with Jesus in the Spirit, and to move forward through transformation towards the eschatological promise of unity in the love of the Trinity. These insights have a deep relevance to the continual task of informing and developing ecclesial self-understanding, particularly as the contemporary Catholic Church considers the meaning of synodality and develops its foundations.

A rich history of developing ecclesial self-understanding follows the foundational writings of the New Testament and early Church. However, this survey will now move to consider the source of the decline in Catholic ecclesiology that led to corruption and clericalism.

1.2 Trent and the Foundations of a Hierarchical Ecclesial Paradigm

The Council of Trent (1545-1563) made a substantial contribution to the doctrinal and ecclesiological landscape of the Catholic Church over a long period of history. Trent stands at the point in time where the flow of regular ecumenical councils was blocked. The import of this stoppage, and the content of the decrees, was magnified by the length of time until the next conciliar action of the universal Church. It was to be three hundred years until the First Vatican Council was held (1869-1870, though not completed), followed by the far more substantial Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). The unusually long and uninterrupted impact of the Council of Trent upon the Catholic Church raises questions around its contribution to the decline in ecclesiology and the emergence of corruption and clericalism. In response, this section will consider how Trent undertook its role as an ecumenical council. It will investigate how Trent addressed ecclesial problems and promoted solutions, and how it established an enduring defensive and hierarchical ecclesial paradigm, at the expense of a legacy of renewal.

1.2.1 Context: What was Trent?

The context of the council is crucial to understanding Trent and its legacy. Trent was the nineteenth General and Ecumenical Council recognised by the Roman Catholic Church, as a form of the Church's highest authority through the Apostolic collegiality of the bishops with the pope.[35] Once the decrees of an ecumenical council are approved by the pope and promulgated, they hold legislative power for the universal Church. The Council of Trent spanned a remarkably long and tumultuous eighteen years, and was held under the authority of three popes: Paul III, Julius III, (Marcellus II and Paul IV had very brief and unproductive pontificates), and Pope Pius IV, who concluded the council. Chief patrons were the Habsburg Emperors Charles V and Ferdinand. Like any other reign of power, the longevity of the Tridentine age (until, essentially, Vatican II) added to its influence upon the shape of the history that followed. Trent was convoked by Pope Paul III who, in his Bull of Indiction, stated that his intentions were to "examine and decide upon" some of the articles issued by "the dissenters of the Church," and to respond to the religious and social upheaval that beset the Church in Europe.[36] Pope Paul III detailed the "affairs of Christendom [which] were daily hurrying on to a worse state," with illustrations of the many political states at war and strife; all of which impacted his plans for an effective council of the universal Church.[37]

Pope Paul III recognised the scale of reforming the institutional Church and its abuses, and he saw an ecumenical council as the most appropriate response:

> …already perceiving unto what troubled times, and unto how many embarrassments in almost all our affairs, our pastoral solicitude and watchfulness were called; we would fain indeed have remedied the evils wherewith the Christian commonweal had been long afflicted, and well-nigh overwhelmed; but we too, as men compassed with infirmity, felt our strength unequal to take upon us so heavy a

35. The 1983 revised Code of Canon Law explains that in the contemporary Church it is the *College of Bishops* that exercises this authority through the bishops' *Apostolic collegiality* in two forms: either through their "united action" throughout the world, or through an ecumenical council. Both require papal approval as a sign of true collegiality. The relevant canons are cc.336-41. *Code of Canon Law*, Latin ed., English trans., *Holy See Press Office*, 1983, accessed 4 Jun 2020, http://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/cic_index_en.html. Hereafter *CIC*.

36. Trent, *The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, trans. J. Waterworth (London: Catholic Publication Society Company, 1848), "The Bull of Indiction," 7-8. A Bull of Indiction is a solemn public papal statement sealed with a lead seal (*bulla*).

37. Ibid.

> burden… [and so] we also fixed our mind on holding a general council.[38]

The issues debated were primarily concerned with the hierarchy. As teachers, pastors and governors, a number of bishops had publicly failed badly, and so reform of the Church was conceived as reform of the clergy. The integrity of the laity was linked with that of their pastors:

> Whereas it is properly the office of bishops to reprove the vices of all who are subject to them, this will have to be principally their care - that clerics, especially those appointed to the cure of souls, be blameless; and that they do not, with their connivance, lead a disorderly life: for if they suffer them to be of evil and corrupt conversation, how shall they reprove the laity for their vices, when they themselves can be by one word silenced by them, for that they suffer clerics to be worse than they?[39]

Synods were to be a solution to combat clerical abuses. Synods mirrored the perceived hierarchical nature of the Church, and therefore operated at the levels of local, provincial, national and global Church. Within this structured vision neither the responsibility nor agency of the laity are recognised; they are mere receivers. Very few lay people were present at the Council of Trent, but they numbered among the most powerful; especially the lay Emperors Charles V and his brother Ferdinand I, while other rulers sent envoys as "orators." These participants, either lay or clerical, had ambassadorial privileges and honour, and could influence the working sessions.[40] However, the vast majority of the faithful lacked voices, authority, and responsibility, especially within the context of an institutional meeting such as a council. Over time, the focus on the Church as hierarchical by nature, and the association of power and authority solely with the episcopacy, gave rise to corruption and bias, in the form of clericalism and, concurrently, the diminution or infantilisation of the laity.[41] Without the

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38. Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, "The Bull of Indiction," 1-2. The Council of Trent, along with the previous eighteen councils and the subsequent Vatican I and II, operated at the highest level of meeting as ecumenical councils. Their decrees hold legislative power for the universal Catholic Church.

39. Ibid., proëm of the Decree on Reformation, 111.

40. Another group active at the council was theologians. Many were drawn from prestigious universities or similar, and were mostly friars of the mendicant orders. Bishop theologians were called Major Theologians, to distinguish them from the others who belonged to the Congregation of Minor Theologians. John W. O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council* (London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013), 6-8, 84.

41. Paul Lakeland describes infantilization in the Church as: "refusing to treat people as adults and instead maintaining an ecclesial institutional culture in which they are effectively treated as children." Paul Lakeland, *Church: Living Communion* (Collegeville, MI: Liturgical Press, 2009), 143.

contribution or agency of the laity the ecclesiology of the Church continued to unfold with an *absence*.[42]

The complex state of European politics meant that the Council of Trent also operated within complex layers of social and ecclesial honour and power. Theologians attended as consultors while, initially at least, bishops had the sole right to vote and proxies were not permitted.[43] The second session saw a difficult discussion on voting rights, with permission to vote on doctrinal matters begrudgingly given to Generals of the Religious Orders and three abbots of the Cistercian Order (who shared one vote).[44] Papal power and royal influence was a concern of both the council attendees and later historians, who commentated:

> …in reality not one in five of the bishops who assisted at the Council but (sic) was completely independent of that influence [of the Sovereign Pontiff], and under the immediate control of some one or other of the great princes of Christendom.[45]

Despite the legislative power that an ecumenical council holds, no pope was physically present during Trent. Most cardinals were also tied to their consistory roles in Rome.[46] The popes maintained control through missives to and from their papal legates via couriers. Factions abounded, due in part to the preponderance of representatives from the various Italian political states, while an outbreak of typhus in the city of Trent also threatened the continuity of the council in its early years.[47] The Council of Trent required remarkable

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42. This effect continued even to the Second Vatican Council, when the laity were defined in the negative, as what they *are not*: "The term laity is here understood to mean all the faithful except those in holy orders and those in the state of religious life specially approved by the Church." Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Holy See Press Office*, 21 Nov 1964, accessed 6 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html, n.31. Hereafter *LG*.

43. John O'Malley describes how the role of theologians evolved during the Council of Trent to become indispensable to the functioning of proceedings, and essential to the bishops as their independently chosen advisors and experts. O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council*, 84-85.

44. The voting process was apparently not firmly established prior to the council, as an initial inquiry was sent by the papal legates to the pope asking if votes were to be cast by nations or by individuals. The decision on proxies was left to the pope. Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, session 2, lxxv-i. The Council of Trent set a precedent for the voting rights of non-episcopal ecclesial leaders to be considered, and indeed, permitted. The historical commentary of Pallavicino (comprising the first section of Waterworth's edition of the Council of Trent: ibid., i-ccliii) notes that Pope Clement - within the context of refusing the right of the Reformers to attend and vote - declared prior to the council that: "neither Scripture, nor precedent, allowed of laymen or heretics having a vote in such an assembly." Ibid., liv.

45. Ibid., session 1, lxxv.

46. Consistories were regular meetings where cardinals offered their advice to the pope, with considerable influence, on serious matters (*causae majores*). O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council*, 6.

47. See chapter XV of session VII which proposed a "translation" of the council (i.e. transferring it to Bologna), and session VIII as the decree permitting the translation. Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, 65-68.

powers of diplomacy to achieve any progress through its sporadic eighteen years. Pope Pius IV approved the decrees of the council in a Bull of Confirmation on 26 January 1564.[48]

1.2.2 Doctrine and Reform

The key issue for the participants of the Council of Trent was reform, largely due to the campaigning of the Reformers which had brought serious issues to the fore. It was a pivotal opportunity for transformation of the Church. However, the struggles for power surrounding the papacy, the council, the curia, and political interests of a continental scale were present as strong undercurrents to the debate. John O'Malley describes the key priorities of the council as "the uprooting of heresies" through doctrinal defence, and "the reform of the clergy and the Christian people."[49] When the council began the conflict between these two priorities was heated, but finally balance was achieved in early 1546 through an agreement to alternate the debates and creation of decrees between *doctrine* and *reform*.[50] The discussions on doctrine were restricted to only those challenged by Martin Luther; in particular, justification and the sacraments.[51] The discussions on reform arose also from the claims of the Reformers, who drew attention to the neglect of dioceses by bishops who lived elsewhere and delegated their pastoral duties, effectively flouting the law of residence and raising the vast question of how to discipline the episcopacy.[52] The earliest general congregations of the council missed the opportunity to begin proceedings with personal transformation; Legate Cardinal Del Monte declared his desire for reform so strong that he would set an example by

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48. Although the pope dated the Bull: "on the seventh of the calends of February," Waterworth has footnoted the date as January 26th, as the Bull was prepared in a consistory on that day. Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, 289, ccxliv.

49. O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council*, 14.

50. The Decrees on Reformation alternate with Decrees on Doctrine. For example, the decrees formed in the twenty-fourth session open with the "Doctrine on the Sacrament of Matrimony," followed by chapters of the "Decree on the Reformation of Marriage."

The third task set by Pope Paul III's Bull - that of preparing the way for peace - was set aside as the domain of the pope, and not the council. Hubert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, vol. 2, trans. Ernest Graf (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd, 1961), 29-31.

51. O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council*, 14. O'Malley describes how the lack of consensus between council attendees on the practical aspects of papal authority prevented them from making any specific statement on that topic - even though it was a focal point of the Reformers' arguments. Ibid., 19-20.

52. The flouting of residence was linked to the accumulation of benefices (*cumulatio beneficiorum*), which could be the only income for a cleric. Practiced to an esurient extent by bishops - including some council members - and also by parish priests, these abuses were forbidden by canon law, yet made possible through complex legal and parochial practices. The debate on residence literally raged for many sessions; one decree draft was shredded beyond repair by a furious bishop. This debate involved all expertise at hand and brought about a new appreciation for canonists. Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, chapter IX "the Bishops' Obligation of Residence - the Pivot of Church Reform," 317-69.

renouncing his bishopric, thereby reducing the number of his attendants, as well as his expenditure. While some were supportive - the Cardinal was followed in his statement by three others - the notes on session three declare that: “it confounded others, who, in urging the necessity of reform, had not anticipated that the work was so speedily to begin with themselves.”[53] Ultimately the direction was determined by the pope, and the prelates were divided into three congregations to examine the topics of doctrine, reform and peace.

At the heart of the Council of Trent was the issue of power: the tension between the power of the pope and that of the episcopacy; the political influence of the monarchs and other factions; the challenges raised by the Reformers; the corruption of those who held most authority in the Church; and the disparity in lay ecclesial responsibility between the royalty and the average Catholic. It is from within this context of power and corruption, doctrine and reform, that the Council of Trent was to form decrees and an enduring hierarchical ecclesial paradigm. These were to influence Catholic ecclesiology - and its key elements of *participation*, *responsibility*, and *authority* - until the renewal instigated by the Second Vatican Council.

1.2.3 The Ecclesial Paradigm of Trent

The ecclesial paradigm of the Council of Trent cannot be simply and clearly extracted from the documents. No statements were explicitly made “on the Church,” and attendees did not debate, or work to reform, the self-understanding or ecclesiology of the Church. The ecclesiology of the time was focused on the balance between papal, episcopal, and conciliar power, and had foundations in the work of a Dominican theologian of the Curia in the previous century. Juan de Torquemada had provided popes with the theology they needed to support their powerful position at the peak of the Catholic hierarchy.[54] His treatise, *Summa de Ecclesia*, described the papacy as possessing all authority in the Church; able to delegate or remove power from the bishops as necessary. De Torquemada defined a council as a meeting of bishops under the pope, who alone held the power to convoke and preside a council, and to

53. Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, lxxix-lxxx.

54. O’Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council*, 32. De Torquemada’s treatise was published in 1561 and is available in digital form through the *Internet Archive*, accessed 24 Aug 2020, https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_GWP6pAt-ctEC.

validate its decrees. Thus the questions of ecclesiology were answered from a perspective that was firmly hierarchical and primarily concerned with institutional power.

The ecclesiology of the council operated implicitly through the choices of the doctrinal issues to engage and debate, the method by which the council proceeded, and the solutions that were proposed in the final decrees. The debates and decrees of Trent reveal two key insights that are essential to understanding the power of its influence upon the development of ecclesiology after it had concluded. First, the context of the council was fundamental to the content of debates, even to influencing the structure of proceedings and determining whom was present, through to the final decrees themselves. The context of the council was Europe in turmoil. The challenge of Luther and the waves of leaders and movements of reform, who were aided by the rapid dissemination of material through novel printing press technology, challenged the corrupt structures of power in Europe. The Catholic Church and its prince-bishops had a great deal to lose: income, power, property, and prestige had all been accumulated over centuries of interweaving religion, society and culture. The laity had much to gain through the movement of the Reformers. As was customary in almost every previous century, a council was held to find solutions to problems.

Second, the ecclesial paradigm of Trent was firmly hierarchical and concerned with the institutional Church. This paradigm shaped how the Church viewed and responded to the challenges of the day, contributed to official decrees, and became a solid source of an ecclesiology of defensiveness and exclusivity. The Council of Trent, in response to the Reformers, marked the beginning of a long period of both significant reform and a "pattern of ecclesiastical defensiveness."[55] It was the visible, institutional church that was under attack, therefore it was the integrity of these elements that would receive defensive attention, as Richard Gaillardetz explains:

> Ecclesiology during this period gave little attention to the church's spiritual origins in the trinitarian mission of Word and Spirit. Defense of the legitimacy of church office and ordained ministry led to an emphasis on the sacrament of holy orders over the sacraments of initiation. In the following centuries, this defensive posture was directed not just against the churches of the Reformation but also

55. Richard R. Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making:* Lumen Gentium*,* Christus Dominus*,* Orientalium Ecclesiarum (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2006), 1.

> against other external forces perceived as threats to the church's mission and very existence.[56]

From within this context of turmoil and challenge to power came the largest number of decrees produced by an ecumenical council. These decrees stood without further conciliar input and debate until the First Vatican Council; ensuring that the paradigm through which Trent viewed the world and the Church - and the effect this brought upon the development of ecclesiology, and ecclesial power, authority and meaning - remained a significant influence upon the Catholic Church for many centuries.

1.2.4 Synods as a Reform Solution

The Council of Trent sought to use synods as a key tool to reform the degenerate structures of power in the sixteenth century Church. Diocesan synods, and the regional level of provincial council, were to be used for communication; maintaining good order and governance; reporting - including monitoring and due legal process; and overcoming corruption. Ultimately the latter was limited by the lack of transparency and accountability of that time and place. The Decrees of the Council declared that every province of the Church was to hold a council within a year of Trent's closure, and then every three years, with a very clear purpose: "the regulating of morals, the correcting of excesses, the composing of controversies, and for the other purposes allowed of by the sacred canons."[57] All bishops and metropolitans were bound to attend these councils, and to likewise hold and attend diocesan synods every year.[58] The main purpose of the diocesan synods was to enable the distribution and public reception of the Decrees of the Council of Trent:

> Finally, the holy Synod commands, that both the decree under Paul III, and this present, shall be published in the provincial and episcopal councils; for It desires that things so nearly concerning the office of pastors, and the salvation of souls, be frequently impressed on the minds and ears of all men.[59]

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56. Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making*, 2.

57. Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, session XXIV, chap.II, 207-8.

58. A diocesan synod serves the local Church, under the pastoral administration of a bishop. A provincial council gathers several bishops and metropolitans over a wider geographical area. A bishop who had acquired several bishoprics for the purpose of greater benefices and power would find it very difficult to manage the requirements of these decrees: hence the rule declaring one ecclesiastical benefice (that requires residence) permitted per person. Ibid., session XXIV, chapter XVII, 224-25. The bodies and meetings of the institutional Church will be discussed in chapter two of this thesis.

59. Ibid., session XXIII, chap.I, 178. See also session XXV, chap.II, 255-56.

The process of reception began with a political step: European monarchs publicly announced acceptance of the Decrees, which would extend to their wider colonies, and then the prelates would make similar announcements in their provincial and diocesan synods. It was a process that would take centuries to propagate successfully, even in Europe:

> In a word, almost from the time of the close of the Council, until the eighteenth century, the bishops and clergy of France year by year urged and renewed their demand for the acceptation of the decrees of Trent; and, by means of provincial and diocesan Synods, most of those decrees, on nearly all important points of discipline, have, at various times, been adopted and enforced, in every diocese of France.[60]

Synods were envisioned as playing a very significant role for implementing the Decrees of Trent, and for improving communication within the Church. This was to be achieved under the power of the Sovereign Roman Pontiff whose supervision relied on strong communication links with his bishops, while also balancing the tension between the authority of the pope and that of the council.[61] Bishops, archbishops, patriarchs and primates were expected to attend councils and synods, especially immediately following Trent, so that they could publicly endorse the decrees and profess their obedience to the pontiff, while also anathematizing all condemned heresies.[62] Non-attendance was to be reported by fellow bishops to the pope, and communion withheld - all under the "pain of the divine indignation."[63] The Decrees of Trent describe how synods were to be used for the regulating of Masses for legacies;[64] the nomination of suitable and qualified judges;[65] the reporting of

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60. Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, ccxlvi.

61. The slow adoption of the reform programs of Trent was discussed in memoranda sent between Cardinal Robert Bellarmine and Pope Clement VIII, during 1600 to 1612, over fifty years after the council began. Giuseppe Alberigo, *La chiesa nella storia* (Brescia: Paidei, 1988), 218-39. O'Malley notes that the Archbishop of Milan, a figure of reform during the Council of Trent, zealously produced eleven diocesan and six provincial synods during his episcopacy: "his synods achieved a normative status in the Catholic world," due mostly to the publishing of the synod decisions and their wide circulation. O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council*, 260.

62. Subject also to the Council of Trent were the masters and doctors of Catholic Universities, who were to bind themselves by oath annually to the Decrees of the Council. Trent, *Canon and Decrees*, XXV, II.

63. Ibid., session XXV, chap.II, 255.

64. Ibid., session XXV, chap.IV, 258.

65. Ibid., session XXV, chap.X, 267.

abuses and scandals;[66] and for punishment.[67] The planned use of councils and synods was an attempt at institutional reformation. They were crucial to the reordering of the Church by forcing the bishops to gather annually and to co-operate in rooting out abuses and the outright evasion of responsibility. The residence debate in particular drove the push for synods to be used as tools for reform with real authority.

The institutional understanding of synods was formed by an ecclesiology that perceived the Church as hierarchical, and power and authority as bound especially to the higher levels of the hierarchy. A holistic renewal or reform by the Council of Trent could not be completely successful because the underlying ecclesiology was not transformed. The imbalance of power within ecclesial relationships remained and could therefore continue to be abused. This is exemplified by the example of at least two prelates during the council, who saw the holding of national synods as an opportunity for personal power and control:

> Ferrier, who saw his favourite project of a dissolution of the Council, to be followed by national Synods, likely to be superseded; and the Cardinal of Lorraine, who had looked forward to the presidency of the Synod to be held in his own country, resolved to throw such impediments in the way, as might at length force the Legates to recur to their original purpose.[68]

Through the subsequent centuries the Catholic Church continued to understand the word "synod" - *synodos* meaning meeting - purely in the institutional sense of a meeting of bishops. Thus, as a tool of reform, the synod has relied on the episcopacy for its planning, undertaking and efficacy, often without the input of the vast majority of the faithful (with the exception of the ruling emperors and princes). If the Church of the twenty-first century intends to make use of synods and councils, a reforming of the ecclesial paradigm is required

66. Trent, *Canons and Decrees*, session XXV, 236; and session XXV, chap.XXI, 278.

67. Ibid., session XXV, chap.XXII, 253. Session XXV was the final session of the Council of Trent. The reformation decrees included those issues that had been of serious concern since the opening of the council: the appropriate moral undertaking of the role of Cardinals and prelates; a warning and restriction on the use of excommunication as punishment; conditions upon benefices, patronage, property and clerical residence; and the use and purpose of synods and councils within this "reformation."

68. Ibid., ccxxiv.

- a new vision and understanding of the Church as the People of God, mature and responsible - before such meetings can be representative or effective within the contemporary context.[69]

The Council of Trent engaged with the problems of its time in a context that was complex and tumultuous, providing doctrines and reforms through an ecclesial understanding that was hierarchical and concerned with institutional power. Synods and councils were to follow the ecumenical council as the primary way to disseminate conciliar decrees and ensure their local reception. Importantly, they were also envisioned as tools of reform for the bishops; continuing the work of Trent by combatting doctrinal heresy, and pursuing reformation through the overcoming of clerical abuses in particular. Reform via synods was to be a process of identifying and overcoming corruption; but this process was controlled in every way by the corrupted individuals that Trent sought to reform. Long-term transformation of the hierarchical ecclesial system could not be achieved in this manner.

Reeling from the uncovering of ecclesial abuse, the contemporary Church mirrors in many ways the Church of the Reformation. The Catholic Church in the time of Trent had no intention of transforming ecclesiology, nor of seeking an appropriate balance of power and authority; neither did it recognise or embrace the responsibility of the wider lay faithful. The defensive and exclusive hierarchical paradigm of the Tridentine age that was handed on to the Catholic Church in the twentieth century failed for these reasons. Trent's legacy endured for over four hundred years, and was not exposed to any significant renewal until the Second Vatican Council. Vatican II proposed a new ecclesial vision for the Church as the People of God, and a new paradigm of communion that was relational and inclusive. Fifty years after this most recent council, the Church turns to synodality for a self-understanding that is appropriate for this time in history, with a recognition of the responsibility of all the faithful.

69. The word "representative" is not used in a democratic sense. Rather, consider the example of the 2018 Synod of Bishops' General Assembly on Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment. How does a group of older males without children discern the "signs of the times" for a generation who live in a vastly different milieu? Do they take advice? Use surveys? Collaborate with, and listen to, young people? How does a bishop faithfully represent the young people of his diocese when he is in dialogue with other bishops? Asking these questions and seeking to build effective answers is a process of a synodal Church.

1.3 The Early Twentieth Century

The focus of this chapter now moves to the twentieth century, and the paradigms and perspectives of the official Church prior to the Second Vatican Council. The following sections will illustrate how the ecclesiology of the early twentieth century maintained Trent's hierarchical approach: preferring to focus on the clergy, infantilise the laity, and stratify the Catholic Church. The Church's self-understanding and pastoral practice - which had been long-shaped by hierarchical definitions of authority and responsibility - were set within a pattern of decline. Since Trent the Church's ecclesiology had remained unexamined and unchallenged by an ecumenical council, and was ripe for renewal.[70]

1.3.1 Early Twentieth Century Paradigms of the Church

At the turn of the twentieth century the Catholic Church was unwittingly strengthening the foundations for clericalism and abuse of power through its use of a rigidly narrow ecclesial self-understanding. Following centuries marked by a "pattern of ecclesiastical defensiveness,"[71] the Church had settled into an identity of a *societas perfecta*, a perfect society which was hierarchical in nature. Key texts of the time describe the strata of holiness and power from the laity through the clergy, to the highest point - the bishops. In their writings, the popes preferred imagery of the Church as *spotless Bride* or *Mother*. This created a tension in the identity of the Church between perfect society and spotless Bride; using the former as a paradigm, the nature of the Church is perceived as militant, hierarchical, defensive and exclusive - this is the fortress ruled and led by the clergy, especially bishops and the Bishop of Rome. The femininity of the Church resided in the "second rank" of people,[72] the laity, whose paradigmatic imagery of spotless Bride evokes a nature of docility, gentle meekness, and a corresponding need for protection and leadership. Inextricable from the visible and earthly presence of the Church is its invisible nature as the *mystical Body of Christ*. Within the turbulence of the era and with threats to the civil power of the Catholic

70. The First Vatican Council was short and incomplete, reducing its overall impact on Church life.

71. Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making*, 1.

72. Pope Pius X in *Vehementer Nos* strongly emphasises the "two categories of persons" as well as the "different degrees of the hierarchy." Pius X, *Vehementer Nos,* Encyclical on the French Law of Separation, *Holy See Press Office*, 1906, accessed 20 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_x/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-x_enc_11021906_vehementer-nos_en.html, n.8. Hereafter *VN*.

Church, the ecclesiology of the pope became entrenched in defensive language.[73] The following analysis of several key documents of the early twentieth century will give insight into the major barriers to developing an ecclesiology of synodality: clericalism, infantilisation of the laity, and an exclusivist and fearful understanding of the Church's relationships and role in the world.

1.3.2 Identifying the Church as a Perfect Society

Three papal encyclicals of the early twentieth century have been selected for analysis because of their focus on ecclesial identity and unity:[74] Pope Leo XIII's *Satis Cognitum* (1896), Pope Pius XI's *Mortalium Animos* (1928), and Pope Pius XII's *Mystici Corporis Christi* (1943). The paradigm of the *societas perfecta*, which served the Church from the time of the Reformation, is present in each document. Along with an institutional focus and hierarchical paradigm, it is used to develop the concepts of unity and identity.[75] This is evident in the first encyclical, Pope Leo XIII's *Satis Cognitum*: "God indeed even made the Church a society far more perfect than any other."[76] Pope Leo XIII does not use the word "hierarchy," but does stratify authority in a hierarchical manner, as he associates functions of

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73. *Vehementer Nos*, for example, is a papal response to the French law on the separation of the Churches and the State in 1905 and the handing of Church property over to lay associations. See: *The Cambridge History of Christianity: World Christianities c.1815-c.1914*, vol. 8 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), s.v. "the Papacy."

74. All three encyclicals are mentioned and recommended within the 1949 Instruction of the Holy Office (known later as the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith). Holy Office, *On the 'Ecumenical Movement,'* Instruction, *Eternal Word Television Network*, 20 Dec 1949, accessed 4 Jun 2020, https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/on-the-ecumenical-movement-2070. This instruction sought to clarify the stance of the Catholic Church on the ecumenical movement.

The *Encyclopedia of Theology* states that three documents give important contributions to ecclesiology prior to the Second Vatican Council: *Pastor Aeternus* (Vatican I); *Satis Cognitum*; and *Mystici Corporis Christi*. *Encyclopedia of Theology: A Concise Sacramentum Mundi* (London, UK: Burns & Oates, 1975), s.v. "Church: Ecclesiology."

75. Edward Hahnenberg describes the *societas perfecta* model as privileging: "the visible and institutional aspects of the Church." Edward P. Hahnenberg, "The Mystical Body of Christ and Communion Ecclesiology: Historic Parallels," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 70, no. 1 (2005): 4.

The notion of the "perfect community" has its origins in *Politics*, the social political work of Aristotle. The text opens with a definition of the state as a supreme association, with its object being the "supreme Good." Aristotle, *The Politics of Aristotle*, trans. J.E.C. Welldon, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893), Book 1, chap.1. Aquinas uses this reference in a section on "the Essence of Law" in his *Summa Theologica*, where he describes the state (and not the Church) as "a perfect community, according to *Polit*. i 1." Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Pt I-II, Q. 90, Art. 3, Reply Obj. 3.

76. Leo XIII, *Satis Cognitum,* Encyclical on the Unity of the Church, *Holy See Press Office*, 29 Jun 1896, accessed 20 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_29061896_satis-cognitum.html, n.10. Hereafter *SaC*.

Key perspectives and imagery of the Church in *Satis Cognitum* include: Body of Christ (*SaC* nn.3, 10, see also: nn.5, 6, 9, 16); Spouse (nn.1, 16; see n.11); Mother (nn.1, 13, 16); mystical Body (nn.3, 5, 10); Divine or Perfect Society (n.10); true Church (nn.3, 4).

power variously with the Church, Saint Peter, and with the episcopal order, as the "Apostles and their successors" (*SaC* nn.3, 11, 12, 15). Pope Leo XIII was concerned with presenting the unity of the whole Church as a perfection, using the word "perfect" twenty times in the encyclical, and linking it closely to "defending" and to "rule" or "ruling":[77]

> To this end He established in the Church all principles which necessarily tend to make organized human societies, and through which they attain the perfection proper to each. That is, in it (the Church), all who wished to be the sons of God by adoption might attain to the perfection demanded by their high calling, and might obtain salvation. The Church, therefore, as we have said, is man's guide to whatever pertains to Heaven. This is the office appointed unto it by God: that it may watch over and may order all that concerns religion, and may, without let or hindrance, exercise, according to its judgment, its charge over Christianity (*SaC* n.10).

The purpose of *Satis Cognitum* was to reflect upon ecclesial unity. However, the consequence of using the paradigm of *societas perfecta* was a document that heavily emphasised an exclusive and global authority of the Catholic Church,[78] elements which contribute over time to a damaging clerical culture.[79] *Satis Cognitum* was the first in a line of official statements that favoured this ecclesiological paradigm.

Ten years later in 1906, the imagery of the Catholic Church given by Pope Pius X in *Vehementer Nos,* was of an "unequal society" (*VN* n.8). This encyclical deserves mention for

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77. "Defending" is used in *SaC* with: the flock, of faith, truth, authority, the rule [that Christ gave Apostles for perfecting, ministering and edifying]. "Rule" and "ruling" are used seventeen times.

78. "Jesus Christ commanded His Apostles and their successors to the end of time to teach and rule the nations" (*SaC* n.3).

79. The Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (May 2013 to Dec 2017) used a definition of clericalism from a 1983 report by the US Conference of Major Superiors of Men. This definition is pertinent to this thesis section because it so clearly links the ecclesial paradigm that is being discussed with the problems that have been revealed in the contemporary era: "Clericalism is the conscious or unconscious concern to promote the particular interests of the clergy and to protect the privilege and power that traditionally has been conceded to those in the clerical state….Among its chief manifestations are an authoritarian style of ministerial leadership, a rigidly hierarchical worldview, and a virtual identification of the holiness and grace of the church with the clerical state and thereby with the cleric himself." Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission), *Public Hearing into Catholic Church Authorities Case Study 50: Introduction*, *Child Abuse Royal Commission*, 2017, accessed 7 Oct 2020, https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/file-list/Case Study 50 - Opening Address - Institutional review of Catholic Church authorities - Structure Governance and Culture - Sydney.pdf, n.7.

including the word "hierarchy" (although not without precedent[80]) and developing it within a framework of society, ranking, unequal power and authority, and perfection of these powers within the episcopacy:

> The Scripture teaches us, and the tradition of the Fathers confirms the teaching, that the Church is the mystical body of Christ, ruled by the Pastors and Doctors - a society of men containing within its own fold chiefs who have full and perfect powers for ruling, teaching and judging. It follows that the Church is essentially an unequal society, that is, a society comprising two categories of persons, the Pastors and the flock, those who occupy a rank in the different degrees of the hierarchy and the multitude of the faithful (*VN* n.8).

Although influential, and a substantial contributor to a culture of clericalism, the concept of an unequal society is not specifically used in the other three encyclicals, which prefer to situate the common faithful within a different paradigm - that of the Church as Bride and Mother.

1.3.3 Identifying the Church as Spotless Bride and Mother

Pope Pius XI's *Mortalium Animos*, the second document of this analysis, continues the language of the First Vatican Council[81] and *Satis Cognitum* through the use of the understanding of Church as Mother and as Bride of Christ.[82] This Encyclical on Religious Unity divides the visible Church along lines of power and gender: the Roman Pontiff and bishops define truth and "stamp the minds" of the faithful (*MA* n.9), while the faithful abide in the "bosom of Holy Mother Church" (*MA* n.4). Using the ecclesial identity of Mother and Spouse creates a static and depersonalised understanding of Church. "Mother Church"

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80. See *Pastor Aeternus* from the First Vatican Council: "Both clergy and faithful, of whatever rite and dignity, both singly and collectively, are bound to submit to this power by the duty of hierarchical subordination and true obedience, and this not only in matters concerning faith and morals, but also in those which regard the discipline and government of the Church throughout the world." Vatican I, *First Vatican Council*, *EWTN*, 1869-1870, accessed 14 Oct 2020, https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/first-vatican-council-1505, session 3, chap.3, para 2. This reference lists together all of the First Vatican documents: session 1 Opening; session 2 Profession of Faith; session 3 Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith (*Dei Filius* - hereafter *DF*); and session 4 First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ (*Pastor Aeternus* - hereafter *PA*).

81. "Mother Church" is frequently used within Vatican I Council statements: "I acknowledge the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all the Churches." Vatican I, session 2, n.12; see also session 2, n.3. "Bride" occurs once in *DF* n.1, and "spouse" once in *DF* chap.4, n.13.

82. Pius XI, *Mortalium Animos,* Encyclical on Religious Unity, *Holy See Press Office,* 6 Jan 1928, accessed 20 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19280106_mortalium-animos.html. Hereafter *MA*. Key perspectives and imagery of the Church in *Mortalium Animos* include: mystical Body (*MA* n.10); spotless Bride or Spouse (n.10); Mother (n.4; see n.11); perfect society (n.6); true Church (nn.7, 10, 13).

becomes a vague third party who is assigned feminine characteristics, such as concern for children and offering healing, which effectively removes these traits from the faithful and renders them passive. Alongside this imagery is the teaching, government, ruling and defending of the Church: these are the functions of the clerics, who are active, zealous, and set apart in their power and masculinity.

Depiction of the Church as Mother and Spouse leads to a confusion of feminine imagery with both the Holy Spirit and Mary, mother of Christ. The third encyclical, Pope Pius XII's *Mystici Corporis Christi*, elevates the mysterious and mystical figure of Spouse and Mother to a role that transcends the faithful:

> …let this be the supreme law of our love: to love the Spouse of Christ as Christ willed her to be, and as He purchased her with His blood. Hence, not only should we cherish exceedingly the Sacraments with which holy Mother Church sustains our life, the solemn ceremonies which she celebrates for our solace and our joy, the sacred chant and the liturgical rites by which she lifts our minds up to heaven, but also the sacramentals and all those exercises of piety by which she consoles the hearts of the faithful and sweetly imbues them with the Spirit of Christ.[83]

This paradigm results in an ambiguous ecclesial identity and assigns to the faithful a role that is passive; the laity receive, rather than contribute.

A further consequence of this gender-based division in combination with the *societas perfecta*, is the clear connection between motherly tenderness and the infantilisation of the laity; that is, the tendency to associate the faithful with a reduced capacity for agency, maturity and self-actualisation in faith. All three encyclicals describe the faithful as "children," which serves to emphasise the episcopal role as paternal and the lay role as - at best - the "seen and not heard" of a well-behaved child of that era. What the laity lack is made up by the clergy, again with statements that contribute confusion around clerical powers and their source:

> Through Holy Orders men are set aside and consecrated to God, to offer the Sacrifice of the Eucharistic Victim, to nourish the flock of the faithful with the Bread of Angels and the food of doctrine, to guide them in the way of God's commandments and counsels and to strengthen them with all other supernatural helps (*MCC* n.20).

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83. Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis Christi,* Encyclical on the Mystical Body of Christ, *Holy See Press Office*, 1943, accessed 20 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi.html, n.92. Hereafter *MCC*.

Vehementer Nos elevates episcopal power while institutionalising the faithful as docile and child-like:

> So distinct are these categories that with the pastoral body only rests the necessary right and authority for promoting the end of the society and directing all its members towards that end; the one duty of the multitude is to allow themselves to be led, and, like a docile flock, to follow the Pastors (*VN* n.8).

The origins of this perspective are visible decades earlier in the First Vatican Council, wherein the Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith blames the faithful for challenges to Catholic doctrine.[84] The panacea to Christian worldliness and discord is held up by Pope Pius XII as the depiction of the Catholic Church as the mystical Body of Christ (*MCC* n.5).

1.3.4 Identifying the Church as Mystical Body

Pope Pius XII's encyclical, *Mystici Corporis Christi*, describes the Church as a hierarchical and juridical institute that is at the same time the spiritual community of Christ's body. Edward Hahnenberg points out how the understanding of authority, and the relationship between the pope and Christ (see *MCC* nn.40-41), was viewed through a very narrow lens which had "very little influence on the existing understanding of the Church's concrete, historical existence."[85] Massimo Faggioli notes how Pope Pius XII's encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*: "rediscovered a biblical category for the definition of the Church," through a harmonizing of the Church as "mystical Body" with concepts of society.[86] Faggioli perceives a clear "ecclesiological shift" with this encyclical, however, this encyclical still lies in continuity with the paradigms of Church as *societas perfecta*, Mother and Spouse, and Mystical Body, present in *Satis Cognitum* and *Mortalium Animos*, and extending back to the

84. The episcopacy remains above blame and is to continue teaching, defending and condemning. As for the laity, they are easily led astray: see *DF* chap.4, n.8.

85. Hahnenberg, "The Mystical Body of Christ and Communion Ecclesiology," 11.

86. Massimo Faggioli, *True Reform: Liturgy and Ecclesiology in* Sacrosanctum Concilium (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012), 44-45.

First Vatican Council in 1870. Within *Mystici Corporis Christi* Pope Pius XII extended and developed these concepts further, with a particular focus upon the Mystical Body.[87]

Through his exposition of the concepts of society and perfection, Pope Pius XII sets limitations upon unity that are exclusive and unbending: "It follows that those who are divided in faith or government cannot be living in the unity of such a Body, nor can they be living the life of its one Divine Spirit" (*MCC* n.22). Baptism provides entry to the perfect society and membership of the Body, no matter how weak the individual, and brings assurance of salvation (*MCC* n.18). The Mystical Body is described in terms that encompass both earthly and spiritual aspects of the nature and identity of the Church, with the visible traits inseparable from the hierarchical institution *and* the maternal spirituality (*MCC* nn.23-42).[88] Confusion remains with the combination of the paradigms of *societas perfecta* and Mystical Body, with the main problem arising as a concentration of authority, responsibility and activity within the hierarchy at the expense of the faithful, who remain docile, passive, and lacking in self-appropriation of *their* identity as the Body of Christ. These paradigms appear to be significant contributors to a culture of clericalism and the abuse of power throughout the twentieth century.

Three official documents contributed substantially to the paradigms and images of ecclesial self-understanding of the Catholic Church in the early twentieth century: *Satis Cognitum* (1896), *Mortalium Animos* (1928), and *Mystici Corporis Christi* (1943). Each encyclical presents the key paradigms through which the Church was to know and enter into its identity and nature. The Church as *societas perfecta* grounded the papal teachings on the Church as a hierarchical society in a manner that was defensive and exclusive. Church identity as Mother or Spouse used feminine imagery that is traditional for the Holy Spirit or

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87. *Mystici Corporis Christi*, as the later and much longer of the three encyclicals at over 19,000 words, contains a greater number of instances of the imagery and language that has been detailed so far: Mystical Body (mentioned 63 times); spotless Bride or Spouse (8x); Mother (9x); perfect society (8x); Church Militant (2x); and Church Triumphant (1x). The latter two may reflect Europe's context in the midst of a second World War, although the encyclical did not create the images - the Synod of Basel (held also in Ferra and Florence) in the fifteenth century mentions the "church militant" and "church militia." Synod of Basel-Ferrara-Florence, Sessions of the Ecumenical Council of Florence, *EWTN*, 1438-1445, accessed 10 Sept 2020, https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/ecumenical-council-of-florence-1438-1445-1461, sessions 2 and 11.

88. *MCC* n.66 describes the loving and spotless Mother Church as giving birth to the Sacraments, imposing sacred law, recommending evangelical counsels, and generating holy people through heavenly gifts and grace. As this document understands these works as the responsibility of the bishops it is a confusing task to untangle such statements. How does "Mother Church" achieve these activities? Why is the teaching and governing Church hierarchical when Mother Church is a single whole? What is the role of the faithful? Where is the Spirit? Is the "Mystical Church" spiritual justification of the institutional and historical reality?

Blessed Virgin, resulting in confused theology. The distancing of the faithful from responsibility and action as Christians can be seen in the treatment of the Church as Mother, which produced a distant and vague spiritual personification of the Church. Finally, the Church as Mystical Body received prominence in Pope Pius XII's *Mystici Corporis Christi*, as he endeavoured to illustrate the spiritual aspect of the visible and societal Body of Christ, and ultimately achieved a spiritual justification for the institutional form of the Church which lay the foundations for a deformed culture of clericalism and lay infantilisation. All of these images have roots in the First Vatican Council and its two documents *Pastor Aeternus* and *Dei Filius*, and present consequences for the life of the Catholic Church (and its dialogue partners) that stretch to the Second Vatican Council and beyond. The development of an ecclesiology of synodality will need to acknowledge and break open these paradigms with a new vision, appropriate for the contemporary Church, which is more able to develop the Church's self-understanding in a dynamic and healthy way.

Conclusion

The review of Saint Paul and the Gospel of John - while touching only briefly on the importance and contributions of scripture towards a contemporary ecclesiology - draws together some of the insights and dynamics of the early Church. Particularly relevant to this thesis is Paul's attention to community; what it means to be *ekklēsia*, what nourishes the community, and what leads to fracturing and decline. The Gospel of John establishes the notion that a believer's life, and the life of the wider community of faith, is a journey of transformation. Commitment to being open to encounter, conversion, and the guidance of the Spirit is a Johannine journey - it is also the journey that a missionary, synodal Church is called to step into.

The Council of Trent was a pivotal event in the most recent five hundred years of the Catholic Church's history. It illustrates how ecumenical councils can be used to recognise the challenges of the time and to initiate the necessary reform through decrees. Trent also demonstrated how renewal requires a phase of implementation involving the activity of regional councils and diocesan synods. This phase was largely neglected and, along with a lack of ecumenical councils in the following centuries, the consequence was that ecclesiology remained without regular renewal, exposure to external input, and rigorous processes of

discernment and engagement with the world. The theology inherited by the early twentieth century had become inward-looking; serving to stratify the people of the Church, and to place rigorous boundaries around authority, responsibility, and activity.

This chapter demonstrates that without ongoing renewal and development ecclesiology could no longer fulfil its potential to serve all members of the Church. The foundations built in the mid-sixteenth century could not recognise ecclesial identity as founded in baptism, nor support the laity in their vocation to mission. Incapable of meeting the challenges of the twentieth century, the hierarchical paradigm was corrupting the communal life of the Church. It would take an explosive ecumenical council to release the Church from the constraints and boundaries it had placed on its thought and its people. The Second Vatican Council will now be analysed for evidence that it did effect such a change in ecclesial perspective and meaning for the Catholic Church.

Chapter 2
The Catholic Church Moves from a Hierarchical to a Relational Paradigm

Introduction

Chapter one has established an understanding of some key ecclesiological insights of the early Church, revealing interconnections between unity, transformation, and the achievement of healthy communities of faith. The analysis of the Council of Trent was undertaken to expose the roots of ecclesiological decline. It demonstrated the valuable potential of ecumenical councils to intentionally engage with the challenges of the era, and to develop solutions together as the universal Church. Trent's legacy, however, was not one of dynamic renewal through the work of synods and councils. Instead, it marked the beginning of a long age without councils and, consequently, the extension of a hierarchical paradigm well into the twentieth century. Without transformation, ecclesiology revealed a loss of engagement with the ecclesial foundations of the early Church: the journeying together of all members, Christian identity rooted in diversity and transformation, and the outgoing, or sending, of a community in communion.

Chapter two explores the impact of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) upon the theology, self-understanding and imagination of the Catholic Church. Section 2.1 describes how Pope John XXIII's vision of fresh air and pastoral care met with theological movements of the time, enabling a movement of renewal that grasped the dynamic and relational nature of the Church. The development of this theology, as well as its tension with hierarchical meaning, will be traced through key conciliar documents. This work provides a foundation for understanding the twentieth century turn from hierarchical ecclesiological meaning towards the relational, and then more fully into synodality. Fundamental to this shift in Catholic theology is Vatican II's turn to the world. Present in the documents, it was also a factor in two significant developments of the Council: the concept of collegiality and the decision to create the Synod of Bishops, as described in section 2.2. Later in this thesis it will be demonstrated how the concept of synodality and its development through synodal praxis and governance build upon these foundations.

Following Vatican II, new perspectives arose and new voices were heard. These will be briefly reviewed in section 2.3, before the responses from the Vatican through the work of Pope John Paul II and the powerful and influential Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith are analysed. The pope's document *Christifideles Laici* was a seminal work on a theology of the laity, recognising the need to articulate the mission and vocation of those who are the "lay faithful." This document will be critiqued in section 2.4, as an important "mid-way" ecclesiological text between Vatican II and the emergence of synodality. Finally, section 2.5 will establish the key forms of participation in the institutional Church to build an understanding of how the Catholic Church operates through synods or councils at various levels, and who and how people may participate and make decisions in those bodies.

2.1 The Second Vatican Council and Renewal

The Second Vatican Council was an epoch-making event for the Catholic Church. Pope John XXIII conceived the idea of an ecumenical Council in a spirit of renewal whereby the institutional Church may be brought up to date - a task long-overdue since Trent. This spirit of renewal was encapsulated in the word *aggiornamento.*[1] After his death his successor, Pope Paul VI, ensured the continuation of the Council, the promulgation of the official

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Unfortunately a new and valuable contribution to scholarship on the Second Vatican Council could not be used due to its recent publication date: Ormond Rush, *The Vision of Vatican II: Its Fundamental Principles* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2019).

1. Apparently Pope John XXIII was known to literally open a window to "let in fresh air" when explaining the need for an ecumenical council. This image illustrates the anticipation of the Council, while the documents and their reception were essential to the implementation of any *aggiornamento*, or bringing up to date. *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 5th ed. (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing, 2011), s.v. "*aggiornamento*." This updating process was intended to be a twofold celebration of a Diocesan Synod for Rome, and an Ecumenical Council for the universal Church, leading to a renewal that included the Church's Canon Law. See: John XXIII, "Allocuzione del Santo Padre Giovanni XXIII Con la Quale Annuncia il Sinodo Romano, il Concilio Ecumenico, e l'Aggiornamento Del Codice Di Diritto Canonico," *Holy See Press Office*, 25 Jan 1959, accessed 7 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/it/speeches/1959/documents/hf_j-xxiii_spe_19590125_annuncio.html.

In 1965 Bernard Lonergan described the reaction to the pope's word *aggiornamento* and the promise that it held for the Church, both at that time and in the future: "The word *aggiornamento* has electrified the world, Catholic and non-Catholic, because it seems to imply a rejection of classicism, a rejection of the view that human nature is always the same, a rejection of the view that any change is only an incidental modification introduced to meet a merely accidental difference in circumstances. It opens, or seems to open, the door to historical consciousness, to the awareness that men individually are responsible for their lives and collectively are responsible for the world in which they live them." Bernard Lonergan, "*Existenz* and *Aggiornamento,*" in *Collection: Papers by Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 4, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, 2nd ed., ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, 222-31 (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 228-29.

documents, and developed his own emphasis on deeper ecclesial self-knowledge, renewal, and dialogue.[2] The Council explored a great deal of the life and relationships of the Church, both internal and external, in a prophetic and hopeful vision of *aggiornamento*. It broke free from a tightly-held model of hierarchical Church with varying degrees of success and of compromise, which is evidenced in the official documents. Vatican II introduced the concept of communion officially to the wider Church through its decrees, declarations and constitutions, bringing a change in perspective for ecclesiology and for the lived identity of the Catholic Church.[3] The new perspective appropriated imagery and language that was relational and dynamic, most notably through the description of the entire *ekklēsia* as the "People of God."[4] A significant accomplishment of Pope Paul VI and the Council was identifying the need for episcopal collegiality, and subsequently creating the Synod of Bishops. This took place alongside the emergence of insights into the nature and identity of the Church as inclusive and relational. A survey of ecclesiology from Vatican II to the contemporary era reveals that the many facets of *aggiornamento* at work in the Council contributed to the movement of the Catholic Church out of a strictly hierarchical perspective and into a relational, dynamic, and ultimately synodal self-understanding.

2.1.1 A Vision of Aggiornamento *and* Ressourcement

Pope John XXIII called for an Ecumenical Council of the Catholic Church remarkably early in his pontificate. It was unexpected, not unlike his election, and the pope himself maintained that the idea was a spontaneous inspiration.[5] In his opening speech to the

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2. This is particularly evident in Pope Paul VI's ecclesiological document, *Ecclesiam Suam*, which is analysed in this chapter.

3. Vatican II produced sixteen documents: four constitutions, three declarations, and nine decrees. They are available through the Vatican's Holy See Press Office website: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm. Constitutions treat substantive doctrinal issues, while decrees and declarations address practical or pastoral issues. Edward P. Hahnenberg, *A Concise Guide to the Documents of Vatican II* (Cincinnati, OH: Franciscan Media, 2007), 5.

4. This language "privileged the themes of baptismal equality and the Church's eschatological orientation." Hahnenberg, "The Mystical Body of Christ and Communion Ecclesiology," 4.

5. John XXIII spoke of this moment in his opening speech to the Council: "First, and almost unexpectedly, we first had the idea of this Council, which we then announced simply to the Sacred College of Cardinals on that memorable January 25, 1959, the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, in his Basilica on the Ostian Way. At first those present were unexpectedly struck silent, as if by a brilliant ray of light from above, and delight showed on the faces and in the eyes of them all. At the same time a powerful fervor was enkindled throughout the world, and everyone began eagerly to look forward to the celebration of the Council." John XXIII, *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*, Opening Speech to the Second Vatican Council, 11 Oct 1962, trans. Joseph A. Komonchak, *In Verbo Veritatis (2 Cor 6:7)* (blog), 8 Oct, 2012, accessed 6 Oct 2020, https://jakomonchak.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/john-xxiii-opening-speech.pdf, n.5.

Council Pope John XXIII declared his preference for foci in the years ahead: “careful attention is given to today's very serious questions and controversies concerning political and economic matters”; and a genuine retrieval of doctrine for the good of the Church “in the way demanded by our times.”[6] He insisted that this could not be achieved through mere discussion nor repetition of dogma and theology:

> For the deposit of faith, the truths contained in our venerable doctrine, are one thing; the fashion in which they are expressed, but with the same meaning and the same judgement, is another thing. This way of speaking will require a great deal of work and, it may be, much patience: types of presentation must be introduced which are more in accord with a teaching authority which is primarily pastoral in character. [7]

Pope John XXIII was placing an unprecedented demand upon the Council participants: their work was to be discerning of the age and yet historically grounded, engaged with the world’s problems but still hopeful, and faithful to tradition while open to the new. How was this going to work?

The long-term renewal of the Church by the Second Vatican Council came about through the processes of *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*, envisioned by Pope John XXIII (pope from 28 Oct 1958 - 3 June 1963) and appropriated by his successor Pope Paul VI (21 June 1963 - 6 August 1978). Along with development these words were contemporary and meaningful to the Church, capturing the essence of the Council’s operation: *ressourcement* looks to the past, *aggiornamento* at the present, and *development* to the future. All were supported by a critical assumption understood by the Council, that: “the Catholic tradition is richer, broader, and more malleable than the way in which it had often, especially since the nineteenth century, been interpreted.”[8] These terms represented the emergence of a new era for Catholic philosophy and theology, and an upheaval to the traditional strictures on thinking and doing:

> They are all concerned with change and, in the context of a reluctance to admit change, operate as soft synonyms for it and soft synonyms for reform. They signal the abandonment of the so-called classicist

6. John XXIII, *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*, n.15.

7. Ibid.

8. John W. O’Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008) 37.

> world view that saw human living in static, abstract, and immutable terms.[9]

The approach to reform by Vatican II was far broader and more comprehensive than arguably any that had been undertaken previously. The speed at which it was called contributed to an air of myriad opportunity and the possibility of change.[10] The transformational power of the Second Vatican Council was brought about through *aggiornamento* and *ressourcement*, from which emerged ecclesial renewal that would develop into synodality for the contemporary Church.

2.1.2 Vatican II and an Ecclesial Paradigm of Relationality

The particular historical context of the Council, and the momentum provided by *aggiornamento* and *ressourcement* within that context, shaped the movement of ecclesiology throughout the Council towards a paradigm of relationality.[11] The hierarchical ecclesial perspective inherited from the Council of Trent had not been exposed to reform through critique or development. This rigidity could not provide foundations for the pastoral focus and creativity that were being asked of an ecumenical council in the 1960s. The classical philosophical underpinnings of ecclesiology were substantially present in the Council's preparatory schemata, which were condemned as clericalist, juridical, and triumphalist.[12] These were to give way to the work of *aggiornamento* and historical consciousness, which demanded a new paradigm that was open to development, and could produce foundations for

9. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*.

10. O'Malley notes how the lack of preparation combined with the sheer number of participants brought immediate procedural challenges. Ibid., 94-102.

11. The early chapters of this thesis speak of paradigms and perspectives; chapter three will lay the foundations for understanding these within a definition of *meaning*.

12. The failings of those documents were soundly criticised by Bishop Emile de Smedt of Bruges. Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2002), 31. Criticisms of the schemata as too juridical and not sufficiently pastoral in their approach became standard as the Council progressed. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 190.

a theology that was dynamic, relational, and dialogical.[13] At that time the recent developments in communion ecclesiology contributed to a new foundational understanding of the Church as the People of God. Communion language enabled the theme of baptismal identity and mission to take its prominent place in conciliar ecclesiology.[14] Key figures worked for the engagement of the Council with *ressourcement* - "a return to the sources"[15] - and the neo-Thomism developed by theologians and philosophers in the early twentieth century. Dominicans Yves Congar, Marie-Dominique Chenu and Edward Schillebeeckx; and Jesuits Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan, promoted progress in theology by embracing the place of history and pluralism as foundational for ecclesial renewal.[16]

The documents of the Council demonstrate the activity of communion ecclesiology through the use of a relational paradigm, language, and themes; often held in tension with various degrees of a hierarchical perspective. Sections 2.1.3-6 examine the key themes that demonstrate the turn to a relational perspective in selected Vatican II documents. First, however, it is appropriate to define the word *hierarchy*.

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13. The mystical Body ecclesiology of the early twentieth century gave way to the communion ecclesiology that was to develop further in the 1970s, 80s and 90s. See: Hahnenberg, "The Mystical Body of Christ and Communion Ecclesiology," 4. The Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, represents an overcoming of a propositional model of revelation, inherited from the Middle Ages, which understands revelation as: "the communication of fundamental truths about God." Within this model dogmatic propositions are conceived as "divine utterances," and faith as assent to these propositions. Richard R. Gaillardetz, *Teaching with Authority: A Theology of the Magisterium of the Church* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1997), 69-70. The draft document on divine revelation presented to the bishops of the Second Vatican Council utilised this model. The bishops who challenged the schema expressed concerns about this understanding of revelation as being fundamentally flawed, in areas such as the role of biblical authors, the "source" of revelation, the notion that Catholic hierarchy could "add" to divine revelation, and the resulting destructive impact that all of this would have on ecumenical relationships. Pope John XXIII ordered the removal of the draft schema and established a new commission to create another. Ibid., 71.

14. The insights of communion language and ecclesiology were present well before the twentieth century in the seminal works of Johann Adam Möhler (1796-1838) and Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834). See Dennis Doyle's chapter "Communion and Modernity," for a discussion on the early emergence of communion ecclesiology: Dennis M. Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology: Vision and Versions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 23-37.

Also emerging were the ecumenical movement and the acceptance of historical biblical criticism by Pope Pius XII: Pope Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, Encyclical on Promoting Biblical Studies, *Holy See Press Office*, 30 Sep 1943, accessed 15 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_30091943_divino-afflante-spiritu.html.

15. *Ressourcement* is translated as "a return to the sources" and was a movement that sought critical historical perspective and a removal of accrued bias for theology. For a collection of essays on this topic see: Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray, eds, *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). Faggioli describes the discussion of tradition, *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*, and their inter-relationships, as "far from over" within the context of the modern world. Massimo Faggioli, *Vatican II: The Battle for Meaning* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2012), 19.

16. Faggioli, *Vatican II,* 77.

2.1.2.1 On the Word "Hierarchy"

Common usage understands hierarchy as: "a system of persons or things arranged in a graded order."[17] Consequently, within the context of the Catholic Church and its frequent use of the word in official documents, hierarchy is frequently misunderstood as referring to the whole Church as graded, from lay up to pope, in a pyramidal arrangement. However, it is the graded authority of ecclesial Holy Orders - deacon, priest and bishop - to which hierarchy refers (and from which the Greek word was derived around the 14th century). Known as the *hierarchia ordinis*, it mirrors the "ordering of the angels," a notion of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite of the fifth century.[18] The three documents analysed in chapter one of this thesis rarely use the word hierarchy.[19] *Vehementer Nos* (1906), however, deliberately uses the word hierarchy to create a distinct division between those with Holy Orders and the laity, in order to pass judgement on the French Law of Separation which sought to remove much ecclesial power from civil life.[20] As explored in chapter one, the defensive language of early twentieth century ecclesiology was categorised by exclusive and sometimes militant language, a tendency to focus on the hierarchy who retained the powers of governance and authority, and associating the laity with weak imagery.

This chapter reveals how the notion of hierarchy and its language significantly came to the fore of ecclesiology during Vatican II. The sections of documents relating to the episcopacy - as the narrowing of the meaning of hierarchy swiftly came to represent - strongly resist the *aggiornamento* and *ressourcement* that had such an impact on many other elements of Catholic theology.

2.1.3 Sacrosanctum Concilium *and "Full and Active Participation"*

The sixteen documents of the Second Vatican Council demonstrate that a new vision of the Church as communion was emerging, and with it a concomitant recognition of the

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17. *American Heritage Dictionary*, s.v. "hierarchy."

18. Gerald O'Collins and Edward G. Farrugia, eds., *A Concise Dictionary of Theology,* 3rd ed. (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press: 2013), s.v. "hierarchy."

19. *Satis Cognitum* (1896) mentions "hierarchy" zero times, *Mortalium Animos* (1928) 1x, and *Mystici Corporis Christi* (1943) 3x. *MA* n.9 states: "An ecclesiastical hierarchy, made up of bishops, priests and ministers, has been divinely constituted." *MCC* twice mentions this "ecclesiastical hierarchy." The Latin originals of these documents were consulted.

20. Recall *VN* n.8: "It follows that the Church is essentially an unequal society, that is, a society comprising two categories of persons, the Pastors and the flock, those who occupy a rank in the different degrees of the hierarchy and the multitude of the faithful." See sec.1.3.2 of this thesis.

dynamic nature of the laity. The first promulgation of the Council was the Constitution on the Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. This document expressed the urgency of Council participants for the need to apply both *aggiornamento* and *ressourcement* to Christian life, through the adaptation of institutions to modern needs, the promotion of unity, and living more fully the Church's mission:

> This sacred Council has several aims in view: it desires to impart an ever increasing vigor to the Christian life of the faithful; to adapt more suitably to the needs of our own times those institutions which are subject to change; to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ; to strengthen whatever can help to call the whole of mankind into the household of the Church.[21]

The vision and hope at this first stage of the Council was for a "promotion and restoration" of the liturgy (*SC* chapter 1), in order to promote the "full and active participation" of all members of the Church "before all else" (*SC* n.14).[22] The method to achieve this was through a concerted effort to rediscover baptism as the entry into the priestly and apostolic character for the whole faithful people, founded on the biblical text of the first letter of Peter:

> But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light (1 Pet 2:9).[23]

As an example of *ressourcement*, this method had a profound impact upon the ecclesiological debate and reorientation of the theological assumptions underpinning the Council's progress on further topics; such as the Church as the People of God, the role and function of the laity, ecumenism, and the need for collegiality amongst bishops.[24]

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21. Vatican II, *Sacrosanctum Concilium,* Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Holy See Press Office,* 4 Dec 1963, accessed 6 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html, n.1. Hereafter *SC*.

O'Malley notes the emphasis on change in this opening sentence, which uses the words *improve* (*augere*), *adapt* (*accommodare*) and *change* (*mutationes*), establishing it as a theme and driving force of the Council. The final document, *Gaudium et Spes*, constituted a climax in the theme of change through significant incorporation of words like *progress*, *development*, and *evolution*. John W. O'Malley, "Vatican II Revisited as Reconciliation: the Francis Factor," in *The Legacy of Vatican II*, eds. Massimo Faggioli and Andrea Vicini, 3-25 (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2015), 14. See: Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes,* Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Holy See Press Office,* 7 Dec 1965, accessed 6 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html. Hereafter *GS*.

22. The phrase "active participation" is used fifteen times in this document; it is inclusive of the entire *ekklēsia* and all aspects of the liturgy. In the original Latin text: *in plenaria et actuosa participatione totius plebis sanctae Dei*; in the full and active participation of all God's holy people (*SC* n.41).

23. Supported by the preceding verses: "…like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 2:5).

24. See Faggioli, *Vatican II*, 5.

Sacrosanctum Concilium was the first document to use the baptismal identity of the faithful from the first letter of Peter, and did so only once:

> Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people' (1 Pet 2:9; cf. 2:4-5), is their right and duty by reason of their baptism (*SC* n.14).

This passage became the lens used to perceive and explore the foundations of a dynamic and relational self-understanding: baptism is the basis of ecclesial identity, and the missionary nature of the entire faithful emerges from their fully conscious and active participation as Christian community. The text demonstrates the tension between the paradigm of Church as *societas perfecta* ("Mother Church" and "leading," which is the duty of the pastors, *SC* n.19), and the emerging concept of the baptismal identity of the faithful and their functioning as priest, prophet and king.[25]

"Priest, prophet and king" - the *tria munera Christi* - became a fundamental concept for the entire faithful that was used deliberately within most Council documents.[26] As a novelty it was either embraced or constrained by the various documents, sometimes both at

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25. The three functions of Christ - given through baptism to God's people - are known as the *tria munera Christi,* which was first integrated into Catholic ecclesiology at Vatican II. Yves Congar anticipated the importance of this concept before the Council and determined that the Church "co-operates *directly* in the constitution of the Kingdom" through three key ways: "prayer, participation in the messianic offices, and the active presence of the Holy Spirit with his gifts." Yves Congar, *Lay People in the Church: A Study for a Theology of Laity*, trans. Donald Attwater (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1957), 88. See also: Yves Congar, "On the Prophet-King-Priest trilogy," *Journal of Philosophical and Theological Sciences Paris*, n.67.1 (1983): 97-116.

The Reformer John Calvin is recognised as introducing the notion of the three offices of Christ: "the prophetic office, kingship, and priesthood." Calvin describes the "efficacy and benefit" of these offices for believers as "spiritual in nature." John T. McNeill, ed., *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion 1*, vol.XX of *The Library of Christian Classics*, ed. John Baillie, John T. McNeill and Henry P. Van Dusen (Philadelphia: the Westminster Press, 1960), chap.XV.

The priesthood of the laity was a concept that faced great opposition during debate at Vatican II, particularly during the debate on the *Lumen Gentium* schema, with Cardinal Bacci insisting that the text be emended to clarify that it was not priesthood "in the true and proper sense." Others agreed that the encouragement of the laity was too enthusiastic. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 187. Ormond Rush discusses the drafting process of *Lumen Gentium* and the tensions involved in the ecclesiological movement away from juridical notions of Church powers. Ormond Rush, *The Eyes of Faith: The Sense of the Faithful and the Church's Reception of Revelation* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 186-93.

26. Explicit instances of this theology of the laity in Vatican II documents in chronological order: *Sacrosanctum Concilium* n.14; *Lumen Gentium* nn.9-12, 20-21, 24-28, 31, 34-36, 62; *Unitatis Redintegratio* n.4; *Christus Dominus* nn.12-21; *Apostolicam Actuositatem* nn.2-3, 10; *Ad Gentes* n.15; *Presbyterorum Ordinis* nn.1-6. In the Catechism: *CCC* n.1545.

See Lakeland for a discussion on this theology of the laity: Paul Lakeland, "Maturity and the Lay Vocation: From Ecclesiology to Ecclesiality," in *Catholic Identity and the Laity*, vol. 54, *College Theology Society Annual,* ed. Tim Muldoon, 241-59 (New York: Orbis Books, 2009), 241. Also: Paul Lakeland, *A Council That Will Never End:* Lumen Gentium *and the Church Today* (Collegeville, MI: Michael Glazier, 2013), 78-80.

once. This phenomenon can be understood in the light of Massimo Faggioli's description of Vatican II as a "paradigmatic example" of the complex relationship between continuity and discontinuity.[27] This tension and complexity continues as the Church still grapples with the development initiated by Vatican II, while finding resistance in those areas of theology and ecclesial life that refuse to relinquish the hierarchical paradigm. Fifty years later the Catholic Church is yet to fully explore and embrace transformation into a community that is priest, prophet and king.

2.1.4 Lumen Gentium *and the People of God*

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, is Vatican II's major ecclesiological document. It opens with a powerful and challenging description of the Church as a "sacrament of unity" with God and with each other.[28] The document recognises that within the "secular character" of the laity lies great diversity, ultimately held together in unity as one people: "a common dignity of members deriving from their rebirth in Christ, a common grace as sons and daughters, a common vocation to perfection, one salvation, one hope and undivided charity" (*LG* n.32). The recognition of the diversity that the Church holds in unity is positive, however there is present in the text a clear distinction between "sacred ministers" and "the rest," which lends an uneasiness to any claim of equal dignity:

> Although by Christ's will some are appointed teachers, dispensers of the mysteries and pastors for the others, yet all the faithful enjoy a true equality with regard to the dignity and the activity which they share in the building up of the Body of Christ. The distinction which the Lord has made between the sacred ministers and the rest of the people of God implies union, for the pastors and the other faithful are joined together by a close relationship (*LG* n.32).

The laity are imagined as "leaven" and act from within the world (*LG* n.31). This metaphor evolved over the course of the Council to become a much more holistic and inclusive vision of the whole Church;[29] with the laity not just situated but living and co-operating in the affairs of the world (see *GS* n.40).[30] The "powerful heralds" of *Lumen Gentium* (*LG* n.35, one

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27. Faggioli, *Vatican II*, 137.

28. The Church as a sacrament of unity also occurs in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* n.26, and references Saint Cyprian: St. Cyprian, *On the Unity of the Catholic Church*, 7; see Letter 66, nn.8, 3.

29. Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making*, 55.

30. Gaillardetz provides a useful summary on key points of the Council's teaching on the laity, see: ibid., 53. Gaillardetz does not mention *Apostolicam Actuositatem* despite the fact that its topic is the laity.

of the very few colourful descriptions of the laity present in this document) are still bound by "prompt obedience" to their "teachers and rulers" (*LG* n.37). This obedience is underlined more frequently in the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.

Lumen Gentium defines a new focus for ecclesiology: the People of God.[31] However, there is a tension within the text when it comes to the identities and roles within the Church. This can be explained by the presence of two competing theologies: the first being the empirical, historical approach of the neo-Thomists, and the second of the neo-Scholastic *societas perfecta* and its accompanying models.[32] The former articulate an understanding of the faithful that is drawn from their baptismal character, occurring frequently within *Lumen Gentium*:

> These faithful are by baptism made one body with Christ and are constituted among the People of God; they are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetical, 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 (*LG* n.31).[33]

Mission is now related to the *being* of the People of God, by result of their baptismal identity, and it encompasses and incorporates all aspects of their lives. However, the imagery of neo-Scholasticism remains within the text, preferring a classicist philosophy and theology, and re-presenting the Church as a spotless Mother and Bride:

> The Church indeed, contemplating her hidden sanctity, imitating her charity and faithfully fulfilling the Father's will, by receiving the word of God in faith becomes herself a mother. By her preaching she brings forth to a new and immortal life the sons who are born to her in baptism, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of God. She herself is a virgin, who keeps the faith given to her by her Spouse whole and entire. Imitating the mother of her Lord, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, she keeps with virginal purity an entire faith, a firm hope and a sincere charity (*LG* n.64).

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31. Like the *tria munera Christi*, this title is based on the biblical text of 1 Pet 2-9. Pope Paul VI's *Ecclesiam Suam* was released before the final text of *Lumen Gentium* was promulgated and became the first document to use "People of God" during the Council. Paul VI, *Ecclesiam Suam,* Encyclical On the Church, *Holy See Press Office,* 6 Aug 1964, accessed 6 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_06081964_ecclesiam.html, n.36. Hereafter *ES.*

32. Lakeland, *A Council That Will Never End*, 21. Lakeland refers to the thinking of Bernard Lonergan on this topic, see: Bernard Lonergan, "The Subject," in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan: A Second Collection*, 2nd ed., ed. Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadosky, 60-74 (USA: UTP Publishing, 2016), 60-62.

33. The original schema on the section on the laity for *Lumen Gentium* was divided into two for the final form: the "People of God" became chapter two, emphasising the fundamental unity of all the faithful, chapter three was on the "Hierarchy," followed by chapter four on the "Laity." Lakeland, *A Council That Will Never End*, 5.

This hierarchical ecclesiology creates distance from a perspective of the Church as the historical People of God, and prefers instead the mysterious and mystical figure of Mother Church, a defensive and hierarchical Church,[34] and reference to the Church as a society (*LG* nn.8, 14, 20, 40):[35]

> But, the society structured with hierarchical organs and the Mystical Body of Christ, are not to be considered as two realities, nor are the visible assembly and the spiritual community, nor the earthly Church and the Church enriched with heavenly things; rather they form one complex reality which coalesces from a divine and a human element (*LG* n.8).

Lumen Gentium seeks to understand the Church both through the traditional stratification of hierarchy (now a term consistently used only for the episcopacy) and laity, and a new vision of the People of God in history with a common baptismal identity. The document's introduction of the Church as a sacrament of unity, the placing of the chapter "On the People of God" before that on the hierarchy and episcopacy, and the frequent use of the *tria munera Christi*, are strong signs that the Council members - while not obliterating the defensive and hierarchical nature of neo-Scholasticism - believed the Church to be capable of moving into a new age of positive, inclusive, and healthy self-understanding. The *being* of the faithful received positive, though not conclusive, treatment within *Lumen Gentium*,[36] while the Decree on the Laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, remains a different story altogether.

2.1.5 Apostolicam Actuositatem *and Paradigms of the Early Twentieth Century*

While the proponents of neo-Thomism contributed to the Vatican II debate around *Lumen Gentium* (21st November 1964), the later Decree, On the Apostolate of the Laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (18th November 1965),[37] suffered from a severe lack of continuity with the former. *Apostolicam* addresses questions around the lay experience of being Church with the concept of a "vocation to the apostolate." This apostolate is placed firmly within a

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34. "Defend" has two references in *Lumen Gentium*, while "preserve" has nine. "Hierarchy" has eighteen occurrences, seven of which are in the *Notificationes* appendix.

35. The statement that this society "subsists in the Catholic Church" (*LG* n.8) brought, and still brings, challenges for ecumenical thinking and dialogue. See Lakeland, *A Council That Will Never End,* 116, 148, 153.

36. The definition of the laity within *Lumen Gentium* is well-known for being lacklustre and in the negative: "The term laity is here understood to mean all the faithful except those in holy orders and those in the state of religious life specially approved by the Church" (*LG* n.31).

37. Vatican II, *Apostolicam Actuositatem,* Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, *Holy See Press Office,* 18 Nov 1965, accessed 6 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicam-actuositatem_en.html. Hereafter *AA*.

hierarchical understanding of the Church wherein the laity have roles that are subordinate to the clergy. The result is a document that resembles a discourse upon the lay faithful from within the context of the papal encyclicals of the early twentieth century. *Apostolicam's* lack of engagement with the *aggiornamento* and theological currents of the time ultimately consigned it to the academic and ecclesiological bottom drawer.

The Decree, On the Apostolate of the Laity, expresses a clear desire for lay action, with strong encouragement for their support in the form of education and associations. The laity are urged to be zealous and useful members of the apostolate of the Church (*AA* n.2). However, the failure of this document to fully ring true in its intentions lies in how it addresses the laity, and how it treats them in the context of ecclesial relationships.[38] The lay people are talked about - not to - in *Apostolicam*, and a juridical tone is established early:

> …the member who fails to make his proper contribution to the development of the Church must be said to be useful neither to the Church nor to himself (*AA* n.2).[39]

The recognition of the lay sharing in the priestly, prophetic and royal office of Christ follows this statement but remains in its shadow. The writers of this document were concerned with the problems and serious errors of the time: corruption of morals and institutions, and idolatry of temporal things (*AA* nn.6-7). Within this context the relationship between laity and the hierarchy is repeatedly underscored by the need for supervision:

> No less necessary is cooperation among various projects of the apostolate which must be suitably directed by the hierarchy (*AA* n.23).[40]

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38. Lakeland acknowledges this when he puts the entire document aside in his discussion on the treatment of lay people in Vatican II documents, for the lack of vision on who the lay are, rather than what they do. Lakeland, *A Council That Will Never End*, 61. Lakeland makes references to other decrees in this book but never returns to the Decree on the Laity (missing an opportunity for critical engagement). The overall lack of interest in the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity is evidenced by the great paucity of references to it in official Church documents and by ecclesiologists.

39. In this example Flannery's translation softens this sentence by using "unhelpful" instead of "not useful." The Latin original could also be translated as "not of service." All Vatican document quotes in this thesis use the English translations from the Vatican's Holy See Press Office (although it exists not without errors), with consultation to the Latin originals. For Flannery's translation, see: Austin Flannery, ed., *Vatican Council II: The Basic Sixteen Documents*, rev. ed., 403-42 (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Company, 1996), 404-405.

40. This quote again uses the official Vatican translation provided by the Holy See Press Office, as Flannery's translation uses a softer interpretation - "systematise this collaboration" - instead of translating the Latin *ordinanda* as "direct," "regulate," or "set in order."

Relationships with Religious are only briefly mentioned and without genuine recognition of their particular charisms, appearing rather as support staff (see *AA* n.25).

These examples illustrate the style of juridical, clerical and triumphalist ecclesiology that was condemned in the schema by Bishop de Smedt.[41] Avery Dulles highlights the damage that these particular perspectives do when they dominate the institutional understanding of the Church: 1) clericalism reduces the laity to a passive condition; 2) juridicism exaggerates the role of human authority, and the prophetic voice of biblical sources is not heard, or is silenced; 3) obstacles are raised against a creative and fruitful theology; and, 4) exaggerated institutionalism leads to serious theological problems.[42] To a large extent these problems have entered the consciousness of the contemporary Church, which is now becoming aware of the destructive implications of clericalism for the entire People of God.

Apostolicam Actuositatem sought to describe the "nature of the lay apostolate, its character and the various forms it can take; it will state fundamental principles and give pastoral directives for its more effective exercise" (*AA* n.1).[43] However, the positive sentiments and overall hope have not been composed in a mature context for a twenty-first century reader who recognises their own responsibility. *Apostolicam* fails to engage with the very people it purports to be considering: for the faithful, the *who* they are as Church is virtually ignored, and their meaning is reduced to what they *do*, and even that is to some extent decided and regulated for them. History has demonstrated that the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church - rather than the Decree on the Laity - has provided a greater wealth of useful and apt imagery of the Church and its relationships, and has contributed to an ongoing *aggiornamento* and deeper self-appropriation of ecclesial identity.

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41. See fn.12 in this chapter.

42. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 35-36. If Dulles were to revise these points today he may well add another consequence of exaggerated institutionalism to the list: a widespread abuse of power over the vulnerable of the Church.

43. One example is *Apostolicam*'s glaring omission from the 1992 document produced by the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), *Communionis Notio*, as a reflection, and corrective, on the development of communion ecclesiology since Vatican II. The footnotes of *Communionis Notio* indicate a wide use of Council documents, with a significant use of *Lumen Gentium*, but not a single reference to the Decree on the Laity. CDF, *Communionis Notio*, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion, *Holy See Press Office*, 28 May 1992, accessed 21 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_28051992_communionis-notio_en.html. Hereafter *CN*.

2.1.6 Pope Paul VI and Ecclesiam Suam

Pope Paul VI wrote his first encyclical, *Ecclesiam Suam* (On the Church) five weeks prior to the opening of the third session of the Second Vatican Council.[44] It was intended to focus the Council on adopting an open and friendly attitude to the world:

> The aim of this encyclical will be to demonstrate with increasing clarity how vital it is for the world, and how greatly desired by the Catholic Church, that the two should meet together, and get to know and love one another (*ES* n.3).

Pope Paul VI's vision of redemptive co-operating required ecclesial reform, characterised by the "three principle policies" of his papacy: self-awareness, renewal, and dialogue. Each embraced *aggiornamento* as a guiding principle,[45] and all were grounded in the baptismal identity of the People of God (*ES* nn.36, 39) who are guided by the Holy Spirit.[46] The encyclical is dedicated to a dialogical vision of the Church which, along with emphases on maturity and responsibility, paves a path towards synodality.[47]

The first principle outlined by Pope Paul VI was a call for the Church to pursue a *deepening self-knowledge*. The pope insisted that knowledge of the nature of the Church precedes concrete plans of engaging with the world, and thus becomes a form of preparation for mission (*ES* n.18). Self-knowledge involves self-examination: a process that is perfectly congruent with the life of the Church within history (*ES* nn.21-26), capable of progress, and requiring co-operative work across the breadth of the Church's members (*ES* nn.29-30). The progress of deepening of self-knowledge must also be mystical (see *ES* n.9),[48] providing the Church with foundations from which to remedy error and to address confusion about the place of the Church in the world (*ES* nn.26, 42). The hierarchy's role enables the lay faithful

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44. O'Malley notes that *Ecclesiam Suam* seems to be the first encyclical ever written personally by a pope, rather than by those delegated to the task. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 204.

45. "We cannot forget Pope John XXIII's word *aggiornamento* which We have adopted as expressing the aim and object of Our own pontificate" (*ES* n.50).

46. "Spirit" and "spirituality" are used frequently within *Ecclesiam Suam.*

47. The Dogmatic Constitution on the Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, was a key document in demonstrating the shift in theology towards a relational and dialogical understanding (in this case, of revelation and the communication of the Trinity). The drafting of *Dei Verbum* underwent many revisions, finally settling on a dialogical vision of the Church. The text has a strong biblical basis with a clear historical appreciation, as illustrated in the second passage. Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, Dogmatic Constitution on the Divine Revelation, *Holy See Press Office*, 18 Nov 1965, accessed 6 Oct 2020. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html, n.2. Hereafter *DV*. See Gaillardetz, *Teaching with Authority*, 72.

48. Pope Pius XII's *Mystici Corporis Christi* is appreciated in *ES* for its christological focus.

in their own identity and mission.[49] Thus progress is supported by the structure of the Church as a "well-organized, hierarchic and social body" (*ES* n.22) *and* by a healthy inner life.

Maturity in faith is the key to deepening self-knowledge. Pope Paul VI emphasised a stirring-up of desire for a mature and responsible faith, that would come about through a sense or awareness of the Church (*ES* n.38) - a *sensus Ecclesiae*.[50] Awareness and maturity grow together, along with participation in communal life and the Christian function of the *tria munera Christi*:

> It is through faith that we gain this awareness of the mystery of the Church - mature faith, a faith lived out in our lives. Faith such as this gives us a *sensus Ecclesiae*, an awareness of the Church, and this is something with which the genuine Christian should be deeply imbued. He has been raised in the school of the divine word, nourished by the grace of the sacraments and the Paraclete's heavenly inspiration, trained in the practice of the virtues of the Gospel, and influenced by the Church's culture and community life. He has, moreover, the tremendous joy of sharing in the dignity of the royal priesthood granted to the people of God (*ES* n.36).

This vision is the great leveller of the hierarchical divisions of the *ekklēsia*: the commitment to the growth of mature Christians is a task of building responsibility and maturity of all the faithful, essential to which are foundations in the meaning of baptism. The *nature of enquiry* was to be likewise responsible and mature: Pope Paul VI stated explicitly in *Ecclesiam Suam* - before any conciliar document did so - that the teaching of Christ must *necessarily develop throughout history*.[51]

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49. Nevertheless, Pope Paul VI was still of his time and of an understanding that the faithful must be obedient to the hierarchy: "By obedience We mean the observance of canonical regulations and respect for the government of lawful superiors, but an observance and respect readily and serenely given, as is only to be expected from free and loving children" (*ES* n.115, see n.114)

50. Pope Paul VI speaks of the *sensus Ecclesiae* three times (*ES* nn.36-38). Clear in the Latin, it is unfortunately lost twice in the English when translated as "awareness of the Church." *Sensus fidelium* is explicitly used once in *Lumen Gentium*, but *sensus Ecclesiae* seemed to be a particular phrase of Pope Paul VI. Perhaps he wanted to express something in the tradition of *sensus fidelium*, but of his own understanding and contextual to *Ecclesiam Suam*? This is noted because *sensus fidelium* - the sense of the faithful - has a particular tradition in Catholic theology, and its contemporary understanding is being explored alongside synodality. See: Ormond Rush, "Inverting the Pyramid: The *Sensus Fidelium* in a Synodal Church," *Theological Studies* 78 (2) 2017: 299-325. The "sense of" is explored in sec.4.3.3 of this thesis.

51. The pope explicitly taught that the pursuit of truth must be a work of harmony and not division: "The work of the Council… will be brought to a successful conclusion through our readiness to follow His divine inspirations, our eagerness to inquire more fully and more deeply into the genuine teaching of Christ and its legitimate and necessary development in the course of history, and our earnest resolve to make of divine truth an argument for union, understanding, and harmony among men and not a reason for dividing them in sterile discussions and regrettable rivalries" (*ES* n.32).

The second principle of Pope Paul VI was that of a heroic and impatient struggle for *renewal* that arises from the Church's deep roots in the world.[52] The struggle also has a source in the desire of the Church to be whom the Church is meant to be, which is a pilgrimage and a constant striving: "[to] become what Christ intended it to be: one, holy, and entirely dedicated to the pursuit of that perfection to which Christ called it and for which He qualified it" (*ES* n.41). Within this pilgrim and eschatological state the Church shares in both the wealth of the world's cultures and their tidal waves of change and confusion (*ES* n.26). As a guiding principle *aggiornamento* offers a necessary break from rigid thinking, and accepts questioning and testing insights, as a way of promoting development:

> The purpose of this exhortation of Ours is not to lend substance to the belief that perfection consists in rigidly adhering to the methods adopted by the Church in the past and refusing to countenance the practical measures commonly thought to be in accord with the character of our time. These measures can be put to the test (*ES* n.50).[53]

The open and critical stance of *aggiornamento* was to operate alongside *metanoia,* as the process of turning to God (*ES* n.51).[54] The prophetic call to humble *metanoia* was essential to the ongoing reform for the Catholic Church (*ES* n.47), along with a spirit of poverty and the supreme position of charity (*ES* nn.55-56).

Pope Paul VI devoted a significant portion of *Ecclesiam Suam* to his third principle of *dialogue*, which was to directly impact the Council and its documents.[55] Dialogue is necessary as: the "mental attitude which the Catholic Church must adopt regarding the contemporary world" (*ES* n.58), and an "internal drive of charity which seeks expression in

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52. In the original Latin text Pope Paul VI uses *renovationem* ten times, which is variously translated into English as *renewal*, *reform*, *renovation*, or *restoration*.

53. Pope Paul VI gave a practical example of his attitude towards *aggiornamento* and prophetic action (in the sense of challenging "the way things have always been done") in his address at the close of the second period of the Council. Stunning the audience, Pope Paul VI announced that in a month's time he would visit the Holy Land. This was the first notable departure of a pope from the soil of Italy in over five hundred years (except as a prisoner of a foreign power). O'Malley notes how the commentators at the time saw this move as endorsing the Council in both its ecumenical progress - *Unitatis Redintegratio* had just been promulgated - and its spirit of *aggiornamento*. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II,* 198.

54. Metanoia (*μετάνοια*) is a Greek biblical word used to mean to turn to God, and to change one's mind. Rahner and Vorgrimler, eds., *Dictionary of Theology*, s.v. "metanoia." This thesis will engage with the concept of committing to ongoing conversion in chapter three.

55. O'Malley points out how the influence of *ES* "infused" the word dialogue into *Gaudium et Spes* and the revision of *Unitatis Redintegratio*, and ultimately became associated with the "spirit of the Vatican II." O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 204. See: Vatican II, *Unitatis Redintegratio,* Decree on Ecumenism, *Holy See Press Office*, 21 Nov 1964, accessed 6 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19641121_unitatis-redintegratio_en.html. Hereafter *UR*.

the external gift of charity" (*ES* n.64). These two descriptions link dialogue with both the contemporary phenomenon of greater communications technologies, and the ancient virtue of charity, as a sharing in the life of God.[56] Thus dialogue with the modern world is driven by responsibility and love. Responsibility must extend beyond the hierarchical notions of preservation and defence to a missionary sharing of the Church's gifts and graces with the world: "The Church must enter into dialogue with the world in which it lives. It has something to say, a message to give, a communication to make" (*ES* n.65). Eternal and modern, divine and human: dialogue is essential to developing the other principles of deeper self-understanding and renewal.

The characteristics of dialogue are outlined as being intelligible, culturally appropriate, humble and generous (removing any bias of arrogance and self-service), appreciating the dignity of the other and being sensitive towards their qualities, friendliness and pursuit of the common good (*ES* n.81). These characteristics aim to remove the tendency of dialogue to turn to domination or exploitation by the more powerful party (*ES* n.82). Dialogue is to be oriented in Christian service and friendship, so that it may be an effective means for pastoral activity and healthy ecclesial relationships:

> Furthermore, if we want to be men's pastors, fathers and teachers, we must also behave as their brothers. Dialogue thrives on friendship, and most especially on service. All this we must remember and strive to put into practice on the example and precept of Christ (*ES* n.87).

Pope Paul VI consistently held up the example of Christ as the ground and aim of Christian behaviour, and as the ultimate act of communication - a "dialogue of salvation" (*ES* n.72). Through Christ's "conversation" with humanity something of the mystery of the Trinity is revealed (*ES* n.70). Pope John XXIII's vision of a Church looking outward,[57] and Pope Paul VI's call to dialogue - along with the other principles of his papacy - invite all of the faithful to expand the Church's horizon of dialogue. Dialogue with other Christians is to be extended

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56. Charity is described by theologians as a distinctive mode of love that forms communication and communion between God and God's People, as well as between persons:

Aquinas states that: "Turning away from God is cured by charity, not by knowledge alone, and charity joins the soul to God immediately in a bond of spiritual union." Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Pt 22ae, Q. 27, Art. 4.

The Catholic Catechism describes charity as: "the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbour as ourselves for the love of God" (*CCC* n.1822).

57. The Church "must also look at the present times which have introduced new conditions and new forms of life, and have opened new avenues for the Catholic apostolate." John XXIII, *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*, n.12.

to non-Abrahamic religions, and finally to encircle all of humanity, improving the Church's processes of thinking, investigating, self-expression, and wisdom (see *ES* n.83).

The whole Church is called to participate in dialogue, and it is the pope who guarantees the unity that is effected.[58] Within the Council's ecclesiology of relationality, Pope Paul VI saw the role of the papacy as a pastoral office with a primacy of "service, ministration, and love" (*ES* n.110), rather than as a juridical figure who often attains an aura of supremacy and domination. The three principles of Pope Paul VI's papacy - self-awareness, renewal and dialogue - are relational and include the entire *ekklēsia*. These principles are understood within the conciliar context of *ressourcement*, *aggiornamento*, and development. Without development, *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* could be simply seen as correctives to get the Church "back on track," and genuine renewal of the Church's hierarchical vision and neo-Scholastic philosophy could be resisted. Pope Paul VI's support for the role of Christian maturity with an historical consciousness, understanding humanity and the Church as developing over time, contributed substantially towards the Council adopting a relational and dialogical paradigm.

Vatican II was established as a pastoral ecumenical council with a firm focus on renewal. *Aggiornamento* and *ressourcement* provided the means by which the prevailing classical and hierarchical viewpoint was challenged, and through which a new ecclesial paradigm of relationality could emerge. The Council's documents held the two paradigms in tension, with the hierarchical content retaining its place most especially in the sections involving the episcopacy. Using a dynamic and relational paradigm, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* set a benchmark for a new and inclusive standard of language for the documents of the council that were to follow: the entire faithful are known by their baptismal identity, they are to participate fully and actively, and they share in Christ's function of priest, prophet and king. *Lumen Gentium* announced the People of God as responsible for mission and united in dignity and vocation. However, the presence of hierarchical language and meaning in several

58. Pope Francis speaks in a similar way on the guarantee of the pope within synodality during an interview: "A synodal Church means that there is this movement from high to low, low to high. And the same in the dioceses. But there is a Latin phrase, that says that the Churches are always *cum Petro et sub Petro*. Peter is the guarantor of the unity of the Church. He is the guarantor." Emmanuel Van Lierde and Geert De Kerpel, "Revolutie van tederheid bezweert cardiosclerose: Exclusief interview met paus Franciscus," *Tertio*, n.878 (7 Dec 2016): 9.

documents, especially *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, indicates that the work of renewal was not yet fully embraced by the Council's members.

Pope Paul VI promoted principles that were to define a new era in ecclesiology, where the Church is capable of self-critique and growth, renewal, and dialogue. These, along with the essential ecclesial stance of turning to the world, defined the key elements of Vatican II that continued to develop towards synodality. Vatican II initiated a journey of ecclesial renewal: relational and dynamic ecclesiology, and the active participation of all the faithful. The Council was "received" over the next fifty years to the extent that renewal (with a pastoral focus and guided by the conciliar documents) took place. Synodality marks a new era of ecclesial consciousness of the need for renewal.

A key characteristic of ecclesial renewal for the Church in the 1960s was a newly positive outlook to the world and the Church's external relationships. Collaboration was identified as a priority for the episcopacy, leading to the concept of collegiality and the creation of the Synod of Bishops. These topics will be reviewed in section 2.2 in order to continue to build an understanding of the key ecclesiological elements of *participation*, *responsibility*, and *authority*: in particular, their meaning at the time of Vatican II for the hierarchy and the laity, and any dissonance with the insights of the early Church.

2.2 The Church Turns to the World

The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, was one of the four documents approved by the Second Vatican Council on its last working day, 7th December 1965. *Gaudium et Spes* exemplifies the determination of many Council members to break free from the confines of internal self-absorption and to turn the Church to look outwards - inspired by Pope John XXIII's metaphorical throwing open of the windows - and to engage with the world in a meaningful way, primarily through dialogue. This conversion of the Church's vision is the beginning of an expansion of ecclesial meaning, particularly around the concepts of participation, responsibility, and authority, and is relevant to the development of synodality.

The move to a dialogical understanding of the Church was influenced by Pope Paul VI's *Ecclesiam Suam*, and particularly embraced by *Gaudium et Spes*.[59] Placing dialogue as central to the Church's mission and responsibility required an inclusive understanding of the laity with an appreciation of the dynamic leadership of the Spirit. The attributes of dialogue itself were articulated as fundamentally relational, for dialogue was the means by which the Church was to develop an outwards vision, and how the laity and their associations could assume Christian responsibility in the world:[60]

> For today both effective action and the need for dialogue demand joint projects. Moreover, such associations contribute much to the development of a universal outlook - something certainly appropriate for Catholics. They also help to form an awareness of genuine universal solidarity and responsibility (*GS* n.90).

This passage articulates the vision that Vatican II had been gradually turning towards through a perspective that is clearly relational, not hierarchical. There is no evidence of "supervision" or other key words associated with infantilisation of the laity, but instead the language is inclusive, describing a mature and co-operative Catholic faithful who engage with the world in respect and friendship.

Gaudium et Spes employs a greater use of language that is relational, dynamic and inclusive, and less use of language that is clerical and hierarchical, than any other Council document.[61] It is the most expressive in the line of texts that promote a relational and outgoing ecclesial paradigm: *Lumen Gentium* is the Council's ecclesiological document; *Unitatis Redintigratio* and *Nostra Aetate* are novel and powerful declarations of the Church's openness to other Christians and other faiths; and *Ad Gentes* is the Decree on Mission.[62]

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59. *Ecclesiam Suam* is quoted in five of the fourteen Council documents that were promulgated after it: *GEd* once; *CD* 2x; *PO* 2x; *DH* 1x; *GS* 3x.

60. Dialogue will be discussed more fully in chapter three of this thesis.

61. *Gaudium et Spes* is exceptional amongst Council documents for its emphasis on *dialogue*, *community*, *family* and *children*, *common good*, *dignity*, *unity* and *freedom*. There is also a significant move towards using *we* and *us*, instead of constantly differentiating between clergy and non-clergy. This is a new development for papal or conciliar documents: the "we" of *Mystici Corporis Christi*, for example, is a "papal we" and not a "we the Church." Vatican II's first document *Sacrosanctum Concilium* used *we* 11 times and *us* 5 times, while *Ecclesiam Suam* used *we* and *us* in an extraordinary 283 and 85 instances. *GS* and *LG* most faithfully represent the key words and themes of Pope Paul VI's *ES*: all three documents refer to *the faithful* rather than *the laity*.

62. With *LG* and *UR*, *Ad Gentes* makes the most references to baptism, as the fundamental source of ecclesial identity and the foundation of these documents' reflections on ecclesial self-understanding, ecumenical friendship, and healthy mission. Vatican II, *Ad Gentes,* Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church, *Holy See Press Office,* 7 Dec 1965, accessed 6 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_ad-gentes_en.html. Hereafter *AG*.

Gaudium et Spes has a clear commitment to the conciliar themes of renewal and development, within the context of relations both internal and external:

> The Church also realizes that in working out her relationship with the world she always has great need of the ripening which comes with the experience of the centuries. Led by the Holy Spirit, Mother Church unceasingly exhorts her sons 'to purify and renew themselves so that the sign of Christ can shine more brightly on the face of the Church' (*GS* n.43).

Insights into the whole body of the faithful - such as the concepts of baptismal identity and the *tria munera Christi* - were built upon when the Council turned its focus to the world; ecclesial relationships were now being placed in the light of missionary activity such as social co-operation, responsibility, and dialogue. A new-found appreciation of the historicity and development of humanity and Church supported these first steps into an ecclesiology that was relational and dynamic.

2.2.1 Collegiality at Vatican II

The Second Vatican Council's use of a relational paradigm revealed many opportunities for reviewing and renewing the relationships of the Catholic Church. While the roles of the laity and the external relations of the Church were debated, Council members saw an opportunity to review the existing conditions of their own roles and authority in the global Church. The bishops had recognised a need for collegiality - in the form of greater co-operation, communication and sharing of authority and responsibility - before and during the Council. Following Pope John XXIII's announcement of the Council there were a number of archbishops who publicly called for new and improved structures of governance between the pope and the episcopacy. In November 1959 the Archbishop and Apostolic Pro-Nuncio in the United Arab Republic (Egypt), Silvio Oddi, proposed the establishment of a central governing body of the Church. This "consultative body" would be permanent, universal in membership, and unifying in purpose. Archbishop Oddi's statements clearly represented the concerns of many over the concentration of institutional authority and governance within the Roman Curia.[63] In the next month Bernardus Alfrink, Archbishop of Utrecht, released a

63. Archbishop Oddi said: "From many parts of the world there come complaints that the Church does not have a permanent consultative body, apart from the Roman congregations." Synod of Bishops, *General Information on the Synod*, *Holy See Press Office*, last modified 10 Oct 2012, accessed 13 Aug 2020, http://www.vatican.va/news_services/press/documentazione/documents/sinodo/sinodo_documentazione-generale_en.html.

statement that underlined the governance of the universal Church as: a "right exercised by the college of bishops with the pope as its head," and a responsibility that was both individual and worldwide.[64] He continued the push against the grip of power held by the Roman congregations:

> This can be done not only in calling an Ecumenical Council, but also in the creation of new institutions. Perhaps some permanent Council of specialized bishops, chosen from the Church, could be given the charge of a legislative function in union with the Supreme Pontiff and the cardinals of the Roman Curia. The Roman Congregations would then maintain only a consultative and executive power.[65]

Giovanni Cardinal Montini, a close colleague of Pope Pius XII and Archbishop of Milan, the largest diocese in Italy, made reference to an "ongoing collaboration of the episcopate that is not yet in effect, which would remain personal and in union, but given the responsibility of governing the whole Church," during a talk commemorating the death of Pope John XXIII.[66] His focus on the concept of episcopal collaboration continued after his election to the papacy. As Pope Paul VI he continued this topic in addresses given to the Roman Curia (21 September 1963), at the opening of the second session of the Second Vatican Council (29 September 1963) and again at its closing (4 December 1965).

The debates of the Second Vatican Council insisted upon the need for clearer and more effective partnership between the Bishop of Rome and the rest of the episcopal order. The early schema of the ecclesiological document, *Lumen Gentium*, was criticised for continuing the "unassailable position" of the Roman Curia and linking their power too closely with that of the pope.[67] The movement to collegiality that the bishops desired was obstructed by the schema's hierarchical and juridical starting point:

> More pointedly, it took no account of collegiality, and it implied that the rights and privileges the bishops enjoyed for the fulfillment of their office were concessions from the Holy See, not theirs by virtue of their episcopal ordination.[68]

Collegiality was to be achieved through clarification of the identity and authority of the episcopate - the essence of which could not be understood as delegated from the papacy - and

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64. Synod of Bishops, *General Information on the Synod*.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.

67. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 190.

68. Ibid.

implementing institutional change accordingly. Synodality extends this process of self-understanding to the entire People of God; seeking the identity and authority of the *ekklēsia* as grounded in the sacrament of baptism, and pursuing self-appropriation through maturity and responsibility of each in their diversity.

2.2.2 Creating the Synod of Bishops

To achieve a visible and effective form of collegiality the Second Vatican Council planned for the creation of the Synod of Bishops. This was to be a body drawn from the College of Bishops (men ordained with Holy Orders of the Order of Bishops with the pope as their head) who would meet regularly in assembly to debate contemporary issues:[69]

> The Synod of Bishops, representing in some way the entire episcopate of the Catholic Church, expresses in a special manner the spirit of communion uniting the Bishops with the Roman Pontiff and Bishops among themselves. It is the privileged place where the assembly of Bishops is immediately and directly subject to the power of the Roman Pontiff, manifests collegial fraternity and episcopal concern for the good of the whole Church and, under the action of the Holy Spirit, offers genuine counsel on various topics related to the Church.[70]

The Synod was established with a consultative role, meaning that the decrees of its assemblies do not have the legislative power of the ecumenical, plenary and provincial councils of the Church. Pope Paul VI officially established the Synod in his Apostolic Letter, *Apostolica Sollicitudo*, on 15th September 1965, three months before the Council's closure.[71] It details the regulations of the Synod of Bishops, stating clearly its ability to be improved upon, and a desire that it serve the unity and good of the entire Church. The pope states in *Apostolica* that the first general purpose of the Synod of Bishops is: "to promote a closer

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69. Note the naming convention: the Synod is the group who gather, while their meeting is an assembly. The popularly named "Synod on the Family" of 2014-15 was actually two assemblies of the Synod of Bishops: the Third Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, and the Fourteenth Ordinary General Assembly.

70. The *Ordo Synodi Episcoporum* details the norms of the Synod of Bishops. It was first promulgated in 1966 and has since had many revisions. Synod of Bishops, *Ordo Synodi Episcoporum*, *Holy See Press Office*, 8 Dec 1966, accessed 13 Aug 2020, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_20050309_documentation-profile_en.html#C._Ordo_Synodi_Episcoporum,_the_Order_of_the_Synod_of_Bishops.

71. Paul VI, *Apostolica Sollicitudo,* Apostolic Letter Issued *Motu Proprio* Establishing the Synod of Bishops for the Universal Church, *Holy See Press Office*, 15 Sep 1965, accessed 7 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19650915_apostolica-sollicitudo.html. Hereafter *AS*.

union and greater cooperation between the Supreme Pontiff and the bishops of the whole world" (*AS* sec.II, 1a). There was an unspoken intention that creating and regulating the Synod would address the perennial problem of the tension between primacy (the office of the pope), and the College of Bishops, which is always a potential threat to the unity, harmony and well-being of the Church.[72] Consolidating this work, the Council's Decree Concerning the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, *Christus Dominus*, expressed the new understanding of the episcopacy as collegial in nature and function:

> Bishops chosen from various parts of the world, in ways and manners established or to be established by the Roman pontiff, render more effective assistance to the supreme pastor of the Church in a deliberative body which will be called by the proper name of Synod of Bishops.[73]

The conciliar formulations of collegiality did not engage with Pope Paul VI's three principles. While movement had been made towards understanding the entire faithful as being a dialogical Church, and at the humble service of building positive relationships,[74] the episcopacy continued to resist applying *aggiornamento* to themselves. The self-understanding of the episcopacy remained hierarchical, retaining exclusive language and lacking any

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72. The three ecumenical councils held in the last 500 years - Trent, Vatican I and Vatican II - all spent a great deal of time on the issue of papal-episcopal balance of power, and dealt with it in very different ways. The popes during the Council of Trent exerted their power in a monarchical manner, even from afar. Vatican I defined papal infallibility as a dogma in *Pastor Aeternus* (*PA* chap.4). The popes of Vatican II led the movement of *aggiornamento*.

73. Vatican II, *Christus Dominus,* Decree Concerning the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, *Holy See Press Office,* 28 Oct 1965, accessed 6 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_christus-dominus_en.html, n.5. Hereafter *CD*. *Christus Dominus* was the result of a long process of proposals and debates and it continued to be modified after Pope Paul VI's *Apostolica Sollicitudo*. Massimo Faggioli, *A Council for the Global Church: Receiving Vatican II in History* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015), 232-35.

74. "Dialogue thrives on friendship, and most especially on service" (*ES* n.87).

acknowledgment of the variety of relationships that bishops operate within.[75] Collegiality was not understood as involving the gifts or the co-operation of the laity, nor for that matter the priesthood, diaconate, or Religious:

> In these days especially bishops frequently are unable to fulfill their office effectively and fruitfully unless they develop a common effort involving constant growth in harmony and closeness of ties with other bishops... Thus, when the insights of prudence and experience have been shared and views exchanged, there will emerge a holy union of energies in the service of the common good of the churches (*CD* n.37).

Collegiality was intended to serve the hierarchy within the institutional structure of the Church (the bishops), which in turn could benefit the local Churches (dioceses). The establishment of the Synod of Bishops was the first step towards recognising the need for a *universal collegiality*; as greater co-operation and communication among the entire People of God, revived missionary orientation, and the breaking open of authority and responsibility from the stranglehold of hierarchical power. Such a universal collegiality is an aim of a synodal Church and represents the movement from relationality to its fuller realisation in synodality.

The emerging ecclesiological paradigm of relationality saw early fruits in the establishment of the Synod of Bishops, representing a new emphasis on collegiality and more effective responsibility of the episcopacy. Collegiality became the first step towards the development of a visible and practical Church-wide communion, while clear statements on the Church's need to attend to its ecumenical and interfaith relationships continued to widen circles of responsibility, openness, and inclusivity. This was a key contribution to breaking

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75. Subsequent to the *Ordo Synodi Episcoporum* of 1966, the next major document on the episcopacy followed an Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in 2001, on the topic of the mission of the office of bishop. *Pastores Gregis* was the post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of Pope John Paul II for that assembly. *Pastores Gregis* articulates for the first time the "ontological and functional differentiation" of the bishop: "the ontological and functional differentiation that sets the Bishop before the other faithful based on his reception of the fullness of the Sacrament of Orders, is a manner of being for the other members of faithful which in no ways removes him from being with them." John Paul II, *Pastores Gregis,* Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Bishop, *Holy See Press Office*, 16 Oct 2003, accessed 7 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_20031016_pastores-gregis.html, n.44. Hereafter *PG*. The document heavily emphasises a bishop's identity as "priest, prophet, king," while noting only once the participation of the laity in the *tria munera Christi* (*PG* n.44).

Pope Francis created the next major development for the Synod of Bishops with *Episcopalis Communio* in 2018, which brought in regulations that abrogated various sections of these previous documents and canon law. Francis, *Episcopalis Communio,* Apostolic Constitution on the Synod of Bishops, *Holy See Press Office,* 15 Sep 2018, accessed 7 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_constitutions/documents/papa-francesco_costituzione-ap_20180915_episcopalis-communio.html. Hereafter *EC*.

open ecclesial self-understanding, and moving towards holistic meaning for the participation, responsibility, and authority of the *ekklēsia*. The renewal of the episcopacy by Vatican II was severely limited because collegiality was not guided by the *aggiornamento* of the Council, but rather it remained rooted in the hierarchical paradigm. Nevertheless, in the new epoch that had been heralded by the Council the Catholic Church's understanding of communion and diversity was to be broken open by the People of God.

2.3 Post-Vatican II: New Voices and Old Concerns

The hierarchical paradigm was no longer suitable for defining the identity and nature of the Catholic Church in the context of the social, cultural and political movements of the 1960s and 70s. The voices of the oppressed - women, people of colour and from indigenous populations - were heard in the liberation movements of social protest and progress that rose up in those decades. This milieu provoked and promoted new movements and new voices, with the Catholic Church and wider Christianity sometimes deeply involved. Leaving behind juridical and defensive theology, many theologians instead drew from the relational and dynamic perspective of Vatican II to develop foundations in ecclesiology that could engage with these movements. The *aggiornamento* and *ressourcement* of Vatican II provided new language and imagery for the development of a theology of the laity, bringing a flourishing of lay ministries. Internally, the Catholic Church found progress and challenge through the implementation of several significant changes: the sacred liturgy became available in the vernacular through the *novus ordo*;[76] a baptismal program for adult catechumen was re-established;[77] new forms of episcopal collegiality were developed; and Religious Orders were called to refocus upon their particular founders and charisms.[78] Reclaiming the identity and

76. Promulgated by Pope Paul VI in the 1969 edition of the Roman Missal, the *novus ordo* ("new order") became the new "Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite Mass." It succeeded the Latin Tridentine Mass which had been used since 1570.

77. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* stipulated the restoration of the ancient order of the Catechumenate for adults (*SC* n.64), resulting in the creation of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA). The first edition of the RCIA liturgy was published in 1972 in Latin: *Rituale Romanum, Ordo Initiationis Christianae Adultorum*, *Internet Archive*, 1972, accessed 4 Jun 2020, https://archive.org/details/OICA1972.

78. See Maryanne Confoy's analysis of the three Vatican II documents pertinent to Religious men and women, and priests: Maryanne Confoy, *Religious Life and Priesthood:* Perfectae Caritatis, Optatam Totius, Presbyterorum Ordinis (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2008).

mission of the faithful was a key movement of the late twentieth century, challenging defensive and hierarchical forms of ecclesiology, and progressing towards a more holistic and inclusive self-understanding of being Church. Nevertheless, an entrenched hierarchical paradigm of the identity and function of the episcopacy remained.

The tension between the two theological perspectives resulted in concerns and correctives. The following section introduces some of the key post-Vatican II movements, with a focus upon the rise of theology of the laity, and the corrective responses led by Cardinal Ratzinger and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith under the papacy of Pope John Paul II.

2.3.1 New Perspectives on Being Church

The development of communion theology, along with new paradigms and a commitment to historical context have contributed to the Catholic Church being open to external relationships since Vatican II. Concurrently, those voices internal to the Church and not previously heard, especially in the field of ecclesiology, began to emerge. The experience of being a more "global Church" at Vatican II encouraged Latin American theologians to receive its teachings in the light of the powerful opening sentence of *Gaudium et Spes*.[79] Key Catholic theologians of the liberation movement, such as Gustavo Gutiérrez, Jon Sobrino, and Leonardo Boff, developed their ecclesiology through an interpretation of the council that focused on the poor and persecuted, and was socially and historically contextualised. Latin American Catholics recognised the need for a socially and politically responsible theology based on an ecclesiology of the People of God and the biblical theology of the history of salvation.[80] Massimo Faggioli notes that after the first period of liberation theology from 1968 to 1975, there appeared links between the work of Latin American theologians and those in other forms of liberation, such as "black theology" and "feminist theology."[81] Feminist theology rose after Vatican II in the early 70s, with salient women in North America including Anne Carr, Elizabeth Johnson, and Romanian-American Elisabeth Schüssler

79. "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ" (*GS* n.1).

80. Faggioli, *Vatican II*, 53.

81. Ibid., 55-56.

Fiorenza. Black theology likewise emerged from the USA, as Christianity was challenged to liberate people of colour from multiple forms of political, social, economic, and religious subjugation.[82] The black theology of Africa, distinguished from African theology, was influential in resistance to apartheid and other key projects, such as the Black Theology Project, "Black Consciousness," and the "Black Renaissance Convention," led by a Catholic priest Dr Smangaliso Mkhatshwa.[83] Further voices include those of African-American women who developed "womanist" theology,[84] and theologians who recognised the place of humanity within ecosystems.[85] The voices and insights of the lay people are finding a place within contemporary theology and have a particular contribution towards the development of a synodal Catholic Church.

2.3.2 Contemporary Communion Ecclesiology: From the Lay Perspective

Strong inroads have been made into determining the weaknesses and biases inherent in the ecclesiology of the early twentieth century since the Second Vatican Council through the raising of new voices and attention given to new perspectives. There is much to be explored around the ecclesiological language and understanding of the laity within history, but pertinent to this thesis is how ecclesiology was being prepared to be broken open to a dynamic understanding of relationships, both internal and external, and for the future development of synodality. Vatican II established strong foundations through understanding the Church as the People of God, a community with common baptismal identity out of which all are called to mission. This was a vision for the whole Church - the *laos*[86] - and yet

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82. Reflecting upon the influence of black theology upon Catholic ecclesiology, Cyprian Davis describes the "Fourth Black Lay Congress," which met in Chicago in 1893. One Congress report discussed the results of a ground-breaking questionnaire sent to the bishops of the USA on the topic of racist practices and discrimination. Cyprian Davis, "Roman Catholic Ecclesiology," in Hopkins and Antonio, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Black Theology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 199-200.

83. Mokgethi Motlhabi, "The History of Black Theology in South Africa," in Hopkins and Antonio, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Black Theology*, 231–233. See also: Steve Biko, "Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity," in *Challenge of Black Theology*, ed. Basil Moore, 36-47 (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1974).

84. See M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010).

85. Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* has given great impetus to this movement. Francis, *Laudato Si'*, Encyclical Letter On Care for our Common Home, *Holy See Press Office,* 24 May 2015, accessed on 7 May 2020, http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html. Hereafter *LS*.

86. "*Laos*" (Greek λαός) is the root of the word *laity*, and means literally "a people." In the New Testament *laos* is used characteristically of God's chosen people: first the believing Jews and then the Christians. *Strong's Concordance*, s.v. "*laos*."

separation of the episcopacy was maintained. This chapter has illustrated how the council failed to take up the opportunity to speak of the Church as a whole, instead holding several paradigms in tension. Consequently, the pressure of renewal created a trajectory for a theology of the laity, while the theology of the episcopacy remained static and separate.

Several bishops and theologians of Vatican II continued post-Council to engage with the task of developing a theology of the laity, casting aside the "docile laity" of the early twentieth century for a radical renewal.[87] Insisting that the work of the Council was incomplete, Congar declared in 1988 that: "today it is the case… that the clergy need to be defined in relation to the laity."[88] This radical reorientation of ecclesiological thinking - although not universally accepted by any means - is a consequence of taking seriously within theology the baptismal identity of the entire faithful. To do so successfully would require the theology of the episcopacy to be drawn into the work of renewal through relational and dynamic understanding of the entire Church; something that has been resisted for over fifty years. This would address one of the key contemporary challenges of the Church, which is to recognise and replace the dysfunctional structures that infantilise the laity.[89] These structures are present and active today as a direct consequence of ecclesiology that has not yet been renewed across the full width and breadth of the *ekklēsia*, but still retains elements of a hierarchical paradigm. The dissonance between the council's desire for a holistic, relational and dynamic ecclesiology for the whole Church, and the reality whereby a theology of the laity morphed away from a static hierarchy, created a number of shockwaves for the People of God.[90]

The post-council trajectory of ecclesiology was marked by a claiming of a mature Christian identity by the laity, built upon the theological foundations of the People of God

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87. See sec.1.3.3 for Pope Pius X's description of the perfection of the laity as obedience and docility. Challenging this by developing a theology of the laity were Cardinal Leo Jozef Suenens and Dominican theologian Yves Congar. Congar was highly influential both during and after the Council, with Faggioli describing him as "*the* most important theologian of the council." Faggioli, *Vatican II*, 78, see 22. Congar was a key theologian within the *nouvelle théologie* movement and was responsible for promoting Catholic theological engagement in ecumenism and the role of the laity. For Congar's origins with his mentor Chenu, see: Janette Gray, "Marie-Dominique Chenu and Le Saulchoir: A Stream of Catholic Renewal," in Flynn and Murray, 205-218.

88. Bernard Lauret, ed., *Fifty Years of Catholic Theology: Conversations with Yves Congar* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1988), 65.

89. See fn.41 in chap.1 on infantilisation.

90. The challenges that have emerged for the contemporary Catholic Church are analysed in chapter five.

and the Church as communion.[91] Communion ecclesiology, developed from the perspective of the faithful incorporates the experiences, perspectives and questions of those once marginalised by the *societas perfecta*.[92] Just as the term "hierarchy" was brought into common usage by Vatican II, the term "laity" was formed out of the desire to define the majority of Catholics who are not clerics:

> By divine institution, there are among the Christian faithful in the Church sacred ministers who in law are also called clerics; the other members of the Christian faithful are called lay persons (*CIC* c.207).[93]

The contribution by the lay faithful to ecclesiological development is a practical reality in many (Western) parishes: the laity are recognising their baptismal identity as "priest, prophet and king" and taking active roles within the Church in many areas.[94] The boom of Lay Ecclesial Ministers (LEMs) in the USA and the increased participation of the lay faithful in ministry, is an expression of an assumption of responsibility and ownership in ecclesial

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91. Lakeland suggests that a "whole-body ecclesiology" involving an inductive approach will move the Church towards a reception (or self-appropriation) of maturity, communion, and mission. Lakeland, "Maturity and the Lay Vocation," 254-58. Action by the official Church in Rome included establishing the Pontifical Council for the Laity quickly after Vatican II in 1967; on 1 September 2016 it was replaced by the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life: www.laityfamilylife.va.

92. Lakeland describes this as an ecclesiology that: "emerges from the consciousness of the believing community." Lakeland, "Maturity and the Lay Vocation," 242. His claim for the Catholic Church of the USA resonates throughout the Western world: "the emergence of an educated lay Catholic community providentially coincides with the appearance of challenges to the survival of our church." Ibid.

93. Canon law details the "Obligations and Rights" of all the Christian Faithful (*CIC* cc.208-23), and of the laity in particular (cc.224-31). These are followed by the significantly longer section on "Sacred Ministers or Clerics" (cc.232-93). See also fn.42 in chap.1 of this thesis.

94. Zeni Fox presents an outline of lay ministry in the USA, describing the roles, functions and demographic data. The basic attitudes and issues towards lay ministry are very similar to those in Australia. Zeni Fox, *New Ecclesial Ministry: Lay Professionals Serving the Church*, rev. ed. (Franklin, WI: Sheed & Ward, 2002), 4-23. See also Dolores Leckey, who surveyed the growth of the laity in the USA since Vatican II in the light of *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, in one of the few books to engage with this conciliar document. The growth in the USA is mirrored to some extent in Australia, and has brought forth a need for the Church to recognise, articulate and nourish the mature identity of all members. Dolores R. Leckey, *The Laity and Christian Education:* Apostolicam Actuositatem, Gravissimum Educationis, vol. 3, *Rediscovering Vatican II* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2006), 37-85. See the chapter on "Implementation."

Arguably the Catholic Church in Latin America is far ahead of Western Catholics with regard to planning for, and engaging with, evangelisation in the modern world. See: Conselho Episcopal Latino-Americano (CELAM), *Documento Conclusivo: Aparecida*, *CELAM website*, Jul 2007, accessed 14 Aug 2020, https://www.celam.org/conferencias_aparecida.php.

matters.[95] The work of LEMs sprang up from the grassroots of the Church; unlike the permanent diaconate and the apostolates encouraged in *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the explosion of LEMs did not come from delegation of responsibility from Rome or the bishops, but from the very consciousness of the faithful. Zeni Fox observes:

> This engagement in ministry indicates the consciousness of men and women of their responsibility for the work of the church. It flows from their consciousness of being church, a fruit of Vatican II.[96]

The origins of this flowering of ministry lie in the desire of many in the Church to be more fully responsible and authentic Christians in today's society; to serve others out of their love for God and each other as fruit of the expression of Christian identity, with commitment to co-responsibility, and as an actualisation of their baptism into mission and ministry.

In the contemporary era of scandal the laity are asking new questions about Church and identity, about the purpose of roles and authority in an institute where both have been terribly abused, and the possibility of real co-responsibility as a mature Church.[97] Communion ecclesiology provides a model that can be built upon for foundations that respect the perspective of the laity, and their search for self-understanding and self-appropriation as Church. However, key to developing an inclusive, dynamic and relational ecclesiology is that the focus remains not on introspection, but on looking outwards towards the world.[98] Concomitant with an outwards perspective is the need to consider all of the faithful primarily as together, not as separated clergy and laity. This principle enables a vision of co-responsibility in a Church of mature and faithful people that can then inform discussion on roles. Together, mature consciousness and communion form the foundation for communities of transformation, as Peter Price describes:

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95. Zeni Fox, "Snapshots of Laity in Mission: Consciousness of Responsibility for Ministry and Identity," in Muldoon, *Catholic Identity*, 197. In 2000 the number of LEMs on parish staff lists in the USA surpassed the number of priests in ministry. Within Australia, the National Centre for Pastoral Research (NCPR), an agency of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC), conducts research into Church life: https://ncpr.catholic.org.au. The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne's (CAM) Office for Evangelisation formed a Secretariat for Lay Ecclesial Ministry to administer the large number of local lay ministers, which include pastoral associates and chaplains: https://www.cam.org.au/evangelisation/Programs/Lay-Ecclesial-Ministry, accessed 20 Oct 2020.

96. Fox, "Snapshots of Laity in Mission," 198.

97. For example, the Plenary Council for the Catholic Church in Australia (2021-2022) has an agenda based on six themes that were drawn out of a national process of discernment. See https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/themes/about-the-themes/.

98. As Paul Philibert states: "the frontiers of the church's mission are the actions of the faithful as witnesses to their eucharistic life." Paul J. Philibert, *The Priesthood of the Faithful: Key to a Living Church* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005), 65.

> First, full participation in the decisions that concern or affect us, as the sociological touchstone of fullness, consciousness and active status in the ecclesial communion; and, second, with this communion as a base, complete awareness of and commitment to our respective roles in our transformative mission to the world in which we are pilgrims.[99]

Building up communities of faith is integral to mission, which is care and action for the flourishing of both the Church and the world.[100] The hope for a Church that co-operates openly with the Spirit in human flourishing, and seeks as a community self-appropriation and self-giving, lies in the tasks of developing a more integral ecclesiology and its effective communication to, and reception by, the faithful. Theological anthropology that recognises the human person as made for communion and community[101] - with the insights of the theologies of baptism, transformation and community - informs communion ecclesiology. Together they form a trajectory of the development of strong foundations for an ecclesiology of synodality, which embraces the reality and experience of the entire People of God, and seeks their maturity and co-responsibility.

2.3.3 Concerns and Correctives

Following the Second Vatican Council, significant engagement was made with communion ecclesiology as a means to perceive the Church as relational and to inform a theology of the laity.[102] Nevertheless, communion ecclesiology did not progress without concerns and correctives. Past ecclesiologies, in the form of the juridical and institutional neo-Scholastic model of Church as *societas perfecta*, and the early twentieth-century rise of the "Mystical Body," remain in official circles and are exposed in such documents as the 1985 Final Report for the Second Extraordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, and the 1992 letter of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Communionis Notio*. These two documents were considered to be milestones in the pontificate of Pope John Paul II, who worked to shape interpretation of Vatican II towards the direction he favoured, which is

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99. Peter Price, "The Diaspora Church: Laity & 'Laicity' in the Post-Vatican II Era," *Pacifica: Australasian Theological Studies* 26, no. 2 (2013): 193.

100. See: Lakeland, *A Council That Will Never End*, 56.

101. See: Gregory Brett, *The Theological Notion of the Human Person* (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 2013).

102. The emergence of communion ecclesiology at Vatican II has its roots in the theology of the Reformation era. Joseph A. Komonchak, "Concepts of Communion, Past and Present," *Cristianesimo nella Storia* 16 (1995): 321-25.

described by Faggioli as: "a clear development in the issues *ad extra* (social teaching, ecumenism, interreligious dialogue) and a more conservative approach to the issues *ad intra*."[103] Pope John Paul II's long pontificate (1978-2005) ensured that the interpretation of communion supported under his leadership would impact the direction of ecclesiology for considerable time.

In 1985 the Synod of Bishops gathered to discuss the "celebration, verification and promotion of Vatican Council II" upon its twentieth anniversary, with a particular focus on practical matters.[104] In its *relatio finale* (final report), the assembly proposed that pastoral programs be developed with the aim of a deeper knowledge and reception of the Council. This took a hierarchical viewpoint:

> The conciliar doctrine must be proposed in a suitable and continued way by means of conferences and courses in the permanent formation of priests and seminarians, in the formation of men and women religious, and also in the catechesis of adults.[105]

Priests, seminarians and Religious are to engage with Vatican II through various methods of formation, while the laity remain recipients of catechesis, a one-way path of information in the condescending style that Lakeland calls "infantiliz[ation] by oppressive ecclesial structures."[106] The debates and documents of this synod utilised a particular interpretation of Vatican II by Pope John Paul II, with the concept of the Church as the People of God losing momentum and *ad intra* issues receiving more conservative responses.[107] Leadership of this response, in association with the pope, was by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who was president/

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103. Faggioli, *Vatican II*, 86. Faggioli also points to the ambiguity present in the 1983 Code of Canon Law, which was produced during this papacy and frequently holds in tension the two ecclesiological perspectives of *societas perfecta* and relational/communion.

104. Synod of Bishops, *The Church, in the Word of God, Celebrates the Mysteries of Christ for the Salvation of the World*, Final Report of the Second Extraordinary General Assembly, *Eternal Word Television Network*, 1985, accessed 15 Aug 2020, https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/final-report-of-the-1985-extraordinary-synod-2561, chap.I, n.2. Hereafter *relatio finale* (1985).

The General Secretariat for the Synod of Bishops has recently created a website although not all documents are currently available: http://www.synod.va/.

105. *Relatio finale* (1985), chap.I, n.6.

106. Lakeland, "Maturity and the Lay Vocation," 242. This unbalanced approach also encompasses formation, renewal, vocations and mission in the 1997 document guiding diocesan synods: "As all community and missionary renewal is necessarily dependant on the holiness of God's ministers, it is appropriate that such should be concerned with the continued betterment of clerical life, the formation of the clergy and the promotion of vocations to the priesthood and to the religious life." Congregation for Bishops and Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, *Instruction on Diocesan Synods*, *Holy See Press Office,* 1997, accessed 21 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cbishops/documents/rc_con_cbishops_doc_20041118_diocesan-synods-1997_en.html, sec.I, n.3.

107. Faggioli calls this response an "institutional reception of Vatican II." Faggioli, *Vatican II*, 86-87.

prefect of three very powerful and influential institutions of the Roman Curia between 1981 and 2005: the International Theological Commission (ITC); the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF); and the Pontifical Biblical Commission.

The 1985 assembly's *relatio finale* positioned "People of God" and "Mystery" as competitive terms, through a reduction of the Church as the People of God (particularly apparent when compared with the Vatican II shift towards this paradigm) and a preference for ecclesial language of "Mystery."[108] Ostensibly the purpose was to reclaim an understanding of communion as seen through the "Mystery of Christ,"[109] but it also worked to divert attention from questions raised around power, authority, and structural change.[110] This document refused to engage with Vatican II's *aggiornamento* or to apply any subsequent ecclesiological renewal, choosing instead to address *ad intra* relationships in the defensive and stratifying approach of the older hierarchical paradigm.

The CDF continued the work of highlighting concerns and correctives around a perceived imbalance between the historical People of God and the Church as Mystery and Sacrament, in their 1992 document *Communionis Notio*. Intended to present concerns and corrections on the concept of *koinōnia* (communion or fellowship), the document is addressed exclusively to bishops and the ecclesiological perspective is firmly that of the hierarchy. The document maintains a clear perception of the Church as mystery (mentioned thirteen times) and sacrament (seven times), and ties these to the visible institutional and hierarchical form of the Church, eschewing a primary focus on baptism and avoiding an interpretation of communion as fundamentally the community of the People of God.

Communionis Notio repeatedly emphasises that the roots of unity, communion, and even ecclesial identity, lie in both the Eucharist and the Episcopate:

> Unity, or communion, between the particular Churches in the universal Church, is rooted not only in the same faith and in the common Baptism, but *above all in the Eucharist and in the*

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108. Joseph A. Komonchak, "Horizons A Pastoral Survey: The Synod of 1985 and the Notion of the Church," *Chicago Studies* 26/3 (Nov 1987): 331. Komonchak reveals the tendency of the synod to emphasise the misuses of the notion of the People of God, in order to "devalue its currency."

109. *Relatio finale* (1985), chap.II, part A, n.3. The assembly expressed concern that a "unilateral presentation of the Church as a purely institutional structure devoid of her Mystery has been made," because of a partial reading of the Council. Ibid., chap.I, n.4.

110. Komonchak notes how these issues were raised in the discussions of the Synod but not represented in the final document. Instead, an imbalance towards the middle-European and German members' reading of postconciliar developments resulted, with preference for the views of Cardinals Meisner, Hoeffner and Ratzinger. Komonchak, "The Synod of 1985," 333.

> *Episcopate* … In fact, *the unity of the Church is also rooted in the unity of the Episcopate* (*CN* nn.11, 12).
>
> For this reason too, the existence of the Petrine ministry, which is a *foundation of the unity of the Episcopate and of the universal Church*, bears a profound correspondence to the eucharistic character of the Church (*CN* n.11).
>
> This unity of the Episcopate is perpetuated through the centuries by means of the apostolic succession, and is also the *foundation of the identity of the Church of every age* with the Church built by Christ upon Peter and upon the other Apostles (*CN* n.12).
>
> The Bishop is a visible source and *foundation of the unity* of the particular Church entrusted to his pastoral ministry (*CN* n.13).[111]

This perspective, while not ignoring the unity that is brought about through baptism and the Holy Spirit, works to subsume it within a hierarchical understanding of the foundations of Church, unity and communion.

The nature of the Church as communion is described by *Communionis Notio* as both visible and invisible, in a form that harkens back to Pope Pius XII's *Mystici Corporis Christi*. The document does not describe the visible Church as the People of God, baptismal in character and priestly, prophetic and royal in function. Instead it is perceived as essentially Apostolic and sacramental, and therefore in the hierarchical order (*CN* n.4). The text maintains a heavy focus on the episcopacy, who are explicitly mentioned twenty-five times, while the faithful are mentioned infrequently (six times) and baptism only five times.[112] There are also ecumenical implications for this document if its particular interpretation of communion is used to judge the "imperfection" of the unity of Christian Churches which do not lie in the communion of a Catholic bishop (*CN* n.17, see also n.14). The overall approach of the CDF and leadership under Pope John Paul II towards communion ecclesiology could be seen as an attempt to draw the key ecclesial developments of Vatican II back into the fold of early twentieth century hierarchical ecclesiology.

This section has investigated how the post-Vatican II Catholic Church experienced both flourishing and constriction in living its reality in the world, and in its self-reflection

111. All italics are added.

112. The word "church" is used 168 times and usually in the context of the episcopacy, leaving language and nouns for non-bishops in the minority: faithful 6 times, priest 0x, pastor 1x, Religious 0x, People of God 2x, and Body of Christ 5x.

through ecclesiology. The global movements of liberation contributed to a raising of previously unheard voices, which challenged many aspects of foundations in theology and ecclesial praxis. The development of communion ecclesiology and the retrieval of an historical understanding of the Church as the People of God resulted in a great deal of theological attention given to the laity. However, within the official and most powerful institutions of the papacy, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and the Synod of Bishops, a hierarchical ecclesial perspective continued to dominate. These bodies promoted concepts and models of Church, and styles of language and thinking, that conflicted with emerging pathways of renewal. This thesis section has clarified that the hierarchical paradigm no longer served the Church in its modern context. Despite the imbalance in its paradigm, ecclesiology included the voices, questions, and new perspectives raised in the late twentieth century and continued to develop a relational self-understanding using the concept of communion and with roots in the *aggiornamento* and *ressourcement* of Vatican II. Ecclesiology was being broken open to the vision of, and contributions by, a co-responsible, collaborative and mature Catholic Church; a sound preparation for synodality. The next section has a focus on selected work of Pope John Paul II, in order to more clearly perceive the substantial development of foundational ecclesiology post-Vatican II in the theology of the laity.

2.4 Pope John Paul II, the Reception of Vatican II and Lay Participation

Pope John Paul II made a significant contribution to the development of an ecclesiology of the laity in his post-synodal apostolic exhortation, *Christifideles Laici*. His long papacy of twenty-six years followed Pope Paul VI (and the brief papacy of Pope John Paul I, thirty-three days), and provides a mid-way point between Vatican II and the contemporary era from which to examine the progress of renewal. The pope provided a substantially positive and constructive exploration of lay baptismal identity, vocation and mission in *Christifideles*. In this document he also insisted on the participation of the laity in the local and regional synods and councils of the Church. *Christifideles Laici* is a papal text written in response to an assembly of the Synod of Bishops, a body which was a concrete expression of the episcopal collegiality initiated by Vatican II. Along with the regional conferences of bishops, the Synod of Bishops was responsible for the reception of the Council, its interpretation, and its promotion throughout the local Churches. This important role will be briefly discussed to lay the groundwork for appreciating and critiquing *Christifideles* in both its context and content.

2.4.1 Promoting the Reception of Vatican II Through Synods and Councils

Collegiality amongst bishops was intended to serve the good of the local churches (dioceses) through the institutional bodies of episcopal conferences and the newly established Synod of Bishops.[113] These formal gatherings of bishops had two important and traditional functions relating to ecumenical councils: to interpret the documents and "spirit" of the

113. Episcopal conferences are a co-operative group of bishops within a large geographical area. Already operating successfully in some parts of the world they were formalised by Pope Paul VI in 1966 with *Ecclesiae Sanctae.* Paul VI, *Ecclesiae Sanctae,* Apostolic Letter Issued *Motu Proprio*, *Holy See Press Office*, 6 Aug 1966, accessed 7 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19660806_ecclesiae-sanctae.html. This apostolic letter was the implementation of the Vatican II decrees: *Christus Dominus*, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, *Perfectae Caritatis* and *Ad Gentes.* The operation, authority, and responsibilities of episcopal conferences are currently governed by the 1983 Code of Canon Law, *CIC* cc.447-59. Canon 447 describes an episcopal conference: "A conference of bishops, a permanent institution, is a group of bishops of some nation or certain territory who jointly exercise certain pastoral functions for the Christian faithful of their territory in order to promote the greater good which the Church offers to humanity, especially through forms and programs of the apostolate fittingly adapted to the circumstances of time and place, according to the norm of law."

The key distinctions between the two collegial bodies is that the members of the Synod of Bishops are representative of the bishops of the universal Church who gather when called by the pope; while the episcopal conferences are permanent institutions whose members are all of the bishops within that territory.

council, and to promote and facilitate the reception of these throughout the Church.[114] The Synod of Bishops undertook the work of interpreting Vatican II in their first two assemblies. The First Ordinary General Assembly (29th September - 29th October 1967) gathered 197 bishops to discuss the topic set by Pope Paul VI: "The Preservation and Strengthening of the Catholic Faith, its Integrity, its Force, its Development and its Doctrinal and Historical Coherence." There were several significant outcomes for ecclesiology, including: a recommendation to establish an international commission of theologians to assist the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith;[115] to further discuss approaches to theological research; and to revise the 1917 Code of Canon Law.[116] The liturgical reforms of Vatican II were discussed, as well as proposals for greater responsibility of the episcopal conferences around renewal of seminaries and priestly formation. The debates of the first assembly were ambitious and wide in scope for such an early engagement with the interpretation of the Council. It is unsurprising that it was followed two years later by an Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops (11-28 October 1969), on the topic of: "the Co-operation between the Holy See and Episcopal Conferences." The ancient contests of papal-episcopal - and now papal-conference - power were under debate in a new, collegial environment. The initial interpretations of Vatican II were unfolding alongside, and within, the post-conciliar cultivation of collegiality.

The second function of promoting and facilitating the reception of Vatican II was the responsibility of the episcopal conferences. Conferences hold the ability to conduct meetings at the level of regional Church (the level below ecumenical councils) with legislative power: plenary or particular councils. Members of the conferences - the local bishops - may call diocesan synods and determine the establishment of parish pastoral councils within their diocese.[117] Episcopal conferences and the meetings they call have an important responsibility within the life of the Church:

> From the very first centuries of the Church bishops, as rulers of individual churches, were deeply moved by the communion of

114. Faggoli states: "As at the Council of Trent four centuries before, the first reformers were the bishops of Vatican II, the real driving force of the council." Faggioli, *Vatican II*, 21.

115. Subsequently in 1969 Pope Paul VI established the ITC as a commission of the Roman Curia: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_index.htm.

116. This work was begun by Pope Paul VI and completed by Pope John Paul II, who promulgated the Revised Code of Canon Law in 1983.

117. See sec.2.5.1 of this thesis.

> fraternal charity and zeal for the universal mission entrusted to the Apostles. And so they pooled their abilities and their wills for the common good and for the welfare of the individual churches. Thus came into being synods, provincial councils and plenary councils in which bishops established for various churches the way to be followed in teaching the truths of faith and ordering ecclesiastical discipline (*CD* n.36).

In *Christus Dominus* the Second Vatican Council insisted on the reinvigoration of the ancient practice of synods and councils as a form and function of co-operation and communication among the leaders of the Church (*CD* n.36).

Just like Trent and the ecumenical councils that preceded it, Vatican II needed interpretation, reception and dissemination by the bishops of the Church. The council was followed by a significant number of diocesan and national synods in Europe, and continental assemblies of bishops.[118] After the initial flurry of synods in Europe dissipated, the structures of collegiality still remained as potential sources of renewal through their work of ongoing interpretation of ecclesial teaching in the contemporary context, and engagement and reception by the regional and local Churches.[119] Collegial structures and co-operation provided foundation that had room to expand into synodal structures. The full implementation of synodality, however, would also require ecclesiology to develop foundations that incorporated the collaboration and co-responsibility of the entire People of God. The first significant move towards this by a pope was Pope John Paul II in *Christifideles Laici*.

2.4.2 The Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the Laity and Christifideles Laici

Twenty years after the conclusion of Vatican II Pope John Paul II turned the focus of the Church onto the laity. The Synod of Bishops met in their seventh Ordinary General Assembly (1-10 October 1987) on the topic: “the Vocation and Mission of the Lay Faithful in

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118. Faggioli describes as a “fruitful season” the ecumenical dialogues held shortly after the Council. Faggioli, *Vatican II*, 8. Bishops’ conferences met in: Austria 1968-71; Netherlands 1970; and Germany 1972-75. The Conference of Latin American Bishops (CELAM) convened for the second time in Medellin, 1968. It was a remarkable event, with a general theme of: “the Church in the Present Transformation of Latin America in the Light of the Council.”

119. The episcopal conferences of Asia were very active in the decades following Vatican II, although they received little attention from Europe. The Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences (FABC) united many episcopal conferences with aims of fostering collaboration *ad intra* and *ad extra*, promoting good practice and communications, and enabling research for the benefit of the Church and the wider peoples of Asia. The depth of research papers and the orientation towards communications of the FABC are a good example for other conferences. FABC website, accessed 15 Oct 2020, http://www.fabc.org/about.html.

the Church and in the World,"[120] while the post-synodal apostolic exhortation, *Christifideles Laici*, was written and promulgated by the pope in the following year. *Christifideles* illustrates Pope John Paul II's attempts to explore the relational vision of the Church in *Lumen Gentium* with particular regard to the laity in the context of the late 1980s.[121] The elements of this document pertinent to this thesis section are its strong promotion of ecclesial meetings (such as diocesan synods, and the wider plenary and provincial councils), and the vision of lay people as active and responsible within these.

The Synod on the Laity and *Christifideles Laici* seem to defy their context. They are situated in the middle of what have previously been described as two remnants of the juridical and hierarchical neo-Scholastic model of Church: the Final Report for the Second Extraordinary Synod of Bishops (1985), and the letter of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Communionis Notio* (1992). Any offical document of the Catholic Church (or indeed any historical artefact) must be appreciated, appropriated and critiqued within its historical context, as this thesis intends to demonstrate through its methodology. As such, the concept of communion within *Christifideles Laici* must be read with the understanding of communion in the other two documents, and the lay participation within the institutional Church must be perceived within the conservative approach of John Paul II's papacy towards *ad intra* issues. The wider context for the ecclesiology of *Christifideles Laici* are the ripples and currents set in motion by Vatican II; particularly those of *aggiornamento*, *ressourcement* and development. The metaphor of currents may assist in preventing the mistake of viewing history as a straight line between events. The many elements that influenced ecclesiology during the long papacy of Pope John Paul II cannot all be analysed here. Instead, some key notions for synodality - such as the pilgrim People of God, the maturity and responsibility of the laity, and synods and councils - will be briefly examined for their development during this period.

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120. This assembly is commonly known as the "Synod on the Laity," for simplicity's sake it will be referred to as such.

121. John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici,* Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation On the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World, *Holy See Press Office*, 30 Dec 1988, accessed 7 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici_en.html. Hereafter *CL*. At over 40,000 words it is one and a half times larger than *Lumen Gentium.*

The preparation for the 1985 Extraordinary Assembly was criticised as "suppressing" the Vatican II notion of the People of God,[122] so it is surprising to find that in 1988 Pope John Paul II uses "People of God" to describe the Church on twenty-one occasions in *Christifideles Laici*.[123] The pope insisted that the *tria munera Christi* - the threefold office of Christ - of the entire People of God was to be foundational to the development of ecclesiology. Through this notion the identity and mission of the Church was to be understood as particularly inclusive of its lay people, and in harmony with the theology of the Second Vatican Council (see *CL* n.14). In a similar way Pope John Paul II used the notion of "communion" frequently, almost liberally, yet it was communion that was the focus of critique and criticism by the CDF in *Communionis Notio.* As noted previously, *Communionis* did not use baptismal identity as a primary basis for communion or unity, but preferred the Eucharist-Episcopacy relationship as foundational. In contrast, *Christifideles* uses baptismal identity to make significant statements about lay participation and contribution in the institutional life of the Church; in particular through diocesan pastoral councils and synods, and plenary and particular councils.[124]

The papacy of Pope John Paul II incorporates the activities of the Roman Curia's CDF, as well as the Synod of Bishops. Together these illustrate the complexity involved in developing the relational and dynamic ecclesiology initiated by Vatican II. A pope seemingly determined to develop the laity on paper, also shaped the development of ecclesiology through other authoritative (and episcopal) bodies and through his own selection of leaders and theologians, some of whom appeared to have different priorities. From within this tension the ecclesiological content of *Christifideles Laici* will be examined.

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122. Faggioli, *Vatican II*, 84.

123. This is greater than the number of references to "Body of Christ" which is used 12 times, although "Body" is frequent (44x). Pope John Paul II's preferred reference to the laity is the novel "lay faithful" (246x). Prior to Pope John Paul II, the early twentieth century documents used "faithful," "church," or more generalised names for the entire *ekklēsia* such as "Mystical Body." Pope Paul VI preferred "the faithful" when speaking of the laity, and "we/us" for the whole body of people. His successors, Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI, continued with Pope Paul VI's introduction of an inclusive style of language, with "we" and "us" in frequent use with a considerable reduction in "hierarchy" and its associated words. Pope Benedict XVI was restrained with his use of "laity" or "lay faithful," and made stronger use of "People of God," which includes all members of the Church and is thus less stratifying (for example see: Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini*.)

Pope John Paul II is comfortable with continuing the tradition of referring to the Church in the feminine third person (for example *CL* n.32), although minimally, and many are quotes of Vatican II texts. In *CL* the pope does move the reader towards an integrated perception of the Church as the entire People of God, rather than a stratified society.

124. Described later in Table 1, sec.2.5.1.

2.4.3 Lay Identity

The Synod on the Laity provided a great deal of material towards the development of an ecclesiology that was holistic and inclusive of all the People of God. The Synod addressed the issue of a positive definition of the laity with some detail and opened itself to a: "decidedly positive vision and displayed a basic intention of asserting the full belonging of the lay faithful to the Church and to its mystery" (*CL* n.9).[125] Any investigation into lay identity would have to visit the Catholic notion of the sacred-secular divide between those with Holy Orders, and those without.[126] This distinction had on occasions in the past been used in a defensive and divisive way. *Christifideles Laici*, however, succeeded in embracing a far more sympathetic understanding of the dynamism and depth of lay life (see *CL* n.15). On the whole this document avoids the pre-Vatican II neo-Scholastic tendency to stratify ecclesial identities, particularly through the sacred-secular dichotomy. *Christifideles* instead prefers statements that envision a more inclusive and holistic ecclesial life.

The topics within *Christifideles Laici* are interwoven and interdependent within a larger framework of meaning. The two major topics of *lay identity* and *lay vocation* have many ideas and metaphors contributing to their development. The identity of the laity is understood as formed primarily through: 1) foundations in baptism, and the resultant functioning as priest-prophet-king; 2) the biblical imagery of vine and branches; and, 3) the Church as communion and mystery.

Baptism is a significant theme for *Christifideles Laici*, and it was used to give a basic description of *all* the faithful (*CL* n.9) and to draw further insights upon the identity and

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125. Note that canon law has a positive identity of the laity: "The Christian faithful are those who, inasmuch as they have been incorporated in Christ through baptism, have been constituted as the people of God" (*CIC* c.204 §1). This is closely followed by the negative: "By divine institution, there are among the Christian faithful in the Church sacred ministers who in law are also called clerics; the other members of the Christian faithful are called lay persons" (c.207 §1).

126. As an example of using this division, *Vehementer Nos* describes the nature of the Church as essentially an "unequal society," wherein "the Church rests on the Bishops, and that all its acts are ruled by them" (*VN* n.8). Sixty years later *Lumen Gentium* continues a distinction by reserving the word "sacred" for priestly or episcopal power (three times); nature (1x); state (1x); teaching authority (1x); ministry (7x); ordination (1x); primacy (of the pope, 1x); character (1x); juridical right (1x); function (1x, also see the appendix); office (1x); as well as the ecumenical council itself, which is traditionally self-referred to as sacred and/or holy. Scripture and the Sacraments are also sacred. Sacred is not used as a description of the laity, although they can participate in the "sacred action of the Liturgy" (*LG* n.42). Religious men and women have "sacred bonds" (vows or something similar, *LG* n.44).

Rahner and Vorgrimler condemn the sacred-profane dichotomy as "not suited to express the way Christianity sees the world and itself." Their theological argument is that: "…Christianity does not see itself as sacred, since as a whole it is not separated from or out of the world but instead is established in the world to come to fulfilment there…Even less to be regarded as sacred are the Church's personnel and institutions." Rahner and Vorgrimler, eds., *Dictionary of Theology*, s.v. "sacred and profane."

vocation of the laity throughout the document (see *CL* nn.10-14). It is through baptism that the entire faithful assume the identity of Christ, and his function as priest, prophet and king. *Christifideles Laici* acknowledges that this is sourced from the *ressourcement* of Vatican II in *Lumen Gentium,* as *LG* n.31 is quoted in *CL* n.9.[127] The Vatican II retrieval of the meaning of 1 Peter 2:9 is developed by Pope John Paul II when he considers the verse in its context: baptism brings about new life and that new life offers participation in the threefold mission of Christ as priest, prophet and king. Moreover, the baptised are "new born babes," and "living stones" waiting to be built. This gives the theological foundation for the pope's insistence that the laity must be given formation to maturity (see *CL* n.35 ∫6). The pope outlines the consequences of participation in Christ's mission by the laity as he expands upon the *tria munera Christi* (*CL* n.14). For the Catholic Church, the priestly role of the laity is a notion fraught with the fears of lay intrusion into the roles of their pastors, or the Church "descending" into ecclesial democracy. *Christifideles* does not explain the understanding of the Synod of Bishops on this topic,[128] but rather draws again on the Second Vatican Council as the source of its authority: the baptised are united with Christ in his priesthood, and thus their own work, prayers, and endeavours are united with Christ's, and "every deed is holy" (*CL* n.14, referencing *LG* n.34).

The prophetic role of the laity is grounded in their "ability and responsibility to accept the gospel in faith and to proclaim it in word and deed, without hesitating to courageously identify and denounce evil" (*CL* n.14). *Prophet* is a novel identity for the laity.[129] While the Vatican II document on the laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, acknowledges but does not describe the *tria munera Christi* (*AA* nn.2, 10), *Lumen Gentium* specifies witness and worship

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127. *Christifideles Laici* goes on to eclipse the use of the words baptism/baptized in *Lumen Gentium*, as well as many other post-conciliar documents: *CL* uses baptism/baptized 65 times, while *LG* has only 26x. Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, connects in many ways to *Christifideles* and uses baptism/baptized 19x. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium,* Apostolic Exhortation, *Holy See Press Office,* 24 Nov 2013, accessed 7 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html. Hereafter *EG*.

128. This contrasts with Pope Francis's style, as he deliberately quotes from the Synod of Bishops or explains their thinking on a topic. Examples from *Amoris Laetitia* include: "As the Synod Fathers noted…" (nn.1, 41, 43, 46); "Here too I will mention what the Synod Fathers had to say about…" (n.60); and many footnotes referring to the *Relatio Synodi* (final document of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops). Francis, *Amoris Laetitia,* Post-Synodal Encyclical Letter On Love in the Family, *Holy See Press Office*, 19 Mar 2016, accessed 7 Oct 2020, https://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20160319_amoris-laetitia_en.pdf. Hereafter *AL*.

129. In the official documents analysed for this thesis the term *prophet* is rarely used except to speak of the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures. Without precluding further data, my judgement of the *ressourcement* of the *tria munera Christi* by Vatican II is that it is truly remarkable, and that *LG* n.12 is quite unique through its appropriation of the prophetic role within the *sensus fidei* for the entire People of God (see fn.25 in chap.1).

as elements of the prophetic role of the People of God. It continues to describe how the entire *ekklēsia* as anointed and prophetic "cannot err in matters of belief" (*LG* n.12). Thus at the heart of understanding the role of the prophet lies the doctrine of the *sensus fidei*, as the discernment in matters of faith by the faithful in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit.[130] Pope John Paul II uses these elements from Vatican II - witness, worship and the *sensus fidei* - to describe the prophetic nature of the laity. Pope John Paul II's one paragraph on the prophetic mission may prove to be one of the most rich and challenging to the contemporary Church, as the need for authentic prophets emerges and becomes more demanding amongst the scandals.[131] The kingly mission of the laity comes as a result of their belonging to Christ, and the sharing of his mission to spread the Kingdom through history (*CL* n.14). Kingship is described as entering into Christ's service to others, in justice and charity, particularly to the least in society.

Within each of these three aspects of Christian function - priest, prophet and king - lies this conclusion: through their baptism all of the faithful enter new life and are called to participate in the redemption of the world. The essential role of the laity in this mission is not overshadowed in *Christifideles* by references to their supervision by the hierarchy, and their share in Christ's power is even explicitly acknowledged:

> But in particular the lay faithful are called to restore to creation all its original value. In ordering creation to the authentic well-being of humanity in an activity governed by the life of grace, they share in the exercise of the power with which the Risen Christ draws all things to himself and subjects them along with himself to the Father, so that God might be everything to everyone (cf. 1 Cor 15:28; Jn 12:32) (*CL* n.14).

The preoccupation with supervising the laity by many of the pertinent Vatican II documents was a consequence of understanding the Church through hierarchical meaning. *Christifideles Laici*'s ecclesial paradigm included a mature understanding of the laity; the grounding of the

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130. The *sensus fidei* is discussed in sec.4.3.3 of this thesis.

131. "Authentic" in the sense explained by Bernard Lonergan, as consistent progression in "knowing" through appropriating the dynamism of one's own intentional consciousness: that is, recognising and developing the cognitive behaviour that is natural to human beings. Authenticity is "never some pure and serene and secure possession," but a constant process of withdrawal from unauthenticity. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 110. Lonergan uses the word "unauthentic" to mean "not authentic." It is interchangeable with the more commonly used "inauthentic," but unauthentic will be retained for consistency.

"Prophet" is understood here as the authentic person attending to, understanding and judging the circumstances in which they find themselves, with reception of the gifts of the Spirit in order to move forward in authenticity, to call others to do so as well, and to effect change.

entire faithful's identity in baptism enabled ecclesiology to develop ecclesial meaning in a more inclusive way.

Christifideles Laici used Jesus' imagery of the vine and branches (John 15:1-11) to imagine all members of the Church and their relationships within a healthy context (*CL* n.9). This is not a metaphor that is typically compatible with a neo-Scholastic framework.[132] Intentionally using the vine and branches can help to overcome defensive or preservationist tendencies. Instead of stratification, each branch, regardless of their role, gains their identity, life and sustenance from Christ the vine. This imagery is tied directly to communion and lay identity by Pope John Paul II. He underscores the "fruitfulness and life" of the metaphor, concluding that "communion and mission are profoundly connected with each other" (*CL* n.32). Using a relational paradigm and biblical imagery the pope is able to illustrate in a holistic way the connections between baptism, identity, communion, and mission:

> 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 (*CL* n.8).

The identity of the Church as mystery is explored through its essence as *koinōnia*/ communion, which is a participation in the mystery of the communion of the Trinity. Such participation is eschatological and eucharistic, and baptism is "the door and the foundation of communion in the Church" (*CL* n.19).[133]

Pope John Paul II points to the wide variety of ecclesial imagery in *LG* n.6 that can bring insight into the inner nature of the Church: his selection of the vine and branches is therefore a deliberate move to an ecclesiological foundation that is relational in meaning, and inclusive of the entire People of God. From such a foundation the vocation of the laity was developed in *Christifideles*.

2.4.4 Lay Vocation

The vocation of the laity within *Lumen Gentium* is to "seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God," which

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132. The vine and branches metaphor occurs infrequently in the early twentieth century documents: *MCC* nn.55, 67; *SaC* n.3. It is certainly not a primary hierarchical metaphor.

133. *CL* quotes the Synod's *relatio finale*, sec.II, C, 1. As mentioned previously, the 1992 CDF document does not contradict these Synod/papal statements on communion and baptism, but does regularly insert the episcopacy into definitions. See the examples in sec.2.3.3 of this thesis.

includes a vocation to perfection (*LG* nn.31-32, quoted in *CL* n.9) and witness (*LG* n.35). With an ecclesiological foundation based on a rich understanding of the lay identity *Christifideles Laici* draws out a corresponding notion of lay vocation. The key themes for vocation emerge as *engaging*, *mission*, and *evangelising*. Pope John Paul II highlights the parish as the place of communion and where the clear need for formation of the laity may be met. These insights are novel; the word *parish* is rarely used in Vatican II, and is absent in earlier documents.[134] The absence of parishes in ecclesiology often indicates that hierarchical ecclesial meaning is being used to perceive the Church as local Churches (dioceses) gathered around their bishops, who become the foci of Church relationships. This approach tends to neglect the complexities of pastoral life such as enormous dioceses, and the importance of the priest-parish relationship. In a similar way to how parishes - the ecclesial home of the laity - are often invisible within institutional documents, discussion around the need for formation is typically directed towards the clergy or Religious. Pope John Paul II continued his novel (papal) thinking to insist upon the importance of lay maturity, responsibility and conscience. As these were taken up and developed over the next thirty years they became key concepts leading to synodality.

2.4.4.1 Vocation: Engaging - Mission - Evangelising

The first theme of vocation in *Christifideles Laici* is *engagement* of the laity. Lay engagement is active participation in the *mission* of the Church as a form of *evangelisation*; together these are the three interdependent themes of lay vocation. Pope John Paul II quoted Pope Paul VI in *Evangelli Nuntiandi* in order to emphasise the need to stimulate the collaboration of the lay people:

> ‘The more Gospel-inspired lay people there are engaged in these realities, clearly involved in them, competent to promote them and conscious that they must exercise to the full their Christian powers which are often repressed and buried, the more these realities will be at the service of the Kingdom of God and therefore at the service of salvation in Jesus Christ, without in any way losing or sacrificing

134. Pope John Paul II may be considered remarkable for his focus on the parish, which he refers to 34 times in *CL*. Parishes are rarely mentioned in the sixteen Vatican II documents: *SC* 4x; *OE* 1x; *OT* 3x; *CD* 13x; *AA* 8x; *PO* 1x; *AG* 3x. The remainder had zero, including Pope Paul VI’s *Ecclesiam Suam*.

> their human content but rather pointing to a transcendent dimension which is often disregarded' (*CL* n.23).[135]

Pope John Paul II was keen to promote "lay associations," as groups that were approved and supported by bishops, and contributed to the building up of the faithful through active mission. He clarifies that the "right" for the laity to participate in such ways was not through any delegation of authority but through their baptism:

> Such liberty is a true and proper right that is not derived from any kind of 'concession' by authority, but flows from the Sacrament of Baptism, which calls the lay faithful to participate actively in the Church's communion and mission (*CL* n.29).[136]

The pope confirms the freedom of the faithful, however he doesn't go so far as to say that they have authority. It is significant that there is no mention of "hierarchical" authority in this document, only "ecclesial authority."[137] Also significant is that the only specific reference to the authority given through the Sacrament of Holy Orders describes it as *service* to the Church: "…from [Christ] they receive the authority and sacred power to serve the Church… Pastors must always acknowledge that their ministry is fundamentally ordered to the service of the entire People of God" (*CL* n.22). These are subtle but important changes to the meaning of authority developed in papal or conciliar ecclesiology. The issue of women and authority is not addressed by the pope, and thus - subsumed as it is within the discussion on the entire laity - the risk of perpetuating the absence of women in leadership and decision-making was allowed to remain.[138] In *Christifideles* women "participate" (*CL* n.51) and are obliquely described as helpers, and, as usual for an official Church document, remain quite

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135. The quote is from: Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Apostolic Exhortation, *Holy See Press Office*, 8 Dec 1975, accessed 9 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi.html, n.70.

136 Cf. the critique of *AA* in sec.2.1.5. Nevertheless, the laity's right to participate does not preclude hierarchical "supervision."

137. The meaning behind this is not clear, but there is some sense that authority is understood as something that must be appropriate (i.e. canonical and competent, see *CL* n.31 and fn.72), rather than simply hierarchical/episcopal.

138. The Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse found that the absence of women was a factor in institutional failures to respond adequately to child abuse: "In some religious institutions, the absence or insufficient involvement of women in leadership positions and governance structures negatively affected decision-making and accountability, and may have contributed to inadequate institutional responses to child sexual abuse. Leaders of both the Catholic Church and the Anglican Church told us they believed that the involvement of women in leadership positions would contribute to making their institutions safer for children." Royal Commission, *Final Report: Preface and Executive Summary*, *Child Abuse Royal Commission*, 15 Dec 2017, accessed 7 Oct 2020, https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/final_report_-_preface_and_executive_summary.pdf, 56. See recommendation 16.7 of the final report: Royal Commission, *Final Report: Recommendations*, vol. 16, *Child Abuse Royal Commission,* 15 Dec 2017, accessed 10 Sep 2020, https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/final_report_-_recommendations.pdf, rec.16.7.

removed from any mention of authority. In recognition of how challenging it was to apply *aggiornamento* to the understanding of women in the Church, the pope noted how "many voices" of the Synod assembly expressed fear of the "excessive insistence given to the status and role of women," which might bring about a possible loss of focus on men (*CL* n.52).[139]

Christifideles explains how the faithful need to enter into communion in order to engage more fully their vocation. The home of communion - the place where it is lived, prayed, and entered into eucharistically - is the parish. The parish community is enriched by charisms, as the gifts of the Spirit or "promptings of grace" that contribute to the well-being of humanity (*CL* n.24). *Christifideles* explains that charisms and ministries are to be understood within a context of an "organic communion," that is, an ecclesial paradigm that is relational and dynamic, and appropriately and healthily modelled through the images of the vine and the branches, and Saint Paul's explanation of Christian community.

Engaging in mission is essential to the vocation of the laity. This document recalls the vine and branches imagery to demonstrate the *unity* of mission and communion. Along with baptism and priest-prophet-king, these comprise Christian identity. Within this unity is *diversity*, likened to the diverse life within nature, and therefore organic and complementary.[140] An organic communion is characterised by the pope as having "diversity and complementarity":

> Ecclesial communion is more precisely likened to an "organic" communion, analogous to that of a living and functioning body. In fact, at one and the same time it is characterized by a diversity and a complementarity of vocations and states in life, of ministries, of

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139. There were 232 Synod bishops (all male) who mostly represented 101 national bishops' conferences around the world, and sixty lay observers, some of whom could speak but did not have voting rights. Roberto Suro, "Pope Opens Synod of Bishops on the Role of the Laity," *The New York Times*, 2 Oct 1987, accessed 15 Oct 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/1987/10/02/world/pope-opens-synod-of-bishops-on-role-of-the-laity.html.

140. I hesitate to use the word "complementary," as it is loaded by the controversy of Pope John Paul II's wider teaching on male-female relationships, families, and the role of women in general - particularly when it is used within the context of female authority and leadership. In his *Letter to Women* the pope distinguishes between women as "helpers" within a "Marian" principle, and men as belonging to the "Apostolic-Petrine" principle (n.11): "The creation of woman is thus marked from the outset by the *principle of help*" (n.7), and, "If Christ - by his free and sovereign choice, clearly attested to by the Gospel and by the Church's constant Tradition - entrusted only to men the task of being an 'icon' of his countenance as 'shepherd' and 'bridegroom' of the Church through the exercise of the ministerial priesthood, this in no way detracts from the role of women, or for that matter from the role of the other members of the Church who are not ordained to the sacred ministry, since all share equally in the dignity proper to the 'common priesthood' based on Baptism" (n.11). John Paul II, *Letter to Women*, *Holy See Press Office*, 29 Jun 1995, accessed 7 Oct 2020, https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1995/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_29061995_women.html.

Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the pope uses "complementary" in *CL*, and the dictionary definition that suitably matches his usage is: "offsetting mutual deficiencies or enhancing mutual strengths." *American Heritage Dictionary*, s.v. "complementary."

> charisms and responsibilities. Because 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 (*CL* n.20).

Strong in *Lumen Gentium*, this understanding of internal ordering is easily expanded to complement the Catholic Church's ecumenical relationships, and the twentieth century ecumenical concept of "unity and diversity."[141]

As unity is linked to identity, diversity is found in the various roles and ministries of the faithful. Both unity and diversity are rooted in the Spirit: "One and the same Spirit is always the dynamic principle of diversity and unity in the Church" (*CL* n.20). Diversity enriches the Church and makes it "more vital and concrete" (*CL* n.45). While the mission of the People of God is one, the ministries through which they engage in mission are many. Pope John Paul II makes the distinction between "ministries derived from Holy Orders," and the "ministries, offices and roles of the lay faithful" (*CL* nn.22-23). The renewal of Vatican II and the momentum of synodality are sometimes perceived as threatening the distinctions between lay and ordained ministry, while at the same time the difference between mission and ministry cannot always be articulated by the faithful. *Christifideles Laici* provides clarity around these areas, although there is room for critical response. Zeni Fox describes how the document represents a: "strong affirmation of the laity, of their place in the Church, or their part in her mission."[142] However, she explains that with a primary focus on the laity's role in the world the confusion and concern over "internal ministry" was not given helpful direction.[143] In the context of the 1980s, during which the social rights of women and people of colour in particular were gaining momentum in being recognised and promoted, the boundaries around the concept of ecclesial ministry were under huge tension, particularly when perceived from a defensive, hierarchical paradigm. The assembly was noted as expressing a "deep appreciation for the contribution of the lay faithful" in the work of the

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141. The Catholic Church's ecumenical relationships can contribute enormously to understanding how a synodal community can function and thrive with diversity, and build unity. The ecumenical movement has accepted from the beginning that unity by its nature is diverse and is not represented or achieved through uniformity or conformity. However, this is always balanced by the question: how diverse can beliefs be before they become division? The documents of the World Council of Churches (WCC) provide a long history of insights into unity, diversity, "legitimate diversity," communion, and other key ecclesiological elements. The experience and theology of the Orthodox Church also represents a rich opportunity for mutual learning and dialogue.

142. Fox, *New Ecclesial Ministry*, 265.

143. Ibid.

Church's apostolate (*CL* n.23), while at the same time bishops were expressing concern over boundaries in ministry.[144] This must have been considerable for the pope to mention it in his exhortation:

> In the same Synod Assembly, however, a critical judgment was voiced along with these positive elements, about 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', 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 (*CL* n.23).

The solution for Pope John Paul II was to clarify the Church's theological position and to establish a commission to study the various considerations around lay ministries (*CL* n.23). However, neither of these was open as a process of dialogue, revealing a trait of that papacy which brought tension to the reception of the Second Vatican Council.

Pope John Paul II established evangelisation as a key theme of his papacy, and he used it frequently in *Christifideles* to indicate the active proclamation of the gospel.[145] Evangelisation is a deep and broad concept that encompasses the whole of Christian life, including: promoting the common good, working for social justice, recognising human dignity, and continually bringing love into the world. These acts of evangelisation are the criteria by which associations of the lay faithful are recognised (*CL* n.30). Thus, to be Church is to be evangelisers: "The entire mission of the Church, then, is concentrated and manifested in evangelization" (*CL* n.33). The emphasis on evangelisation throughout *Christifideles*, and indeed through the pope's long term of office, was intended to inspire and encourage the active participation of the People of God in their mission together, as a right and a consequence of their baptism.

The vision of evangelisation would require not only good formation of clergy, but also of a "mature and responsible lay faithful" (*CL* n.35). Pope John Paul II devotes chapter five

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144. Fox discusses this briefly and describes John Paul II's tone as "cautionary" and erring on the side of describing lay ministry as exercised only in the secular world. Fox, *New Ecclesial Ministry*, 263.

145. Pope John Paul II proclaimed a Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, and rigorously encouraged a series of synods across the world. The underlying theme was to be the "new evangelisation of the third millennium," of which these synods were to be an integral part. John Paul II, *Tertio Millennio Adveniente,* Apostolic Letter on Preparation for the Jubilee of the Year 2000, *Holy See Press Office*, 10 Nov 1994, accessed 24 Oct 2020, https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19941110_tertio-millennio-adveniente.html, n.21.

to formation of the lay faithful, and highlights the need for: development (again, founded on the image of the vine and branches); the discernment of, and dedication to, one's vocation; the need for integration between ecclesial and social life; opportunities for doctrinal and spiritual formation; and collaboration with God in God's plan. The fruitful contribution of the laity depends on their formation, healthy relationships and communion together (*CL* nn.20, 27). Responsibility is an important theme in *Christifideles Laici*. For the laity, their responsibility lies in their mission to participate in the redemption of the world (*CL* n.36); the common good, human dignity, and justice all form the context for this mission. *Conscience* has a subdued presence in Vatican II documents, but has more explicit references in *Christifideles*. This document holds up a well-formed conscience as necessary for reflective, effective, and compassionate Christian life:

> When persons in conscience have the courage to face the more serious questions of human existence - particularly questions related to the purpose of life, to suffering and to dying - they are unable to avoid making their own the words of truth uttered by Saint Augustine: 'You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you' (*CL* n.4).

Christifideles does not use the phrase *sensus fidei* (although it is certainly what is being referred to in n.14), but it does use "sense" frequently, such as a "sense of responsibility."[146] It is striking that a particular phrase of Pope Paul VI - the *sensus Ecclesiae*, used in *Ecclesiam Suam* nn.36-38 - is used by Pope John Paul II.[147] The "sense of the Church" is understood as being developed within a person through the ecclesial formation experienced in family life. A *sensus Ecclesiae* gives to a person a perception of the beauty of wholehearted service to the Kingdom of God (*CL* n.62).[148]

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146. Rush acknowledges *CL* n.14 in footnotes on several pages: Rush, *The Eyes of Faith*, 163, 219, 253. "Receive," in the sense of receiving one's vocation or mission, is a notion important to the sense of the faithful and is used correspondingly in *Christifideles*. The *sensus fidei*, responsibility and "sense of" are discussed in secs.4.3.2-3 of this thesis.

147. Although *Christifideles* has no explicit references to *Ecclesiam Suam*.

148. In the Latin original: *Quo magis coniuges et christiani parentes in conscientia crescent de eo quod eorum "Ecclesia domestica" vitae et missionis Ecclesiae universalis est particeps, eo magis filii ad "sensum Ecclesiae" formari poterunt et totam pulchritudinem sentient suas dedicandi vires in Regni Dei servitium* (*CL* n.62 ∫1).

With this explanation the *sensus Ecclesiae* is not so much a communal understanding of being Church, but that which is formed by individual's conscience through their lived experience of being in communion. A "sense of the Church" could be understood to be one's openness to more fully enter into the lived meaning of the Church, and the accompanying deepening of one's life in faith.

In opposition to the spirit of dialogue and development, and the prime qualities of good conscience and responsibility that bear fruit in the *sensus Ecclesiae*, John Paul II refuses discussion on a particularly sensitive issue:

> In her participation in the life and mission of the Church a woman cannot receive the Sacrament of Orders, and therefore, cannot fulfil the proper function of the ministerial priesthood. This is a practice that the Church has always found in the expressed will of Christ, totally free and sovereign, who called only men to be his apostles; a practice that can be understood from the rapport between Christ, the Spouse, and his Bride, the Church. Here we are in the area of function, not of dignity and holiness. In fact, it must be maintained: 'Although the Church possesses a "hierarchical" structure, nevertheless this structure is totally ordered to the holiness of Christ's members' (*CL* n.51).

In this section Pope John Paul II quotes his apostolic letter *Mulieris Dignitatem* (On the Dignity and Vocation of Women, 15 August 1988), which he wrote shortly before the promulgation of *Christifideles*, as well as the CDF's *Inter Insigniores* (Declaration on the Question of Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood, 15 October 1976).[149] With an historical perspective it appears that a bulwark of definitive statements were made with a purpose of closing off any possible opportunities for dialogue.[150] Authentic dialogue on the topic of women and authority, and women and the priesthood, would have required hospitality and an openness to mutual learning, both of which reside in humility, from the CDF and the papacy. The Catholic Church would have to wait for the emergence of synodality, thirty years later, to revive the hope that such a dialogue would one day be possible.

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149. Neither of the two quoted documents use the words "leadership" or "authority," except for *Inter Insigniores* fn.21, which refers to priests. CDF, *Inter Insigniores*, Declaration on the Question of Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood, *Holy See Press Office*, 15 Oct 1976, accessed 18 Aug 2020, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19761015_inter-insigniores_en.html, fn.21. Hereafter *InIn*.

150. Consider these two statements from the CDF's *Inter Insigniores.* The first provides a circular argument that Christ was a man therefore a priestly minister must be a man, and the second denies the authenticity of a woman's act of conscience and spiritual discernment when it involves a call to ordination:

"That is why we can never ignore the fact that Christ is a man. And therefore, unless one is to disregard the importance of this symbolism for the economy of Revelation, it must be admitted that, in actions which demand the character of ordination and in which Christ himself, the author of the Covenant, the Bridegroom, the Head of the Church, is represented, exercising his ministry of salvation - which is in the highest degree the case of the Eucharist - his role (this is the original sense of the word *persona*) must be taken by a man. This does not stem from any personal superiority of the latter in the order of values, but only from a difference of fact on the level of functions and service" (*InIn*, sec.5 ∫6).

"It is sometimes said and written in books and periodicals that some women feel that they have a vocation to the priesthood. Such an attraction however noble and understandable, still does not suffice for a genuine vocation" (*InIn*, sec.6 ∫4).

With his post-synodal apostolic exhortation, *Christifideles Laici*, Pope John Paul II was determined to continue to develop the theology of the Second Vatican Council, particularly around the concepts of the People of God and communion. He recognised the importance of addressing the identity and role of the laity as a response to the questions of the time, and as a necessary task for the Church of the future. The pope used a relational perspective to ground his ecclesiology and made effective use of the vine and branches imagery, both of which contributed to further change in meaning from hierarchical paradigms. The identity of the laity was developed within a wider perspective of the whole Church: ecclesial identity is given through baptism, it functions as priest-prophet-king, and is formed in communion. Vocations are richly diverse and rise out of the unity of Church identity and mission. Pope John Paul II understood vocations as the engagement of the laity in their mission to be evangelising, which required maturity, responsibility, formation and development of conscience. Ecclesiology in the 1980s was struggling with the questions that had been raised in the two decades since Vatican II, and evidence of discord and contradiction lies amongst the substantially positive work of *Christifideles Laici.* Likewise, the document itself is surrounded by other texts and movements that illustrate the fearful response of those with a hierarchical perspective.

While the nature and identity of the laity was undergoing renewal, connections with the wider environs of ecclesial life were missing, thus reducing the efficacy of genuine transformation. Through a retreat into the unbending hierarchical paradigm several elements avoided renewal and remained absent, including: an integral understanding of authority and leadership; a genuine recognition of Christian responsibility and dialogical praxis, both internal and external to the Church; a holistic anthropology, leading to healthy and mature relationships; and, most essential - because it currently obstructs the development of these other elements - a theology of the episcopacy.

Effective renewal of these elements will mark the transformation of the Catholic Church from collegiality into the wider and authentic vision of synodality. In order to move closer to the point at which synodal foundations can be proposed, a review of ecclesial institutional structures, authority and responsibility will be undertaken in section 2.5.

2.5 Synods and Councils

The reception of the teachings and "spirit" of the Second Vatican Council were to be promoted through the work of synods and councils at regional and local levels. As it was for the Council of Trent, it was understood that the hierarchical institutional Church would be responsible for this interpreting and teaching, providing momentum as well as correction. Vatican II anticipated the Synod of Bishops to enable episcopal collegiality, while at each level of the Church there exists some form of consultative body which allows co-operation with the laity. Various meetings can be called to address particular questions or problems, and may also involve clerics, Religious, and lay experts. Pope John Paul II initiated a revival of synods and assemblies in the decade leading to the third millennium.[151]

The next section of this chapter reviews these structures in order to demonstrate how institutional authority and co-operation operates in the Catholic Church, who can participate, and with what authority. Drawn from canon law and various directives from the Roman Curia, this will give insight into what restricts or promotes collaboration. An understanding of these structures and how they function is necessary in order to judge their successes and failures. There is no doubt from the contemporary scandals that the formative and collaborative structures of the Catholic Church have failed: the tasks of a synodal Church will involve humility and prayer; a rigorous search for bias and its resulting corruption; formative education; and a fresh commitment to renewal that continues to develop an ecclesiology of synodality.

2.5.1 The Institutional Form of the Catholic Church

The Catholic Church is conceived theologically as a communion of local churches, each gathered around their bishop in communion, and with their unity together confirmed by the bishop of Rome, the pope. The practical operations of the institutional Catholic Church are illustrated in Table 1 at four levels: the parish, the local church (diocese), the regional

151. In the years between 1967, when the Synod of Bishops held their first assembly, and 1990, the Synod met regularly every two to three years. Then began the special assemblies held for certain regions with a focus on the "New Evangelisation" for their local churches: Europe (1991); Africa (1994); Lebanon (1995); American (1997); Asia (1998); Oceania (1998); Europe II (1999); Africa II (2009); and the Middle East (2010). Synod of Bishops, *General Information on the Synod*.

church (a conference of bishops),[152] and the universal church. A parish is a stable community of the faithful who are under the care of a pastor who has been appointed by the bishop of the diocese. A pastor must be in the sacred order of the presbyterate, and suitable for the role.[153] Local or "particular" churches are described in canon law as being usually a diocese, but which can also be other groups of faithful that are constituted territorially or administratively. Local churches are akin to a "fundamental unit" of the Catholic Church because they are governed by a bishop.[154] At the regional level is a conference of bishops; a group of bishops within a nation or territory who can communicate and collaborate for the good of their faithful and the greater society. All diocesan bishops belong to the conference, and together - along with their auxiliaries and other local titular bishops - they may pass decrees that are binding for their territory, upon approval from the Apostolic See. The bishop of the Catholic Church in Rome, the Roman Pontiff, is the head of the College of Bishops and pastor of the universal Catholic Church. He has power over the universal Church and "primacy of ordinary power over all particular churches and groups of them."[155] The pope is "always joined in communion with the other bishops and with the universal Church," and he has the right to determine how to exercise his office.[156] There are no appeals permitted nor recourse prescribed against a sentence or decree of the pope.

The following table is an attempt to describe, as succinctly as possible, the institutional structure of bodies and meetings that participate in ecclesial authority, either as deliberative or consultative, from the relevant canon law.[157] The level at which the body

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152. The region can vary depending on which geographical or political area is involved. Bishops of a nation co-operate as a national conference (such as the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference), while the ACBC are part of the wider Federation of Catholic Bishops' Conferences of Oceania (FCBCO). Both can call meetings with legislative power: the former can hold a Plenary Council (of the Church in Australia), the latter holds a Synod (of Oceania).

153. From the chapter in canon law on parishes, pastors, and parochial vicars: *CIC* cc.515-52.

154. See *CIC* cc.368-74. The fundamental responsibilities of a bishop to the people of the diocese are to govern, teach, and sanctify, cc.381-402.

155. See *CIC* cc.331-35 on the Roman Pontiff.

156. Ibid.

157. Table 1 also intends to clarify difficulties in nomenclature, such as how a synod can be both a body (Synod of Bishops) and a meeting (diocesan synod); and how meetings at each level have a variety of names (synod, council, and ecumenical council).

In addition to the relevant articles of canon law which have been referenced previously, the section on diocesan synods uses the comprehensive instruction from 1997: Congregation for Bishops and Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, *Instruction on Diocesan Synods*. The section on the Synod of Bishops uses the norms established in Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation *Episcopalis Communio* (Sep 2018).

exists or meeting occurs determines what it is to be called, how wide it is in scope, and how far its influence can reach.

Table 1. Institutional Participation at Each Level of the Catholic Church

Level	Body	Meeting & Attendees	Authority
Parish	Parish Pastoral Council	Parish Pastoral Council meetings The participants, structure and content of Pastoral Council meetings are determined by the parish priest, but could be delegated.	The pastoral care of a parish, and its juridic affairs, are entrusted to the pastor, under the authority of the bishop. The bishop must approve the establishment of pastoral councils in the diocese. A pastoral council consists of laity and the pastor; is consultative only, having no legislative power; and is governed by the rules of the bishop.
Local Church	Diocesan Pastoral Council All dioceses should have a pastoral council with a diversity of members representing the diocese. The council investigates, considers, and proposes practical solutions to pastoral matters.	Diocesan Synod The bishop chooses participants (who may be clerics and lay), determines the topic and questions, and presides over the meeting. The bishop is the sole legislator.	The purpose of the diocesan synod is to assist the bishop in the exercise of his office. The synod declarations can shape the pastoral direction of the diocese into the future. Lay people and presbyters have a consultative voice only. Legislative power within a diocese is the sole responsibility of the bishop, and co-operation with others in this task is expressly prohibited. Authority over the diocesan pastoral council remains with the bishop, who alone may convoke, preside, and choose what information may be made public.

Level	Body	Meeting & Attendees	Authority
Regional Church	Conference of Bishops	Plenary Council or Particular Council (the difference lies in the boundaries of the region) The Conference of Bishops must attend and are the only attendees with a deliberate vote. Decrees must pass by a two-thirds majority vote. The Conference determines the calling, ordering and attendance of the Council. The pope approves the initial call for the Council and its final decrees. Canon law permits non-bishops to attend with consultative votes (i.e. ability to speak). The attendance of non-bishops is greatly restricted: laity and priests must not number more than half of the number of bishops and other special consultors.	The purpose of a plenary or particular council is to bring together a group of bishops (and advisors) to reflect upon local issues and to propose legislation for the future. They also have a particular role in promoting the decrees of an ecumenical council within the regional and local context. Members of a Conference of Bishops have legislative power and pastoral governance of their region. Final approval of legislation belongs to the pope.
Universal Church	The College of Bishops, acting with the pope as its head	Ecumenical Council All bishops of the College of Bishops (i.e. all bishops who are in communion with the Catholic Church) are permitted to attend and only they have a deliberative vote. The pope can invite any other person and determine their role. They may not have a deliberative vote.	The College of Bishops, acting with the pope as its head, holds the highest and fullest authority in the Catholic Church. One way this power is exercised is through an ecumenical council, which can only be called, ordered, and approved by the pope, who also promulgates its decrees. Another exercise of this power is through the actions of the dispersed bishops acting in unity which, when in accord with the pope, is collegial. Decrees of an ecumenical council impact the entire Church - sometimes significantly and over a long period of time.

Level	Body	Meeting & Attendees	Authority
Universal Church	The Synod of Bishops	General (Ordinary or Extraordinary) or Special Assembly Members of the Synod of Bishops are bishops chosen from different regions of the world who meet at fixed times. Other participants may be invited and have a role determined by the pope.	The pope determines members of the Synod; convokes, presides and closes the assemblies; and determines the location, topic and agenda. While normally consultative, the pope can choose to grant deliberative powers to the assembly and ratify and promulgate the Final Document, bringing it into the authority of the Magisterium.

2.5.1.1 Authority

Table 4 reveals a fundamental point about authority in the Catholic Church: in every instance the formal bodies and meetings at various levels of the institution are permitted and governed by the order of bishops. Complex as it may initially appear, and while lay people and even non-Catholics can potentially be involved at each level of meeting, the nature of the episcopacy as foundational to the life of the Church means that all substantive power and authority resides only in the bishops. The role and authority of the episcopacy has been, and still is, defined within the inherited hierarchical paradigm.[158] One of the main consequences of this is the complete inability of women or lay men to access positions with meaningful authority, for authority has become condensed into the episcopacy for so long that, at best, a lay person can only be valued as a consultant.[159] Women and lay men cannot contribute to ecclesial legislation through deliberative votes *at any level of meeting*. Remarkably, the *Ordo Synodi Episcoporum* permits deliberative votes by a number of male Religious during all three types of assembly of the Synod of Bishops *but not women Religious*. It was mentioned in chapter one that the Ecumenical Council of Trent also gave extraordinary voting permission to a small group of male Religious.[160] Both of these examples set a precedent for non-clerics to contribute as full members of an assembly or council (although they cannot be members of the Synod or College of Bishops) with full voting rights. There is currently no

158. See fn.75, earlier in this chapter.

159. This consequence is clear in canon law, which governs the norms of the bodies and meetings in Table 1.

160. See sec.1.2.1 and fn.44 in chap.1.

theological, social, cultural, political, or any other reason that could justify the exclusion of lay women from responsibilities that may be granted to lay men; a point which raises many questions around ecclesial participation, responsibility, and exclusion.[161]

2.5.5.2 Participation and Responsibility

The Catholic Church uses its institutional bodies and meetings such as synods and councils to engage with the signs of the times and to promote ongoing renewal. They provide opportunities for the entire faithful to engage in "collaboration, dialogue, and discernment" at various levels, so that they may "consider well the problems they share and manifest better the communion of the whole Church" (*CL* n.25).[162] However, a problem has been identified in that the governance and responsibilities of synods and councils are bound to the episcopacy, which has resisted *aggiornamento* and is still caught in the exclusive, hierarchical paradigm. Consequently, lack of access to real authority and responsibility has left laity disillusioned and, in the contemporary Australian context, it has been noted that both the spirit and the specifics of *Christifideles Laici* have been disregarded:

> It is very often a frustration that prevents real involvement on the part of some very talented people. Further, many such talented people have walked away from any involvement with the institutional church, either because the world they live in demands more of their time as well as respecting their gifts, or they discern poor clerical leadership that draws the church ever deeper into irrelevance.[163]

Opportunities to establish diocesan pastoral councils as well as diocesan synods have often been left wanting and the voices of many faithful unheard. One reason these bodies and councils are low in both prominence and effectiveness is because they require a good deal of commitment from the bishops, with whom lies all authority to call them, select participants,

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161. Technically members of a Religious Order who are not ordained are lay people, as defined by the 1983 Code of Canon Law: "By divine institution, there are among the Christian faithful in the Church sacred minister who in law are also called clerics; the other members of the Christian faithful are called lay persons" (*CIC* c.207 §1). However, *Lumen Gentium* (earlier in 1964) had a more narrow definition whereby the laity are defined by their secular (i.e. living in the world) nature: "The term laity is here understood to mean all the faithful except those in holy orders and those in the state of religious life specially approved by the Church… What specifically characterizes the laity is their secular nature." (*LG* n.31).

162. *CL* n.25 refers to *CIC* cc.443 §4; 463 §§1-2.

163. Price, "The Diaspora Church," 192.

choose the format and topics, and, most significantly, hold all power to vote.[164] In particular it is the levels lower in authority - the parish and diocesan pastoral councils - which suffer the most from lack of interest, support and formation from the clergy. These are the levels at which lay engagement can be significant and most visible; thus they should be a priority for any cleric who wishes to promote the maturity and co-responsibility of the laity within institutional structures of participation that already exist.

The structures of the institutional Catholic Church have a great deal of responsibility for giving momentum to ongoing renewal and for addressing the challenges of the world. The Synod of Bishops held a number of assemblies during the pontificates of Popes Paul VI and John Paul II, but the vision of active and effective episcopal conferences, local churches, and pastoral councils failed as a collective enterprise.[165] The hierarchical perspective is responsible for the decline of the institutional Church into clericalism. For the People of God to be authentically baptismal in identity and missionary in nature they need ecclesiological foundations for the entire Church, removing the laity-hierarchy strata and replacing it with an integral and synodal paradigm. Likewise, the institutional structures must also be at the service of all the baptised, not only the hierarchy, and oriented to evangelisation. Synodality extends out from a relational paradigm and collegial structures and seeks to implement a wider, integrated understanding of the People of God.

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164. "A [parish] pastoral council possesses a consultative vote only and is governed by the norms established by the diocesan bishop" (*CIC* c.536 §2). Canon 537 likewise determines that "in each parish there is to be a finance council," however, just as pastoral councils can be removed immediately by the parish priest, there is no guarantee of the presence or ultimate efficacy of any council with lay participation in a parish.

A significant frustration for the laity is that despite their often considerable education and expertise, they can be denied the most simple forms of service to their parish and wider church. Furthermore, there remains a lack of recourse in canon law to any formal processes of complaint, or even simple communication, to the leadership of the diocese.

165. Consider the example of the Catholic Church in Australia: "Since the establishment of the Catholic Church in Australia in 1834, at least 145 Catholic synods - 3 provincial, 4 plenary and 138 diocesan - have been held throughout the nation. However, in the 46 years since the 2nd Vatican Council (1962-1965) which explicitly called for synods 'to flourish with new vigour' (*CD* n.36), and insisted that the laity have an active role in them, no plenary or provincial councils or synods have been held, and only five Australian bishops have convened just six diocesan synods." Peter J. Wilkinson, *Catholic Synods in Australia, 1844-2011*, *Catholics for Renewal*, Dec 2011, accessed 20 Oct 2020, https://www.catholicsforrenewal.org/documents.htm. The last diocesan synod held in Melbourne (the most populous Australian Catholic diocese) was in 1905; the last Melbourne Provincial Synod was 1907. Ibid.

In response to Pope Francis' example the ACBC announced a Plenary Council for the Church in Australia. With very little preparation conducted through diocesan synods this will prove to be a groundbreaking and challenging move towards a synodal renewal for the Catholic Church in Australia. Plenary Council 2020 website, accessed 15 Oct 2020 http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/.

Conclusion

The review of ecclesiology and the development of a hierarchical paradigm in chapter one supported the investigation of the Second Vatican Council and beyond in chapter two. The focus of chapter two was upon the new era for the Catholic Church heralded by the Council, in which ecclesiology was broken open to new paradigms for exploring the nature and mission of the Church. The official documents of the Council were examined in section 2.1. They were seen to reflect the tension between participants who supported the vision of renewal as *aggiornamento*, *ressourcement*, and theology in a Thomistic style, and those who relied on the neo-Scholasticism of the early twentieth century. The progress of ecclesiology within Vatican II brought emphasis to the place of history and pluralism within theology and philosophy. Vatican II established strong foundations for conceiving the Church as the People of God; a community with common baptismal identity out of which all are called to mission. However, it was unable to break away from the various metaphors of the hierarchical perspective which belonged in a particular way to the identity and functioning of the episcopacy.

Section 2.2 described the development of collegiality and its concrete expression in the Synod of Bishops. These are precursors to synodality, which deepens and expands to a universal scope the hierarchical understanding of participation, responsibility and authority. Section 2.3 explored the emergence of new voices and a theology of the laity. The preparatory groundwork for the emergence of many previously unheard voices was laid in the work of the Council. The Church's understanding of relationships was breaking open, and in doing so was exposed to criticism and correctives from the hierarchy. Pope John Paul II invigorated the development of theology of the laity with strong foundations in the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Christifideles Laici*. Examined in section 2.4, this document supports the baptismal nature, and *tria munera Christi* functioning, of the laity, and the responsibility that these entail. The context of *Christifideles* reveals the elements of ecclesial praxis and theology that limited the document's potential to promote renewal: authority remained a concept apart from the laity, and, likewise, the institutional structures of the Church remained the realm of the episcopacy (section 2.5), whose identity and function were shaped by the exclusive and defensive hierarchical paradigm. The underlying foundations of

an integral ecclesial communion - the structures of parish, diocese and region - were long-neglected.

Chapter two identifies that what was missing after the Council was a holistic ecclesiology, which perceives and supports the responsibility and authority of the entire People of God - the clergy and laity together. A comprehensive renewal must be *transformative* for the entire People of God. Foundations for transformation lie in the meaning that was rediscovered by Vatican II: common baptismal identity and a dialogical and missionary nature. Collegiality was the first step towards implementation of a visible and practical Church-wide communion; the next step is universal development and appropriation of the People of God as mature, responsible and missionary - the authentic Catholic Church.

Chapter 3
Foundations for an Ecclesiology of Synodality

Introduction

Chapter three will lay the foundations for an ecclesiology of synodality as essential to the healthy development of the contemporary Catholic Church. These foundations will have strong connections with the insights of the first chapter, which sought the roots of synodality within the historical unfolding of the early Church. The exploration in chapter two of the Council of Trent and the ecclesial metaphors of the early twentieth century revealed an inertial and defensive hierarchical ecclesial meaning. The legacy of Trent was long and deep: a hierarchical paradigm that was so concerned with issues of power and control, and manifestly insufficient for the twentieth century, ultimately produced multifaceted forms of clericalism that are still deeply ingrained in Catholic culture. It would take reform on a huge scale to break the Church open to a return to a dynamic and relational self-understanding and its appropriation with a modern hermeneutic.

Ecclesiological renewal began at the Second Vatican Council and was shaped and propelled by three concepts that had long been restricted: *ressourcement*, *aggiornamento*, and development. They represent a return to the sources (past) and a bringing up to date (present), with an intention to develop a more authentic Church in the future. Vatican II released the pressure that had held ecclesial meaning in stasis, and prepared for the possibility of an era that embraced relational and dynamic meaning, providing the capability for developing all of the faithful as mature and responsible, and committed to guidance and transformation by the Holy Spirit. This new potential could not be fully realised when, post-Council, the hierarchy failed to expel the old, familiar, and ultimately toxic culture of defensiveness, exclusivity, and stratification. Fifty years later it is apparent how difficult it is to adopt a new ecclesial paradigm when the old one still distorts the structures of authority and power.

This is the background for the foundations to the vision of synodality which shall be developed in this chapter.

The Catholic Church as synodal is emerging during what will likely prove to be a new era brought about by two highly significant factors for renewal: the papacy of Pope Francis, and the explosive revelations of scandalous abuse and cover-up in the Church. Synodality is

not a reactionary solution but rather a new mode of self-understanding that is oriented to - and capable of providing the means for - achieving the *authenticity* of the People of God.[1] The Church's new era of synodality is fundamentally characterised by the grasping of new meaning, the struggle of an expansion of consciousness, and the adoption of a more sophisticated control of meaning. It is an era where the Church grows in consciousness of the need for commitment to ongoing conversion with hope in transformation by the Spirit, only in response to which the fruits of structural renewal may be possible. Hierarchy as a paradigm, or interpretive framework, is recognised as no longer appropriate or life-giving for understanding the people and processes of the Church. Fundamental for synodality is understanding the People of God as pilgrims on a journey; with each other, the world, and with the Creator. Synodality is radical in two ways: for the comprehensive encompassing of synodal meaning of all aspects of being Church and indeed of all human life, its relationships and environments; and for the return to roots, where Jesus' disciples were walkers and talkers, who questioned and learned together, and were filled with, and led by, the Holy Spirit.

In the present context of the Catholic Church where is synodality now, and what more does it need to contribute to the flourishing of the People of God? What will synodality look like in a practical sense? Before these questions can be addressed through this chapter and the next, the issues for ecclesiology that have arisen from chapters one and two deserve acknowledgement:

> Surveying the history of hierarchical meaning raises questions around the roots of clericalism. What can be done to identity and remove these roots? How does the Church prepare itself to avoid such a catastrophic failure in the future?
> Vatican II laid the groundwork for engaging with questions that lie at the heart of contemporary ecclesiology: who has responsibility within the Church? What are the responsibilities of the faithful? And towards what is the Church moving - mission? "apostolate"? the institution? God? each other? What are the connections between

1. Authenticity as the pursuit of self-transcendence, and the constant turning away from unauthenticity - as described by Bernard Lonergan - shall be explained in this chapter within the context of meaning and community.

Chapter two engaged with the language of Vatican II and Pope John Paul II (as well as the CDF) when surveying the ecclesiological development around the "laity." This chapter moves into the contemporary era and the papacy of Pope Francis where the language and theology is of the *entire Church* as the People of God.

power, authority and responsibility? What could happen to the exercise of power when ecclesial relationships are perceived through a synodal paradigm? Are there areas of ecclesial life that did not undergo the *aggiornamento* of Vatican II? In particular, to what extent does the episcopacy retain a static and hierarchical self-understanding?

The papacy must likewise be considered: how is the Petrine charism of "unity of faith and communion"[2] conceived and practiced from within the various ecclesial views, i.e. hierarchical, collegial, communion, synodal? Where lie the healthy foundations and vision for the future?

These questions and issues directly inform the Church of the present. The task of an ecclesiology of synodality will be to recognise the dialectic of the past and select foundations from which to critically engage with the issues as they present now, in order that the Church of the future may be built up as more honest, humble and loving in identity and mission.

Chapter three will establish foundations for an ecclesiology of synodality in two parts. Firstly, through an investigation of new meaning for the Catholic Church which conceives the People of God as *community*. How community is constituted and achieved will be analysed using the work of theologian and philosopher Bernard Lonergan. The second part will explore conversion and transformation as concepts essential to synodality. Together, the foundations established in this chapter will support, in chapter four, the practical understanding of a synodal Church as authentic.

3.1 New Meaning for the Church: The *Ekklēsia* as Community

The Catholic Church is undergoing a transformation of self-understanding from hierarchical to synodal. This process is actually a *change of meaning* for the Church. The Church dramatically entered a new era with the Second Vatican Council, which heralded a departure from the Church functioning as hierarchical and moved it forward on a journey perceived as relational and communal. Vatican II, and its reception which is still unfolding

2. See *PA* n.4. See also: CDF, *The Primacy of the Successor of Peter in the Mystery of the Church*, *Holy See Press Office*, 18 Nov 1998, accessed 21 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19981031_primato-successore-pietro_en.html.

after fifty years, supports the understanding that change of meaning occurs slowly and painfully. There is a dialectic between continuity and change.[3] Continuity is found in the foundations that tie generations together, as the meaning that has been formed by the community over time and in turn forms the community. Change does not necessarily involve an explicit rejection of any of the multitudes of small or large meanings that comprise one's world: it can be the *ressourcement* of returning to the roots, or the *aggiornamento* of making the Church contemporary.

The concepts of human development in history and meaning are essential to the notion of authenticity for this thesis. This chapter explores what it means for the Catholic Church to be synodal, by demonstrating how change in meaning is bringing about the possibility of authenticity for the Church. This will require a rigorous survey of meaning and the control of meaning, within the context of a modern heuristic method.[4]

Synodality elevates within the meaning of being Church those attributes that were foundational to the early Church, as identified in chapter one: community, unity and diversity, walking together, and Spirit-led transformation. These attributes are dynamic and deep in meaning, indicating that the path for the Church is not yet clear, and not of the Church's planning, but of the Spirit's. It is a path to be made as it is walked, because it is a path of conversion. The sin and failures of the contemporary Church demand conversion to new attitudes if it is to be synodal: from arrogance to listening and learning; drawing humility out of humiliation; and wiping out defensiveness and exclusivity to be replaced by hospitality and inclusivity. The radical nature of synodality brings a connection (or reconnection) with what is recognised as authentic, but also a break from that which proves to be unauthentic. Hierarchical meaning has not evolved into synodality but is being overcome by it. Hierarchy as power, defensiveness and stratification survived as meaning for the Church for far too

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3. Vincent Long Van Nguyen, Bishop of Parramatta in Australia, uses biblical imagery to describe the renewal that is happening to the contemporary Church: "Pope Francis has unleashed a new energy, he has poured a new wine which cannot be contained in old wineskins. He has challenged us to move in concert with him and bring about the rebirth of the Church." Vincent Long Van Nguyen, "Address to Priests in Australia and New Zealand," *Catholic Outlook*, 26 Nov 2018, accessed 15 Oct 2020, https://catholicoutlook.org/address-to-priests-in-australia-and-new-zealand-part-1-introduction/.

4. Bernard Lonergan defines method as: "a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results. There is a method, then, where there are distinct operations, where each operation is related to the others, where the set of relations forms a pattern, where the pattern is described as the right way of doing the job, where operations in accord with the pattern may be repeated indefinitely, and where the fruits of such repetition are, not repetitious, but cumulative and progressive." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 4. The methodology of this thesis is in accord with Lonergan's definition.

long. It resisted genuine engagement with culture that could potentially bring about an *aggiornamento* by each generation, and instead turned inward and over time cultivated the fruit of that corruption: clericalism.

Clericalism is an ecclesial self-understanding founded on hierarchical meaning, which by its nature cannot co-exist with a relational self-understanding: the concentration of power in the episcopacy cannot accede to co-responsibility and mutual authority; the *societas perfecta* cannot co-exist with the priestly, prophetic and kingly functions of all the faithful; and clericalism cannot bear the baptismal rights and responsibilities of the laity. These dualities illustrate the tension between classical and modern method. The fixed, classical notion of the world developed and supported the theology of exclusive power and participation in authority. Modern science and contemporary philosophical and theological tasks, however, are supported by modern and empirical method - not by classicism. Modern empirical method marked the twentieth century movement into a new epoch of development - not merely in the Catholic Church but in human history - for the *control of meaning*. Stepping out of classicism and not yet fully into a new era brings an in-between time. The present time is a new stage for humanity in the reflection upon and control of meaning, and for understanding the human person as operating with the dynamism of transcendental consciousness - the drive by which the person comes to *know*. The next section explains transcendental consciousness for the context of this thesis, so that synodality may be defined as new ecclesial meaning and understood as the People of God living authentically.

3.1.1 The Expansion of Meaning Through History

This section shall explore a modern control of meaning which incorporates transcendental consciousness as the natural operations of the person as subject, as explained by Canadian Jesuit Bernard Lonergan. This foundation will be established by a brief exploration of human development as the progressive journey of humanity through expansions of cultural meaning, which have taken the shape of successive plateaus in history. The plateaus mark stages of breakthrough in heuristic method, whereby achievement in understanding has broken the former boundaries and restrictions in the control of meaning and reached a new, more expansive realm. These great epochs of change in the control of meaning are few. Lonergan explains how the first was marked by Socrates' turn to reflexive

control of meaning and Greek classical culture.[5] This overcame the prior common-sense understanding of the world, wherein myth and magic are used to control meaning.[6] Such unsophisticated control of meaning in the earliest heuristic method of human development was the result of undifferentiated consciousness, in a culture which did not yet have the ability to move beyond the common sense world.[7] Socrates added a "prior question" to the usual consideration of the end and not the means, i.e. enquiring first into the *nature* of virtue before investigating how to acquire it. The breakthrough that brought movement into the second plateau was the Scholastic control of meaning through logic, which set clear boundaries between the necessary and the contingent. The understanding of "truth" was restricted by a focus on the fixed and unchanging, while remaining disconnected from the individual, anomalies, change and transformation.[8]

This thesis is seeking to form a concrete, historical apprehension of the human person in communities constituted by meaning, in order to explore the particular movement from hierarchical meaning to synodality for the Catholic Church. To do this, history must be respected in a concrete and not abstract way. The classical notion of the world as split into the necessary (true under all circumstances) and the contingent (true only under certain conditions, or existing only as a matter of fact and not necessarily existing) cannot undertake

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5. Bernard Lonergan, "Dimensions of Meaning," in *Collection: Papers by Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 4, 235-36.

6. The realm of *common sense* is separated from the realm of *theory*. Common sense is the perspective of persons and things in relation to oneself, and is achieved through a self-corrective process of learning. The language and objects of theory do not belong in the world of common sense. One can move between these realms when one's control of meaning has developed such an ability. A further stage exists with the appropriation of: "one's own interiority, one's subjectivity, one's operations, their structure, their norms, their potentialities… it is a heightening of intentional consciousness, an attending not merely to objects but also to the intending subject and his acts." Finally there is the realm of transcendence: "moving beyond the realms of common sense, theory, and interiority and into the realm in which God is known and loved." Achieving awareness of these realms and intentionally shifting between them is described as a "differentiated consciousness." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 83-85.

7. Lonergan describes the movement of a person through the different stages or degrees of development - of oneself and of the world - as differentiation of consciousness (as mentioned in the previous footnote). This involves awareness of self as moving from a "world of immediacy" (such as a child's experience of only that which is sensory and immediate), to a world mediated by meaning, thence to a more sophisticated world of theory where one is aware of one's use of reflexive techniques upon the mediating operations. Lonergan describes a higher stage of the mystic who: "drops the constructs of culture and the whole complicated mass of mediating operations to return to a new, mediated immediacy of his subjectivity reaching for God." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 29.

8. Lonergan speaks of the difference between classicism and the reality of pluralism and historicity. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 326-30.

this task.[9] Lonergan explains that with classical thinking comes classical culture: a culture that is constituted by meaning that is in turn shaped and reflected upon within the confines of the classical control of meaning. Those confines were shifted by the advent of modern science, which no longer claims absolute truth and certain knowledge, but instead is *on the way* to truth, a journey which involves hypotheses, probabilities, and systems, which are all founded on an openness to recognising that there can always be more data, more theories, and further opportunities for more rigorous determinations. Lonergan noted in 1965 that modern culture struggled with the movement to a new age, as it still does today:

> Classical culture has given way to a modern culture, and, I would submit, the crisis of our age is in no small measure the fact that modern culture has not yet reached its maturity. The classical mediation of meaning has broken down…[10]

Lonergan describes the modern control of meaning as empirical, whereby observation, understanding, and judgement are necessarily part of the one process of knowing.[11] Modern science as empirical is accessible and dynamic. It seeks definitions of terms and relationship, and ultimately reaches for a complete explanation of all phenomena - a goal that is far beyond classical science. Modern science does not restrict itself to pure philosophical thinking but is engaged with the practical and applied sciences, pure scientific thinking, the explosion of the digital era and modern large-scale statistical mathematics, as well as social sciences and the arts. Science is very much a collaborative and cumulative enterprise, and now operates comfortably within a modern, empirical control of meaning: but what of philosophy and theology?

Already in this thesis it has been noted how an historical perspective was acquired by biblical studies in the early twentieth century, and gained momentum through the work of *ressourcement* by the French Dominicans, laying the groundwork for the Second Vatican

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9. Within classical science the human mind is also split between science/opinion, theory/practice, and wisdom/prudence. The necessary universe could be known scientifically, and contemplated by theory. The contingent universe is known only by opinion and is the realm in which human operation was effective and practical. The pursuit of wisdom was the seeking and finding of ultimate and changeless foundations. Lonergan says: "If modern theologians were to transpose medieval theory into the categories derived from contemporary interiority and its real correlatives, they would be doing for our age what the greater Scholastics did for theirs. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 327-28.

10. Lonergan, "Dimensions of Meaning," 238.

11. Lonergan describes six canons of empirical method in *Insight*, with the intention of revealing the *why* of empirical method, and to ultimately producing a unified method which he calls Generalised Empirical Method (later called transcendental method in *Method in Theology*). Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1978), 71.

Council.[12] Yet more was needed to bring the understanding of the human person - in particular the cognitional, epistemological and metaphysical process of knowing - out from a classical worldview to a consciousness that is transcendental and necessarily historical.[13] The work of Lonergan achieved this in the bringing together and elevating of two disparate understandings of human reality: the notion of human nature from the ancient Greeks, and the concept of historicity from nineteenth century historical thought.[14] The result was *natural right* and *historical mindedness* which together conceive the human person as operating with a consciousness that is intentional within the wider world that is mediated by meaning.

In the next section the concepts of meaning and community are investigated, in the first of three stages of exploring the foundations of an ecclesiology of synodality. These concepts will help to establish an understanding of the People of God as a dynamic and relational community, which is formed through the various stages of common meaning.

3.1.2 The World is Mediated and Constituted by Meaning

The world is mediated to human beings by meaning, for the world is so much more than what is seen, touched, heard, tasted or smelled. Humans can imagine, plan, build up or destroy, hope and love, as more than simply reactions to their sensory experience. It doesn't take long for a toddler to grow out of their immediate world to the world beyond. This is a world that is known and interpreted by other people and is in turn communicated to, and received, by the individual.[15] The world is then *known* through a wide variety of sources; a child's world expands from the initial circle of family, friends, and books, to the dramatically larger world of school, neighbours, media, and the information offered by science, literature, the arts, and other expert (and non-expert) voices. The world is thus known to a person as *mediated by meaning*, the scope of which lies beyond an individual, or even the sum of all individuals' experiences. Meaning is in fact the substance of community and culture:

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12. See sec.2.1.2.

13. See fn.6 in the Introduction. The move from classicist to historicist thinking and methodology for theology is expected to be a painful and drawn-out process.

14. Bernard Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, 169-83 (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 169.

15. Anyone familiar with the constant questioning of a toddler will know that reception of meaning is not mindless but rather a dynamic and driven process of knowing. Lonergan explains how the human person possesses a deep capacity for inquiry: "questions for intelligence, for reflection, for deliberation reveal the eros of the human spirit, its capacity and its desire for self-transcendence." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 242, see 13.

> For the world mediated by meaning is a world known not by the sense experience of an individual but by the external and internal experience of a cultural community, and by the continuously checked and rechecked judgments of the community.[16]

Herein lies the importance of community and meaning, not as abstract concepts but as the concrete *working out what the world is* and *how this is known* throughout history. The acts that build up common meaning are what constitute and unify a group of people as *community*. An understanding of the meaning of the Catholic Church is impoverished if the Church is not perceived in this way as community - indeed, as a community of communities. To be responsible, a contemporary ecclesiology must include an examination of how exactly community is constituted, how this relates to meaning, and how community can experience growth or decline.[17] This is developed in section 3.2 using the theology of Lonergan.

3.2 The Church as Dynamic and Relational: Building Community

The Catholic Church is dynamic and relational because it is comprised of human beings who are essentially historical and communal. *Historical* indicates that each instance of Church, every family, parish and diocese, is rooted in their own time and place, society and culture, and are capable of progress or decline.[18] *Communal* is a description of the fundamental reality of each and all human persons as made in the image and likeness of the

16. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 238.

17. To be cognitively responsible is to practice and refine one's ability to make good judgements. This is a constant process of attending to the facts, being intelligent and reasonable with this data, and only then being prepared for judgement - which in turn is always open to new data and starting the whole process over. As a crude snapshot of Lonergan's explanation of *knowing*, this is what ecclesiology seeks to do: to attend and observe, to understand, and, with good judgement, to explain the nature and identity of the Church. Importantly, Lonergan recognises that successive generations must rely on the insights and judgements of those who went before. Progress is thus an historical endeavour: it takes place in the milieu of a particular time and place, but also requires engagement with the past. Lonergan states: "Human knowledge, then, is not some individual possession but rather a common fund, from which each may draw by believing, to which each may contribute in the measure that he performs his cognitional operations properly and reports their results accurately… Through communication and belief there are generated common sense, common knowledge, common science, common values, a common climate of opinion. No doubt, this public fund may suffer from blindspots, oversights, errors, bias. But it is what we have got, and the the remedy for its short-comings is not the rejection of belief and so a return to primitivism, but the critical and selfless stance that, in this as in other matters, promotes progress and offsets decline." Ibid., 43-44.

18. Lonergan explains that human authenticity promotes progress, and human unauthenticity generates decline. The principal means of overcoming evil in the world - and in the Church - is through Christian authenticity, which he describes as a "process of redemption." Ibid., 291, 364.

Triune God, who is communion.[19] The words communal, communion and community, all have their etymological root in the Latin *commūnālis* (common), which is different from the root of unity, *ūnitās* (one). This is significant, for this thesis proposes that a synodal Catholic Church understands itself as a dynamic and relational community of communities. Dominican theologian Jean-Marie Tillard explains how the Church is a "communion of communions," formed through baptism and gathered together as communities by the Spirit:

> The nature of the Church, as early Tradition understands it, is, therefore, summed up in *communion*, *koinonia*. It is the *Church of Churches*. Understood in its full context, it is the *communion of communions*, appearing as a *communion* of local Churches, spread throughout the world, each one itself being a *communion* of the baptized, gathered together into communities by the Holy Spirit, on the basis of their baptism, for the Eucharistic celebration. This existence as *communion* constitutes its essence. And the relationship to *communion* with the Father, Son and Spirit shows its deep-rootedness even in the eternal reality of the mystery of God.[20]

Using the imagery of expanding spheres one can understand how ecclesial communion can be either outgoing or restricted. Beginning with one's God and one's immediate neighbour, communion can be close, direct, immanent. Successive spheres, which may be larger or overlapping, encompass the wider activities and groups that a person cares about. Closeness is not limited by geography nor always by corporal existence, as in the case of the communion of saints. The furthest edges of the spheres form the horizon beyond which the individual has no interest. With nothing in *commūnālis* (common) there can be no communion with what lies beyond. Expanding one's own horizon (spheres of communion) is a journey of expanding one's consciousness through inquiry and exploration, and most especially through encounter. This is *authenticity*, which involves continual work in

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19. The words communal, communion and community, all have roots in the Latin *commūnālis* (common). *American Heritage Dictionary*, s.v. "communal." An undercurrent in this thesis is the relationship between *commūnālis* (common), *ūnitās* (one) and the "one" in "one, holy, catholic and apostolic," as an attribute or characteristic of the Church.

20. Jean-Marie Tillard, *Church of Churches: An Ecclesiology of Communion,* trans. De Peaux (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 29. Italics are the author's own.

Eastern Orthodox theologian John Zizioulas describes the mystery of being Church as "being as communion": "The Church is not simply an institution. She is a 'mode of existence,' a way of being. The mystery of the Church, even in its institutional dimension, is deeply bound to the being of man, to the being of the world and to the very being of God… This way of being is not a moral attainment, something that man *accomplishes*. It is a way of *relationship* with the world, with other people and with God, an event of *communion*, and that is why it cannot be realized as the achievement of an *individual*, but only as an *ecclesial* fact." John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Press, 1985), 15. Italics are the author's own.

recognising bias and unauthenticity in one's thinking, and removing the boundaries and inconsistencies to knowing what truly is so. This chapter is laying foundations for understanding synodality as the entire *ekklēsia* as authentic, which first requires the concept of community to be developed within this section.

Communities undergo cycles of progress and decline, periods of stagnation, and occasions of transformation. A synodal Church knows itself as a community of communities on a journey that is characterised by these moments throughout history. While the concept of synodality was introduced in the introduction of this thesis, and key ecclesiological concepts explored in section 1.1, the origin of the word itself contributes to understanding a synodal community. The word "synod" is from the Greek word *synodos* meaning "meeting,"[21] and is used to describe the gathering of bishops.[22] The root words *syn-* meaning together/with/ united/at the same time, and *hodós* meaning way, indicate that synod can be understood in a more holistic way as *a way together*, or *journeying together*.[23] This journey is known in both an eschatological sense of being pilgrims - called as children of God but not yet in the glory of Christ (*LG* n.48) - and in the concrete and historical sense of human development as a continual pursuit of progress and battle against decline.[24]

Sections 3.2.1-4 describe how at the heart of the human journey is the building of community through common meaning, and explore the stages by which this happens. The extent to which meaning is identified, entered into, lived, shared, and renewed, is the extent to which community is achieved. Unity may therefore be conceived as the achievement of community, and a sign of authentic communion, in section 3.2.5.

3.2.1 Common Meaning

Community is constituted through the work of building up common meaning by a group. Common meaning can be tenuous - an individual can join a sporting club and care not a whit about its history or future - and common meaning can be hard won, as decades of

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21. *Collins English Dictionary: Complete and Unabridged*, 12th ed. (HarperCollins Publishers, 2014), s.v. "synod."

22 In this meaning "synod" is interchangeable with "council." Rahner and Vorgrimler, eds., *Dictionary of Theology*, s.v. "council." See sec.2.5 of this thesis.

23. *Hodós* (Greek): a "way, road, path or journey." *Strong's Concordance*, s.v. "*hodós*."

24. Progress occurs when people live in accord with their intentional consciousness, and decline is the consequence of not doing so. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 291.

ecumenical dialogue can attest to. The depth to which a group of people achieve community depends on the degree to which they enter into their meaning together, which is a process of common experience, blooming into common understanding, developing further into common judgement, and, finally, flourishing in genuine commitment. The people within an authentic community allow meaning to inform their lives and, in turn, use their experience, understanding and judgement to build their meaning. Lonergan clarifies how exactly meaning and community are interrelated, and the stages by which they are achieved. This provides the foundations to understanding community, communion and meaning in the context of synodality, which is being established through this chapter:

> A common field of *experience* makes for a potential community; and without that common field people get out of touch. Common and complementary ways of *understanding* make for a community of mind; and without it there are misunderstanding, suspicion, distrust, mutual incomprehension. Common *judgements* constitute a consensus; and without it an easy tolerance gives way to amazement, scorn, ridicule, division. Common *commitments*, finally, are the stuff of fidelity to one another, of loyalty to the group, of faith in divine providence and in the destiny of man; and without such commitments community has lost its heart and becomes just an aggregate.[25]

The action of building common meaning is always historical and highly dependent on the community's control of meaning. Thus it is always important to consider the group's context in any given time and culture, and its reflexive, reflective action upon the making of meaning.[26]

Lonergan's explanation demonstrates how it is that a community is more than simply a group of people, and even more than the collective of their individual experiences, understanding, judgements and commitments. *Community is an achievement of common*

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25. Lonergan, "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness," 4. Italics have been added to highlight the four stages of being community.

26. Building common meaning can encounter serious obstructions to authenticity. These include: 1) The common understandings, or the judgements which follow, can be distorted and produce a warped meaning. A contemporary example is how the protection of the right to bear arms in the United States of America has brought about a subculture of defiance and belligerence in the face of continual gun massacres, even in schools. 2) Meaning can be inherited and known through a control of meaning that is out of step with today's empirical, historical, and transcendental control of meaning. Thus that which is inherited (such as doctrine, dogma and tradition) must be received again through the modern control of meaning for it to operate effectively in the modern world. A contemporary example for this issue is the structures of authority in the Church. These continue to hinder the flourishing of Christian women and others who are marginalised, and their communities, that is, the whole Church. It is only through employing a reflexive action upon meaning-making that a community can critically evaluate their meaning, its source and development, and their own receiving and living of it.

meaning.[27] The dynamic and relational community of communities that is the Catholic Church thus achieves its most effective self when acting together fully in its common meaning: in Jesus Christ.

3.2.2 Common Experience

Meaning is encountered and initially either recognised or obscured, agreed upon or rejected, through the earliest stage of community: shared experience. Without common experience as a foundation a group will lack even the potential for moving towards mutual understanding, consensus and loyalty. To clarify this, Rosemary Haughton explains: "Community is not the common existence of a large group of people, it refers to the creation of a relationship, whose nature is not affected by the number of people involved."[28] The nature of community is dynamic: there are points at which relationships are created and these can be strengthened by entering more deeply into the stages of common meaning, or they can be neglected, and the group will no longer operate as a community but instead as an assembly of individuals aligned to their own pursuits.

Community values and meaning are eroded by a detachment from shared experience, which can be illustrated by those leaders in society who have both power and strong communications. Examples include politicians who cultivate fear of refugees and entrepreneurs who prefer profit over ethical supply lines. Abuse of power contributes to the fracturing of authentic authority, and brings about a pervasive loss of trust in institutions that, by their mandate, should be pursuing the common good. Some clerics and Religious have created the same effect in religious institutions. Those who have removed themselves and their offices from the common experience of the People of God can spiral into habits of corruption, ranging from serial abuse cover-ups to extreme financial mismanagement and obsessive careerism.[29] The complex causes of clerical abuse in its many forms are yet to be

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27. Haughton says of this: "all communities have to become on-purpose." Rosemary Haughton, *The Transformation of Man: A Study of Conversion and Community* (New York, NY: Paulist Press Deus Books, 1967), 153.

28. Ibid., 244.

29. One example is the massive misuse of diocesan funds by Bishop Michael J. Bransfield when he was leader of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston in West Virginia, USA: Ashley McKinless, "Explainer: How Could Bishop Bransfield Misuse Funds for Years Without Raising Red Flags?" 12 Jun 2019, accessed 15 Oct 2020, https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2019/06/12/explainer-how-could-bishop-bransfield-misuse-funds-years-without-raising-red-flags?.

fully uncovered. While the contemporary Church reels from one revelation to the next it may be too simple to point to any one source of clerical corruption. However, if the community of the *ekklēsia* is built up through each generation's contribution to common experience, understanding, and judgement, then, equally, each generation through its parishes, dioceses, and episcopal leadership, can neglect and distort this process. The imbalance of power that was cultivated through the hierarchical paradigm of Church brought about a great separation between clerical and lay experience. This contributed to an overall effect known as clericalism, which includes an enduring infantilisation of the laity, a lack of accountability in leadership, and various forms of abuse. Approaches that have foundations in understanding the Church as a dynamic and relational community of common meaning could be used by a synodal Church to overcoming these problems .

3.2.3 Common Understanding

Common understanding is the next stage of development for a community and it builds on common experience. It is not only a shared understanding of the aims and values of the group, but a growing in understanding each other. The horizon of an individual encompasses all that one knows or cares about. Simply meeting another person does not place them inside one's horizon, nor for that matter does any shallow attempt to understand them using only preconceived notions. Authentic understanding is part of the larger dynamic process of human knowing which questions, receives new data, assesses, revises, confirms, and remains open to repeat the process over again. The common understanding of a group is therefore a continuous cycle of operations that are personal and conscious, mutual and conversational, and thus highly relational and communicative. Moving into shared understanding requires clear direction and leadership, but these are at the service of that which brings about the possibility of genuine mutual understanding: hospitality, encounter and dialogue. These elements draw out an understanding of the *ekklēsia* as a dynamic and relational community in the context of common understanding.[30]

30. Hospitality, encounter and dialogue also resonate with the three principle policies of the pontificate of Pope Paul VI, as stated in *Ecclesiam Suam:* self-awareness, renewal, and dialogue. See sec.2.1.6 of this thesis.

3.2.3.1 Hospitality

Hospitality and *encounter* pave the way to genuine *dialogue.* As the first step, hospitality is both a welcoming of, and openness to receive, another person. It is the laying of initial groundwork to enable encounter to occur with mutual respect. The methodology of Receptive Ecumenism is one way that the Catholic Church is developing a contemporary understanding of hospitality as radical openness to the other, with a purposeful desire to change or renew the self of the Church, rather than the other.[31] Receptive Ecumenism's values of mutual dignity, learning and renewal, are the values of a synodal Church incorporated into the service of its *ad extra* relationships, in some ways earlier than its *ad intra* relationships.[32] Antonia Pizzey explains how Receptive Ecumenism understands hospitality as "intimately [connected] to love," and, as the "face of love," that helps to "guide us in putting love into action."[33] The consequence is preparation for an encounter that is respectful of, and open to, the different horizon of the other:

> Receptive Ecumenism emphasises hospitality by placing, as its first duty, love for one another. It is, therefore, not concerned with changing others or trying to convert them. The otherness of the other is encountered and respected. We invite the other in, to listen and learn from them – and it is we who are changed![34]

Through intentionally adopting this direction of love-hospitality-encounter the methodology of Receptive Ecumenism has the potential to be of great use for the contemporary Church in

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31. Antonia Pizzey encapsulates Receptive Ecumenism (RE) as: "essentially a strategy of active ecclesial learning and listening in the service of institutional renewal." Antonia Pizzey, "Receptive Ecumenical Learning: A Constructive Way of Approaching Ecclesial Identity and Renewal," in *Receptive Ecumenism: Listening, Learning and Loving in the Way of Christ*, ed. Vicky Balabanski and Geraldine Hawkes, 61-78 (Adelaide, SA: ATF Theology, 2018), 62. Pizzey fleshes out the concept of hospitality as a virtue of a person doing RE. She acknowledges that Murray, the key figure in the founding of RE, describes the core values of RE as "responsible hospitality and dynamic integrity." Murray, "Receptive Ecumenism and Catholic Learning," 16.

32. Another *ad extra* example is ARCIC III, which explored the questions of authority and communion ecclesiology in a novel and dialogical way (see fn.3 in chap.1). ARCIC III's methodology is described as "receptive learning": "that process whereby each of our traditions asks itself whether instruments of communion and other elements of church life found in the other tradition might suggest a way of furthering the mission of the church in one's own tradition. "Receptive learning" does not presume that elements from one tradition can usually be directly borrowed from the other. One tradition might decide that, in some cases, some processes or instruments in another tradition would not be suitable. But the term suggests a positive openness to study and evaluation of what seems to work in another tradition, with a view to adapting it to one's own." ARCIC III, *Walking Together on the Way*, iii.

33. Antonia Pizzey, "The Receptive Ecumenical Spirit: The Role of the Virtues in Guiding Receptive Ecumenical Discernment and Decision-Making" (paper presented at the Fourth International Receptive Ecumenism Conference, Canberra, 6-9 Nov 2017).

34. Pizzey, "The Receptive Ecumenical Spirit."

its *ad intra* relations. These relationships have been traumatised by clericalism and the result is a Church in great need of multifaceted healing.

In preparation to encounter each other as wounded Body, a synodal Church will need to adopt humility and love through hospitality, as a welcoming of God and neighbour in every community.[35] Hospitality is preparation for encounter and dialogue, and is an act of hope for love that could be reached later in friendship, after the successive stages of community have been laboured over. Love is "marked" by humility, as described by Pope Francis:

> Love, on the other hand, is marked by humility; if we are to understand, forgive and serve others from the heart, our pride has to be healed and our humility must increase (*AL* n.98).

The love and humility of genuine hospitality will prove to be key to any process of building up the People of God through truth-seeking and repentance.[36]

3.2.3.2 Encounter

Chapter one of this thesis established that moments of encounter are key elements of a process of transformation. Encounters with Jesus in the Gospel of John involved invitation and exploration, and likewise the historic development of Christianity demonstrates stages of invitation, re-orientation, progress or decline, and the leadership of the Spirit. To intentionally engage in encounter is to prevail over fear, mistrust and boundary-setting that are the consequences of turning inwards. It is encounter that brings momentum to a synodal Church and overcomes the inertia that enables corruption to continue unchallenged. Corruption is the result of decline, which Lonergan defines as an individual's alienation from her or his intentional consciousness, and a society's acceptance of ideology that justifies such

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35. This resonates with the discussion in chapter one on Saint Paul's concern that the Christian community participate in mutual building up in love (*agapē*).

36. The preparatory stage of the upcoming Plenary Council for the Catholic Church in Australia began with "Listening & Dialogue Encounters" by small groups. For many Australian Catholics being asked to contribute in a mature and discerning way to an ecclesial conversation was a novel experience. Noel Connolly encapsulates the challenges of breaking open synodality in this context: "Lay people have not always been encouraged to speak up and we clergy have not always appreciated our responsibility to invite the *sensus fidelium* and to listen humbly. We all have much to learn and it may be a little messy and hurtful in the process. Consulting, speaking up, listening, discerning are all skills and they take practice to master. I imagine that the first time we speak boldly, it may be clumsy and/or angry. It will probably be even more difficult for us to listen humbly, neither pointing a finger at, nor judging others, but with open kind hearts trying to appreciate what the Spirit is saying through each of us." Noel Connolly, "A Pope Who is Not Afraid of Open Discussion and Even Dissent in the Church," *Plenary Council 2020*, last modified 8 Jun 2019, accessed 13 Sep 2020, https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/TalkTheologyV1.pdf.

alienation.[37] Pope Francis emphasises the importance of encounter in each of his major documents, and takes its meaning well beyond what was established by the Second Vatican Council.[38] Pope John XXIII opened the Council with a pastoral outlook, determined that the Church should meet the needs of the day by: "explaining the validity of her doctrine more fully rather than condemning."[39] The Church was to be a "loving mother of all," raising the "torch of religious truth" during the Council, and distributing the "goods of heavenly grace" to the world.[40] Pope John XXIII's vision was that the Church could look outwards to the world and to its relationships *ad extra* in a positive manner; this was a break with the Church's hierarchical meaning which had been stagnant for a long time, but it was only a beginning. The fifty years of history since Vatican II have brought many new encounters for the Catholic Church and now it can move with the insights gained from hearing new voices and exploring relational ecclesial meaning.[41] Pope Francis has accelerated that movement with the concept of synodality, which stretches relational meaning to become realised more fully as synodal meaning: the People of God who walk together in the world as authentic Church.[42] Synodality enables the threads that are the insights of the People of God to be

37. "As self-transcendence promotes progress, so the refusal of self-transcendence turns progress into cumulative decline." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 55. Pope Francis' term "cardiovascular sclerosis," and the biblical "hardness of heart," describe the resistance that a person erects within when they disregard their consciousness' demand for authenticity.

38. The word "encounter" has a very small presence in Vatican II documents: once in *IM, AA*, and *GS*; and twice in *AG*. The concept is far more important in Pope Francis' documents, with encounter occurring: 33 times in *EG*; *AL* and *CV* 26x; *QA* 16x; *LS* 10x; and *GE* 8x.

39. John XXIII, *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*, n.16.

40. Ibid., n.17.

41. See sec.2.3.1.

42. Recall from chapter two the relational meaning revived for the *ekklēsia* during the Second Vatican Council, which includes: full and active participation of the laity, identity as the People of God, *ad extra* dialogue, and episcopal collegiality.

drawn together within the bigger picture of what it means to be Church. No one voice should be cut off and no opinion dismissed without having first been heard.[43]

The walking of synodality brings opportunity for *encounter* with creation and creator:

> …the Christian is a man and a woman walking towards fullness, towards an encounter with Christ who redeemed us. A Christian cannot stand still. The Christian must always move forward, he must walk.[44]

First and foremost, encounter with God brings conversion, which cannot be separated out from community (*EG* n.88). Encounter with Christ brings joyful mission (*EG* n.8), especially to those to whom Jesus tended, namely the poor and vulnerable. To do this the Church must itself become poor and vulnerable so that there may be the possibility of genuine encounter, which is a challenge to one's personal horizon.[45] The Church's self-understanding, as its ecclesial meaning, can impede this attitude: "the current model, with its emphasis on success and self-reliance, does not appear to favour an investment in efforts to help the slow, the weak or the less talented to find opportunities in life" (*EG* n.209). The gifts of the Church are those that have been given by the Spirit, and it is those alone that renew the faithful and attract others.[46] Pope Francis' solution to overcoming the problem of arrogance is to promote a culture in the Catholic Church that commits to conversion and welcomes diversity,

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43. Pope Francis' attitude on this likely stems from his understanding of discernment, which is discussed in the later section on discernment and intentional consciousness. This has caused consternation amongst both his admirers and detractors. Journalist John Allen points out that Pope Francis does not "simply make a change" when it comes to prelates who disagree with him. One example is of the four cardinals who submitted a list of *dubia* (doubts) in response to *Amoris Laetitia* - to which the pope has controversially never replied. John L. Allen, "Why was Pope Francis so Quick to Answer These 'Dubia'?" *Crux Catholic Media*, 23 Oct 2017, accessed 15 Oct 2020, https://cruxnow.com/news-analysis/2017/10/pope-francis-quick-answer-dubia/.

Similarly, when former Vatican ambassador to the USA, Archbishop Carlo Viganò, wrote an open letter that accused Church leaders of abuse cover-up, Pope Francis did not respond to Viganò. The pope said to the media when prompted on the issue: "I read the statement this morning, and I must tell you sincerely that, I must say this, to you and all those who are interested: read the statement carefully and make your own judgment. I will not say a single word on this." Hannah Brockhaus, "Pope: 'I Will Not Say a Single Word' on Viganò's Allegations of Cover-up," *Catholic News Agency*, 26 Aug 2018, accessed 15 Oct 2020, https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/pope-i-will-not-say-a-single-word-on-viganos-allegations-of-cover-up-65149.

44. Francis, "Morning Homily," *Zenit Online News*, 13 Oct 2016, accessed 15 Oct 2020, https://zenit.org/articles/the-father-dreamed-of-you-as-expectant-parents-dream-pope-says/.

45. Lonergan describes how *encountering* the past is more than reading, learning and narrating history: "encounter is more. It is meeting persons, appreciating the values they represent, criticizing their defects, and allowing one's living to be challenged at its very roots by their words and by their deeds…encounter is the one way in which self-understanding and horizon can be put to the test." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 247. The principle that moves encounter and dialectic to a place of dialogue and friendship is natural right (see sec.3.1.1 of this thesis).

46. Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Holy See Press Office,* 25 Mar 2019, accessed 7 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20190325_christus-vivit.html, n.207. Hereafter *CV*.

inclusivity, listening, vulnerability and humility. Again, the pope demonstrates these characteristics within his official speeches and documents, with apologies on behalf of the Church standing out as examples of how he wants ecclesial leaders to act.[47] Chapter five will discuss in more detail what a poor and humble Church - faithful to its baptismal identity and missionary nature - could look like.

Building common meaning through encounter as one of the elements in the stage of common understanding is fundamental to a synodal Church. As a primarily pastoral and relational activity, synodality is concerned with building up the pilgrim People of God, as a community moving towards the capacity for common judgement and the fullness of friendship.

3.2.3.3 Dialogue

Authentic dialogue requires a turning towards the other, prepared for through hospitality and enacted by encounter. Synodal meaning for an ecclesial community promotes dialogue as an activity of journeying, with a purpose to build common understanding through an exploration of meaning together. Scholastic ecclesiology does not understand the Church as dialogical in nature, but instead aims to articulate a hierarchical and static self-understanding: the function of the episcopacy being to govern, teach and sanctify, and the function of the laity to follow their shepherds.[48] While authentic dialogue demands equal dignity, with listening and speaking expected from all involved, a hierarchical body can only communicate in a downwards direction, for to do otherwise would violate the hierarchical meaning of power and authority. As discussed in the previous chapter, this impacts upon the freedom and maturity of those at the "bottom" of the pyramid.[49] The Vatican I and pre-

47. One example is the apology in *Querida Amazonia*, which refers to Pope Francis' "Address at the Second World Meeting of Popular Movements," in Santa Cruz de la Sierra-Bolivia, 9 July 2015. Francis, *Querida Amazonia,* Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Holy See Press Office,* 2 Feb 2020, accessed 7 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20200202_querida-amazonia.html, n.19. Hereafter *QA*. See also: Deborah Castellano Lubov, "Pope Francis Asks Forgiveness for Sins of Vatican," *Zenit Online News,* 14 Oct 2015, accessed 15 Oct 2020, http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/pope-francis-asks-forgiveness-for-sins-of-vatican.

48. This is expressed clearly in *VN* n.8 (see secs.1.3.2-3, and fn.20 in chap.2 of this thesis).

49. This is another issue that stems from the disease of clericalism, and is demonstrated by the comments of the laity, as individuals and some who claim lay representation, around the occasion of the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon Region (6-27 October 2019). Statements were made that can only be categorised as racist, colonialist, sexist, demeaning, petty, and worse. Sadly this is a very visible aspect of Catholic culture that is symptomatic of a decline in community and unity over a long period of time. This issue will be discussed further in chapter five.

Vatican II documents analysed in this thesis all have zero instances of the word dialogue, which is to be expected as it did not emerge in common social usage until the second half of the twentieth century.[50] *Relationship* and *dialogue* are novel words introduced by Pope Paul VI to Catholic ecclesiology in *Ecclesiam Suam.* The encyclical mentions dialogue eighty-one times, and relationship ten times, however they are not words generally taken up by the Council documents.[51] Of the sixteen Vatican II documents five did not use the word dialogue, and eight used it between one and three times. The Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, and the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, both had twelve instances; the Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church, *Ad Gentes*, had six.[52] The word relationship was used minimally.

Two main conclusions can be drawn from these brief statistics; on the one hand, that at the time of the Second Vatican Council dialogue was seen to be of service to the out-facing relationships of the Church; the *ad extra* of ecumenism, interfaith, and secular interaction. On the other hand, the lack of the concept of dialogue in *ad intra* documents reveals that dialogue - despite being heavily emphasised mid-Council by the pope - was not yet considered relevant to "internal" ecclesial activity and relationships.[53] Out of this context a new forum for dialogue emerged through the concept of collegiality. The Synod of Bishops was dialogical in that it sought greater co-operation and communication amongst the episcopacy. These elements are important to growth in common understanding, and the assemblies of the Synod of Bishops, along with the regional Conferences of Bishops who

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50. The *Toronto Statement* (1950) of the newly-establish World Council of Churches (WCC) sought to establish ecumenical foundations by bringing churches together in a systematic and entirely new way, yet it does not use the word *dialogue*. Nor does it use *encounter*. *Relationship* was a prominent notion, with adjectives such as dynamic, close, brotherly, and spiritual. WCC, *Toronto Statement*, Central Committee statement, *Oikoumene*, 15 Jul 1950, accessed 15 Oct 2020, https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/1950/toronto-statement.

51. Ten instances is not a large number but it does stand in contrast to the very minimal usage by the Vatican II documents. *Gaudium et Spes* uses "relationship" 16 times, and all others have single figures.

52. It may be significant that these three documents were written after *Ecclesiam Suam*. Although most other documents share this timing, these three had a particular focus on external relationships and thus dialogue was a concept accepted as relevant to them. *Nostra Aetate*, the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions, was the most significant document for the Church's *ad extra* relationships. It mentions dialogue only twice, and relationship once, indicating how this declaration was providing the reorientation of thinking around other religions that was needed before serious dialogue with them could be proposed. Vatican II, *Nostra Aetate*, Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, *Holy See Press Office*, 28 Oct 1965, accessed 6 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html.

53. The documents on priestly training, the renewal of Religious life, Christian education, the pastoral office of Bishops, and others that are equally concerned with the life of the Catholic community - even *Lumen Gentium* and *Sacrosanctum Concilium* - do not mention dialogue more than twice.

gather in synods, have provided opportunities for bishops to welcome and encounter each other with a goal to conduct dialogue on contemporary issues.[54] The nature of these institutional bodies was critiqued in chapter two of this thesis, as being exclusive in their membership, authority, and understanding of dialogue.

Movement into common understanding within a group relies on the work of effective communication, which can range from everyday conversations to highly structured, institutional dialogue. During the twentieth century the occasions of official dialogue between the Catholic Church and external partners often resembled an encounter of statements. Dialogue was sometimes perceived to be a threat to one's own tradition, whereby to move towards the other entailed a risk to one's own horizon.[55] It became habitual to clarify one's own tradition, then that of the other, and to form judgements around the difficulties and differences. The process of dialogue developed over time to enable a wider vision of the horizon of one's tradition extending into friendship, if not communion, with others, and towards a contemporary approach which appropriates openness, humility, and willingness to learn. The overall stance can be one of journeying shoulder-to-shoulder, of friendship and mutual enrichment.[56] In this way the Catholic Church's *ad extra* dialogue experiences can model an approach to achieving common meaning through the building of common experience, common understanding, and common judgement. The overall goal is not static but the dynamic and life-giving progress in authenticity, as individuals, as a tradition, and in

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54. The meetings of bishops and their documents are listed on the Vatican website: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/index.htm. Special Assemblies are those which concern one or more specific geographical regions, such as the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon Region (the "Synod on the Amazon").

55. The ecumenical goal of visible unity will require movement beyond multilateral dialogues, statements, differentiated agreements, etc., to the point where Christians can see the value in each other's different experiences and ways of being church, and can begin to see that moving into unity opens the possibility of healing and wholeness. See: WCC, *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (Australia: WCC Publications, 2013), foreword.

The 2000 CDF document, *Dominus Iesu*, has been criticised for its defensive and exclusive language, and lack of respect for progress in ecumenical dialogue and reconciliation since Vatican II. See Francis A. Sullivan, "The Impact of *Dominus Iesus* on Ecumenism," *America Magazine*, 28 Oct 2000, accessed 22 Oct 2020, https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/386/article/impact-dominus-iesus-ecumenism. CDF, *Dominus Iesus*, Declaration on the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church, *Holy See Press Office*, 6 Aug 2000, accessed 22 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000806_dominus-iesus_en.html.

56. The website of the WCC, *Oikoumene*, provides a timeline of the Assemblies of the WCC from the 1st Assembly in Amsterdam, 1948, to the 10th Assembly in Busan, 2013. The topics reveal a movement from discussions on difficulties and differences to collaboration and shared experience. *Oikoumene*, accessed 15 Oct 2020, https://www.oikoumene.org/en/about-us/organizational-structure/assembly/past-wcc-assemblies.

relationship with others. It is with this understanding that Pope Francis describes how "unity is done walking":

> What must we do to promote Christian unity? Our task is to receive this gift and make it visible to all. From this point of view, unity, before being a goal, is a path, with its roadmaps and its rhythms, its slowing down and its acceleration, and also its pauses. As a path, unity requires patient expectations, tenacity, effort and commitment; it does not annul conflicts and does not cancel contrasts, rather, at times it can expose to the risk of new misunderstandings. Unity can be accepted only by one who decides to set out on the path to a goal that today might seem rather distant. However, he who follows this way is comforted by the continual experience of a communion joyfully perceived, even if not yet fully attained, every time that presumption is set aside and we all recognize ourselves in need of God's love.[57]

In an address to a theology congress the pope strongly emphasised that dialogue is at the service of evangelisation when it becomes a "method of discernment and proclamation of the Word of love."[58] It is when communication becomes an experience of listening and loving, that a dialogical approach becomes a "form of welcoming."[59]

As an intentional form of moving into common understanding, authentic dialogue has an aim of: "speaking and listening, giving and receiving, mutual growth and enrichment."[60] These elements all involve some degree of risk. Opening oneself up to genuine dialogue is to become vulnerable through challenges to one's horizon, and through deliberately exposing one's consciousness to the possibility of unauthenticity.[61] Dialogue needs to be intentionally grounded in humility if it is to be a process of building common understanding and a movement towards common judgement. Humility is described as a necessary ecclesial attribute because the Church is *pilgrim*, as described by Richard Gaillardetz:

> By conceiving of the church not just as a collection of individual pilgrims but as itself pilgrim, the [Second Vatican] council adopted a

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57. Pope Francis, "Pope's Address to Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity," *Zenit Online News*, 10 Nov 2016, accessed 15 Oct 2020, https://zenit.org/articles/popes-address-to-pontifical-council-for-promoting-christian-unity-2/.

58. Francis, "Address to the Congress 'Theology After *Veritatis Gaudium* in the Context of the Mediterranean'," *Holy See Press Office,* 21 Jun 2019, accessed 31 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2019/june/documents/papa-francesco_20190621_teologia-napoli.html.

59. Ibid.

60. Methodology for dialogue of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID): PCID website, accessed 15 Oct 2020, https://www.pcinterreligious.org.

61. This was touched on in chapter one when the literary techniques of the Gospel of John were described as "destabilizing" to the restrictions set by the horizons of the reader who encounters the Father, Son and Spirit of the Gospel. See sec.1.1.9.

> tone of eschatological humility, a conviction that, while the church was confident it was headed in the right direction as guided by the Spirit, it had not yet arrived.[62]

A synodal Church is a dialogical Church, and this way of being encompasses the building of common experience and common understanding, to the realm of common judgement, commitment, and ultimately friendship. The Second Vatican Council described the Church as a "sacrament of unity" for the world (*LG* n.1), which, if the Church is understood as a community of communities, and unity as a sign of common meaning, is a vision that is concrete, historical and eschatological. The People of God achieve community in each time and place to the extent that each group commits in authenticity to their common experience, understanding and judgement. The eschatological promise of unity is the achievement of ever-expanding horizons of friendship and love until all are together in God. The building of common judgement for a community of common meaning and what this achieves will now be addressed.

3.2.4 Common Judgement

Common judgement may be achieved through dialogue based on a foundation of common experience and understanding. Thus it is the fruit of the long, hard work of mutual respect and encounter, welcoming and listening, giving and receiving, all of which are elements of modern methodologies of dialogue.[63] It is integral that participants are prepared to bring an awareness of their selves to this process. This involves anything that falls inside their horizon; their history, tradition, values, and meaning. Grounded in this horizon of interest, an individual always holds the potential to reorient their position from one of dialectic to one of dialogue through a process of conversion. This move, Lonergan explains, is a transposition of issues, "from a conflict of statements to an encounter of persons." Authentic dialogue is therefore a meeting of people who reveal their selves to each other:

> But it can be more helpful, especially when oppositions are less radical, for the investigators to move beyond dialectic to dialogue, to

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62. Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making*, 56.

63. The PCID describes these as the necessary elements of a methodology of dialogue: "Dialogue is a two-way communication. It implies speaking and listening, giving and receiving, for mutual growth and enrichment. It includes witness to one's own faith as well as an openess [sic] to that of the other. It is not a betrayal of mission of the Church, nor is it a new method of conversion to Christianity." PCID, "Profile," *Holy See Press Office,* http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interelg_pro_20051996_en.html.

> transpose issues from a conflict of statements to an encounter of persons. For every person is an embodiment of natural right. Every person can reveal to any other his [or her] natural propensity to seek understanding, to judge reasonably, to evaluate fairly, to be open to friendship. While the dialectic of history coldly relates our conflicts, dialogue adds the principle that prompts us to cure them, the natural right that is the inmost core of our being.[64]

Dialogue, welcome, and encounter provide the conditions - and nurture the desire - for people to genuinely reveal their selves to each other and to "cure" their differences. What is being revealed is, as Lonergan describes, a person's *natural right*; those cognitive operations that are natural to the human process of inquiry and of knowing.[65] Meaning-making is the activity of these operations in every person - attending, being intelligent, reasonable and responsible - and so common meaning is the activity and the consequence of these operations in common:

- A group attends to the same activity or sensory data together; they have common experience.[66]
- A group asks questions of the data and seeks an explanation together; they have common understanding.
- A group is confident that their understanding of the data is correct; they have common judgement.
- Together the group finds value that binds them; they have common commitment.

Authenticity is a constant striving to improve one's adherence to what Lonergan calls the imperatives of transcendental consciousness: *be attentive*, *be intelligent*, *be reasonable*, *be responsible*.[67] The challenge lies in recognising unauthenticity and being open to conversion; both of which shall be explored in the next section.[68] For now, the concept of authenticity is necessary to appreciate that appropriating the operations of one's transcendental consciousness is demanding, and while individuals remain unaware of their cognitional operations and the need to co-operate with them, the likelihood of bias and division is high. As such, communities experience periods of gradual progress (as common meaning is built

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64. Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 182.

65. Lonergan moved from using the term *natural right* (in "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness") to *transcendental consciousness* (*Method in Theology*). This thesis will now move to using the latter.

66. People may have similar experiences but didn't experience them together. This may more accurately be called "experience in common," and can still contribute to building common meaning and community.

67. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 53. Progress is brought about through the continual flow of improvements.

68. With "unauthenticity" meaning that which is not authentic.

up), and decline (when the constitutive elements of community are missing or corrupted). The effective building up of a community cannot be achieved through enforcing conformity or eradicating diversity. Both of these are injustices to the consciousness of the people involved.[69]

A community achieves common meaning through the authentic operation of each person's transcendental consciousness together, in harmony and in mutual support. This is the genuine sign of unity. The unity of the Catholic Church, as a community of communities, relies on this authentic communion. To be authentic this communion is not merely active in any one sphere of religious life, or even all of them. It must include all spheres of all communities in which each person lives: a person's whole horizon, and then more. The Church has a spiritual dimension, and so communion has a spiritual dimension too.[70] The Catholic Catechism explains that: "The communion of saints is the Church."[71] Thus prayer is a necessary element for this community. The call for missionary discipleship by Pope Francis is a call to expand horizons through encounter, to welcome the possibility of relationship with all of creation, and to actively engage in dialogue, given that being missionary is integral to the nature of an authentic Church.

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69. This is the key to understanding Pope Francis' differentiation between *evangelising* and *proselytising*. "It is not by proselytizing that the Church grows, but 'by attraction'" (*EG* n.15). This statement quotes Pope Benedict XVI. Benedict XVI, "Homily at Mass for the Opening of the Fifth General Conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Bishops," 13 May 2007, Aparecida, Brazil: AAS 99 (2007), 437.

Pope Francis explained the differences further in a talk with Jesuits: "…evangelization is free! Proselytism, on the other hand, makes you lose your freedom. Proselytism is incapable of creating a religious path in freedom. It always sees people being subjugated in one way or another. In evangelization the protagonist is God, in proselytism it is the I…. Evangelization is essentially witness. Proselytizing is convincing, but it is all about membership and takes your freedom away." Antonio Spadaro, "'The Sovereignty of the People of God': The Pontiff Meets the Jesuits of Mozambique and Madagascar," *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 26 Sep 2019, accessed 11 Oct 2020, https://www.laciviltacattolica.com/the-sovereignty-of-the-people-of-god-the-pontiff-meets-the-jesuits-of-mozambique-and-madagascar/.

70. Pope Francis speaks of dialogue with God in *Christus Vivit* nn.117, 158, see n.250.

71. The Catechism quotes bishop Nicetas of Remesiana, who is the earliest person known to use the phrase "communion of saints": "What is the Church if not the assembly of all the saints?" *CCC* n.946, fn.479.

3.2.5 The Achievement of Community

Finally, at the peak of communal achievement are the commitments of faith, loyalty, love, and friendship.[72] These are acts which have the greatest meaning for the human person, and have as their foundation the long, hard work of common experience, common understanding and common judgement. Hierarchical meaning, however, understands judgement in a far more rigid and exclusive way, for it employs a classical understanding of the human person and does not appreciate historicity. As outlined in chapter one, the hierarchical paradigm of the early twentieth century provided ecclesiological language with exclusive and defensive language, wherein the Church was: "…ruled by the Pastors and Doctors… who have full and perfect powers for ruling, teaching and judging" (*VN* n.8). In official documents the words *authority* and *judgement* are reserved for the clerics of the Church. For example, the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Church uses judgement or judge twelve times, and only as an act or capacity of bishops (*LG* nn.12, 25, 26, 27), the pope (*LG* n.25, preliminary note n.3), the pontiff with the bishops (*LG* n.25), God (*LG* n.16), or Christ (*LG* nn.14, 48).

It is apparent that one role of an ecclesiology of synodality will be to apply the actions of synodal renewal to the theology of the episcopacy, which was set apart from the *ressourcement*, *aggiornamento*, and development of Vatican II. Chapter two revealed how the episcopacy is a stronghold of power, not only over the concepts of governance and leadership, but over (theoretically at least) all forms of authority and judgement within the institutional Church. The understanding of the Church as community and communion, as outlined in this chapter, must extend to the entire People of God, or the *ekklēsia* cannot achieve common meaning as the Body of Christ. Communities that achieve commitments of

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72. "Loyalty" is identified by Lonergan as a fruit of common meaning. Loyalty is the trust in, and support of, individuals and groups who are known to be worthy. The abuse scandals of the Catholic Church have severely damaged the trust of the People of God that had previously been held with certainty and relatively uncritically. In recognition of the disastrous loss of trust in the USA, the 2019 Catholic Partnership Summit (CPS) produced a report that defined five principles of response to abuse and leadership failure: transparency, accountability, competency, justice, and trust. With a firmly practical focus the summit attempted to produce "measurable, visible outcomes" that could "restore trust in the Church." CPS, *Heal the Body of Christ: A Plan to Create a New Culture of Leadership and a New Response to Abuse in the Catholic Church*, *Leadership RoundTable*, Feb 2019, accessed 11 Oct 2020, https://leadershiproundtable.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/CatholicPartnershipSummit_SummitReport_WithBoard.pdf. It is interesting to observe how a lack of theological foundation to this process of response to crisis results in a document without the words *love*, *grace*, *friendship*, *holy* (once), and contains no reference to the Holy Spirit. Most telling is the almost complete lack of engagement with the concept of *conversion*, which lies at the heart of Pope Francis' ecclesial renewal. In *Evangelii Gaudium* the pope refers to the "renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion" (*EG* n.27), which is discussed in chapter five of this thesis.

faith, loyalty, love, and friendship do so through hospitality and encounter. They are dialogical, and open to those changes in horizon that are made possible in authentic exchange and moments of conversion. It is important to recognise that an openness to the guidance of the Spirit cannot be maintained within an unbending structure. Within synodal meaning all relationships are dynamic and committed to dialogue and conversion.[73]

The hierarchical models and metaphors of the Church as *societas perfecta* or fortress (as discussed in chapter one) are simply not compatible with meaning that is lived as authentic community and communion. The renewal work of the Second Vatican Council and Pope Paul VI introduced the notions of relationship and dialogue to official Catholic documents, as ecclesiology moved away from hierarchical meaning and towards relational meaning. An ecclesiology of synodality has foundations in an ecclesial self-understanding that is dynamic, communal, and capable of growth or decline in its achievement of common meaning. This chapter serves to establish an understanding of community that will contribute to such foundations. Section 3.2 has described how the dynamic community of the *ekklēsia* may grow together in meaning through stages of common experience, understanding, and judgement. This growth is promoted through authentic encounter, supported by hospitality, and served by open and humble dialogue.

Encounter, hospitality and dialogue are integral to the vocation of the laity in the era of synodality. Pope Francis strongly emphasises this point: "The kerygma has a clear social content: at the very heart of the Gospel is life in community and engagement with others" (*EG* n.177). Encounter that moves to dialogue has the potential to become a process of reorientation from stances that are opposing, yet seeking agreement and consensus, to stances that are mutually aligned. The achievement of building common meaning together can be the precious fruits of friendship, commitment, loyalty, and love. The process of dialogue can be deeply unsettling but can move to the point of desiring the good for the other,

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73. Pope Francis has promoted a dialogical Church at many levels and in many spheres of interaction, including ecumenical, interfaith, intergenerational, environmental, and spiritual. Dialogue is a recurring theme of *Evangelii Gaudium*, with the word *dialogue* occurring 25 times in a great variety of contexts. Also: *Laudato Si'* 25x; *Amoris Laetitia* 21x; *Christus Vivit* 10x; and the Constitution on the Synod of Bishops, *Episcopalis Communio*, 10x. In *Christus Vivit*, for example, Pope Francis identifies those aspects of Catholic life which he claims are open to, and supportive of, dialogue, including: relationships with youth (*CV* n.38); communications using social media and the internet (*CV* n.87); Catholic schools (*CV* n.222); and marriage (*CV* n.265). A synodal Church is committed to hospitality, encounter and dialogue, and thus is required to identify those aspects of the institution that are not capable of dialogue and in need of renewal or conversion (see *CV* n.208).

which lies at the heart of contemporary evangelisation and synodality. The building up of the community through common meaning is a task for all members, as Saint Paul insisted, or there can be no achievement of authentic community. This is essential to understanding synodality as a process of being attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible as individuals, and together as communities of communion within the world.

The *aggiornamento* and *ressourcement* of Vatican II have moved forward to the point where renewal is understood as the need for continual conversion. This is being promoted by the papacy of Pope Francis, and will require the ecclesial community to attend to their relationships through hospitality, encounter and dialogue. The roles of conversion and transformation, and the concept of a synodal Church as the People of God living authentically will be developed in the next section.

3.3 The Church as Authentic: Conversion and Transformation

The concepts of meaning and community have been investigated as a first and necessary stage of exploring foundations for an ecclesiology of synodality. Human meaning develops in collaboration which finds its achievement as community. The community of the People of God - who are a community of communities[74] - is thus called to develop their meaning together, ever deeper and more fully into that mystery which is meaning as the Body of Christ. Within this context this next stage will explore how effective collaboration thrives when people seek authenticity, as a process within themselves and therefore as a contribution to the authentic progress of each group to which they belong. Authenticity will be explored as an active cultivation of one's own ability to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible. It is explained by Lonergan as self-appropriation, a "taking on" of one's own cognitional operations, or intentional consciousness, and working to recognise and remove unauthenticity and bias.

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74. The phrase "community of communities" is used to describe the reality that all people exist within many different communities, not all of which are religious or ecclesial, but are nonetheless integral to the life of Christians. Tillard's phrase "communion of communions," on the other hand, describes those communities who identify as Church: "this community possesses, by its 'reception' of the gospel and the gift of Christ Jesus, the reality on which can be built the only *communion* which answers the deep wish of humanity." Tillard, *Church of Churches*, 168.

The person who works to grow in authenticity is developing their capacity to be a full human being, which - in mirroring the communion of the Triune God - can only be made manifest in community:

> There is still a further dimension to being human, and there we emerge as persons, meet one another in a common concern for values, seek to abolish the organization of human living on the basis of competing egoisms and to replace it by an organization on the basis of man's perceptiveness and intelligence, his reasonableness and his responsible exercise of freedom.[75]

For the ecclesial community authenticity means living more deeply the meaning that is Christ, while this meaning is comprehended and lived differently depending on whether it is hierarchical or synodal. This section will note these differences, as synodal meaning is explored in the context of a modern, empirical control of meaning incorporating Lonergan's description of intentional consciousness. The elements of synodality, as identified by Pope Francis, the originating proponent of a synodal Church in the modern era, will be identified. They will be explored in order to gain insight into the pope's intentions, as well as to enable judgement of whether synodality as a movement is compatible with the concepts of dynamic, relational and communal meaning that were developed in the previous section.

Conversion is at the heart of renewal. The concept of conversion has been present through many threads in this thesis, especially in transformation in the early Church (sections 1.1.6-9), encounter (3.2.3.2) and achieving community (3.2.5). Conversion will now be described and examined in its importance to any process of genuine renewal, particularly with regard to seeking authenticity in community and, ultimately, transformation in the Holy Spirit.

3.3.1 Transforming the Catholic Church: Community Needs Renewal

This thesis proposes synodality as the ecclesiological foundations and framework capable of supporting an authentic Catholic Church into the future. In order to appropriate synodal meaning the Church is in need of transformation, through a complete, radical break from hierarchical meaning. A synodal Church is mature and responsible, on a journey to enter more deeply into its identity and mission as the community of People of God who are the Body of Christ. The renewal of the Church in the contemporary era is therefore not simply a

75. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 10.

repetition of what has done well in the past, in the hope that success in meeting the particular problems of today can be generated.[76] Renewal is not purely *aggiornamento*, an updating, although this can be a very important element. Neither is renewal a constant expectation of change; Lonergan rightly cautions against the extremes of either refusing change, or constantly trying to initiate it.[77] The different world-views of the classicist and the empirical historicist determine how renewal is understood, and either feared, ignored or appreciated. As described previously, the classicist worldview is a product of the Scholastic era, which sought to explain and to control reality through unchanging laws which define, categorise, and limit the known world.[78] The empirical worldview understands open inquiry as integral to human knowing, and human consciousness as both historical and transcendental.[79] This worldview marks a movement into what Lonergan call the third plateau in the history of human development, a movement which signifies transformation of human self-understanding. This new stage - the era of transcendental consciousness - brings to humanity's understanding of enlightenment and emancipation the concept of: "such self-transcendence as (including) an intellectual, a moral, and an affective conversion."[80] This three-fold conversion will be investigated as essential to the process of growing in authenticity.

3.3.2 Transformation and Conversion

Christian life is to be transformed and transforming - the People of God bringing about God's kingdom in the world, which was explored in chapter one in relation to the unity

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76. The word "radical" means a return to the roots: *rādīcālis*, having roots, and *rādīx*, a root. *American Heritage Dictionary*, s.v. "radical." The roots of the Catholic Church lie not in past processes but in the gospel message of Jesus Christ.

On the topic of structural transformation Pope Francis cautions that: "Changing structures without generating new convictions and attitudes will only ensure that those same structures will become, sooner or later, corrupt, oppressive and ineffectual" (*EG* n.189).

77. Lonergan, "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness," 2.

78. See sec.3.1.1.

79. Empirical sciences operate on the basis of *method*, described by Lonergan as: "a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 4-5. Thus method is conceived not as a set of rules, but as a "normative pattern of operations from which the rules may be derived." Ibid., 6. This normative pattern is the transcendental consciousness of the human person, which can be appropriated through transcendental method. "Self-appropriation" is a grasp of transcendental method enabling a move from the world known through common sense, to a more sophisticated realm which is known through theory and interiority. Ibid., 83-85. When philosophy grasps the significance of a generalised empirical method for cognitional theory, epistemology and metaphysics of proportionate being, it will signify deeper movement into the third plateau of human development. Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 177-78.

80. Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 179.

of a community. In that chapter, it was noted that Paul taught his communities that unifying transformation is brought about through the Spirit and the loving participation of the *ekklēsia.* John's Gospel illustrates the process of transformation through encounter, which brings an offer of invitation, and provocation through questions or sensory experiences. John 3:3 describes transformation and new life: "Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above'." The consequence of transformation is death, followed by new life in grace, which Haughton describes:

> Transformation is a total personal revolution. It begins with repentance - the rejection along with actual sins of the whole apparatus of natural virtue as irrelevant and misleading - and proceeds eventually to the desired dissolution of all that ordinary people ordinarily value in themselves or others. The result of this dissolution, the death of the natural man, is the birth of the whole human being, the perfection of man, meaning both man as an individual and man as a race, because the process is at once personal and communal.[81]

This is the new life that Christians are called to enter into, allowing it to radically transform one's self and world, while working out that meaning together. Thus it is deeply personal and communal. Vincent Donovan expands any limited notion of *communal* to *universal*, as he places transformation within God's continuing creative action in the world:

> Authentic Christian prayer has its roots in creation, in people opening themselves to the creative power of God, allowing the power of creation to continue to work in them to make all things possible, participating themselves in that work of creation and in the answer to their own prayers.[82]

Donovan's concern is that Christians do not place limits on their understanding of God's action in their lives, nor on the notions of mission, evangelisation, and salvation, which must necessarily be so open as to incorporate the whole earth.[83] Haughton explains that transformation: "takes place in Christ and nowhere else. It is what Christians call the resurrection, or eternal life."[84] *Formation* is the work of humans towards their personal growth, through their family life, education, society and culture, but it does not and cannot provide the power of *transformation* that Haughton and Donovan describe. Transformation is

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81. Haughton, *The Transformation of Man,* 7.

82. Vincent Donovan, *The Church in the Midst of Creation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989), 130.

83. In 1989 Donovan could say: "No religion in the world, including Christianity, is adequate to the issues at stake today. No religion, no ethics, no cultural form, no social or political structure, no ideology can support the future that is upon us." Ibid., 143.

84. Haughton, *The Transformation of Man*, 7-8.

God's work, and is the language of redemption and salvation for Christians. It is human participation in eschatological life - the kingdom of God.

Cumulative acts of conversion bring about transformation in the human subject and their world. The person and their world (Lonergan always places these together when discussing transformation) are transforming and transformed when conversion takes place:

> By conversion is understood a transformation of the subject and his world. Normally it is a prolonged process though its explicit acknowledgment may be concentrated in a few momentous judgments and decisions. Still it is not just a development or even a series of developments. Rather it is a resultant change of course and direction. It is as if one's eyes were opened and one's former world faded and fell away. There emerges something new that fructifies in interlocking, cumulative sequences of developments on all levels and in all departments of human living.[85]

Conversion is therefore a process in which a person may intentionally and actively participate, or which they may choose to reject.[86]

Lonergan often uses the terms transformation and conversion interchangeably,[87] however he distinctly uses the word conversion, as the "change of course and direction" of one's horizon and values, to describe the necessary way towards self-transcendence.[88] Lonergan describes the new life given by a conversion experience as a vertical exercise of freedom that moves a person from one horizon to another.[89] This is not the expansion of horizon that was described earlier, which comes about through an open mind and heart to the experiences and encounters of life. Conversion is destructive ("death" says Haughton), for a person has been uprooted from the place that was once comfortable - one's identity and meaning that recognised certain values - and the ground replaced by something that is yet to be known. The dynamism of creation, of human activity and relationships, and particularly of human cognitive operations demands *ongoing conversion*. What is basic to humanity's

85. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 130.

86. In chapter four this will be discussed as "hardness of heart."

87. To transform is to change the nature, function, or condition of. The Latin roots of transform are *trāns*, across, and *fōrma*, form. It is a synonym of convert, yet convert has Latin roots of *convertere*, to turn. *American Heritage Dictionary*, s.vv. "convert," "transform."

88. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 357.

89. Ibid., 237.

inquiring mind, declares Lonergan, is not the classicist's "proof" of logic, but conversion.[90] He identifies three forms of conversion which together bring about authenticity.[91]

Authentic living demands, and is constituted by, conversion. Authenticity is growth of the whole person and a self-appropriation that simply cannot be achieved without the rigour and pain of removing (again and again) that which is unauthentic. In essence: "conversion is from unauthenticity to authenticity."[92] This is where the Catholic Church stands today, indeed where it always stands: in need of conversion so that transformation into the Body of Christ can continue further and deeper, by and for each generation. The journey into authenticity is a journey into Christ, who is the way, the truth, the life (John 14:6):

> [Love] dismantles and abolishes the horizon in which our knowing and choosing went on and it sets up a new horizon in which the love of God will transvalue our values and the eyes of that love will transform our knowing.[93]

This "dynamic state of being in love with God" is a fulfilment of a consciousness that "deliberates, makes judgments of value, decides, acts responsibly and freely."[94] This is the fulfilment in which all of humanity is called to participate. It is the good news: God, who so loved the world as to send the Son (John 3:16a), the one whose life revealed the fullness that human life can enter into, whose dying gave all away, and whose rising revealed that death's barrier was broken. Authenticity is entering into God's love and being prepared to be broken until wholeness is achieved. Authenticity is not static, nor fearful or authoritarian in its communal living. It requires willingness to walk with others on the journey with humility and hope. Authenticity extends to all aspects of the life of the community which seeks renewal through ongoing conversion of all that is meaningful: identity, communal life, families,

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90. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 338.

90. The three-fold conversions of the authentic self are: 1) intellectual (reaching out beyond oneself); 2) moral ("of becoming a person in a human society"); and, 3) religious ("the fruit of God's gift of his grace"). Ibid., 104-105. All of these can come about through an open mind and heart: open, that is, to oneself as well as others, and open to God's gift of grace. Achievement in self-transcendence is no mere individual effort, but flourishes in relationship. Later, Lonergan refers to religious conversion as "affective," as he does in "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness."

92. Ibid., 268. This is not a simple process: "It is only by knowledge making its bloody entrance that one can move out of the realm of ordinary languages into the realm of theory and the totally different scientific apprehension of reality. It is only through the long and confused twilight of philosophic initiation that one can find one's way into interiority and achieve through self-appropriation a basis, a foundation, that is distinct from common sense and theory, that acknowledges their disparateness, that accounts for both and critically grounds them both." Ibid., 85.

93. Ibid., 106.

94. Ibid., 106-7.

worship, ritual, sacraments, mission, evangelisation, social justice, peace-building, ecumenism, inter-faith dialogue, scientific endeavour, academic pursuit, environmental care. The entire Catholic Church as authentic is the vision and goal of synodality.

The work of conversion upon hearts and minds aims for transformation of the horizons of the people and the meaning of the community. Lonergan describes conversion as finding one's true roots:

> Conversion is a matter of moving from one set of roots to another… it occurs only inasmuch as a man discovers what is unauthentic in himself and turns away from it, inasmuch as he discovers what the fulness of human authenticity can be and embraces it with his whole being. It is something very cognate to the Christian gospel, which cries out: Repent! The kingdom of God is at hand.[95]

The things that no longer consume interest will fall away, and anything identified as blocking the growth of the community in authenticity can be removed. Communal discernment in the common good will grow, and people will more readily recognise the beautiful and valuable, and reject what is not. Conversion leads people on paths that have not been walked before. A Spirit-led Church requires confidence in God's guidance, even though the journey may seem strange and unclear, even dangerous. Haughton wants the whole Church - the entire People of God - to act like catechumens in their willingness to hand themselves over to the Father: "There are no guarantees; the demand is for a leap of faith, for a dying, a baptism."[96] The act of baptism involves being open to the possibility of transformation, which, as enacted through ritual and liturgy, is to be situated in a new sphere of the community of the People of God. This is the new context for the new life that must be worked out, reflected upon, and integrated into the experience of the whole ecclesial community.[97] As baptismal and discerning the Church is constantly moving and directed towards the possibility of transformation in the Spirit.

This section demonstrates that the Church is an intentional community of transformation. The transformation of the individual, as understood within the concept of

95. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 271.

96. Rosemary Haughton, *The Passionate God* (London: Darton Longman & Todd), 330.

97. Haughton, *The Transformation of Man*, 249.

authenticity, is relational and occurs within many spheres of community.[98] The authentic individual committed to ongoing conversion will contribute to the progress, or the overcoming of decline, in every sphere of activity they are involved in. Authenticity has been described as a journey towards self-transcendence as a fulfilment of consciousness. Thus authenticity brings about fulfilment of human beings, in their own selves and in their communal and environmental contexts.

For the Catholic Church of the present and the future, the commitment to authenticity through ongoing conversion by all members of the *ekklēsia* is a collaboration with God's transformation of the world - the work of redemption.

Conclusion

Chapter three has responded to the need for the Church to develop an understanding of the People of God as dynamic and relational within a modern hermeneutic. Chapters one and two have revealed the concept of meaning as essential to ecclesiology through history. Initially referred to as paradigm or perspective, meaning has now been defined within the context of transcendental consciousness in section 3.1. Meaning has been explained as acts of human consciousness, shaping and shaped by the values held by individuals and their groups, and built up through common experience, understanding, and judgement. Section 3.2 explains how groups of people achieve community to the extent that they achieve common meaning. The stages that build upon each other are described in sections 3.2.2-4: common experience can produce common understanding, upon which common judgement may stand. The final dynamic state is love, friendship, loyalty, and trust, as the fruits of authentic community. Building community is difficult and relies on conversion. Personal and communal conversion is the stuff of transformation, and central to the Church's mission. These insights into meaning, community, authenticity and transformation contribute to the foundation upon which an ecclesiology of synodality can be built.

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98. Rowan Williams uses the imagery of a "net of exchange" and "web of gifts" when speaking of ecclesial relationships. Rowan Williams, *Resurrection: Interpreting the Easter Gospel* (London, UK: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1982), 43-44. Spheres - in comparison with nets - can always expand, and Lonergan's "horizon" of one's interest, along with Haughton's "spheres of breakthrough," resonate with the spherical shape associated with our world and the encompassing nature of the universe, as well as with the "roundness" associated with wholeness.

Hierarchical ecclesiology understands and controls meaning in a different way, and remains blind to both the dynamism of human consciousness, and the progress in authenticity required in building community. Hierarchical meaning forms stratified groups of people and stunts the notions of authority and responsibility. As key to the development of healthy communities, authority and responsibility are reformed in chapter four in the light of what has been established in chapter three. The role of the Holy Spirit in transformation and the practical understanding of a synodal Church's (and indeed all peoples') participation in this mission for the world will be explored, in order to deepen the understanding of authenticity in a synodal Church.

Chapter 4
A Synodal Church: On a Journey to Authenticity

Introduction

Chapters one and two have reviewed some of the key moments and movements in the development of the Catholic Church's self-understanding through history. Insights into healthy ecclesiological foundations have been drawn from the early Church, while the roots of decline were uncovered in the Council of Trent. Trent's legacy involved a hierarchical paradigm that offered a juridical and defensive understanding of the Church for centuries without reform. The use of the hierarchical paradigm in the early twentieth century produced a distorted view of the *ekklēsia* as a *societas perfecta;* with stratification in its internal relationships, and defensiveness and exclusivity in its external relationships.

The Second Vatican Council broke the throttle grip that hierarchical meaning, and Scholastic control of that meaning, had upon ecclesiology. The power of renewal released a flurry of *aggiornamento* and *ressourcement*; applied to areas of liturgy, lay activity, and ecumenical and interfaith relations. A new paradigm brought new meaning to the Church's self-understanding. Ecclesiology now perceived the value of the *tria munera Christi*, full and active participation of all the faithful, the baptismal identity and missionary nature of the Church, and the pilgrim People of God. There was evidence, however, in conciliar documents that the embodiment of ecclesial governance and authority - the episcopacy - remained resistant to renewal. Further evidence arose in the review of institutional structures in chapter two, and in the analysis of the concerns and correctives produced during the pontificate of Pope John Paul II.

The historical context of the emergence of synodality has been established, and chapter three has provided foundations for conceiving the Church through new meaning, and with a modern control of meaning. Foundations for an ecclesiology of synodality will expand and deepen the meaning introduced by Vatican II through the support of a holistic and inclusive vision of the entire People of God. This is the task of the *kairós* of synodality - to move the Church out of decline and into progress effected by authenticity.

The primary aim of chapter four is to gain insight into how authenticity may be achieved through synodality: if authenticity is personal self-transcendence, and authentic

communities are formed through common meaning, then how could synodality promote this? What would a synodal and authentic Church look like? The second aim of the chapter is to investigate Pope Francis' vision for the Church, as he is the instigator of synodality in our day. This will involve analysing how the pope describes synodality, the key themes he has identified, and how are they are communicated.

The methodology for chapter four involves following two streams together - Pope Francis' explication of synodality, and Lonergan's of authenticity. The texts of the pope's official documents and crucial speeches will be analysed alongside a review of the concepts of intentional consciousness and conscience, authority, and responsibility, in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of authenticity. This methodology will make the vision of synodality clearer, revealing that which is yet to come to maturity, identifying anything that may be incongruous, and working towards the aim of judging the consonance of the thesis that the Catholic Church as synodal is the community of the People of God as authentic.

4.1 Pope Francis' Vision of Synodality

This section will introduce Pope Francis' vision of synodality and identify its key elements, which will then be examined more deeply in sections 4.2-3. Section 4.1.1 will briefly analyse the pope's communication of synodality, revealing the importance of communications in both building up and expressing synodal meaning.

Synodality provides Pope Francis' papacy with drive and direction. He revealed his vision for the Catholic Church decisively through an address to participants of the Synod on the Family in 2015:

> We must continue along this path. The world in which we live, and which we are called to love and serve, even with its contradictions, demands that the Church strengthen cooperation in all areas of her mission. It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium. What the Lord is asking of us is already in some sense present in the very word 'synod.' Journeying together - laity, pastors, the Bishop of Rome - is an easy concept to put into words, but not so easy to put into practice.[1]

1. Francis, "Address at the 50th Anniversary."

It is significant that this speech, introducing and promoting synodality, was delivered on the 50th anniversary of the institution of the Synod of Bishops by Pope Paul VI - the Synod of Bishops being a symbol of a new era of collegiality within the global Catholic episcopacy. Pope Francis claims that as pope he has always "sought to enhance the Synod," and quotes Pope John Paul II's hope that: "collegial pastoral responsibility could be more fully expressed in the Synod."[2] In this speech Pope Francis makes clear that his intention is to extend the concept of collegiality - the journeying together of the bishops, their co-operation and collaboration, and even their pastoral responsibility - to the whole Church. The pope describes synodal action as journeying together, discerning together, mutual listening, listening to the Spirit, and serving each other. He declares that: "In a synodal Church, the Synod of Bishops is only the most evident manifestation of a dynamism of communion which inspires all ecclesial decisions."[3] Thus, synodal actions are the result of dynamic communion which in turn is the foundation of authoritative action - that is, *all decisions*. To clarify this in practical terms, Pope Francis lists the "organs of communion" of the Catholic Church; from the "base" that is the people, through the structures of the local Churches, the wider ecclesiastical regions, to the universal Church and the papacy. There is no doubt that synodality is intended to affect the life of the *whole* Church. Synodal meaning is to replace hierarchical meaning for the Catholic Church's self-understanding, extending even to the episcopacy: "Synodality, as a constitutive element of the Church, offers us the most appropriate interpretive framework for understanding the hierarchical ministry itself."[4] This is something that the Second Vatican Council and its reception over fifty years has not yet achieved, although its progress is still unfolding, even as synodality is emerging as a more comprehensive development in the Church's control of meaning.

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2. Francis, "Address at the 50th Anniversary." This reference by Pope Francis is to Pope John Paul II: John Paul II, "Address for the Conclusion of VI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops," 29 Oct 1983. Pope Francis uses this reference again in *Episcopalis Communio*.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid. Pope Francis underscores his intention that synodality will reform the episcopacy several times in this address, in *Episcopalis Communio*, and directly in his reform of the Roman Curia with the "C9" Cardinals (the council created by Pope Francis to assist him in matters of governance renewal, and in the project of revising the regulations of the Roman Curia in the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus*).

4.1.1 Communicating Synodality

Pope Francis' techniques of teaching and pastoral guidance, which are incorporated within his understanding of his own authority as pope, can be understood as *synodal*.[5] His first official teaching document was *Evangelii Gaudium*, promulgated in the first year of his pontificate on 24 November 2013.[6] This document established the foundations for Pope Francis' vision of mission, discipleship, and other key ecclesiological concepts within the context of synodality. The pope understands synodality as essentially a transforming power for the Church, capable of moving the People of God out of a "tomb psychology" (*EG* n.83) and into evangelising mission. It is a transformation that revitalises Christian meaning and values from within the communities of God's People. A key message of synodality is revealed through Pope Francis' series of documents and public teachings: transformation, as God's activity, will be welcome and effective when Christian communities are committed to a culture of conversion.

Pope Francis clearly favours a grounded, practical and pastoral communication of what synodality means. His intention is for meaning to move from disconnected or "un-real" ideas to being a lived reality, enacted by the people.[7] The communications methodology of

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5. Above all is the insight encapsulated by the papal biographer Austen Ivereigh, who says: "most of all he is a pope *with* the people. It is what everyone, admirers and enemies alike, notices about Francis: his natural affinity with the human race… His mission is to take the Church to the people, in order to not just save the people but to save the Church." Austen Ivereigh, *Wounded Shepherd: Pope Francis and His Struggle to Convert the Catholic Church* (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 2019), 5.

As the themes of Pope Francis' explication of synodality are discussed it is interesting to note how his technique in communicating changes over time, particularly in relation to his teaching documents of encyclicals and apostolic exhortations.

6. This excludes *Lumen Fidei*, which was a conclusion to series of encyclicals by Pope Benedict XVI who intended to write a trio of texts on theological virtues: *Deus Caritas Est* (On Christian Love, 25 Dec 2005), *Spe Salvi* (On Christian Hope, 30 Nov 2007), and *Lumen Fidei* (On Faith), which was released by Pope Francis on 29 June 2013. Commentators observed that the writing reflects a strong contribution by Pope Benedict, which the style, footnotes and references attest. Drew Christiansen, Robert P. Imbelli, and Christiana Zenner, "On the 'Light of Faith': First responses to '*Lumen Fidei*'," *America Magazine*, 16 Jul 2013, accessed 15 Oct 2020, https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/light-faith. It would be interesting to hear from Pope Francis how the experience of co-creating *Lumen Fidei* influenced his own style and methodology in writing his papal documents, if any.

7. This is explicit in Pope Francis' official documents, as well as his public teachings and statements. "Realities are more important than ideas," says Pope Francis in *EG* n.233. He doesn't deny the importance of either but instead insists on balance: "There also exists a constant tension between ideas and realities. Realities simply are, whereas ideas are worked out. There has to be continuous dialogue between the two, lest ideas become detached from realities" (*EG* n.231). In *Laudato Si'* the pope frequently discusses "reality," and criticises indifferent thought that detaches humans from reality: "Modern anthropocentrism has paradoxically ended up prizing technical thought over reality" (*LS* n.115). The pope continues in *Misericordiae Vultus*: "In short, the mercy of God is not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality" (*MV* n.6). In *Christus Vivit*: "Youth is not something to be analyzed in the abstract. Indeed, 'youth' does not exist: there exist only young people, each with the reality of his or her own life" (*CV* n.71). See also the critique of the impact of digital communications upon one's sense of reality: *CV* nn.86, 88, 90, 110, and *AL* n.22.

the pope involves taking the heart of what can be a very complex issue when described in theory, and conveying it through simple words and vivid imagery. Pope Francis' language is primarily relational, as well as sensible (of the senses).[8] In this way he manages to convey meaning in a memorable way to a wide audience, capturing the public's imagination and moving meaning into common parlance and activity.[9]

Pope Francis' method for communicating the meaning of synodality (as he understands it)[10] is to propose in humility (see *EG* n.1 and *QA* nn.2-6), and to invite.[11]

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8. Lonergan describes this realm of meaning as "common sense," which is the level at which all people begin their engagement with reality and in which most of a person's time is spent. The realm of common sense expresses meaning in language that is ordinary and everyday, and it remains separate, uncomprehending, and sometimes hostile to the technical language of the realm of theory, the philosophical language of the realm of interiority, and the prayerful language of the realm of transcendence. Pope Francis embraces common sense language in a way that Lonergan describes as "providing scaffolding" for entering into the other realms. If a person accepts the invitation to enter more deeply into the concepts and not just the soundbites, they can move up that scaffolding to beyond "what is immediately given in consciousness" and into deeper realms of consciousness. See Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 257-60.

Pope Francis' emphasis on conversion and engagement, and his invitational, non-polemic style, indicate that he is deliberately using this type of method. Ivereigh explains the influence that the writings on governance and leadership by the iconic Argentinian president Juan Perón have had on Pope Francis. Ivereigh, *Wounded Shepherd*, 36-39.

9. For example: "Evangelizers thus take on the 'smell of the sheep'" (*EG* n.24); and, "I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets" (*EG* n.49).

10. The meaning of synodality, or of anything, does not stand alone as a concept, and cannot be conveyed to another person by any single explanation. Synodality does not have a meaning that pre-exists as theoretical - outside the context of a specific community at a specific time - which all people can work towards understanding in its entirety. Sacramental theologian Joseph Martos explains how meaning exists only in the minds of people, although it can be expressed in words and other symbols such as objects, images, gestures, sounds, smells, etc. Joseph Martos, *Deconstructing Sacramental Theology and Reconstructing Catholic Ritual* (Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2015), 220-30. Thus synodality can be explained by Pope Francis in the best way that he understands and is able to communicate its meaning, but this must enter into the processes of each hearer's consciousness to become meaning. Meaning is made by the mind of each individual, with each person developing their own meaning for why they do what they do. Without a great deal of effort one person cannot understand the meaning that another may give to that same activity, or even perhaps explain their own actions. A cognitive exercise in exploring and understanding one's own meaning, and doing the same in conversation with others, can only lead a small way into the activity of common meaning. Far more significant is the shared experience of doing something together to bring about some sense of common meaning. Martos describes how it is the "life of the community that supplies the lived experience which people bring to their liturgical celebrations." Ibid., 228. It is the relationships, the shared activities, and the plans and endeavours that shape the meaning of the people, and, in turn, the people are shaped into community by the meaning upon which they agree. Martos describes this lived sense of communal meaning as "felt meaning," which can be difficult for individuals to articulate, certainly in the beginning, and which is strengthened by accumulated insights (built up by consistently sharing experience and building common understanding and judgement) and through meaningful interactions with others. See Martos' section on Meaning and Context: ibid., 224-30.

11. It is in *Querida Amazonia* that Pope Francis most fully employs invitation by describing four "dreams" (*QA* n.7). The exhortation is very practical in its pastoral, scientific and ecological concerns, so the use of "dreams" is not meant to distance or fictionalise the Amazon, but the opposite: to invite the reader to enter into all that is opened up by this document and by the *relatio finale* of the assembly. The concept of dreams in taken from the assembly's preparatory document (which precedes the *instrumentum laboris*) in which dreams are mentioned three times, including in the questionnaire offered at the end: "What Church do we dream of for the Amazonia?" Synod of Bishops, *Amazonia: New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology*, Preparatory Document for the Special Assembly for the Pan-Amazon Region, *General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops*, 8 Jun 2018, accessed 13 Oct 2020, https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2018/06/08/180608a.pdf.

Querida Amazonia, in particular, is designed to be an invitation to personal conversion, and to building a "spirit of human fellowship" (*QA* n.20). Within all of his documents, speeches, and moments of teaching, Pope Francis uses simple and engaging little "soundbites" which are his own insights into Christian life. His speeches, addresses, and particularly his answers to questions, can be peppered with anecdotes and observations.[12] Within his texts the pope engages with science, philosophy, Catholic tradition, and literature; a typical trait of papal teaching.[13] The soundbites are part of greater themes that can initially appear as simple metaphors relating to normal human experience, but which can function as gateways into profound ecclesiological meaning. Together the memorable anecdotes, insights and soundbites, rich themes, and use of repetition work to build up the meaning of synodality in the minds of the listeners and readers of Pope Francis.

The most prominent themes of synodality evident in the teaching of the pope are: journeying; hospitality, encounter, and the "revolution of tenderness"; a polyhedron Church and dialogue; bridge-building; and Spirit-led discernment and responsibility.[14] These key themes will now be reviewed for what they reveal of the meaning of synodality, and how they may resonate within the understanding of the Catholic Church as authentic; an understanding which has been established through the ecclesiological foundations laid so far in this and the previous chapter, and is in need of fleshing out with the emerging experiences and understandings of synodality.

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12. Pope Francis often exhibits a relaxed and friendly teaching style, which can be critiqued for his contrasting approach to differently gendered audiences. The pope's insights and method of communicating are markedly different to a Western style, and can therefore be experienced as discomforting or disconcerting when encountered by those used to the traditional European style of Church; where insights are typically drawn directly out of biblical, doctrinal or catechetical texts, and where communication methods can be quite removed from the lives of the listeners. Walter Kasper describes Pope Francis as bringing a paradigm shift: "from a deductive method to a method in the sense of see-judge-act, which begins inductively at first and, only in a second step, introduces theological criteria." Kasper affirms that such a shift can "elicit irritations and misunderstandings." Walter Kasper, *Pope Francis' Revolution of Tenderness and Love: Theological and Pastoral Perspectives* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 2015), 35.

This encapsulates the need for balance that Pope Francis desires between ideas and reality (see fn.7 in this chapter). Pope Francis' style could be described as engagement with reality through his own authenticity in a confident and free manner. Authenticity demands recognising bias and moving away from unauthenticity, which the pope has demonstrated in his own moments of humility and humiliation. In contrasting the styles of Pope Benedict XVI and his successor, Pope Francis, Kasper describes the latter as: "defined by kerygmatic theology… In the spirit of the founder of his order, Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), he proceeds not from doctrine, but from the concrete situation… he attempts to evaluate the situation according to the rule for discernment of spirits." Ibid., 10.

13. See Appendix B for a brief analysis and critique of the references within Pope Francis' major documents.

14. Together these elements describe the concept of "missionary discipleship"; the practical dimensions of which are discussed in the next chapter using the foundations of chapters three and four.

4.2 Journeying and Walking Together in Authenticity

Journeying is a key metaphor for synodality, as it provides a strong sense of the movement and collaboration that are integral to dynamic and relational meaning. Synodal journeying is not the stratified placements of people in a hierarchical Church; where seminarians are set apart to study, the priest is set over his flock, and the bishop governs, teaches and sanctifies alone in his position of power. This thesis proposes that the imagery of the People of God journeying in synodality is not pyramidal but spherical: the people are all together in the mix and equal, although different in every way that people differ.[15] The sphere holds gently all the gifts and talents, and allows the appropriate leader for the time to rise to the surface, or, in times of upheaval, a prophet may burst to the surface.[16] People belong to many spheres and their individual authenticity can contribute to the achievement of community in each context. To reject the contribution of individuals is to be inauthentic to this foundation of synodality. Lonergan explains that people can operate at a multiplicity of states of conversion, which, as described before, contributes to the development of authenticity.[17] Judgement is the highest level of the operations of cognitional consciousness;

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15. In his introductory speech on synodality Pope Francis described the Church as: "an inverted pyramid, the top is located beneath the base," with the metaphor working to upend the pyramidal imagery formed from hierarchical ecclesial meaning. Francis, "Address at the 50th Anniversary." In an interview a year later, the pope described with more detail what he thought the shape of a synodal Church looks like: "[the Church is] born from baptism and shapes itself around the bishop who calls her together and strengthens her." And again: "A synodal church means a back-and-forth motion, up and down, side to side, and again (*the Pope shows this violently with his arms - editor*). The same should occur in the dioceses." Van Lierde and De Kerpel, "Revolutie van tederheid," 7-9. The Dutch original text is used with my own translation (the Vatican's English translation omits the editor's note on Pope Francis' expressive movements, it paraphrases and limits this section, and contains a spelling mistake).

16. The clergy have been advised by Pope Francis that their place may change position: they may be in front of the people, amongst them, or behind, as need determines. The particular role of the bishop in these positions is to foster "missionary communion" in the diocese; to develop participation and dialogue; and, most of all, to aim for the "missionary aspiration of reaching everyone" (*EG* n.31). This aim is not incompatible with lay leadership, and for a community that seeks to engage fully with its diversity of ministries and gifts, it may well be essential. Martos develops this further by suggesting that while clergy can maintain their eucharistic leadership role, ordination should reclaim its original meaning for the Christian community: "…it might be advisable to return to the earlier practice of ordaining (i.e. initiating into a ministerial position) individuals to perform specific ministries in specific communities. Those so ordained would be chosen because they have gifts for ministries such as administration, preaching, or liturgical leadership, they would be ordained for a particular parish or local community, and their ministerial status would last only as long as they continued to minister in that community." Martos, *Deconstructing Sacramental Theology*, 270-71.

17. Lonergan explains how conversion manifests in a variety of ways for an individual, depending upon their particular place within the many permutations of conversion (intellectual, moral or affective/religious), differentiated consciousness (the movement out of a sensory way of understanding the world and into the world as mediated by meaning), and realms of meaning. Lonergan defines several realms of meaning: common sense, theory, interiority, and transcendence, as well as realms of scholarship and art. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 257-76.

while people can tend to leap straight to judgement, the authentic person labours long over the prior operations of attending and understanding, and remains open to new information, and new experience. For a community to appropriate this process within themselves, and to do so together, is exceedingly difficult, but both desirable and advantageous against stagnation and decline. Authenticity of an individual and progress of a community are humble, humiliating, frustrating, rewarding, and joyful journeys.

Evangelii Gaudium describes a vision of synodality: a joyful, active, transformed and transforming Church as a community of the baptised that is impelled by the Spirit to evangelise as "missionary disciples" (*EG* nn.119-20). The document opens with a statement of what it means to be a Christian: "The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus" (*EG* n.1). It is a reminder that Christianity is relational and transformational, and that missionary activity is to share the good news of encounter with God's love to all others in friendship and community (*EG* nn.2-8). The concept of journeying occurs frequently in *Evangelii Gaudium* and is not limited to the Catholic *ekklēsia*. All Christians are "pilgrims journeying alongside one another" (*EG* n.244), and non-Christians, too, can co-operate with God's grace and have a "communitarian experience of journeying towards God" (*EG* n.254).[18] It has been noted before that parishes are rarely mentioned in papal documents,[19] but in *EG* they are described as having an essential role in forming and nourishing the faithful, and being a "sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey" (*EG* n.28). In order to do so, parishes must be capable of self-renewal and constant adaptivity, and closely connected with the homes and lives of the people (*EG* n.28). Accompanying each other - pastors and lay - in a "journey of openness to God" (*EG* n.44) is part of the walking that a synodal Church does together; along with popular piety (*EG* n.124), everyday conversations (*EG* n.127), formation and mystagogy (*EG* n.166), and through all of these steps together, a "journey of growth and maturity in the faith" (*EG* n.200).[20] The nature

18. The only explicit reference to "synodality" in *EG* is to the lessons that can be learned through ecumenical listening and learning: "in the dialogue with our Orthodox brothers and sisters, we Catholics have the opportunity to learn more about the meaning of episcopal collegiality and their experience of synodality. Through an exchange of gifts, the Spirit can lead us ever more fully into truth and goodness" (*EG* n.246).

19. Except for *Christifideles Laici*, see sec.2.4.4 of this thesis.

20. *EG* n.200 refers to the duty that Catholics have for a "preferential option for the poor," a key notion of Catholic Social Teaching: "I want to say, with regret, that the worst discrimination which the poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care… none of us can think we are exempt from concern for the poor and for social justice" (*EG* nn.200-201). Pope Francis is reminding Catholics that journeying is not comfortable; it requires ongoing conversion in order to turn back to God and to the poor, which brings with it the need for repentance and renewed commitment.

of the Church is characterised as journeying so that all aspects of ecclesial life are incorporated into evangelising activity; especially the reforming action of conversion and Spirit-led transformation.

The 2018 apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate* links community, holiness and journey as intrinsic to Christian life: "Growth in holiness is a journey in community, side by side with others."[21] Understanding holiness as a communal journey was evident in the Second Vatican Council's *Gaudium et Spes,* which opened with a description of the Church as a community led by the Spirit (*GS* n.1). This pastoral constitution held up engagement with the world as enriching for the Catholic Church, and a source of learning:

> In addition, the Catholic Church gladly holds in high esteem the things which other Christian Churches and ecclesial communities have done or are doing cooperatively by way of achieving the same goal. At the same time, she is convinced that she can be abundantly and variously helped by the world in the matter of preparing the ground for the Gospel. This help she gains from the talents and industry of individuals and from human society as a whole (*GS* n.40).

Pope Francis maintains a positive and open attitude towards learning, and through his example and words he encourages the Church to be the same.[22] The pope demonstrates that genuine openness is accompanied by humility and vulnerability. This was exemplified during a visit to Chile in 2018, where Pope Francis defended a bishop accused of covering up reports of abuse. Amidst a time of great anger and turmoil for the Church in Chile as scandals were revealed, the pope publicly described accusations as "calumny."[23] Subsequently, Pope Francis was sufficiently open to recognise that his statements were inappropriate, and he set into motion a series of investigations that brought about a powerful experience of humiliation, repentance and conversion for the pope.[24] These events will undoubtedly be regarded in the

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21. Francis, *Gaudete et Exsultate,* Apostolic Exhortation on the Call to Holiness in Today's World, *Holy See Press Office,* 19 Mar 2018, accessed 7 Oct 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20180319_gaudete-et-exsultate.html, n.141. Hereafter *GE*.

22. Pope Francis spoke of "theological freedom" and allowing the possibility of experimentation with new paths and creating something new when he addressed a theology congress. Francis, "Address to the Congress 'Theology After *Veritatis Gaudium*'."

23. Gerard O'Connell, "'This is calumny': Pope Francis Defends Bishop Barros Against Charges he Knew of Sexual Abuse," *America Magazine*, 18 Jan 2018, accessed 15 Oct 2020, https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2018/01/18/calumny-pope-francis-defends-bishop-barros-against-charges-he-knew-sexual-abuse.

24. Later, while still in Chile, Pope Francis met with and apologised to victims of abuse. Upon return to the Vatican he announced that two Vatican officials - Archbishop Charles Scicluna of Malta and Monsignor Jorge Bertomeu Farnós - would go to Chile to investigate what happened by listening to victims. "Archbishop Scicluna Sent to Chile to Investigate Bishop Accused of Child Abuse Cover up," *Times of Malta*, 31 Jan 2018, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/archbishop-scicluna-sent-to-chile-to-investigate-bishop-accused-of.669320.

future as a pivotal time of conversion for Pope Francis, for since then the anguish of ecclesial abuse, and the urgent need for repentance and healing, are frequently evident in his words and actions.[25] Eight months after visiting Chile he wrote a "Letter to the People of God" on the scandal of abuse, in which he declared: "the pain of the victims and their families is also our pain, and so it is urgent that we once more reaffirm our commitment to ensure the protection of minors and of vulnerable adults."[26] The letter articulated the problem of abuse as threefold: abuse of power, of conscience, and sexual abuse. This particular insight into abuse seems to have emerged after the Scicluna/Farnós report from Chile, and has been used since then by the pope when he speaks of abuse.[27] Pope Francis' work to accept humiliation and develop new and healthy pathways out of the situation is an example of an authentic person exposed to their own bias. The path of authenticity involves recognition and removal of what is unauthentic in oneself, and with this new-found vision to recognise and remove the unauthenticity that is present also in community life.[28]

This cycle of responsible behaviour corresponds with how Pope Francis describes walking along the path to growth in holiness as essential to daily missionary activity (*GE* nn.25-31). Within this dense section of *Gaudete et Exsultate*, holiness is described as a commitment to being responsible within every relationship and for every action. The complexity of holiness as both an internal and external exercise is revealed: mission is an engaged commitment to full-hearted and full-bodied activity, which must be undertaken "responsibly and generously" (*GE* n.26). Lonergan expands this meaning when he describes

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25. As one example, on 1 January 2019 Pope Francis sent a letter to the bishops of the USA, who met for a spiritual retreat at his request. In the letter the pope was open and direct about the seriousness of the abuse crisis facing the Church, the effect on credibility, and referred in particular to the situation in the USA. Jim Fair, "Pope Francis Calls for 'Renewed and Decisive Approach to Resolving Conflicts'," 3 Jan 2019, accessed 27 May 2020, https://zenit.org/articles/pope-francis-calls-for-renewed-and-decisive-approach-to-resolving-conflicts/.

The relaunched Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors (17 February 2018) and its future operations are likely to be impacted by the anticipated apostolic constitution on the Roman Curia, which has an interim title of *Praedicate Evangelium*, "Preach the Gospel."

26. Francis, "Letter to the People of God," *Holy See Press Office*, 20 Aug 2018, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/letters/2018/documents/papa-francesco_20180820_lettera-popolo-didio.html.

27. The threefold description of abuse seems to have been first used in Pope Francis' letter to the Chilean bishops. Francis, "Letter to the Bishops of Chile Following the Report of Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna," *Holy See Press Office,* 8 Apr 2018, accessed 16 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/letters/2018/documents/papa-francesco_20180408_lettera-vescovi-cile.html.

28. Lonergan describes individual bias, as well as two forms of community bias in *Insight*: group bias and general bias. Group bias is the tendency to choose what is good for one's group, rather than the common good. General bias is the longer cycle of decline after progress, brought about by the human tendency to stay in the world of common sense; rejecting the realms of specialist knowledge and preferring immediate solutions to the small sphere of the immediate world. Lonergan, *Insight*, 218-38.

how *being responsible* is the achievement of a person who is being their true self, by being attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible.[29] Through a commitment to constant exercise of this process a person achieves progress, not only for themselves but for the communities in which they operate.[30] Being responsible is a process of self-fulfilment and meaning-making, as Lonergan describes:

> The process is not merely the service of man; it is above all the making of man, his advance in authenticity, the fulfilment of his affectivity, and the direction of his work to the particular goods and a good of order that are worth while.[31]

This path of authenticity is the path of holiness of which Pope Francis speaks in *Gaudete et Exsultate*; for, as Lonergan explains, authenticity is achieved in self-transcendence, and being in love with God is the fulfilment of being human.[32] The pursuit of the common good is equivalent to the pursuit of meaningful, responsible, and loving relationships with each other, God, and all creation.[33] This is the synodal journeying that the Catholic Church is called to walk: the path of holiness as a journey of authenticity.

The bible is full of stories of journeying, and so synodality has roots in the history of God's People as led by God and guided on a path of Wisdom.[34] Thus the journey of a synodal Church is not aimless nor groundless, but guided by Wisdom and ultimately grounded in the grace of sharing in God's knowing:[35]

> Once you move from 'journeying' to 'wandering aimlessly', all wisdom is lost! The one thing that directs and guides us on to the right path is wisdom, the wisdom born of faith. It is not the false wisdom of this world… To receive this wisdom we have to look at the world, our

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29. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 52-53.

30. The human good is described by Lonergan as both individual and social: "Individuals do not just operate to meet their needs but cooperate to meet one another's needs. As the community develops its institutions to facilitate cooperation, so individuals develop skills to fulfil the roles and perform the tasks set by the institutional framework. Though the roles are fulfilled and the tasks are performed that the needs be met, still all is done not blindly but knowingly, not necessarily but freely." Ibid., 52.

31. Ibid.

32. "As the question of God is implicit in all our questioning, so being in love with God is the basic fulfilment of our conscious intentionality." Ibid., 104-105.

33. See *LS* n.218: "In calling to mind the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi, we come to realize that a healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion."

34. The book of Genesis alone describes a great number of journeys or migrations.

35. In Hebrew tradition Wisdom is the way of "righteousness, justice, and equity" (Prov 1:3). By a life in Wisdom a person finds true value in life (Prov 3). Haughton describes life that is oriented to the flow of God's grace and love as living in "exchange." Knowingly or unknowingly, all relationships participate within this flow of life in either a positive way - as joining the life of the Spirit and the way of Wisdom - or in a negative way, where there is a refusal, blockage or distortion of love. Haughton, *The Passionate God*, 18-47.

> situations, our problems, everything, with the eyes of God. We receive that wisdom when we start to see things with God's eyes, listen to others with God's ears, to love with God's heart, and to judge things by God's values.[36]

Wisdom is used frequently in *Querida Amazonia* in the key theme of inculturation of the gospel, which requires respect and appreciation of cultural diversity and the mutual exchange of gifts. Pope Francis points to the wisdom present in indigenous ways of life (*QA* nn.22, 32, 72) and culture (*QA* nn.30, 34, 70), which indicate a path of consciousness of integral connection with creation (*QA* nn.42, 51). "Grace supposes culture," says Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium*, "and God's gift becomes flesh in the culture of those who receive it" (*EG* n.115). The consequence of receiving the gospel is the transformation of the culture in which it comes to life, enfleshed in the people of that time and place.[37] The stories of the Bible reveal this many times over: God's covenant in the first testament, and the gospel brought by Christ, are not ideas but reality that takes root in the hearts and minds of individuals and communities, and, through the transformation of people, becomes a transformation of societies and cultures.

Journeying has been illustrated as being communal, holy, responsible, missionary, and biblical. All of these are fundamental characteristics of the journey of the People of God, in their many communities of communities, who seek authenticity. The contemporary Church is recognising this movement into authenticity and naming it synodality. A synodal Church recognises that the movement of reform, growth and progress is necessary for authenticity.[38] Pope Francis insists that movement must serve the opportunities for conversion that present themselves, often in moments of crisis and suffering.[39] He often warns against the inertia of a closed heart and mind: "We need a revolution of tenderness in this world who suffer from

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36. Francis, "Address to Youth of Bangladesh," *Zenit Online News*, 2 Dec 2017, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://zenit.org/articles/pope-tells-youth-of-bangladesh-to-choose-the-right-path/.

37. Lonergan is aware that this is the place where theology is done: "A theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, xi.

38. Lonergan refers to Aristotle when he describes the nature of a human person as: "an immanent principle of movement and of rest." See Aristotle, *Physics*, II, 1, 195b 21-22. Lonergan continues: "In man such a principle is the human spirit as raising and answering questions. As raising questions, it is an immanent principle of movement. As answering questions and doing so satisfactorily, it is an immanent principle of rest." Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 172. Thus the Church itself, as the People of God, will experience movement and rest as it attends to the signs of the times.

39. In an interview during the COVID-19 pandemic Pope Francis states: "Every crisis contains both danger and opportunity… We need to reconnect with our real surroundings. This is the opportunity for conversion." Austen Ivereigh, "Pope Francis Says Pandemic Can be a 'Place of Conversion'," *The Tablet*, 8 Apr 2020, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.thetablet.co.uk/features/2/17845/pope-francis-says-pandemic-can-be-a-place-of-conversion-.

cardiovascular sclerosis."[40] Many of the pope's themes of synodality specifically counter inertia by being active and engaging in nature; the most fundamental of these is *encounter*, which the pope considers to be the only solution to fear and rejection (*EG* n.91).

4.2.1 Expanding Hearts and Relationships with a "Revolution of Tenderness"

The "revolution of tenderness" is a recurring theme when Pope Francis speaks of encounter.[41] It is framed as a demand of the Gospel for people to draw together and open their hearts:

> …the Gospel tells us constantly to run the risk of a face-to-face encounter with others, with their physical presence which challenges us, with their pain and their pleas, with their joy which infects us in our close and continuous interaction. True faith in the incarnate Son of God is inseparable from self-giving, from membership in the community, from service, from reconciliation with others. The Son of God, by becoming flesh, summoned us to the revolution of tenderness (*EG* n.88, see nn.2, 67, 188).

In his "blueprint" for the Church, *Evangelii Gaudium*,[42] Pope Francis invites all Christians to "a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them" (*EG* n.3). It is the tenderness of Christ that is encountered and which forms the foundation for a disciple's life - a life of joy and friendship with God that cannot help but spill over in relationship with others (*EG* n.8). Encounter with Christ brings with it an invitation to encounter people as Jesus did: showing closeness to everyone, looking with love, drawing near, eating and drinking, displaying sensitivity, receiving people, and ultimately sacrificing himself - in perfect synchronisation with his life - on the cross (*EG*

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40. Van Lierde and De Kerpel, "Revolutie van tederheid," 9. In *Evangelii Gaudium*: "Sometimes we prove hard of heart and mind… This leads to a kind of alienation at every level" (*EG* n.196). With 113 instances the word "heart" is very important to this apostolic exhortation. For other references to hardness of heart by Pope Francis see: *EG* n.83; *AL* n.62; *GE* fn.70. See fn.37 in chap.3 of this thesis.

41. The revolution of tenderness is linked to other synodal characteristics such as community, listening, patience, and mercy. Mercy and encounter are significant themes in *Misericordiae Vultus*, but surprisingly the phrase "revolution of tenderness" is absent. Pope Francis' language in this document on mercy is invitational: "May the message of mercy reach everyone, and may no one be indifferent to the call to experience mercy." Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus,* Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, *Holy See Press Office,* 11 Apr 2015, accessed 7 Oct 2020, https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_bolla_20150411_misericordiae-vultus.html, n.19. Hereafter *MV*.

42. *Evangelii Gaudium* will be highly significant for the Church's present and future engagement with synodality, with Pope Francis frequently referencing it when he discusses mission and evangelisation.

n.269).[43] This understanding of the life of a disciple as a call to encounter lies at the heart of evangelisation for Pope Francis, who points to Jesus as the model of this "method of evangelization" (*EG* n.269).

As a "revolution," the revolution of tenderness has two forms: firstly, the turning motion that is a disciple's life, cyclically drawing in for nourishment and moving out to encounter others in relationship around the axis of a tender God. Such dynamic imagery for discipleship - which Pope Francis calls "missionary discipleship" - is potentially full of fear and risk for a static and hierarchical ecclesial self-understanding. The overthrowing of fear and its replacement with tenderness is the second action of the revolution, which is exemplified by the choice of a female figurehead by the pope:

> There is a Marian 'style' to the Church's work of evangelization. Whenever we look to Mary, we come to believe once again in the revolutionary nature of love and tenderness. In her we see that humility and tenderness are not virtues of the weak but of the strong who need not treat others poorly in order to feel important themselves. Contemplating Mary, we realize that she who praised God for 'bringing down the mighty from their thrones' and 'sending the rich away empty' (Lk 1:52-53) is also the one who brings a homely warmth to our pursuit of justice… This interplay of justice and tenderness, of contemplation and concern for others, is what makes the ecclesial community look to Mary as a model of evangelization (*EG* n.288).

Tenderness which stems from humility and vulnerability is the antidote to the paralysis caused by fear and inertia. Entering into peoples' lives through tenderness, rather than through the imposition of power and domination, is the messy option: "our lives become wonderfully complicated and we experience intensely what it is to be a people, to be part of a people" (*EG* n.270). The challenge (and reward) of tenderness and encounter is the building of a community that embraces diversity, and appreciates the constructive value of dialogue.

43. With multiple biblical references in this paragraph of *EG* n.269, Pope Francis also resonates with the Vatican II document on the Church in the Modern World when he writes: "Moved by his example, …rejoicing with those who rejoice, weeping with those who weep…" The opening paragraph of *Gaudium et Spes* is a strong statement on the Church as a community deeply *in encounter* with the world (*GS* n.1).

4.2.2 A Polyhedron Church and Dialogue

Dialogue brings hospitality and encounter to their fruition in friendship and responsibility.[44] This section establishes how the concept of dialogue may be developed for the new era of synodality through an understanding of the Church as a *polyhedron*, or many-sided shape. Hierarchical meaning imagines the Church as a fortress or a boat, with an accompanying concept of unity that requires boundaries and consistency - often to the point of uniformity - and is threatened by the "outside" world. From the view of synodality, a polyhedron Church is enhanced by the unique shapes of the people, communities and cultures by which it is constituted. The Spirit, too, constitutes the Church as a fountain of life. It is a flowing form that is poured, sent, and given to the Church, and dwells in people's hearts (see *LG* nn.2-4). The Spirit guides, unifies, equips, prays, and witnesses; it is never described as static, defensive, or boundary-loving. A synodal Catholic Church seeks to be guided and filled with the Spirit, with the necessary gifts arising to address the issues of each time and place. The dynamism and diversity of this reality is what Pope Francis describes as polyhedron, an image that eliminates the stasis of hierarchy and adds further (and realistic) complexity to the spherical shape that has been suggested in this chapter.:

> We are in the age of globalization, and we wonder what globalization is and what the unity of the Church would be: perhaps a sphere, where all points are equidistant from the center, all are equal? No! This is uniformity. And the Holy Spirit does not create uniformity! What figure can we find? We think of the polyhedron: the polyhedron is a unity, but with all different parts; each one has its peculiarity, its charism. This is unity in diversity. It is on this path that we, Christians, do what we call with the theological name of ecumenism. We try to have this diversity become more harmonized by the Holy Spirit and become unity… this is our Christian beauty![45]

Unity, as full and mature life in a polyhedron community, is beautiful for its harmony and complexity. Its flaws are not those elements that disagree, but those that refuse to be part of the journey, to move, to renew, to be open to the Spirit. Chapter five will investigate the need for the entire Church to be synodal in a way that promotes a journey of conversion and authenticity - this will be essential to Christianity's success in achieving unity, and not merely within Catholicism.

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44. See sec.3.2.3.3.

45. Francis, "Pope's Address to Pentecostal Community in Caserta," *Zenit Online News*, 29 Jul 2014, accessed 16 Oct 2020, http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/pope-s-address-to-pentecostal-community-in-caserta.

This thesis proposes that in a synodal Church of polyhedron shape dialogue rests on three principles. First, that dialogue is one means by which a person, or a group, can reveal themselves fully to another. Evangelisation is authentic communication of the Christian message; it is described in *Evangelii Gaudium* as joyful (*EG* n.83), new (*EG* n.73), revealing and challenging (*EG* n.74), and dynamic (*EG* n.81). Christian meaning cannot be communicated as abstract concepts, but only as belonging to the meaning of the communicator. That is, words themselves do not hold meaning, rather, they carry the meaning of the person who writes or speaks them.[46] The gospel message has a social dimension to its meaning which must be expressed through the "words, attitudes and deeds" of believers (*EG* n.258), and which is referred to as "social dialogue" in *Evangelii Gaudium*. Revealing oneself and one's meaning in dialogue is therefore a valuable form of Christian witness.[47]

Of the five major documents in Pope Francis' pontificate from 2013 to 2020, *Evangelii Gaudium* mentions dialogue most frequently.[48] *Amoris Laetitia*, as a post-synodal apostolic exhortation that focuses on families and their blessings and challenges, is also notable for twenty-one references to dialogue. *Love* (546 instances) and *family* (525 instances) are key topics in *Amoris Laetitia*, and the pope indicates that dialogue is important within these contexts: dialogue is "essential for experiencing, expressing and fostering love in marriage and family life" (*AL* n.136). Dialogue can be silent (*AL* n.12), ritualistic (n.16), official (n.199), casual (n.221), sensitive (nn.149, 264), and, above all, loving (nn.140, 172). Effective dialogue requires healthy habits, such as cultivating communication skills, loving attitudes, attending to the other person, patience, listening, giving time, and keeping an open mind (*AL* nn.136-41). All of these elements of dialogue resonate with those outlined by Pope Paul VI in *Ecclesiam Suam*.[49] The two popes agree on the contribution of the mystical dimension of life to dialogue, with Pope Francis explaining that interesting dialogue is the fruit of an "interior richness nourished by reading, personal reflection, prayer and openness to the world around us" (*AL* n.141). This is the pursuit of authenticity: through being attentive,

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46. See sec.3.1.2.

47. Remembering that evangelising and Christian witness are not the same as proselytising. See fn.69 in chap.3.

48. Instances of the word "dialogue" in the major documents of Pope Francis: *EG* 59 times; *LS* 25x; *AL* 21x; *CV* 10x; and *QA* 15x.

49. See sec.2.1.6 of this thesis.

intelligent, reasonable and responsible a person embraces their transcendental consciousness and will be prepared to meet others as their true self.[50]

The second principle of dialogue proposed within synodal meaning is that dialogue contributes to forming community at its highest functioning of *being responsible*. Being responsible has been described as the human fulfilment that brings a consciousness that "deliberates, makes judgments of value, decides, acts responsibly and freely."[51] Here the two popes continue their agreement, with Pope Paul VI declaring that the Catholic Church has a deep inner urge and responsibility to engage with the problems of the world and solve them (*ES* n.14). Pope Paul VI cautioned against uneven power dynamics existing within dialogue situations.[52] He called all Christians to dialogue as Christ offers himself as love in dialogue - a "dialogue of salvation" (*ES* nn.70-77). This was an emphatic turning point in the understanding of the balance of power in conversations - and in evangelising in particular - as Pope Paul VI emphasised that responsibilities arise out of relationality (although he omits *ad intra* relationships from this discourse in *Ecclesiam Suam*). When Pope Francis discusses dialogical responsibility he draws no boundaries: *all people* are addressed in his ecological-social documents *Laudato Si'* and *Querida Amazonia*, and *all of their relationships and actions* fall within their personal and social responsibility. The pope calls all people to hear both the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth together, for social and ecological issues are integrally connected: to be disconnected from them is to lack responsibility (*LS* n.49). In *Querida Amazonia* Pope Francis promotes "social dialogue," which is particularly conscious of the poor. Building on Pope Paul VI's sensitivity to power imbalances, this style of dialogue insists that those with power have a responsibility to recognise the power imbalance when they engage with others. Furthermore, they are to ensure that their own impact is reduced, and that the contribution of the poor is increased:

> Dialogue must not only favour the preferential option on behalf of the poor, the marginalized and the excluded, but also respect them as having a leading role to play (*QA* n.27).
>
> The Church can learn and 'reshape her identity' by listening to the people and their history, which is connected to the land (*QA* n.66).

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50. Dialogue and natural right are discussed in sec.3.2.4.

51. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 106-7. See sec.3.3.2 of this thesis.

52. See sec.2.1.6 of this thesis.

The reshaping of identity that Pope Francis speaks of is the People of God constituting themselves through meaning, as a consequence of listening and learning with open hearts and minds. It is a process of being authentic. The wider the circles in which people can listen and learn brings them deeper into the kingdom of God, where God's redemptive activity is at work in and through creation, including the environment and the communion of saints.[53]

The third principle of synodal dialogue is that dialogue provides the means by which a diverse group may move toward unity. Unity is a sign of achieving community, which cannot be brought about through conformity or uniformity, but rather through dialogue. Community consists of a diversity of individuals who seek authenticity for themselves and for the group, and are unified through their achievement of common meaning. By rejecting conformity the Church is committing itself to a constant process of learning from each other, a dialogical process which reveals value and contributes to common meaning:

> In this way, by learning from one another, we can better reflect that wonderful multifaceted reality that Christ's Church is meant to be. She will be able to attract young people, for her unity is not monolithic, but rather a network of varied gifts that the Spirit ceaselessly pours out upon her, renewing her and lifting her up from her poverty (*CV* n.207).

Lonergan understands that being responsible will move people to dialogue, as a responsible act together, which will in turn promote concern for the other (friendship) and concern for the common good (justice). The papal documents of *Laudato Si'* and *Querida Amazonia* have a strong cultural awareness that brings nuance to the task of dialogue by a polyhedron community. Dialogue must overturn cultural or social norms that do not function to raise up the powerless, or to open the powerful to humble listening. The contemporary world needs dialogue to flourish in order to strengthen communities and repair the damage done when barriers are built between people, as well as between humanity and the environment. Pope Francis has proposed "bridge building" as the key act of responsibility by humanity, and as an active metaphor for the concept of communion.

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53. Ecclesial examples of dialogue within wide circles of interest include the Sisters of Mercy's work to establish a "Mercy International Reflection Process" (MIRP). This is a global listening and discernment process to respond to the "cry of the Earth and the cry of the Poor": MIRP website, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.mercyworld.org/about/our-initiatives/mercy-international-reflection-process/.

4.2.3 Bridge Building as a Metaphor for Synodality

With the opening speech of the Second Vatican Council Pope John XXIII declared that he preferred a "teaching authority which is primarily pastoral in character."[54] This vision has been embraced wholeheartedly by Pope Francis for his papacy and expressed most clearly in one of his most frequent themes of synodality: building bridges.[55] The pope describes bridge building as a relational, pastoral and biblical activity that lies at the heart of authentic communion:

> Pastoral activity needs to bring out more clearly the fact that our relationship with the Father demands and encourages a communion which heals, promotes and reinforces interpersonal bonds. In our world, especially in some countries, different forms of war and conflict are re-emerging, yet we Christians remain steadfast in our intention to respect others, to heal wounds, to build bridges, to strengthen relationships and to 'bear one another's burdens' (Gal 6:2) (*EG* n.67).

Bridge building prepares for transformation through the promotion and fostering of encounter, co-operation, dialogue, and the building of community, which, as already explained, requires common experience, understanding, judgement, and commitment.[56] The opposite of building bridges is not stagnation (for stagnation involves resistance to conversion) but building walls. The activity of building bridges contrasts the ease and speed in which a wall can be thrown up, with the time-consuming, skilful, and labour-intensive construction of a bridge. A wall is built to divide a community,[57] while a bridge connects people, trade, skills, and ideas. This imagery reveals that progress requires the co-operation and co-responsibility of many people with various skills, gifts, and perspectives. It also brings powerful insight into the nature of unity as neither conformity nor uniformity, but abundant generosity and diversity.

Bridge building will be an essential theme of a synodal Church. It will demand creativity, as well as the elements discussed already: journeying, hospitality, encounter and dialogue. Tenderness is important too, for, as Pope Francis insists, the human person must be

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54. John XXIII, *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*, n.15. See sec.2.1.1 of this thesis.

55. To "build a bridge" is defined as establishing a relationship, in order to foster understanding and appreciation of cultural differences. *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, accessed 12 Oct 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/build a bridge, s.v. "build a bridge."

56. See sec.3.2.1.

57. Obvious examples of physical walls include the Berlin Wall, built between East and West Germany, and President Trump's wall between the USA and Mexico.

at the centre of building.[58] This is developed as a foundational notion in *Laudato Si'*, whereby an open mind and tender heart operate as a constant correction - that is, they promote conversion to responsible action - to cultural and social paradigms. The pope warns that a "technological paradigm" can dominate the worldview to the point where decision-making capacity, genuine freedom, and creativity are diminished (*LS* n.108). The problems that arise from a warped "modern anthropocentrism" include a prizing of technology for its own sake (*LS* n.115), a neglect of the environment (*LS* n.117), a "constant schizophrenia" which unbalances the human drive to be responsible (*LS* n.118), and a culture of practical relativism (*LS* nn.122-23). The solution that Pope Francis proposes to these problems is to build an *integral ecology* (*LS* chapter four). This can only be achieved through conversion, and in itself incorporates many of the principles of bridge building and humble journeying.

The first component of an integral ecology is the building of an environmental, economic and social ecology (*LS* nn.138-42). Essentially, this is the recognition of life, in its entirety, as interconnected, interwoven, and interdependent. The understanding of solutions as discrete and specific to a single problem is to be rejected and replaced by methodologies that perceive ecosystems and spheres of interaction (*LS* n.141). The word ecosystem is a biological term, defined as: "a system involving the interactions between a community of living organisms in a particular area and its nonliving environment."[59] Although "ecosystem" is used only in the specifically environmental documents *Laudato Si'* and *Querida Amazonia*, it describes very well how human life can be envisioned within creation by a synodal Church. The building of this first element essentially begins with acquiring a modern heuristic method, which has been described earlier in this thesis as control of meaning based on transcendental consciousness.[60] Pope Francis' documents illustrate how out of an ecological

58. In *Evangelii Gaudium* Pope Francis states that Christians have an: "absolute priority of 'going forth from ourselves towards our brothers and sisters' as one of the two great commandments which ground every moral norm and as the clearest sign for discerning spiritual growth in response to God's completely free gift" (*EG* n.179).

59. *Collins English Dictionary*, s.v. "ecosystem."

60. See sec.3.1.1 and fn.26 in chap.3.

vision, with foundations in modern empirical control of meaning, can be drawn concepts and practicalities of integral ecology and the shape and role of building within this.[61]

The second element is building a "cultural ecology" (*LS* nn.143-46). This involves making connections with the treasures of the past - a community's historic, artistic and cultural legacy - in order that they may contribute to the current culture: "a living, dynamic and participatory present reality which cannot be excluded as we rethink the relationship between human beings and the environment" (*LS* n.143). In discussing cultural ecology Pope Francis refers to contemporary issues that require the building up of cultural connections in order to bring health to the community: scientific responses to environment concerns with regard to the language used in communications, the rights and responsibilities of citizens in the face of consumerist culture, the links between cultural decline and environmental exploitation, and the principal place that indigenous communities require in dialogue. Key to a healthy cultural ecology is the building of bridges between generations, which brings exchange of listening, memory, and wisdom (*AL* n.193). Common meaning is thus built through the strengthening of family and intergenerational bonds. The opposite brings ideologies, which gain power through the destruction of diversity, made possible, for example, by those "who have no use for history, who spurn the spiritual and human riches inherited from past generations, and are ignorant of everything that came before them" (*CV* n.181).

The "ecology of daily life" is the third element of an integral ecology, which considers the space and environment in which people move (*LS* nn.147-55). It has a particular concern for beauty and creativity, and appreciates how a lack of social justice results in depriving people of these things. Building connections between the dignity of the human person and the systems which support them in their daily lives is recognised as important.

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61. Despite the harmony, Pope Francis has not openly credited Bernard Lonergan as an influence on his thinking. Undoubtedly the "See, Judge, Act" method (developed by the founder of the Catholic Worker Youth and Cardinal Joseph Cardijn) has been highly influential on the Argentinian pontiff. This method was used by the general assemblies of the Latin American episcopate (CELAM), the documents from which are frequently cited by Pope Francis, including the Aparecida assembly during which Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio was the chair of the editorial committee. *Evangelii Gaudium* alone has 12 endnote references to CELAM documents. Kasper, *Pope Francis' Revolution of Tenderness and Love*, 11-12.

Pope Francis identifies discernment as the element of Ignatian spirituality that helps him to live his ministry. Antonio Spadaro, ed., *A Big Heart Open to God* (New York: HarperCollins, 2013), 12. Gordon Rixon has analysed Pope Francis' understanding of discernment in his writings in the light of the Jesuit heritage of Ignatian spiritual exercises that he shares with Lonergan. Gordon Rixon, "Dwelling on the Way: Pope Francis and Bernard Lonergan on Discernment," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 84, no. 3 (22 May 2019): 305-318.

Laudato Si' calls for housing, public spaces and transport to be reviewed in the light of the meaning of persons' bodies (*LS* n.155).

The fourth element, the "principle of the common good," is defined as: "the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfilment."[62] The preferential option for the poor as an ethical imperative is emphasised in *Laudato Si'*, which - along with respect for human rights, the principle of subsidiarity, and social peace and justice - is essential to building a society that values the common good (*LS* nn.156-58). Finally, the fifth element of integral ecology is "justice between the generations" (*LS* nn.159-62). This involves the responsibility and accountability of the current generation to those of the future. Conversion remains at the heart of this challenge, as with all problems, for solutions can only be found after recognition of wrongs, the broadening of horizons, and the urgent need to be responsible are appropriated and acted upon.

The exposition of integral ecology in *Laudato Si'* is followed by a comprehensive discourse on those topics that will be necessary to its practical development: dialogue (*LS* nn.163-201), education for ecological citizenship (*LS* nn.211-15), ecological conversion (*LS* nn.216-21), joy and peace (*LS* nn.222-27), civic and political love (*LS* nn.228-32), sacramental signs and the celebration of rest (*LS* nn.233-37), the Trinity (*LS* nn.238-40), and Mary Queen of all Creation (*LS* nn.241-45). The encyclical concludes with a prayer for monotheistic believers and a Christian prayer.[63]

Synodality is a framework for authenticity, in which communities may commit to ongoing conversion, and look forward to transformation. The metaphor of building bridges represents Spirit-led activity applied to all relationships and all that lies within one's horizon, including one's own cognitive processes of knowing. Pushing out this scope, wider and wider, brings an appreciation that there need be no boundaries to Catholic responsibility - an insight which Pope Francis articulates in *Laudato Si'* and *Querida Amazonia*. Bridge building is a

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62. *LS* n.156 quotes directly from Vatican II's *Gaudium et Spes* n.26. The three references to Vatican II documents in *LS* are all to *GS*.

63. Demonstrating the universality of the call of *Laudato Si'*, yet holding a particular resonance of meaning for people of faith. Note that the encyclical letter was given on the Solemnity of Pentecost - a move that is deeply symbolic of Pope Francis' intention for the Church to be guided by the Spirit and active with the Spirit's gifts.

key element to the development of an authentic and responsible synodal Church, as well as to the healing and wholeness of the human person, which occurs in and with creation. The methodology of Pope Francis is to establish a hermeneutical foundation that understands the world as essentially (and mysteriously) interconnected in order to draw together Catholic social teaching and the issues of the contemporary world. Then a framework of synodality is applied and solutions may be found by: walking together; engaging with new and creative ideas; offering hospitality to all people and prioritising the poor; seeking dialogue with culture, tradition and technology; and approaching the whole of creation with a tender heart. In this way, synodality is not only a way of being for the Catholic Church but a way for all people "of good will,"[64] and therefore a genuine path of redemption for the world.

The next section will explore the concept at the peak of authentic, synodal living: responsibility.

4.3 The Responsible Church

A synodal Catholic Church that walks an authentic path of redemption for the world is a *responsible* Church. Being responsible is the achievement of an authentic person (someone who lives in accordance with their transcendental consciousness) and of an authentic community (who appropriate together their common meaning). The next sections explore what it means to be responsible through the concepts of discernment, responsibility and authority, a "sense of" and the *sensus fidei*, and meaning-making and value. These reveal the pneumatological foundations of synodality, and continue to build upon the importance of conceiving the Church as community and the human person as possessing intentional consciousness.

4.3.1 Discernment and Intentional Consciousness

This section considers the role of discernment in a synodal Church as an exercise of individual and communal responsibility. Thus the functioning of discernment is at the highest

64. A traditional term for non-Catholics who seek the common good, they may also be described as authentic people.

operation of intentional consciousness: responsible decision. Christians do not alone hold transcendental consciousness and the ability to develop it through authenticity. All humans have transcendental consciousness, and possess the dynamism that propels them to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible. Lonergan describes how community is at the heart of being human, and that *being responsible* is the pinnacle of life together as Christians and as the wider global community:

> The ideal basis of society is community, and the community may take its stand on a moral, a religious, or a Christian principle. The moral principle is that men individually are responsible for what they make of themselves, but collectively they are responsible for the world in which they live. Such is the basis of universal dialogue. The religious principle is God's gift of his love, and it forms the basis of dialogue between all representatives of religion. The Christian principle conjoins the inner gift of God's love with its outer manifestation in Christ Jesus and in those that follow him. Such is the basis of Christian ecumenism.[65]

Lonergan understands that being responsible will move people to dialogue, as a responsible act together, which will in turn promote concern for the other (friendship) and concern for the common good (justice).

If the journey of the synodal Church is to be responsible, and the building is to be of bridges and not walls, then the Church must practice *discernment*. To *discern* means "to recognise or perceive clearly," or to "recognise or perceive differences," with the roots in the Latin *dis-* (apart) and *cernere* (to separate).[66] Lonergan uses the word discern in this sense: as an ability to perceive that can be heightened and improved through the exercise of authenticity. In order that discernment may be understood as authentic decision and action, following right judgement, Lonergan's explanation of intentional consciousness is briefly reviewed.[67]

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65. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 360.

66. *Collins English Dictionary*, s.v. "discern."

67. It is helpful to note that, as will be made clear in this section, people constantly exercise judgement. Judgement is one part of the operations of human consciousness, and when made authentically and compassionately with open mind and heart, it is what constitutes persons as good and kind. "Being judgemental," however, is the exercise of unauthenticity. It is the operation of judgement from a basis of fear, ignorance and bias, and people naturally reject or resent this type of judgement. To overcome "being judgemental" does not require a retreat from making judgements, but rather an embrace of the long, difficult path of being authentic, through recognising bias and rejecting unauthenticity, opening one's horizon and committing to conversion. The resulting transformation, as work of the Spirit, will transform judgement towards the realm in which Jesus operated with love and forgiveness.

First and foremost, Lonergan's explanation of intentional consciousness recognises that the human mind is dynamic and that knowing is a process, naturally utilising a method that is: "a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results."[68] The overall result is an "open, ongoing, progressive and cumulative" process that is human knowing and responsible decision making.[69] The openness of this process is a recognition that knowing is never complete, and that observations, understanding, and judgements can always be reassessed and received anew in the light of new data. If the procedures of the mind have a method there must be distinct operations by which patterns, processes, and repetitions are grouped. Lonergan defines the basic pattern of operations as four groups: 1) seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting; 2) inquiring, imagining, understanding, conceiving, formulating; 3) reflecting, marshalling and weighing the evidence, judging; 4) deliberating, evaluating, deciding, speaking, writing. These are transitive operations; they intend an object, or make known the object to the subject, thus they are the work of *intentional consciousness.*[70] The four levels of conscious intentionality are successive, related and qualitatively different, in that they take the product of the previous level and apply further operations.[71] This process brings an expansion of consciousness, such as what occurs when one shifts from *experiencing* to the work of *understanding*, or from *judging* the correctness of one's understanding to *deciding* what is the best course of action. The person as subject is aware of their consciousness operating and is thus present to their self: "On all four levels, we are aware of ourselves but, as we mount from level to level, it is a fuller self of which we are aware and the awareness itself is different."[72] At the fourth level, consciousness becomes conscience.

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68. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 4.

69. Ibid., 6. This is in contrast to previous descriptions of human knowing, as Lonergan describes: "This process contrasts sharply not only with the static fixity that resulted from Aristotle's concentration on the necessary and immutable but also with Hegel's dialectic which is a movement enclosed within a complete system." Ibid.

70. "By seeing there becomes present what is seen, by hearing there becomes present what is heard, by imagining there becomes present what is imagined, and so on, where in each case the presence in question is a psychological event." Ibid., 6-7. These operations are not possible when asleep or in a coma. A person is a subject in both the grammatical sense (as the subject of the verbs of the operations), as well as the psychological sense (operating consciously). Ibid., 7.

71. As the pattern of operations of the human consciousness this whole dynamism is called transcendental method. All people are familiar with observing this method as it is the basic operations of consciousness, but only to the extent that one is attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible.

72. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 9.

In summary: the exercise of discernment, at the fourth level of deliberating and deciding, requires the hard work of expanding one's consciousness. This is a long road of appropriating one's consciousness, recognising bias and rejecting unauthenticity.[73] Communal discernment requires this path of authenticity to be taken together, so that acts of experiencing, understanding, and judgement may be done in common - that is, building a community of common meaning that can act in unity with common commitment. How the Holy Spirit is present and active in discernment can also be explored by examining what discernment *is not*. A clear example is contained in an address made by Pope Francis to the diocese of Rome.

Good order and *functionalism* are not only threats to the life of the *ekklēsia* but they can be sources of clericalism, declares Pope Francis.[74] Balance and orderliness are not the true stuff of life, he says, and obsessing with them is a distraction from the messy disorder of life. It can also misrepresent the gospels: "Take the Beatitudes: they deserve the Noble Prize for imbalance! The Gospel is like that."[75] When functionalism reigns no space is given to the reforming and renewing work of the Holy Spirit:

> ...we have fallen into the dictatorship of functionalism. It's a new ideological colonization that seeks to convince that the Gospel is wisdom, is a doctrine, but it's not a proclamation, it's not a kerygma. And so many leave the kerygma, inventing synods and counter-synods, . . . that in reality aren't synods; they are a 'reordering.' Why? Because to be a synod - and this is also true for you [as diocesan assembly] - the Holy Spirit is needed; and the Holy Spirit kicks the table, He throws it out and starts again. Let us ask the Lord for the grace not to fall into a functionalist diocese.[76]

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73. Lonergan notes how challenging it is to move into the world of transcendental consciousness, not merely because of the intricacies of terms and relations, but because a person must recognise the operations of intentional consciousness within their own mind. Without doing so one risks not learning about knowing, because they could not actively engage in that very process being described. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 7.

Lonergan explains how "being at home" in transcendental method involves the heightening of one's consciousness by objectifying it. This is an application of the "operations as intentional to the operations as conscious," by: 1) experiencing one's experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding; 2) understanding the unity and relations of one's experienced experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding; 3) affirming the reality of one's experienced and understood experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding, and; 4) deciding to operate in accord with the norms immanent in the spontaneous relatedness of one's experienced, understood, affirmed experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding. Ibid., 14-15.

74. Francis, "Pope's Words at Encounter with Diocese of Rome," *Zenit Online News*, 13 May 2019, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://zenit.org/articles/popes-words-at-encounter-with-diocese-of-rome-full-text/.

75. Ibid.

76. Ibid.

During the COVID-19 pandemic Pope Francis again describes the Holy Spirit as provoking disorder through the charisms, and "out of that disorder creates harmony."[77] The Church in its entirety - as the People of God and their co-operation as multifacted institution - is shaped and formed by the Spirit. The pope points to the Acts of the Apostles as demonstrating how the Holy Spirit: "de-institutionalises what is no longer of use, and institutionalises the future of the Church."[78] Freedom and creativity are given by the Spirit for the service of people, especially the poor, as a characteristic of the "reinstitutionalised" Church.[79] Chapter five will investigate in a practical manner this tension between disorder and harmony, but for now it is helpful to recall how the work of the Spirit was described in the Gospel of John, in chapter one. Jesus' communion with the Father is extended to his believers, as branches of a vine, through the power of the Spirit.[80] Communion, community, and unity are all brought about through entering more and more deeply into life abiding with Jesus, and receiving the Holy Spirit. "Deeper life" has been explored in this thesis as an entering into common meaning, a commitment to conversion, a broadening of horizons through an open heart and open mind, and now in this discussion on discernment, as an expansion of consciousness - all of which are the path of authentic living.

Discernment reveals how the Spirit has a particular role to play in the development of a person's judgement and thus their responsible action. Judgement is made possible through the work of one's intentional consciousness through the stages of being attentive, being intelligent, being reasonable, and finally, being responsible. Being responsible is to have an active conscience, the fourth level of consciousness involving acts of deliberation, evaluation and decision.[81] For these acts to be truly deliberate decisions rather than arbitrary, to be authentic and not unauthentic, they require the work of conversion.[82] The "human spirit" is described by Lonergan as an open structure: the "ever immanent and operative though unexpressed transcendental precepts: Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be

77. Ivereigh, "Pope Francis Says Pandemic Can be a 'Place of Conversion'."

78. Ibid.

79. The vision of a Church "reinstitutionalised" through synodality is explored in the second half of chapter five.

80. See sec.1.1.10 of this thesis.

81. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 268.

82. As Lonergan explains: ibid., 268-69.

responsible."[83] Discernment is a "pillar of the spirituality of Pope Francis," declares Antonio Spadaro.[84] Pope Francis elaborates upon discernment as the process of responsible decision-making, a process that is patient, humble, and open to the "large horizons" of the "kingdom of God":

> Discernment is always done in the presence of the Lord, looking at the signs, listening to the things that happen, the feeling of the people, especially the poor. My choices, including those related to the day-to-day aspects of life, like the use of a modest car, are related to a spiritual discernment that responds to a need that arises from looking at things, at people and from reading the signs of the times. Discernment in the Lord guides me in my way of governing.[85]

Discernment is an important means of being responsible, which, through seeking wisdom and listening to the Spirit, can be foundational to responsible decision-making. It is an important exercise of being responsible for both individuals and a community. The Church's understanding and expression of the faithful's need to be responsible, and the closely-related concept of authority, are investigated in the next section.

4.3.2 Responsibility and Authority

Within the framework of synodality *responsibility* and *authority* are areas that require significant rethinking - and humility - in order to de-couple them from the episcopacy and put them in their rightful place within the realm of the entire People of God. Responsibility is not an important theme in the ecclesiological Church documents that have been analysed in this thesis until the truly pastoral texts are reached.[86] *Gaudium et Spes* has a far greater number of references to responsibility than the other Vatican II documents.[87] It is also unusual in its use

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83. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 302, see 268.

84. Antonio Spadaro, "Interview with Pope Francis," *Holy See Press Office,* 19 Aug 2013, accessed 16 Oct 2020, http://m.vatican.va/content/francescomobile/en/speeches/2013/september/documents/papa-francesco_20130921_intervista-spadaro.html.

85. Ibid.

86. *Mystici Corporis Christi* is the only one of the three early twentieth century documents that uses the word "responsible" and does associate it with the faithful. Of the fifteen Vatican II documents that use the word infrequently (or not at all, with *GS* the exception) it is usually in the sense of the responsibility of the hierarchy. *Inter Mirifica* does, however, speak of the responsibility of a wide range of people involved in communications. Vatican II, *Inter Mirifica,* Decree on the Media of Social Communications, *Holy See Press Office,* 4 Dec 1963, accessed 16 May 2020, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19631204_inter-mirifica_en.html, n.11. Hereafter *IM*.

87. *GS* uses "responsible" 5 times, and "responsibility" 27x.

of responsibility outside the context of the hierarchy.[88] It is notable that Christian responsibility (see *GS* nn.19, 43, 50, 75, 76, 89) is always in the context of society and culture: Christians act as responsible citizens for the common good, and with the guidance of their conscience (*GS* n.76). The Church "respects and fosters the political freedom and responsibility of citizens" (*GS* n.76). Responsibility is linked with conscience, community, and recognition of the dignity and freedom of the human person (*GS* n.31). The concept of authority in *Gaudium et Spes* lies in two spheres: the teaching authority of the Church, and "public authority" (i.e. civil political leadership). The document refrains from associating responsibility with authority, for to do so would require describing the laity as possessing authority and Church documents have resisted doing this even up to today.[89]

Lonergan defines authority as "legitimate power," and *co-operation* as "the source of power."[90] Co-operation is the building activity of a group in their authenticity, and it includes the achievements of those who came before which were handed on as meaningful. Lonergan is careful to make the distinction between an authentic community and an arbitrary collection of people, for the former alone can carry legitimate power. It is valuable at this point to reiterate in the context of a new theme how a community is built up:

> As the source of power is cooperation, so the carrier of power is the community. By a community is not meant a number of people within a frontier. Community means people with a common field of experience, with a common or at least complementary way of understanding people and things, with common judgments and common aims. Without a common field of experience people are out of touch. Without a common way of understanding, they will

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88. Such as the responsibility of: individuals and workers (*GS* nn.31, 34, 63, 67, 68, 74), the underprivileged (*GS* nn.27, 31, 71), children (*GS* n.52), married couples and parents (*GS* nn.50, 51), specialists, experts and leaders (*GS* nn.57, 79, 80), communities and societies (*GS* nn.57, 60, 74, 75, 86), and all of humanity (*GS* nn.9, 27, 55, 56, 60, 81, 84, 87, 90).

Vatican II's decree on the laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, has been critiqued for its hierarchical paradigm in sec.2.1.5 of this thesis. Each of the nine references to "responsibility" is to that of the laity: their responsibility is global and missionary (*AA* n.3), as Christian citizens (*AA* nn.12, 13), and requires formation and encouragement (*AA* nn.1, 7, 30). Nevertheless, the laity are still in co-operation with, and "under," the hierarchy (*AA* n.20, see n.24).

89. See sec.2.4.4.1 for a discussion on authority in Pope John Paul II's *CL* and contemporary writings. The 2014 document on the *sensus fidei* by the Vatican's International Theological Commission mentions "authority" thirteen times. All of these instances refer to the teaching and doctrinal authority of the Catholic Church, its magisterium and hierarchy, as responsible. ITC, Sensus fidei *in the Life of the Church*, *Holy See Press Office,* 10 Jun 2014, accessed 16 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20140610_sensus-fidei_en.html. Hereafter *SF*.

90. Bernard Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," in *A Third Collection*, vol. 16, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, 2nd ed., ed. Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadosky, 3-9 (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 3.

> misunderstand one another, grow suspicious, distrustful, hostile, violent. Without common judgments they will live in different worlds, and without common aims they will work at cross-purposes. Such, then, is community, and as it is community that hands on the discoveries and inventions of the past and, as well, cooperates in the present, so it is community that is the carrier of power.[91]

Community as an achievement of meaning is now seen to be a carrier of legitimate power. If community is created by an authentic group of people - a group who share and build meaning together in friendship - then by definition all members are acting responsibly, and all are contributing to the ability of the community to carry legitimate power. Therefore authority belongs to the community, as Lonergan explains:

> It is the community that is the carrier of a common world mediated by meaning and motivated by values. It is the validity of those meanings and values that gives authority its aura and prestige.[92]

Without authenticity, power is no longer authority but "mere power."[93] While the dialectic of authority is complex, the effective approach to recognise legitimate power is to attend to *progress as the fruit of authenticity*. Likewise, the signs of decline are signs of unauthenticity; underlining decline is the breakdown of a community's co-operation.

When power is exercised within a responsible community it is an exercise of what Lonergan describes as the "word of authority":

> It is that word that brings the achievements of the past into the present; it is that word that organizes and directs the whole hierarchy of cooperating groups in the present; it is that word that distributes the fruits of cooperation among the cooperating members; it is that word that bans from social intercourse those that would disrupt the cooperating society. In brief, the word of authority is the current actuality of the power generated by past development and contemporary cooperation.[94]

When the exercise of power is legitimate, when the word arises from the authenticity achieved through common experience, understanding and judgement, and when it returns to the community and is accepted and received as belonging truly to their treasure of common meaning, it reveals through this action a spirit of community, or a sense of community. When

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91. Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," 4.

92. Ibid., 5. Lonergan explains that meaning and values may be authentic (cumulative acts of progress), or unauthentic (cumulative acts of decline), and warns that authenticity is "ever precarious." Ibid., 6.

93. Ibid., 6.

94. Ibid., 4.

this same spirit is active in the *ekklēsia* upon matters of faith it is honoured as the *sensus fidei fidelium* - or the sense of the faith of the People of God.[95] The *sensus fidei* will emerge as a concept important to synodality and the growth of a mature and responsible People of God. While there is evidence of the *sensus fidei* in the official Vatican documents analysed in this thesis, the concept as it contributes to the growth of a mature and responsible Church has been long-neglected by the Vatican and scholars.

4.3.3 A "Sense of" and the Sensus Fidei *Since Vatican II*

The *sensus fidei* - the sense of the faithful - represents a concept that is essential to a holistic ecclesiology: the right and responsibility of the baptised to know and affirm their faith. However, direct references to the *sensus fidei* are rare within the documents analysed within this thesis. It is not explicitly mentioned in the three documents of the early twentieth century (*SC*, *MA*, *MCC*), nor does Pope Paul VI refer to the *sensus fidei* in *Ecclesiam Suam*.[96] There is evidence, however, that the meaning of this concept is present as seeds in the language.

As discussed previously, in his mid-Council document, *Ecclesiam Suam*, Pope Paul VI wrote of the *sensus Ecclesiae* - an awareness of the Church.[97] The *sensus Ecclesiae* is described as a mature, experienced faith, that has been made capable of some knowledge of the mystery of the Church (*ES* n.36). This mature life of faith consists of knowledge of scripture, nourishment by the sacraments, inspiration of the Spirit, practice in gospel virtues, and grounding in Church culture and community. "Self-awareness" of the Church is one of Pope Paul VI three principal policies of his pontificate; he uses the word "awareness" twenty-

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95. Rush describes how he uses the shorter term *sensus fidei* ("the sense of the faithful") to embrace the meaning of both the singular *sensus fidei fidelis* ("the sense of the faith") and of the corporate *sensus fidei fidelium* ("the sense of the faith of the faithful"), depending on the context. He notes that *Lumen Gentium* n.12 uses *sensus fidei totius populi* ("the sense of the faith of the whole people"). Rush, *The Eyes of Faith*, 6. Rush's comprehensive study into the long-neglected notion of the *sensus fidei* is a valuable contribution to the development of an ecclesiology of synodality.

96. In a synopsis of chapters one and two of the ITC's document, Sensus Fidei *in the Life of the Church,* Commission member Sara Butler explains that: "the phrase *sensus fidei* appears neither in Sacred Scripture nor in the Church's formal teaching prior to the Second Vatican Council." The concept of the *sensus fidei* has evidence, however, in both scripture and Christian history, and the ITC document was an attempt at working towards a contemporary understanding, particularly in preparation for the Synod on the Family. Sara Butler, Sensus Fidei*: Chapters One and Two*, *Holy See Press Office,* 10 Jun 2014, accessed 16 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20140610_butler-sensus-fidei_en.html.

97. See sec.2.1.6.

three times in *Ecclesiam Suam* as an important concept for ecclesiology.[98] It resonates strongly with Pope Francis' attention to "reality over ideas,"[99] as an awareness of reality as it is, and not how it may be known through the distortion of ideology, bias, or short-sightedness. The next step in understanding the *sensus Ecclesiae* is to see how it grows and matures through a life lived in community, through shared meaning and shared commitment to authenticity. Pope Paul VI's desire was for an authentic ecclesial community - a vision that is being named in the contemporary era as a synodal Catholic Church.

As an expression of authentic ecclesial responsibility and self-awareness, the *sensus fidei* was placed in the context of the *tria munera Christi* by the Second Vatican Council.[100] In the sixteen documents of the Second Vatican Council, the phrase *sensus fidei* occurs explicitly only once, in the chapter on "the Laity" in *Lumen Gentium*:

> [Christ continually fulfills His prophetic office]… not only through the hierarchy who teach in His name and with His authority, but also through the laity whom He made His witnesses and to whom He gave understanding of the faith (*sensus fidei*) and an attractiveness in speech so that the power of the Gospel might shine forth in their daily social and family life (*LG* n.35).

This passage places both the hierarchy and the laity within the scope of the function of Christ's prophetic office, but there is a delineation in this quote: responsibility in the ecclesial realm belongs to the hierarchy, while in the second half of the text the activity of the laity and the *sensus fidei* are operative in the realms of social and family life. This indicates the influence of hierarchical meaning, which prevents the placement of responsibility into the full scope of the People of God. While here in *Lumen Gentium* the text understands the *sensus fidei* emphatically as participation in *prophetic* function,[101] in *Ecclesiam Suam* the *sensus*

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98. In the Latin text the word that is translated into "awareness" is *conscientia* - conscience, consciousness, knowledge or sense. P.G.W. Glare, ed., *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, combined ed. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1990), s.v. "*conscientia*."

99. See fn.7 in this chapter.

100. The *tria munera Christi*, or threefold functions of Christ, were discussed in sec.2.1.3 of this thesis. Rush presents a pneumatological approach to the *tria munera Christi*, balanced with the more obvious Christological approach, in order to reveal the role of the Spirit as the "principle of reception" of the threefold office. Rush, *The Eyes of Faith*, 56-62.

101. *LG* n.34 speaks of the laity's share in Christ's priesthood, and n.36 describes their participation in the kingdom of God; neither are linked to the *sensus fidei*.

Ecclesiae is placed in the context of "sharing in the dignity of the royal priesthood granted to the people of God" (*ES* n.36).[102]

Earlier in chapter two of *Lumen Gentium*, "On the People of God," the *sensus fidei* is described more fully:

> The holy people of God shares also in Christ's prophetic office; it spreads abroad a living witness to Him, especially by means of a life of faith and charity and by offering to God a sacrifice of praise, the tribute of lips which give praise to His name. The entire body of the faithful, anointed as they are by the Holy One, cannot err in matters of belief. They manifest this special property by means of the whole peoples' supernatural discernment in matters of faith when 'from the Bishops down to the last of the lay faithful' they show universal agreement in matters of faith and morals. That discernment in matters of faith is aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth. It is exercised under the guidance of the sacred teaching authority, in faithful and respectful obedience to which the people of God accepts that which is not just the word of men but truly the word of God. Through it, the people of God adheres unwaveringly to the faith given once and for all to the saints, penetrates it more deeply with right thinking, and applies it more fully in its life (*LG* n.12).[103]

This statement is more expansive in how it connects the laity and their sense of the faith to the *tria munera Christi* than *LG* n.35. There are other insights that can be drawn from the text: the anointing of the Holy Spirit consecrates the baptised to the holy priesthood (*LG* n.10); praise of God and holiness are participation in Christ's royal power and the kingdom (*LG* n.36); and spiritual sacrifice, witness and service are also a share in Christ's priesthood (*LG* n.34).[104]

While explicit discussion on the *sensus fidei* may be minimal, there is often present in the documents from Vatican II onwards a recurring use of phrases that begin with "*sense of*." For example, the final document of the Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, lacked the term *sensus fidei* but used "sense of" seventeen times (see Appendix C), including: sense of

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102. Pope Paul VI chose not to use the words laity or lay as references to the faithful in *ES*, and instead used "Christian" 62 times; church 204x; and we/us 283/85x.

103. Biblical references in this paragraph have been removed for brevity.

104. This is shaped a little further by the ITC document on the *sensus fidei*: "The faithful are baptised into a royal priesthood, exercised principally in the Eucharist… [which] shapes and forms the *sensus fidelium* and contributes greatly to the formulation and refinement of verbal expressions of the faith, because it is there that the teaching of bishops and councils is ultimately 'received' by the faithful" (*SF* n.75).

God, sense of responsibility, and sense of human dignity.[105] The text gives some insight into what is meant by this:

> …it is necessary to develop the human faculties in such a way that there results a growth of the faculty of admiration, of intuition, of contemplation, of making personal judgment, of developing a religious, moral and social sense (*GS* n.59).

In this way the document describes "a sense" as a cognitive capacity that can be fostered. It is operating at the fourth level of intentional consciousness, and complementary to the work achieved through three-fold conversion (intellectual, moral, and religious/affective), although this is not the language that the Council members used. Developing a "sense of responsibility" is by far the most frequent use of "sense of," indicating how the dynamic and relational paradigm introduced by Vatican II understands the responsibility of all the faithful as foundational to Christian being. This language of "sense of" demonstrates that this is so, even when, at the same time, the language of the Council reserves words such as *authority*, *responsibility* and *power* to the hierarchy.[106]

What is being observed in these documents and in the often multi-layered and conflicting language is a *change of meaning* for the Church. The Second Vatican Council hosted the emerging elements of relational meaning which grew quickly in the fertile ground outside the boundaries of those who preferred hierarchical meaning. Change of meaning occurs slowly, and ecclesial language, ways of thinking, rituals, exercise of authority, theological reflection, re-appropriation of doctrine - in short, all forms of ecclesial life - will

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105. In Latin, *sensus* is a form of the verb *sentio* - meaning to perceive, feel understand; and to think, realize, see, understand. Glare, ed., *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. "*sensus*." Also translated as the word "sense" is *conscientia* (*GS* n.73), which is usually translated as conscience or consciousness, and can be knowledge or awareness (see fn.98 in this chapter).

106. Analysing the use of these words in Vatican II documents reveals how tightly they are bound to the hierarchy. For example, in *Lumen Gentium* the word "power" appears fifty times (in the body of the text, not including the supplementary notes) in relation to: God three times; the Gospel 2x; Christ 11x; priests 4x; Holy Spirit 6x; Apostles/bishops/sacrament of Orders/college of bishops 13x; the pope 5x; departed saints 1x; and the Blessed Virgin Mary 1x (and other 4x). As a typical example of official documents *LG* demonstrates how the laity are given no share in power, and analysis reveals the strict boundaries around the concept of authority. As mentioned in chapter two, there is tension in how the Council promotes a mature laity - especially through the *tria munera Christi* - and yet reserves the highest operations of responsible acts in the Church to the hierarchy alone.

The Pastoral Constitution, *Gaudium et Spes*, remains the exception as it frequently refers to the power of individuals, societies and humanity (using the language man/mankind), and this power is linked to responsibility: "the modern world shows itself at once powerful and weak, capable of the noblest deeds or the foulest… Moreover, man is becoming aware that it is his responsibility to guide aright the forces which he has unleashed and which can enslave him or minister to him. That is why he is putting questions to himself" (*GS* n.9). There is considerable discussion within *GS* on public, civil and political authority, but all other instances of the word authority are the "Church's teaching authority" (see *GS* nn.23, 43, 51).

take many years to move, although abuse scandals, the coronavirus pandemic, and the papacy of an Argentinian Jesuit are all forcing movement and opening up the possibility of renewal.

This section will now review the *sensus fidei* and "sense of" in post-Vatican II documents. In the 1988 post-synodal document on the laity, *Christifideles Laici*, Pope John Paul II refers to the *sensus fidei* without naming it, in a long section that introduces the *tria munera Christi* as a key ecclesiological concept (*CL* n.14). Reflecting upon *Lumen Gentium*, the pope describes the lay faithful's "appreciation of the Church's supernatural faith, that 'cannot err in matters of belief'" (*CL* n.14), as belonging to their share in Christ's prophetic function. The "sense of the Church" (*sensus Ecclesiae*) is mentioned once. It is placed in the context of a paragraph that highlights the role of the Christian family (*Ecclesia domestica*) as a place for formation in the faith:[107]

> The daily life itself of a truly Christian family makes up the first 'experience of Church', intended to find confirmation and development in an active and responsible process of the children's introduction into the wider ecclesial community and civil society. The more that Christian spouses and parents grow in the awareness that their 'domestic church' participates in the life and mission of the universal Church, so much the more will their sons and daughters be able to be formed in a 'sense of the Church' and will perceive all the beauty of dedicating their energies to the service of the Kingdom of God (*CL* n.62).

The many instances of "sense of" in *Christifideles Laici* are detailed in Appendix C. A "sense of communion" and a "sense of responsibility" are the most frequently used. The text's final paragraph indicates how an "ecclesial consciousness" brings to life the interconnected concepts of communion and responsibility, and how these are the source of a fruitful ecclesial life (*CL* n.64). Finally, in *Christifideles Laici* it is important to note that "discern/ discernment" and "responsibility" are key concepts and often occur together. Likewise, "conscience" is used frequently and linked to the value of human dignity, which is important to this document (see *CL* n.5 ∫4).[108]

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107. Pope John Paul II places both of these terms in inverted commas - "sense of the Church" (*sensus Ecclesiae*) and "domestic Church" (*Ecclesia domestica*) - in both the Latin and English, along with "experience of Church" (*experientiam Ecclesiae*). This may be because they are considered to be novel terms but there are many other examples of this in *CL,* which indicates that it could be his personal style.

108. *Christifideles Laici* uses "responsible/responsibility" 23/46 times; "discern/discernment" 6/7x; and "conscious/conscience" 12/11x.

Moving to the contemporary papacy, Pope Francis rarely speaks of the *sensus fidei* in either his teaching and preaching moments, or his official documents.[109] The exceptions are his distinctly synodal documents - those which propose missionary discipleship and synodality of the institutional Church.[110] The pope uses a wide range of "sense of" throughout his texts. They occur throughout all four categories of values which are identified in Appendix C, with the most frequently used "sense of" being *responsibility*, *reality* and *community*. These topics have all been discussed in this chapter as important to the pope and to his understanding of what is required for the Catholic Church to be synodal.

Pope Francis refers to the *sensus fidei* in *Evangelii Gaudium*, in the section titled "We are all missionary disciples":

> In all the baptized, from first to last, the sanctifying power of the Spirit is at work, impelling us to evangelization. The people of God is holy thanks to this anointing, which makes it infallible *in credendo*. This means that it does not err in faith, even though it may not find words to explain that faith. The Spirit guides it in truth and leads it to salvation. As part of his mysterious love for humanity, God furnishes the totality of the faithful with an instinct of faith – *sensus fidei* – which helps them to discern what is truly of God. The presence of the Spirit gives Christians a certain connaturality with divine realities, and a wisdom which enables them to grasp those realities intuitively, even when they lack the wherewithal to give them precise expression (*EG* n.119).

The *sensus fidei* is thus a consequence of the work of the Spirit who anoints and guides all of the baptised in truth and wisdom. The faithful have a share in a new life and knowledge - a life of grace - even if they cannot express it. Before this exhortation was released Pope Francis emphasised that the operation of the *sensus fidei* is not populism but "thinking with

109. *MV, LS, AL GE, CV,* and *QA* have no explicit references to the *sensus fidei*.

110. *Evangelii Gaudium* has a focus on missionary discipleship and contains two instances of *sensus fidei.* The texts on institutional synodality are: "Address at the 50th Anniversary," with 3x *sensus fidei*; and *Episcopalis Communio*, with 2x.

In an August 2013 interview, three months before the promulgation of *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis states that his image of the Church is that of the "holy, faithful people of God," and he describes the *sensus fidei* as he does in *EG* n.119. Spadaro, "Interview with Pope Francis."

the Church," where the Church is the "totality of God's people."[111] Later, he had to counter the fear of those who perceive this process as succumbing to secular influence.[112]

The use of "sense of" in *Laudato Si'* gives insight into Pope Francis' claim that "it's not a 'green' encyclical, it's a social encyclical."[113] The pope's social concerns are wide-ranging and the "senses of" that he encourages are all deeply relational:[114] responsibility, deep communion, fraternity, meaning of life and community, belonging, the whole, personal dignity, intergenerational solidarity, the common good, self-esteem, and solidarity. In *Amoris Laetitia* the pope's "senses of" move from social to interpersonal, and include a "sense of": happiness and peace, beauty, wonder, and of home. *Gaudete et Exsultate* has a small number of references to "sense of," while *Christus Vivit* considers a youth audience, with "sense of being orphaned" (twice) balanced by a "sense of" truth, reality, purpose, being part of the Church, and deep fulfilment. *Querida Amazonia* builds on the social and environmental concerns of *Laudato Si'* in the context of the Amazon, and encourages social and communal "senses of," that include: community, dignity, identity, (co-)responsibility, and solidarity. Developing a "sense of" is clearly important to Pope Francis, and it has roots in the dynamic and relational meaning of Vatican II.

4.3.4 Meaning-Making and Value

This thesis proposes that "sense of" should be understood in the same way that Joseph Martos describes a lived sense of communal meaning as "*felt meaning.*"[115] "Felt meaning" is how Martos articulates the reality of building common meaning, which is not experienced by people as a simple process of handing over or receiving meaning. Meaning does not and

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111. Spadaro, "Interview with Pope Francis."

112. "Francis pointedly told the US bishops that 'synodality' does not mean a parliament or a democratic vote. The real protagonist in a Synod of Bishops, the pope said, isn't any of the bishops or other participants taking part, but the Holy Spirit." John L. Allen, "Pope to US Bishops: No, 'Synodality' Doesn't Mean 'Democracy'," *Crux Catholic Media*, 23 Feb 2020, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://cruxnow.com/news-analysis/2020/02/pope-to-us-bishops-no-synodality-doesnt-mean-democracy/.

113. Francis, "Pope's Address at Meeting on Modern Slavery and Climate Change," *Zenit Online News*, 22 Jul 2015, accessed 8 Oct 2020, http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/pope-s-address-at-meeting-on-modern-slavery-and-climate-change. The pope continues: "…because in the social surroundings of the social life of men, we can't separate the care of the environment. More than that, care of the environment is a social attitude, which socializes us in one way or another - each one can give it the value he wants - yet it makes us receive. I like the Italian expression when speaking of the environment, of the '*Creato*,' of that which was given to us as a gift, namely, the environment." Ibid.

114 See Tables 4-6 in Appendix C for paragraph references.

115. As described in fn.10 of this chapter.

cannot reside in objects - even symbols cannot hold meaning - because meaning is "something that happens in people's minds; it is an activity of human consciousness."[116] "Meaning is act," explains Lonergan, and not just one act but all of the cognitive acts of a human person that together produce the dynamism of wonder, inquiry, questioning and answering that is human knowing.[117] Developing a "sense of" is therefore a communal exercise in constituting, and being constituted by, meaning. It is a bringing together of individuals and their own making "sense of" into a larger, intelligible, whole, which is never a mere collection of individuals but possesses its own dynamism. A community with common meaning has built the capacity for individuals to reveal their conscious selves to each other,[118] and to use communal experience, understanding and judgement to shape their personal authenticity (bearing in mind that progress is always precarious for a group, and decline an ever-present risk):

> There is a first step in attending to the data of sense and of consciousness. Next, inquiry and understanding yield an apprehension of a hypothetical world mediated by meaning. Thirdly, reflection and judgment reach an absolute: through them we acknowledge what really is so, what is independent of us and our thinking. Fourthly, by deliberation, evaluation, decision, action, we can know and do, not just what pleases us, but what truly is good, worth while. Then we can be principles of benevolence and beneficence, capable of genuine collaboration and of true love.[119]

The authenticity of an individual can contribute to the authenticity of another, but only to the extent that a person is open to another's horizon, to a different contextualization of meaning, to conversion, and to friendship and commitment. Responsible decision-making of a group relies on the personal responsibility of each of its members. The capacity for free, conscious and deliberate decisions is possible because of the natural right that is transcendental consciousness, and the exercise of this together is the work of a community of common

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116. Martos, *Deconstructing Sacramental Theology*, 222. Meaning does not exist as words or symbols, but is instead carried by them, as Lonergan explains: "Meaning is embodied or carried in human intersubjectivity, in art, in symbols, in language, and in the lives and deeds of persons." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 57. Ecclesiologist Joseph Komonchak explains further: "The creed and the canon of the Scriptures are only black marks on white paper unless appropriated by believers; the sacraments exist only as and when being celebrated; the apostolic ministry is only active in the men who undertake it." Joseph A. Komonchak, *Who are the Church?* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2008), 74.

117. Lonergan, "Dimensions of Meaning," 233.

118. Transcendental consciousness or natural right, as discussed in secs.3.1.1 and 3.2.4.

119. This process of authenticity is the substance of Lonergan's definition of "self-transcendence as the achievement of conscious intentionality." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 35.

meaning. Any group that aspires to authentic community must therefore seek not only individual authenticity but the "meaningful interactions" that Martos speaks of.[120] These interactions are both humble and grand in the way that reality consists of humble moments of hospitality, encounter and conversion, as well as the grand moments of conversion, transformation, and even mistakes and failure.

The promotion of responsible and free decision-making is the movement of consciousness to conscience - this is the fullness of the meaning of "sense of," and it is the fullness of responsible human living.[121] To have a "sense of mystery" (*EG* n.279) is to be a community of prayer; to have a "sense of the common good" (*LS* n.204) is to be an informed and compassionate community; to have a "sense of solidarity" (*LS* nn.162, 232; *QA* n.70) is to be an inclusive and loving community. Likewise, the negatives noted in Tables 4-6 of Appendix C indicate what happens to a group that is lacking in authenticity, through the absence of shared values (a "sense of disorientation" in *EG* n.64), experiencing discrimination as a severe form of lack of welcome (a "sense of isolation" in *LS* nn.47, 237; *AL* n.158), mourning a lack of shared history and historical meaning (a "sense of uprootedness" in *LS* n.149; *QA* n.21), and so on.

The fourth and highest level of intentional consciousness *intends value*: the conscience desires what is truly good before it even knows what it is. A community of common meaning shares values that ascend upward from vital, to social, cultural and personal.[122] There is one more value that is placed above all the others and by which they are all transformed: religious, or transcendent, value.[123] This is the value apprehended by a community of faith, whose *knowing* - which has already been explained as a compound process of experiencing, understanding and judging - has been transformed into the realm of faith: for "faith is the knowledge born of religious love."[124]

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120. Martos, *Deconstructing Sacramental Theology*, 229.

121. Lonergan explains: "to speak of the fourth level of human consciousness, the level on which consciousness becomes conscience, is to suppose the context of intentionality analysis. Decision is responsible and it is free, but it is the work not of a metaphysical will but of conscience and, indeed, when a conversion, the work of a good conscience." He adds, "Further, deliberate decision about one's horizon is high achievement. For the most part people merely drift into some contemporary horizon." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 268-69.

122. See Brendan Lovett for a very helpful diagram and discussion on the structure of the human good, which he develops into nine irreducible levels of value. Brendan Lovett, *On Earth as in Heaven: Corresponding to God in Philippine Context* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1988), 20-22. See Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 36-41.

123. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 116.

124. Ibid., 115.

The *sensus fidei* belongs to a community of faith; it is the community's "sense of the faith." In recent decades scholarship on the *sensus fidei* has coincided with a need for it within an ecclesiology of synodality. Ormond Rush explores a theology of revelation, faith and the *sensus fidei* by first describing the importance of the concept of *reception*, and its role as a root metaphor for a wide range of theological categories.[125] Rush describes the relational dimension of human living as "reception," in the sense of the communal activities already discussed in this thesis: hospitality, encounter, engagement, dialogue, journeying, and building - all of which contain aspects of giving and receiving, invitation and acceptance. Conversion, as an integral component of synodality, involves reception as a form of recognising and accepting reality as it is and acting upon it.[126] Learning, too, is reception, and Rush speaks of the movement between horizons that conversion brings about.[127] This reveals the strong correlation between reception and conversion. For now, it is important to note the dynamism between the Spirit and human response in the second of Rush's aspects of "the reception of revelation," namely "spiritual reception" as the reception of religious experience and relationship with the divine:

> …in the sense of both a personal response to and appropriation of God's salvific self-communication through Jesus Christ in the Spirit (*fides qua creditur*), and the believer's assent to the content communicated within God's personal self-revelation, proposed by the church as beliefs (*fides quae creditur*).[128]

The International Theological Commission's 2014 document, Sensus Fidei *in the Life of the Church*, describes the *sensus fidei*:

> …the faithful have an instinct for the truth of the Gospel, which enables them to recognise and endorse authentic Christian doctrine and practice, and to reject what is false. That supernatural instinct, intrinsically linked to the gift of faith received in the communion of the Church, is called the *sensus fidei*, and it enables Christians to fulfil their prophetic calling (*SF* n.2).

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125. Rush, *The Eyes of Faith*, 6.

126. This could be described as a process of "receive, perceive, act" (a version of see-judge-act, see fn.12 of this chapter) and underlines Pope Francis' understanding of responsible action. In an interview the pope says: "To 'see' the poor means to restore their humanity. They are not things, not garbage; they are people." Ivereigh, "Pope Francis Says Pandemic Can be a 'Place of Conversion'."

127. Rush, *The Eyes of Faith*, 8.

128. Ibid., 8-9.

This description moves beyond faith as a purely cognitive exercise and indicates that praxis - particularly a "prophetic" action - also belongs within Christian meaning. This will be discussed further in the following chapter within the context of the four functions of meaning.

Using the propositions that "sense of" is "felt meaning," and that the *sensus fidei* is the community's "sense of the faith," some conclusions can be drawn as to the nature of the "sense of the faith." Firstly, it is an achievement of an authentic community of faithful people - there can be no *sensus fidei* outside this.[129] Groups that are either non-religious or unauthentic in their religious life lack a "sense of the faith" because they lack the "faithful conscience" that is achieved through authenticity and religious conversion.[130]

Secondly, the *sensus fidei* is difficult to grasp, both as a concept and as a reality for a community. Achieving the *sensus fidei* will only occur in fleeting moments, as the culmination of possibly years of building up the community, and may be recognised only in reflective hindsight. Progress, authenticity, and community are always described by Lonergan as precarious achievements: they require the difficult commitment to a constant process of conversion and few people consciously seek authenticity through self-appropriation.[131] Conversion is unsettling, and many people will mistake the comfort of conformity and uniformity for the real success of achieving a community of conscience.

Thirdly, hierarchical meaning obscures the *sensus fidei*. The *sensus fidei* requires the achievement of a community of faith who are active in conversion and in conscience. The lived values of a contemporary group may include the leadership and authority of women; active rights and responsibilities of all members, including the safety and protection of children and the vulnerable; the concept of co-responsibility; and financial and operational

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129. The *sensus fidei* is described by Rush as an ongoing desire for knowledge of God: "*sensus fidei* is the whole ecclesial process of faith seeking understanding, interpretation, and application of salvific revelation - on the communal and individual level." Rush, *The Eyes of Faith*, 69. The *knowing* of a community together is its building of common meaning.

130. Ibid., 69-70. Rush's description could be understood as the activity of a "faithful conscience": "*If the Spirit is the principle of revelation's reception, then the* sensus fidei *is faith's organon bestowed by the Spirit for revelation's reception*. It is a capacity which the Spirit gives with the gift of faith, enabling the understanding, interpretation, and application of the the faith. Its activity in the believer is the activity of the indwelling Spirit." Ibid. Italics are the author's own.

131. "Human authenticity is never some pure and serene and secure possession. It is ever a withdrawal from authenticity, and every successful withdrawal only brings to light the need for still further withdrawals." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 110. Lonergan explains how "in a sense everyone knows and observes transcendental method," because it is the natural dynamism of consciousness to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible. However, to follow the method in order to be more consistently authentic is a challenging task of "heightening one's consciousness by objectifying it," that is, appropriating one's self as subject, and developing a differentiated consciousness. Ibid., 14-20, 81-85.

transparency and accountability of institutions.[132] These values cannot be supported by hierarchical meaning, for its values are expressed in stratification, concentration of power, and defensive, juridical and exclusive self-imagery. The Church's language, metaphors, rituals, liturgies, expression of doctrine, and more, carry meaning, and if that meaning challenges the meaning developed by a synodal community then their authentic living will be, at the very least, an experience of constant tension. However, when the values of the Church are recognised by an ecclesial community as their own the result is the "happy conscience" of which Lonergan speaks,[133] and the foundation from which truly authentic co-responsibility can take place.[134]

Fourthly, the *sensus fidei* is essential to a synodal Catholic Church. Authenticity can be achieved by any individual or group, for it is not the prerogative of synodality. However, synodality is best described as the *authentic People of God*, whose authenticity will be both constituted and made visible through expressions of the *sensus fidei*. Opportunities for this will be found in all areas of ecclesial life - governance, liturgy, theology, education, health care, parishes - but an active *sensus fidei* requires all that has been identified in this thesis as foundational to an ecclesiology of synodality. The presence of the *sensus fidei* reveals unity and communion in a faith community.

Fifthly, a community that has not achieved authenticity in their lived meaning is in need of a prophetic voice. It is important to note that people can be authentic to an unauthentic tradition: meaning has been received, accepted and lived to one's best; yet it remains unchallenged of itself, that is, the good and the true that it proclaims. The role of the prophet is in recognising and challenging that which they judge to be unauthentic.[135]

An authentic Catholic Church, by definition, will have a communal life that supports the responsibility of all. The authenticity of the Church is deeper movement into *being*

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132. The document produced by the 2019 Catholic Partnership Summit is an example of an ecclesial appreciation of social values - the examples of "transparency, accountability, and co-responsibility" are repeatedly mentioned - that are yet to find a "home" in ecclesial self-understanding (ecclesiology). This document is distinctly non-theological, possibly for that reason. CPS, *Heal the Body of Christ*.

133. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 35.

134. Hierarchical meaning cannot support true co-responsibility because boundaries are placed around the understanding of responsibility, authority and power. Authority as legitimate power, and co-responsibility as co-operation of a community of conscience, cannot flourish within hierarchical meaning.

135. In the scale of values the function of personal value is to challenge and renew the cultural values out of which it arose (see fn.122 in this chapter).

Church, requiring all that brings depth to *being human*, at the heart of which is loving and being loved in community with each other, creation, and Creator. Hierarchical meaning has failed to enable Christians to know themselves as the People of God, as the community of Church, and to be responsible and mature in their faith. The *sensus fidei* has struggled to operate in an ecclesial culture that so often works to construct and corral power, and to infantilise the People of God. A synodal Church recognises authentic authority as the legitimate power that works out of the community's "sense of the faith" and "sense of the Church." The vision of a synodal Church is one where power is born out of loving and responsible co-operation, which, in the power of the Spirit, could truly transform the world.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to build understanding as to how synodality promotes authenticity for the Catholic Church. In order to do so, Pope Francis' theme of synodality was analysed in partnership with Lonergan's explanation of intentional consciousness. This methodology tested the cohesiveness of the two, while establishing foundations for an ecclesiology of synodality. Section 4.2 demonstrated how the language of journeying, hospitality, encounter, the "revolution of tenderness," dialogue, a polyhedron Church, and bridge-building, carry the meaning of synodality. It is language that has grown out of conceiving the human person as dynamic and relational, and with appreciation for the ecclesiological insights of the early Church.

Movement into synodal meaning is characterised by the sweeping away of boundaries that previously seemed natural. *Journeying* is now an activity that is shared with the world, rather than against it. *Hospitality*, *encounter* and *dialogue* have such a broad context that boundaries no longer exist within synodality; the horizons of Christians are therefore to constantly expand and include all of creation. The *revolution of tenderness* is the antidote to hardness of heart. A *polyhedron Church* turns the metaphor of a fortress Church on its head, and brings insight to the beauty, giftedness, and challenges of a Spirit-formed Church. *Building bridges* is the evangelising energy of the Church used to build up all that is authentic and life-giving. Synodality systematically removes all limits that could be placed on the sphere of evangelising action; the Church's connections are with each other, Creator and all creation so that all may be in the communion that is the Kingdom of God.

The elements of synodality are capable of being supported, and more clearly defined, within Lonergan's explanation of authenticity and transcendental consciousness. Therefore synodality - as rooted in the experiences and understandings of the earliest church, and as capable of allowing and enabling the Church to enter into a new era of control of meaning - is the appropriate way forward for the contemporary Catholic Church. The full appropriation of synodal meaning would represent a break for the Church from the restrictions of hierarchical meaning.[136]

Section 4.3 defined *discernment* and *responsibility* as authentic activity within a synodal Church, and placed them within the horizon of all of the faithful. Legitimate authority is understood as emerging out of authentic communities. When communities of faith discern, act responsibly, and achieve legitimate authority together, the *sensus fidei* is active.

The next stage of this thesis is to use the synodal foundations established in chapters three and four to reveal the key issues for the contemporary Catholic Church.

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136. The language of Scholasticism and the subsequent hierarchical ecclesiology is incompatible with the modern control of meaning that Lonergan describes as empirical, and as the next plateau in how humans come to know their world as mediated by meaning. See sec.3.1.1 in this thesis on the expansion of meaning through history.

It cannot be emphasised enough how hierarchical meaning - with its refusal to move out of an outdated control of meaning - cannot be supported by the modern, empirical control of meaning and use of transcendental consciousness. Synodal meaning can and will flourish, for the evidence is already present. Consider as one example the shape, content and impact of papal documents as they have been discussed in this thesis, and indeed the papacy itself. Synodality is transforming the papacy and, slowly, the Roman Curia, while making strong connections at the grassroots level with the People of God.

Chapter 5
Contemporary Challenges and Synodal Solutions

Introduction

Chapter five will demonstrate how the foundations established in chapters three and four may be used by the Church to perceive the issues of the contemporary era with a new light: in particular, to identify the challenges to the contemporary Church, and reveal how synodal foundations support the activity of finding of solutions.[1]

This chapter identifies the key challenges of the contemporary Catholic Church as clericalism and hierarchicalism. With long, deep roots in hierarchical meaning and the slow corruption brought about by bias and lack of renewal, these two factors greatly impact the life of the People of God and their ability to be missionary disciples today. The Second Vatican Council released the power of a movement of renewal into a new control of meaning that is dynamic, relational, and dialogical, and concerned with the full and active participation of all members as mature and responsible. However, clericalism and hierarchicalism continue to restrict synodal flourishing in a number of ways that are explored in section 5.1.

The solutions proposed in section 5.2 describe how a community of common meaning can achieve balance through living in a way that enables all four functions of meaning to flourish. These functions are shown to contribute to a deeper understanding and implementation of the *tria munera Christi*.

This chapter explains that there are three components in the framework of a synodal Church: good governance, synodal praxis, and an ecclesiology of synodality (upon which both of the former are founded). Creative development is already emerging out of communities that are committed to building this framework. Section 5.2.4 will discuss the fruits of contemporary dialogue around synodal good governance, and section 5.2.5 explores examples of synodal praxis at various levels of ecclesial life.

This thesis has established that a vibrant, healthy, and missionary Church is built by communities that are authentic and committed to conversion through open hearts and minds. Synodality breaks away from hierarchical control of meaning and offers synodal meaning -

1 The functional specialty of this thesis is foundations. Therefore, engaging with the issues of the contemporary Church is made possible by the foundations established in this thesis, but is not the task of the thesis itself. See fn.3 in the Introduction.

rooted in transcendental consciousness, dynamic, relational and promoting conversion - as the foundations for overcoming ecclesial decline and pursuing progress. The framework of synodality is built upon a renewal of the foundations of ecclesiology, which support the Church's self-understanding as baptismal in identity and missionary in nature.

5.1 Challenges: the Divisions Caused by Bias

Hierarchical meaning is resistant to conversion by its nature. It has been used to demand conformity and uniformity of people, thereby restricting their freedom to be creative and to be authentically responsible. Hierarchical meaning is not open to dialogue that respects and learns from diverse people and cultures, and thus it forms institutional structures and processes that are resistant to conversion. Consequently, the Church has designed and accepted expressions of ecclesial meaning (such as liturgy, rituals, language, doctrine, definitions, canon law, etc.) that tighten boundaries and reinforce forms of exclusion.[2] Effective evangelisation requires that the People of God overcome comfortable inertia, and work to attain self-transcendence through the ongoing conversion of authentic living. This way of being is not static and certain, but dynamic and vulnerable.

Inertia, which is inherent to hierarchical meaning, proves to be a challenge to any form of renewal.

2. Consider the ongoing resistance to ordination of women in the Catholic Church, which culminated in a "definitive statement" by Pope John Paul II to prevent debate on the issue: "Wherefore, in order that all doubt may be removed regarding a matter of great importance, a matter which pertains to the Church's divine constitution itself, in virtue of my ministry of confirming the brethren (see Lk 22:32) I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church's faithful." John Paul II, *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*, Apostolic Letter On Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone, *Holy See Press Office*, 22 May 1994, accessed 6 Jun 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19940522_ordinatio-sacerdotalis.html, n.4. Note, however, that the statement is at the level of encyclical letter, which does not carry the authority of other levels of papal statement, nor of an ecumenical council. An encyclical is literally a circular letter of a pope that is sent out to the bishops. Its primary purpose is not to be definitive: an encyclical is "a pronouncement of the ordinary magisterium, but not in itself a new dogmatic definition by the extraordinary or the ordinary magisterium. Its teaching requires an assent that is positive and internal, but not absolutely final." Rahner and Vorgrimler, eds., *Dictionary of Theology*, s.v. "encyclical."

5.1.1 Inertia

Inertia is resistance to movement, change, or renewal. This is a property of people and not of an institution as a separate entity; institutions and social realities, such as the Church, do not have meaning in themselves but instead are constituted by people who are the bearers and sharers of meaning.[3] This thesis has shown how meaning is lived by people with various degrees of authenticity or unauthenticity. A community that achieves common meaning is able to "move" forward and together have an ability to expand its horizons of experience, understanding, judgement and friendship.[4] A group of people without shared meaning are, by definition, without these horizons in common. "As common meaning constitutes community, so divergent meaning divides it," states Lonergan, and the worst division emerges out of the divide between a self-transcending person, and a person with an absence of the three-fold conversions.[5] The individual who chooses inertia over conversion develops an internal barrier to challenges that originate externally, and from those that arise from an internal, unhappy/ conflicted conscience.[6]

Two attitudes are contributing to a "powerful force of inertia" in the Church today, particularly in the United States.[7] The first is a "bunker mentality" whereby the faithful choose an attitude of defensiveness in the face of paralysing scandals and society's angry response. A bunker mentality is a turning inwards, and a refusal to recognise the value of facing outwards to the world. It fears the vulnerability of such a stance. The second attitude is to adopt a "culture of maintenance." Robert McElroy describes this as a burden imposed by the vast financial, structural, and property-related responsibilities of the Church, as well as

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3. Komonchak notes that there can be a tendency to reify social relations and institutions by detaching them from their reality as "products of human intentionality." Joseph A. Komonchak, "The Epistemology of Reception," *The Jurist* 57 (1997): 188-89.

4. See secs.3.2.1-5.

5. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 357. This is an essential point to understand when considering conflict in any group. If people disagree with each other but are committed to being open to the possibility of taking on new data, understandings and judgements, then the potential for respectful dialogue exists. The opposite involves being so certain of the facts that new insights are not permitted, and thus a person is *closed* - both to dialogue with others and to the action of their own intentional consciousness. The conscience becomes blind and the person no longer contributes to the development of the community.

6. Conscience is discussed in secs.4.3.1-4; sec.1.1.4 (Saint Paul, community and conscience); and sec.2.4.4.1 (*Christifideles Laici* and conscience).

7 While the two attitudes are often referred to separately, Robert McElroy, Bishop of San Diego, California, brings the two together in his lecture: Robert McElroy, "2019 MacTaggart Lecture" (St Mary's University, San Antonio, TX, 6 Nov 2019, https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/bishop-mcelroy-us-church-adrift-synodality-can-renew-it).

the pressure to conform to styles and patterns of decision-making that belong in the past.[8] The latter is a direct hindrance to discernment and enables a toxic cycle of despair and denial (see *GE* n.137), which are evidenced by these two attitudes. The culture of maintenance is a very large problem for the Church's episcopacy because it restricts both evangelisation and responsible action:

> Precisely in moving out of a bunker mentality in the life of the church we will be freer to carry out our responsibilities regarding clergy sexual abuse with greater clarity, zeal and compassion, because our relationship and love for all those who have been abused will not be seen through the distorting lens of distance and protectiveness that are all too often the byproducts of viewing out from a bunker.[9]

As (usually) the only visible leaders of the Catholic Church, the bishops carry a large portion of the responsibility for overcoming the culture of maintenance and demonstrating acts that reject a bunker mentality. The real, concrete solution for the hierarchy lies in a "culture of vulnerability," as proposed by theologian James Keenan:

> If we learn the lessons of vulnerability and mutual recognition, we might be able to discern with the rest of the Church that is waiting for us, *already in their vulnerability*, how precisely we should reform our seminaries, our chanceries and of course, the Vatican, but it will be by vulnerability and not by the smoke and mirrors of hierarchical domination that has already taken the life out of so many.[10]

Vulnerability should not be considered a liability, but instead "as something which establishes for us as human beings the possibility to be relational and therefore moral." A community that recognises this can begin from a place of humility when planning for reform.

5.1.2 Clericalism

The contemporary era for the Catholic Church is distinguished by the scandal of ecclesial abuse, its widespread occurrence and deep social impact, and its movement into the consciousness of the faithful and the wider society. With denial no longer an acceptable response, the concept of *clericalism* is being explored by many people in order to move into a deeper understanding of the flaws and corruptions of the Church that are so publicly on

8. McElroy, "2019 MacTaggart Lecture."

9. Ibid.

10. James F. Keenan, "Vulnerability and Hierarchicalism," *Melita Theologica*, n.68/2 (2018): 142, see 135.

display.[11] The insight that clericalism is "encountered as an *experience*"[12] brings to light that there is a lived meaning behind the concept of clericalism. This thesis contends that a major source of clericalism's meaning is hierarchical: developing over some five hundred years, undergoing little of the renewing force of synodal structures, challenged by Vatican II, and surviving in remnants which take their stand in Scholastic thinking and within the functioning of the episcopacy.

Why is clericalism so destructive?

Clericalism is abuse. Pope Francis states this clearly in *Christus Vivit* using the three-fold definition, but without placing limits on the sources or forms of abuse:

> Abuse exists in various forms: the abuse of power, the abuse of conscience, sexual and financial abuse. Clearly, the ways of exercising authority that make all this possible have to be eradicated, and the irresponsibility and lack of transparency with which so many cases have been handled have to be challenged. The desire to dominate, lack of dialogue and transparency, forms of double life, spiritual emptiness, as well as psychological weaknesses, are the terrain on which corruption thrives (*CV* n.98).[13]

The Australian Royal Commission condemned the culture of clericalism in the Catholic Church (and in other Christian traditions) as the "central factor" of child abuse and the inadequate response to it within the institution. Clericalism and the context in which it thrives are described by the Commission:

> Clericalism is at the centre of a tightly interconnected cluster of contributing factors. Clericalism is the idealisation of the priesthood, and by extension, the idealisation of the Catholic Church. Clericalism is linked to a sense of entitlement, superiority and exclusion, and abuse of power.
>
> Clericalism nurtured ideas that the Catholic Church was autonomous and self-sufficient, and promoted the idea that child sexual abuse by

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11. One such example is the report into clericalism produced by the Association of US Catholic Priests which states: "We must first grapple with a definition of clericalism, because defining a problem is the key to addressing its resolution. Entire books have been devoted to describing clericalism. Yet no one definition or book contains the entire truth. Clericalism permeates our ecclesiology and fosters numerous grave problems." Association of US Catholic Priests (AUSCP), *Confronting the Systemic Dysfunction of Clericalism*, *AUSCP*, Jun 2019, accessed 10 Oct 2020, https://www.futurechurch.org/sites/default/files/Model 4 A -AUSCP White Paper-Systemic Dysfunction Clericalism.pdf, 5.

12. Ibid., 6. Italics are in the text.

13. This statement is a direct quote from the final document of the "Synod on Youth." Synod of Bishops, *Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment*, Final Document of the XV Ordinary General Assembly, *Holy See Press Office*, 27 Oct 2018, accessed 13 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20181027_doc-final-instrumentum-xvassemblea-giovani_en.html.

> clergy and religious was a matter to be dealt with internally and in secret.[14]

When the people who constitute an institution develop these attitudes they close off their reception to listening and learning, as well as hospitality and encounter. These concepts have been identified within this thesis as essential elements of the stages that build authentic communities of meaning: common experience, understanding, judgement and friendship. Through attitudes that reject openness, clericalism contributes to the decline of communities in the most fundamental way.

Clericalism is essentially a corruption of relationships. This means that its operation is not restricted to being within one person only, but is manifested between people or within a community. Clericalism creates an imbalance and distortion of what is considered acceptable, often leading to a lack of transparency and accountability - not only in finances and operations but essentially within relationships. Visible effects include the elitism of the priesthood (rising to a whole new level for the episcopacy) and corresponding deference by the laity, as described in the Australian National Catholic Safeguarding Standards:

> When fostered by priests it may be demonstrated in an attitude where clerics see themselves as self-sufficient, superior to and separate from accountabilities of the world beyond the Church. When fostered by lay people it may be demonstrated by thinking that their contributions to the life of the Church are second-rate, or that in all things, surely 'Father knows best'.[15]

The language and metaphors of hierarchical meaning act to separate the People of God, rather than build them up in their diversity towards unity.

The exclusionary nature of clericalism can be low in visibility and consciousness - as exclusion often is - and ranges from excluding women from positions of authority to the

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14. Royal Commission, *Final Report: Preface and Executive Summary*, 55, 68.

15. Catholic Professional Standards Ltd, *National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*, May 2019, accessed 17 Oct 2020, https://www.cpsltd.org.au/media/1456/20190521-final-ncss-edition-1-web-version.pdf. In response to the Australian Royal Commission the ACBC and Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) established Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL). Led by lay professionals, the CPSL created the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) which are designed to be implemented by all Catholic entities, ministries and organisations across Australia. The NCSS are a framework for the implementation of policies and activities to prevent, respond to and report concerns regarding child abuse. They are designed to "drive cultural and behavioural change and promote accountability and transparency of Catholic Church leaders and their ministries and entities." The ten NCSS standards are taken directly from the Royal Commission's *Final Report: Recommendations*, vol. 16.

secretive nature of episcopal decision-making and accountability.[16] Exclusion works to create an imbalance in how people are perceived, with the dignity, freedom and value of a person dependent on their status or vocation in the Church.[17] Exclusion is heightened by the bunker mentality and culture of maintenance, which are essentially manifestations of fearfulness. Furthermore, as a consequence of not actively identifying and removing unauthenticity, the group or general bias that is at work in the wider society will sit quietly unexamined in the minds of the *ekklēsia*, allowing racism, misogyny, and other biases to remain in the Church.

Clericalism blocks the exercise of authentic governance and authority. The Australian Royal Commission excoriated the governance of the Catholic Church:

> The exclusion of lay people and women from leadership positions in the Catholic Church may have contributed to inadequate responses to child sexual abuse. In accordance with contemporary standards of good governance, we encourage the Catholic Church in Australia to explore and develop ways in which its structures and practices of governance may be made more accountable, more transparent, more meaningfully consultative and more participatory, including at the diocesan and parish level.[18]

The German Catholic Bishops' Conference supported a research project that, likewise, drew strong parallels between Church governance, the problems of clericalism (which "denotes a

16. Within seminaries, for example, there are certain positions that cannot be held by a woman or any layperson, regardless of their qualifications and experience. The rector, vice-rector and spiritual director must be "always a priest." ACBC, *Ratio Nationalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, Programme for Priestly Formation in Australia, rev. ed., *ACBC website*, Dec 2015, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.catholic.org.au/acbc-media/downloads/all-downloads/bishops-1/handbook-1/1396-programme-for-priestly-formation-2009-1/file, 27. Hereafter *PPFA*.

The Royal Commission recommended that canon law be amended so that: "the pontifical secret does not apply to any aspect of allegations or canonical disciplinary processes relating to child sexual abuse." Royal Commission, *Final Report: Recommendations*, rec.16.10. Pope Francis did so on 4th December 2019. Vatican News, "The Pope Abolishes the Pontifical Secret in Cases of Sexual Abuse," *Holy See Press Office*, 17 Dec 2019, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2019-12/pope-abolishes-pontifical-secret-sexual-abuse-clergy.html.

17. There is a common complaint from single lay Catholics who feel that they are left out of lofty vocational statements which often focus on callings to clerical, Religious or marital life. See Elyse Raby, "The Single Life: An Ecclesial Wilderness" (paper presented at the Convention of the College Theological Society, Portland, Oregon, 29 May 2015).

Consider also the massive disparity between the training, educational, professional, and living support given to priests, and that given to lay pastoral workers. Parishes in the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, Australia, may apply for funding co-contribution of a Lay Ecclesial Minister; the funding has a very low maximum threshold, is reduced over three years and then terminates. CAM, *Guidelines for the Funding of Parish Lay Ecclesial Ministers*, *CAM website*, 2019, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.cam1.org.au/evangelisation/News/Article/22567/Guidelines-for-the-Funding-of-Parish-Lay-Ecclesial-Ministers-2019#.Xt8Aksbp6JQ. In contrast, the document on the formation of priests for Australia, *PPFA*, is very specific in the details of formation requirements and specifications, but mentions neither funding nor budgets.

18. Royal Commission, *Final Report: Preface and Executive Summary*, 69.

hierarchical-authoritarian system"), and the prevalence of abuse and its cover-up.[19] When the consequences of clericalism, as have been described, are revealed along with their cover-up, Church leadership appears hypocritical at best, and evil at worst.

Finally, clericalism obscures the evangelising nature and mission of the Church. The laity cannot be effective evangelising disciples if they are not authentic in themselves and together as community, while the clergy cannot effectively support their people if they have grown apart through the creation of barriers between them. The overcoming of such barriers is possible through the utilisation of the imagery and themes of synodality, with the relationship between pastors and people described with language that is co-operative, responsible and hope-filled. Pope Francis has already provided some examples: the bishop as walking with the people (*EG* n.31), priests who are generous and joyful (*CV* n.100), communities who accompany each other (*EG* n.171), and Christians who work together for the renewal of the world (*EG* n.183).[20] In *Evangelii Gaudium* Pope Francis describes how the minority in the Church (priests) are at the service of the majority (the People of God) (*EG* nn.102, 104).[21] This exhortation is a foundational document for a synodal Church which envisions a Church where all members actively, joyfully, sensitively, and intelligently live out their baptismal gifts (*EG* n.272) and responsibilities (*EG* n.239).[22] *Evangelii Gaudium* will prove to be an important contribution to the foundations of an ecclesiology of synodality, providing the means by which the Church can overcome clericalism and become an authentic community of the People of God.

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19. German Bishops' Conference, *Final Report Summary of the Research Project (MHG Study): Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests, Deacons and Male Members of Orders in the Domain of the German Bishops' Conference*, *Deutsche Bischofskonferenz*, 25 Sep 2018, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://dbk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/diverse_downloads/dossiers_2018/MHG-Study-eng-Endbericht-Zusammenfassung.pdf, 12-13.

20. Taking on the "smell of the sheep" is a well-known example of the pope's metaphors, and with it he is referring to the *whole community*, not just the pastors: "Evangelizers thus take on the 'smell of the sheep' and the sheep are willing to hear their voice" (*EG* n.24).

21. See also Pope Francis' key speech on synodality where he said: "in this Church, as in an inverted pyramid, the top is located beneath the base. Consequently, those who exercise authority are called 'ministers,' because, in the original meaning of the word, they are the least of all." Francis, "Address at the 50th Anniversary."

22. McElroy declares: "The only effective corrective to clericalism is a theological vision and ecclesial reality that powerfully frame the ordained priesthood within a participatory and co-responsible church where lay women and men are empowered, respected, well-formed and cherished." McElroy, "2019 MacTaggart Lecture." Note that Bishop McElroy undertook a process of diocesan renewal through a synod on family (29-30 Oct 2016), a pastoral letter, further discussion groups, a synod implementation committee, and interest in another synod on youth. Arguably the bishop could make such a statement in authenticity because of his experience of synodal journeying with the people of his diocese. See: The Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego website, accessed 9 Oct 2020, http://www.sdcatholic.org/en-us/diocese/synodonthefamily.aspx.

5.1.3 Hierarchicalism: The Theology and Function of the Episcopacy

Hierarchical meaning was a strong and uncontested source of deformation of the relationships of the clergy over a great period of time. It operated likewise upon the episcopacy to bring about *hierarchicalism*, a term coined by Keenan. Keenan explains that hierarchicalism is a culture of the episcopacy that is contrary to a culture of servant leadership.[23] It is a culture characterised by behaviour such as grooming selected seminarians for special formative pathways and hierarchical "allurements," which contribute to an experience of separation and elevation.[24] Clericalism has damaged the Catholic Church so badly because it acted within the intimate space of relations between clergy and the faithful. The wounds caused by hierarchicalism operate in relationships that flow out of the order of governance, leadership, and authority; therefore all ecclesial relationships *ad intra* and *ad extra* can be touched by hierarchicalism. Bishops wield the official institutional power of the Church and it is this sphere that has deformed and corrupted.[25] The theology and function of the episcopacy experienced doctrinal renewal by Trent in the form of hierarchical refinement,

23. Keenan, "Vulnerability and Hierarchicalism," 134.

24. Ibid., 134-35. This type of behaviour has been legitimised by privileged patriarchies throughout history. There are two definitions of patriarchy: firstly, as a family, community, or society based on the system of male headship of the family with descent traced through the male lineage. Secondly, where the control of institutional or organisational power, including the principles, philosophies and values, is held by males. *Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary* (New York, NY: Random House, 2010), s.v. "patriarchy." The critique of clericalism, hierarchicalism, and hierarchical meaning in the light of historical ecclesial patriarchy is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, these definitions would be valuable contributions to discussions on governance, power, and authority, as well as to the traditional ecclesiological understandings of unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolic nature of the Church.

25. In his article Keenan describes the horrific abuse of power in the case of Cardinal Law in the USA. Keenan, "Vulnerability and Hierarchicalism," 131. The last decade has seen a series of explosive revelations of sexual abuse cover-ups, public lying and obfuscation, by bishops and cardinals, along with personal acts of abuse. Further examples include: Chilean priest Fernando Karadima, whose corruption sparked a furore that culminated in the mass offer to resign by the bishops of Chile, several of which were accepted by Pope Francis (for various scandals including cover-up and sexual abuse); the former bishop of the Wheeling-Charleston USA diocese Michael J. Bransfield (inappropriate expenditure of diocesan funds to support an extravagant lifestyle); French Cardinal Philippe Barbarin (who received a suspended prison sentence for failing to report sexual abuse allegations made against a priest in his diocese); Australian Cardinal George Pell (whose sensational conviction for child sexual abuse was overturned); Argentine Bishop Gustavo Zanchetta (formally accused of sexual abuse of seminarians); and former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick of the USA (accused of serially abusing boys and assaulting priest and seminarians, now "removed from the clerical state").

and, later, received only minimal exposure to the *aggiornamento* of Vatican II.[26] While the post-Vatican years saw the emergence of new voices and perspectives, the long pontificate of Pope John Paul II and the direction of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith were responsible for allowing the solid buffer of resistance to renewal around the episcopacy to continue. As an unbending product of hierarchical meaning the episcopacy, as an institution, has today reached its point of catastrophic failure.

5.1.3.1 Bishops and Governance: Juridical Versus Pastoral Language

Chapter two discussed how in every instance and at every level the formal meetings of the Church are permitted and governed by the order of bishops, in whom resides all substantive authority.[27] Pope John Paul II asserts in *Pastores Gregis* that the work of the Synod of Bishops and Vatican II vindicated the theological tradition of jurisdiction belonging to the pope and bishops, from whom all other forms of church government derive:[28]

> Consequently, the work of the Synod made constant reference to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council on the episcopate and the ministry of Bishops, especially as set forth in the third chapter of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* and in the Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops *Christus Dominus*. Of this luminous teaching, which repeats and develops traditional theological and juridical themes, my predecessor of venerable memory Pope Paul VI, could rightly say: 'It seems to us that episcopal authority emerges from the Council vindicated in its divine institution, confirmed in its irreplaceable function, renewed in its pastoral powers of teaching, sanctifying and governing, honoured in its extension to the universal Church by way of collegial communion, more clearly identified in its hierarchical aspect, strengthened in shared and fraternal responsibility

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26. The Council of Trent defined ecclesiastical hierarchy (composed of bishops, priests and other ministers) as divinely instituted, and clarified the superiority of bishops to priests, particularly in relation to the power of episcopal consecration over the Sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Orders. *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. II (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), s.v. "Bishop (Sacramental Theology of: Effects of Episcopal Consecration)."

It has been noted that discussions on episcopal collegiality around the time of Vatican II have: "stressed a dimension of the episcopal office that has too often been overlooked: the role of the bishop for the good of the Church everywhere and for its worldwide mission of evangelization." Ibid., s.v. "Bishop (in the Church): Present Problems and Theories." This insight indicates that some movement towards a synodal context for the episcopacy, rather than a purely hierarchical context, may be possible. See also sec.2.2.2 of this thesis on the vision of collegiality in Vatican II's Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, *Christus Dominus*.

27. See sec.2.5.1.1.

28. This notion is known as the *hierarchia jurisdictionis*, while Holy Orders are the *hierarchia ordinis* (the three classes of ordained men as bishops, priests and deacons). This structure is maintained in Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, but not in Protestant churches. O'Collins and Farrugia, eds., *A Concise Dictionary of Theology*, s.v. "hierarchy."

> with other Bishops for the universal and particular needs of the Church, and more strongly associated in a spirit of hierarchical union and joint cooperation with the head of the Church, the constitutive centre of the College of Bishops' (*PG* n.2).[29]

When the theological language of the episcopacy remains rooted in the juridical, stratified language of hierarchical meaning, the consequence is that *ecclesiology* - the self-understanding of the whole Church - takes on this tone and is seen through this lens, as has been demonstrated in this thesis. Juridical episcopal theology places the bishops at the centre of ecclesial life. Their role in governance-sanctifying-teaching is so inflated that the *tria munera Christi* of the entire faithful is suffocated, as is the people's function in building community and communion.[30] Authority and responsibility have been withdrawn from the lived understanding of the entire People of God and set aside for the episcopacy.[31] This is often defended and upheld by appealing to canon law, but for synodal meaning this action removes the possibility of authenticity, legitimate authority, and community as an achievement of common meaning.

The meaning of a bishop's centrality to a community in a relational sense has been lost, or at least to a great extent obscured. The concept of collegiality was the Second Vatican Council's hope for ecclesial collaboration but it was strictly bound in scope; serving only the roles and functions of the bishops with the pope,[32] and producing no significant impact for

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29. Pope John Paul II quotes Pope Paul VI: Paul VI, "Address to the Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops of Italy" (6 Dec 1965): AAS 58 (1966), 68.

30. Sec.2.3.3 quotes the CDF document *Communionis Notio* which repeatedly asserts that the bishops are the "foundation of the unity" of the Church (*CN* nn.11, 12, 13). Compare with Pope Francis' understanding of unity in *Evangelii Gaudium*, where it is described as a gift of the Trinity (*EG* nn.117, 131), and in *Episcopalis Communio*, where the role of bishops is to "strengthen [the flock] in unity" (*EC* n.5). Nowhere does Pope Francis describe the episcopacy as the source or foundation of unity.

31. Consider how canon law does not describe any processes of - nor recognise the need for - recourse for concerns or complaints about bishops who are the only members of the *ekklēsia* ascribed with ecclesial authority. Neither do any of these official documents on the episcopacy or the Synod of Bishops: *Lumen Gentium*, *Christus Dominus*, the *Ordo Synodi Episcoporum*, *Pastores Gregis*, and *Episcopalis Communio*.

32. Vatican II's *Christus Dominus*, refers to "hierarchical communion," "hierarchical authorities," and the "sacred hierarchy." As described in sec.2.1.2.1, *hierarchy* is a notion that is reserved for the episcopacy, rather than describing its place as being within a wider hierarchy of ecclesial relationships. See *CD* n.4, *LG* n.10.

the fifty years following the Council.[33] In his address to the participants of the Synod on the Family, Pope Francis declares that: "From the beginning of my ministry as Bishop of Rome, I sought to enhance the Synod [of Bishops]."[34] He quotes Popes Paul VI and John Paul II in their statements that the Synod of Bishops could be improved upon over time, and draws the conclusion: "It is precisely this path of *synodality* which God expects of the Church of the third millennium."[35] With this thread Pope Francis draws together post-Vatican II episcopal development of collegiality with the contemporary development of synodality. He weaves them together in his speech as he develops imagery of a synodal Church walking, listening and discerning together:

> Synodality, as a constitutive element of the Church, offers us the most appropriate interpretive framework for understanding the hierarchical ministry itself… In a synodal Church, the Synod of Bishops is only the most evident manifestation of a dynamism of communion which inspires all ecclesial decisions.[36]

With these statements the juridical focus of the episcopacy as foundational in both an ecclesiological and communal sense is overturned. Within synodal meaning the notion of unity is the realisation of community in Christ, which necessarily takes place in and between parishes and cannot be imposed "from above."[37] The structures of the local (diocesan) Church achieve synodality - authentic communities - only to the extent that they "keep connected to the 'base' and start from people and their daily problems."[38]

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33. For example, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) meet in assembly annually, but have not held a Plenary Council since 1884. A 2002 request to the USCCB administrative committee for the convening of a council was rejected. Philip Murnion, "The Potential of a Plenary Council," *America Magazine*, 28 Oct 2002, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/409/article/potential-plenary-council#. The Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) is an exception: from the early 1970s the FABC Bishops, familiar with religious plurality and more accustomed to flexibility than their European counterparts, operated collegially with great success. They have prioritised significant and long-term co-operation, communication, publication, participation in synods, and research. See the FABC website, accessed 15 Jun 2020, http://www.fabc.org.

34. Francis, "Address at the 50th Anniversary."

35. Ibid. Italics are in the text of the address.

36. Ibid.

37. Pope Francis says: "The first level of the exercise of *synodality* is had in the particular Churches." Ibid.

38. Ibid.

Only once the bishops become "manifestations" of the dynamic communion of their diocese can they achieve the next level of unity together in collegiality.[39] This is followed by the highest authoritative action of the Church as the college of bishops act in accord with the Bishop of Rome in ecumenical council, or, as Pope Francis clarifies here, in assembly as the Synod of Bishops:[40]

> The last level is that of the universal Church. Here the Synod of Bishops, representing the Catholic episcopate, becomes an expression of *episcopal collegiality* within an entirely synodal Church. Two different phrases: 'episcopal collegiality' and an 'entirely synodal Church'. This level manifests the *collegialitas affectiva*, which can also become in certain circumstances 'effective', joining the Bishops among themselves and with the Pope in solicitude for the People of God.[41]

Authentic collegiality depends on the authenticity of bishops in all their relationships and responsibilities. As has been previously stated, authenticity demands minds and hearts that are open to conversion and expansion of horizon, and a willingness to recognise and work towards removing unauthenticity.

In the light of synodality the role of the bishop in a synodal Church is to exercise legitimate authority in their position as pastoral leader of a diocese. The function of the bishop is to journey with their communities in a synodal way: to engage deeply with them in dialogue, to encourage mutual listening and learning, to practice discernment and develop the

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39. Through a bishop's active role in achieving community in the local Church the bishop becomes part of the strongest and most valuable achievements of common meaning: relationships of friendship, trust, loyalty and love. The criticism of episcopal failures in the scandals of abuse and mismanagement often focus on the "loyalty" given by bishops to their fellow bishops and priests who are accused, and to the public image of the Church. If a bishop's first loyalty is built in the midst of the life and love of the people of the diocese then this friendship would constitute significant formation in authentic responsibility. The local leadership and wider collegial actions of a bishop must arise out of their authenticity within their community, and not the other way around. Such an approach could inform the development of much-needed analysis of, and planning for, episcopal leadership.

40. Table 1 in sec.2.5.1 details how the College of Bishops, acting with the pope as its head, holds the highest authority of the Church. Canon law explains that the pope can freely expand or limit the forms in which collegiality can take place: "It is for the Roman Pontiff, according to the needs of the Church, to select and promote the ways by which the college of bishops is to exercise its function collegially regarding the universal Church." *CIC* c.337 §3.

41. Francis, "Address at the 50th Anniversary." Through the use of Pope John Paul II's phrase *affectus collegialis* (*PG* n.8), Pope Francis draws the "spirit of collegiality" into the deeper spirit of synodality explicitly for the service of the People of God.

sensus fidei.[42] In short, to build up an authentic community of faith as missionary evangelisers (*EG* nn.27, 30-33).

5.1.4 Bias

The unauthenticity of individuals and their collective acts within structures, processes, and ways of being Church bring obstacles to the possibility of realising an authentic synodal Catholic Church.[43] The root cause of unauthenticity is *bias*, which is recognised by Lonergan as functioning in three forms: individual, group or general bias.[44] Individual bias is understood as a refusal to allow new insights or to apply a new paradigm when an understanding appears faulty. Bias blocks questions and turns away from wonder, the "primordial drive" and the "pure question" that exists within the human person prior to any insights, concepts or words.[45] The presence of bias results in fear, ignorance and inertia, which go hand in hand and appear in various forms for individuals and groups. Group bias is a tendency to reject insights, or distort data, due to the shortsightedness of the group, as well as an overwhelming tendency to prefer purely practical solutions to immediate problems. General bias is the preference to limit oneself to the realm of common sense and to reject respect for wisdom and the cultivation of intelligence.[46]

When the general bias of common sense combines with group bias the result is a distortion in a community's dialogue on the common good. Common experience, understanding and judgement devolve into inauthenticity, because they cannot achieve authenticity without appropriating intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility.[47] If a

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42. See *Evangelii Gaudium* for a synodal discussion of bishops and discernment (*EG* nn.16, 33, 51, 124); communication and values (nn.62, 66, 118, 191); humble service (nn.76, 104); evangelisation (n.110); and ecumenical and interfaith dialogue (nn.245, 250).

Pope Francis described the synodal activity of the participants in the Synod on the Family, who were both bishops (only bishops can be members of the Synod and exercise a vote at the assembly) and other people who were invited: "The wealth of nuances is remarkable. That is proper to the Church. It is unity in diversity. That's synodality. It does not come from the top down, it is really listening to the churches, searching a harmony." Van Lierde and De Kerpel, "Revolutie van tederheid," 9.

43. See fn.73 and fn.92 in chap.4. Note that "unauthenticity" does not mean a person or community is without meaning and values, but that their meaning and values are the product of cumulative acts of decline. Conversion brings about a change in direction and enables an orientation that is capable of development. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 52.

44. See fn.28 in chap.4 of this thesis.

45. Lonergan, *Insight*, 9.

46. See fn.6 in chap.3 for a definition of common sense.

47. See fn.17 in chap.3.

group fails to know together their common meaning (through exercising their intentional consciousness and comprehending their historicity), the consequence is a "longer cycle" of small-mindedness and selfishness that spirals into a future that cannot be imagined with errors that cannot be avoided.[48] Bias resists reform, and its effect is to diminish human potential as individuals and as community. Horizons are limited because hospitality, engagement and dialogue are perceived as threats, and the possibility of authenticity and communion are thus limited. For the same reasons dynamism and creativity are tightly contained, and unity is misunderstood as conformity and uniformity. The situation is clearly in decline when boundaries rather than bridges are built. Bias heightens the risk of progress turning into decline.

The People of God, like any other community, must constantly attend to recognising and removing the presence of bias, for its activity in human minds and actions brings about the distortions that have been described so far in this chapter: the continued control of meaning by the hierarchical paradigm; resistance to renewal and transformation; and clericalism, hierarchicalism, and their accompanying scandals of abuse. Bias distorts consciousness of ecclesial relationships and what is healthy for the *ekklēsia* in terms of authority and responsibility. The Catholic Church has been particularly prone to the preference for inertia over renewal; a choice that arises out of bias. Professional accountability, genuine collaboration and co-responsibility, and the welcoming of diverse gifts consistently fall to the bias of "*we've always done it this way*." The scandal of three-fold abuse has destroyed trust and community, while also revealing the precariousness of Catholic culture built upon hierarchical meaning.[49] The solution - progress in human development in history - is brought about dynamically in two ways: the upwards movement of creative processes, and the downwards movement of healing love.[50] The dynamism of these movements rejects arrogance (especially the arrogance of inertia), as it comes forth from the humility of an open mind and the vulnerability of an open heart.

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48. The process of knowing is reviewed in sec.4.3.1.

49. As evidenced in the report of the Australian Royal Commission, as well as the various reports into clericalism that have been referenced in this chapter.

50. Neither movement can be forced nor followed like a recipe but are the work of communities committed to being authentic. Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," 103.

Mercy is participation in God's kingdom with an open heart, as a good conscience is participation with an open mind.[51] The concept of mercy is essential to synodality, and thus it appears as a consistent theme of Pope Francis' papacy:

> 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… Such a community has an endless desire to show mercy, the fruit of its own experience of the power of the Father's infinite mercy. Let us try a little harder to take the first step and to become involved (*EG* n.24).

Mercy is invitation into God's abundant and freely-given grace, and being merciful is entering deeper into this mystery of communion between, and within, Creation and Creator; sourced from the fount of God's loving-kindness, the biblical *ḥesed*.[52] It is the "being-in-love" that Bernard Lonergan describes as deep-set joy, radical peace, fruitful love - all fruits of being-in-love because it is the state of "basic fulfilment of our conscious intentionality."[53] Mercy is a bodily compassion that the Church is called to express as Jesus did:[54]

> It is absolutely essential for the Church and for the credibility of her message that she herself live and testify to mercy. Her language and her gestures must transmit mercy, so as to touch the hearts of all people and inspire them once more to find the road that leads to the Father (*MV* n.12).

Signs of an evangelising Church are its acts and works of mercy in all spheres of life by all members, who are to be led, joined, and followed by an episcopacy who walk in Christ's footsteps. These will be evidence of the Church's authenticity.

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51. See *GE* nn.81-82: "Giving and forgiving means reproducing in our lives some small measure of God's perfection, which gives and forgives superabundantly. For this reason, in the Gospel of Luke we do not hear the words, 'Be perfect' (Mt 5:48), but rather, 'Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful'… Seeing and acting with mercy: that is holiness."

52. Veronica Lawson identifies five word groups that express the concept of mercy in the Hebrew Scriptures: 1) mercy as liberation and compassion, verb *ḥamal* and noun *ḥemlah*; 2) mercy as looking with the eye of pity, or the eye that spares the guilty, verb *ḥûs*; 3) mercy as steadfast, enduring love or loving kindness, noun *ḥesed* and adjective *ḥasîd*; 4) mercy as womb-compassion, word group derived from the Hebrew word for womb *reḥem*; 5) mercy as grace or graciousness, noun *ḥēn*. Veronica M. Lawson, *The Blessing of Mercy* (Northcote, Australia: Morning Star Publishing, 2015), 19.

53. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 105.

54. Lawson explains that the Hebrew word group *raḥamîm/raḥam/raḥûm* is translated to a number of Greek words that include *splanchna* (innermost parts) and *splanchnizein* (to be moved in one's bowels/inner parts, the depths of one's being). Thus when the English text says that Jesus is "moved with pity," it is movement deep within his body, and is more accurately mercy or compassion than pity. Lawson, *The Blessing of Mercy*, 41, 43, 46. Lawson points out that: "the sort of compassion that comes from one's *splanchna* is never just a felt emotion. It always culminates in action to alleviate suffering of some kind." Ibid., 59-60.

This section has identified the key challenges to the renewing movement of synodality as the remnants of hierarchical meaning, inertia, clericalism, and hierarchicalism. The cognitive foundation of them all is bias, wherein inertia, fear and defensiveness take shelter and accept the accumulation of unauthenticity. For the individual, unauthentic acts are those that arise out of a refusal to be observant, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible and therefore not living in accordance with one's transcendental consciousness. For the group and wider society, unauthentic acts occur in history and so social and cultural values can decline over decades and centuries, with a greater prevalence of bias resulting in less awareness of how it divides common meaning. Clericalism and hierarchicalism are founded upon dense layers of bias and cling to a pre-empirical and historical control of meaning; they are the Catholic Church's unauthenticity. The People of God are groaning under the weight of abuse and scandal. The parishes, priests, and bishops; all who are wounded in heart, mind and body, outcast, ashamed, rejected; the older generation who see the past fade and the young generation who can't see a future - all Catholic people are in need of transformation together and in Christ. The Church needs redemption.

5.2 Solutions: The Path of Redemption

The challenge of the contemporary Catholic Church, and indeed of any community at any point of history, is not the achievement of any particular goods as ends in themselves (such as accountability, transparency and co-responsibility) - but *progress*. The concept of progress has been established in this thesis as the appropriate movement of a synodal Church in authenticity; whereas progress in accountability, for example, may simply result in reams of forms to fill out and training programs to attend, as if they were in themselves the true form of accountability. Progress is the journey of human development in authenticity, dynamically creative from below and loving from above.[55] The true work, then, lies in promoting authenticity in individuals and the achievement of communities of common meaning, who, in faith, actively participate in the kingdom of God. This is the work of transformation which is guided by, and in co-operation with, the Spirit. Again, what lies at the

55. See fn.50 in this chapter.

heart of challenges to progress is not the absence of certain goods, but the presence and activity of unauthenticity. It is the dialectic between authenticity and unauthenticity that Lonergan describes as the "root of division, opposition, controversy, denunciation, bitterness, hatred, violence."[56] When division is so great that society is threatened to be consumed by evil there is a solution: redemption.

Christian authenticity is participation in the redemptive action of Christ, which is the promotion of the good, the valuable and true in the world, and, when required, the overcoming of evil with good through an embrace of the necessary suffering and self-sacrifice:[57]

> A religion that promotes self-transcendence to the point, not merely of justice, but of self-sacrificing love, will have a redemptive role in human society inasmuch as such love can undo the mischief of decline and restore the cumulative process of progress.[58]

Authenticity and redemption are not for Christians alone, for all humanity is called to participate and, through the many ways that love flourishes, already does. Nevertheless, Christ's followers are called to be conscious of this mission and intentionally commit to it. Christian identity is love:

> Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:34f-35).

Within this exploration of synodal solutions to contemporary challenges the next section will move into the practicalities of a transformed and transforming synodal *ekklēsia*.

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56. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 291. From within unauthenticity one's perspective can be so distorted that what is unauthentic is preferred over the genuinely authentic. Lonergan explains how progress is twisted by the sins of bias: "There is the egoism of individuals, the securer egoism of groups, the overconfident shortsightedness of common sense. So the intelligence of progress is twisted into the objectification of irrational bias. Worse, to simpleminded sins of greed there is added the higher organization of sophistry. One must attend to the facts. One must deal with them as in fact they are and, as they are irrational, obviously the mere dictates of reason are never going to work. So rationalization enters the inner citadel. There is opened a gap between the essential freedom all men have and the effective freedom that in fact they exercise. Impotent in his situation and impotent in his soul, man needs and may seek redemption, deliverance, salvation… it comes with the faith that can liberate reason from the rationalizations that blinded it." Lonergan, "Mission and Spirit," 31-32.

57. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 291.

58. Ibid., 55. It is important to recognise that religion, too, is exposed to acts of unauthenticity and in humility may be redeemed from its errors. Ibid., sec. "Religious development dialectical," 110-12.

5.2.1 Synodal Meaning and Baptism

Synodality brings radical (returning to the roots), dynamic, and relational meaning to the Church's self-understanding. This thesis proposes that baptism is essential to developing synodal identity of the People of God, to framing the understanding of the sacramental nature of the Church, and for a healthy and holistic grounding of an effective Christian ministry. The power of baptism as the locus of authentic ecclesial authority and responsibility was discovered by Vincent Donovan when he preached the gospel to the African Masai:

> Those pagan elders were right. Baptism *is* everything. If we are going to entrust them with baptism, it means we are entrusting to them and passing on to them the whole power and responsibility of the church - the full meaning and implication of eucharistic community with a mission.[59]

Discussion of a synodal sacramental theology is beyond the scope of this thesis, however it is important to establish baptism as the foundation for Christian identity and as the active wellspring for Christian mission, made possible by God's grace. Ecclesiologist Joseph Komonchak asks: "Do the sacraments exist except when being celebrated?"[60] What does this question mean for baptism? How can baptism be "celebrated" as a continuing event when it is usually considered to be a single moment in a person's life? The answer to this involves the dynamism of the Christian journey that begins with commitment to a life identified as baptised, with a nature that is eucharistic and therefore gathered in community, blessed, broken and sent out for the world:

> 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 (1 Cor 10:16-17).

Christian communities have been baptised into identity as the Body of Christ and are nourished by that Body in their communion and eucharistic action.

Baptism is understood as death, new life, and communion. A person who continually celebrates these as real and active has a life transformed and sacramental, which is the purpose of a Church that is both redeemed and redeeming. Living the meaning of one's baptism is this thesis's vision of an authentic, responsible community of faith in Christ who

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59. Vincent Donovan, *Christianity Rediscovered* (London, UK: SCM Press, 2001), 127.

60. Joseph A. Komonchak, "Theological Perspectives on the Exercise of Synodality" (proceedings of the study seminar "Fifty Years After *Apostolica Sollicitudo*: The Synod of Bishops at the Service of a Synodal Church," Vatican City, 6-9 February, 2016, 351, fn8).

are doing so together. It is no mere theory but the practical means by which one counters unauthenticity and corruption in the Church and in each sphere of relationships. Three facets of baptism illustrate a gathering of the threads of the foundations of an ecclesiology of synodality.

Firstly, the community of the Catholic Church is entered into intentionally by baptism.[61] This is why and how the Church is the People of God on a journey, and not a *societas perfecta*. Baptism is entrance into new life and new meaning.[62] Any "setting apart" is in the sense that a Christian turns away from a previous life not informed by faith, and firmly rejects what is revealed as unauthentic by the new light in their life. The new Christian is transformed, but this is only the beginning of a life of dynamic expansion: commitment to continual conversion, rejection of bias, building of communion and common meaning, and accepting the difficult challenge to keep open one's heart and mind. The new life brings communion and community, not as a perfect society but as a people called to live authentically and faithfully within their various spheres of relationships. The way in which baptism incorporates a person - brings them into the Body of Christ - in a specific place and time, while also placing their horizon of being within the entire expanse of creation past and present is described by ARCIC III:

> It immerses the baptized in the stream of an ecclesial existence that is at once local in focus, but also trans-local and universal. Throughout it is eschatological in orientation and implication. Each Christian is initiated into participation in the life of the risen Christ in the Spirit (Rom 6:3-4) in a specific river, pool, baptistery, or font in a particular place, with a particular local community of faith, support, and sponsorship (usually a parish), and into a particular web of relationships.[63]

Baptism orients a person's life to God and grounds them in communion with a particular group of people, bringing Christian meaning to their life as a missionary disciple.

Secondly, the wider spheres of co-operation, collaboration, and all such work that is done in friendship for the benefit of people and creation, is communion in the Spirit. To the

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61. From the Catechism: "Baptism makes us members of the Body of Christ: 'Therefore . . . we are members one of another' (Eph 4:25). Baptism incorporates us *into the Church*. From the baptismal fonts is born the one People of God of the New Covenant, which transcends all the natural or human limits of nations, cultures, races, and sexes: 'For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body' (1 Cor 12:13)" (*CCC* n.1267).

62. On baptism as entry into new meaning Lonergan says: "The assent of faith is the starting point for an ever fuller understanding of its meaning, its implications, and its applications." Lonergan, *Insight*, 726.

63. ARCIC III, *Walking Together on the Way*, n.51.

Spirit belong all acts of love and generous self-giving. A synodal Church recognises the value that is found in all communities of people that co-operate with their intentional consciousness and build each other up in authenticity; it not only recognises but learns from others.[64] The development of synodal meaning requires that the horizons of Christians continually expand to embrace other people, cultures, environments, etc., so as to be walking a path of consciousness of integral connection with all creation in humility and mercy.[65] The nature of Christianity as a eucharistic community makes this mission of participation in redemption possible; Christians are more conscious of being built up in the Spirit and emptied for this purpose. The transformation of the world into the Body of Christ is the redemption that Christians are called to co-operate with. This is no "setting apart" (a hierarchical understanding of the Church) but rather a deeper entry into the mystery of communion and an expansion of one's heart, mind, and horizon.

Thirdly, baptism is death. Transformation and new life cannot take place without a dying, the origins of which are in the death of Christ.[66] The knowledge that Christ overcame death makes death supremely important to Christians, and its action is present not only at the end of life but within it, as Haughton points out:

> The final un-making is the necessary condition of a re-making, a transformation which is beyond imagining, yet does not break the truth of the essential eternal Self… But the dying is real. The pain and the loss and the grief are real. The destruction is not a mere shedding of an outerworn layer; it is the un-making of the person, the whole person, so that the Self may be born… It is a matter of everyday experience; death presents itself to us in little and big ways every day

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64. The methodology of Receptive Ecumenism, appropriated by the participants of ARCIC III, recognises receptive learning as a position of "positive openness" to the instruments and elements of other traditions, and not merely a case of "borrowing." ARCIC III, *Walking Together on the Way*, "receptive learning" under Usage of Terms.

65. This is especially visible in the integral ecology of *LS* and *QA* nn.42, 51. See sec.4.2.3 of this thesis.

66. See *CCC* n.1225. Haughton speaks of the losses in life that women in particular experience, as part of a life that is sensitive to vulnerability: "Perhaps it is easier, in some ways, for women to face death, because there are so many times in the lives of ordinary women when they have to face loss - loss of independence when children come, loss of the children, loss of beauty (which our society has made into a major disaster akin to death), loss of the capacity for child-bearing (in itself an important kind of 'dying,' even for a woman who has had no children, or is dedicated to a celibate life). Rosemary Haughton, *Feminine Spirituality: Reflections on the Mysteries of the Rosary* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1976), 61. Considering the female *embodied* experience of being vulnerable could lead to valuable exploration around feminine leadership in terms of being more able to develop the strengths of sensitivity to bias and unauthenticity. The typical clerical understanding of women as "maternal" or "complementary" in their nature is neither helpful nor constructive within ecclesial meaning. Cf. *CL* n.51.

Knowing and living one's baptism as death is one facet of a culture of vulnerability (which holds the same meaning as the revolution of tenderness, sec.4.2.1 of this thesis) that is one solution to inertia proposed in sec.5.1.1).

> of our lives… If we let it in, it will hurt, but we shall live, and others will live by us.[67]

Knowing how intentional consciousness and authenticity function provides an understanding as to how authenticity demands dying to sin, bias, and unauthenticity. Suffering, then, will be amplified in a person desiring authenticity because their desire is for authenticity in all of their relationships and spheres of living, and for perfect communion amongst all creation. Stoking this desire brings painful awareness of the lack of communion in the world.

Fourthly, baptism acknowledges through ritual the transformation of a person's knowing with the light of faith, and thus an opening up of a whole new way of being responsible. A community of faith is necessary for the development of a Christian person (*CCC* n.1253), and this thesis has described how this is a communal process of building common experience, understanding, judgement, and responsible action together. People of faith need community, and there is an interconnection between self-transformation and its working out in community:

> Conversion is existential, intensely personal and utterly intimate but not so private as to be solitary. Those who experience it form a community to sustain one another in their self-transformation and to help one another in working out the implications and fulfilling the promise of their new life.[68]

Finally, it is baptism that grounds the possibility of unity as the community of the People of God. It is the sacramental character that provides for eucharistic and missionary nature, and for the rising of legitimate authority out of community. This is epitomised by the *tria munera Christi* into which all the baptised enter as the function of their baptism:

> The baptized have become 'living stones' to be 'built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood' (1 Pet 2:5). By Baptism they share in the priesthood of Christ, in his prophetic and royal mission. They are 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that [they] may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called [them] out of darkness into his marvelous light.' Baptism gives a share in the common priesthood of all believers (*CCC* n.1268).[69]

An authentic Christian community is indistinguishable from Christ's Body; in Christ they belong to the unity of the Trinity. Living in this unity makes Christians *sacramental*:

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67. Haughton, *Feminine Spirituality*, 63.

68. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 130.

69. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) incorporates the priest-prophet-king language in the anointing after baptism. See: Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy (USCCB), *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (Chicago, IL: Liturgy Training Publications, 1988), 347.

> Since 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, it desires now to unfold more fully to the faithful of the Church and to the whole world its own inner nature and universal mission (*LG* n.1).

The celebration of baptism - its existence and effect as a sacrament - is the intentional and continual entering into the meaning of baptism as new life, death, and communion by the faithful. The *tria munera Christi* (threefold function of Christ as priest, prophet and king) has been re-presented by the Second Vatican Council as the function of the entire People of God, and foundational to understanding the dynamism of mission, vocation, and ministry in the Church.

The next section explores the four functions of meaning in order to flesh out how the Church lives its meaning in a balanced way.

5.2.2 An Authentic Community Develops all Four Functions of Meaning

Common meaning builds community towards achieving trust, friendship, loyalty and love; they radiate the harmony of unity and their communication is joyful and attractive to others. A community with divergent meaning is divided in its experience, or understanding, or judgement - perhaps in all three - and consequently divided in its relationships. A divided community is unattractive for the distrust and hostility that it communicates. In many ways and at many levels the Catholic Church is familiar with both of these realities. Authenticity is a long, hard journey and there are always new circumstances and new people which test the commitment and vision of a community. Chapter three of this thesis established an understanding of meaning as act, and explored the stages of building community. This section will now explore the four ways in which meaning functions in order to support a balanced and holistic understanding of common meaning.

5.2.2.1 Cognitive

Meaning functions in ways that are cognitive, constitutive, effective and communicative.[70] For the lived meaning of a community to flourish it would do so in each of these ways or there would be an imbalance in how meaning is experienced and perceived as

70. See Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 76-81.

operating. In the worst scenario, there can be such a strong focus on one function of meaning that the others are ignored, stifled, or belittled. The cognitive function of meaning moves a human person out of their immediate and sensory reality and into the wider existence of a world mediated by meaning.[71] The ecclesial authority of the Catholic Church has historically placed great value on the cognitive function of Christian meaning: ecumenical councils serve to clarify what is *meant* by the Church's teaching, and to anathematise what is not; the papal role is deeply involved in responding to the signs of the times with Church doctrine; and bishops receive from Christ "the command and the power to teach all nations" (*CD* n.2). Furthermore, in times of turmoil the faithful are often deemed to be in need of "better catechesis,"[72] a sentiment that echoes today the hierarchical notions of separation of those who teach and those who are taught (i.e. the laity, whom are docile followers).

The cognitive is a cherished and vital function of Christian meaning that has been developed through the expression of beliefs and confirmed through doctrine, language of faith and creed, the study of Sacred Scripture, catechesis, and so on. The other three functions of meaning bring balance to the cognitive, so that the historical, dynamic and relational - which can so often be neglected - may be restored to understanding the human person in their cognitional operations and historicity.[73] It was noted in chapter two that a recent boom in Lay Ecclesial Ministers is an expression of the faithful assuming responsibility and ownership of ecclesial matters, that is, of ecclesial meaning and how they may come to know and live it more deeply.[74] The *knowing* involves committing to authenticity and conversion within individuals, and developing the "sense of responsibility" and *sensus fidei* within the *ekklēsia*, as the foundational means by which the meaning of the Church may flourish in its cognitive functioning.

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71. As discussed in chap.3, see especially fn.7.

72. For example see: Jonah McKeown and Kevin Jones, "Survey on Catholic Belief in the Eucharist Prompts Calls for Better Catechesis," *Catholic News Agency*, 10 Aug 2019, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/survey-on-catholic-belief-in-the-eucharist-prompts-calls-for-better-catechesis-96869.

73. Lonergan criticises the classicist assumption that "the unity of faith is a matter of everyone subscribing to the correct formulae." "Such classicism," he states, "was never more than the shabby shell of Catholicism." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 327. The root and grounds of unity lie in being in love with God and receiving God's grace, and so Christian witness lies not in expounded dogmatic formula but in revealing God's love. Success depends very much on the three-fold conversion (including intellectual) to enable dialogue with people in their own context and culture.

74. See sec.2.3.2.

5.2.2.2 Constitutive

The concept of the Church as constituted by meaning through the work of building authentic community has been well established in this thesis. The importance of the human reality of the Church, which is grounded in the understanding of the human person as having natural right and historicity is emphasised by Komonchak:

> The Church is a human community… whose constitutive meaning and value are the common human acts of faith, hope, and love… whose co-intentionality *is* their community… The ontological reality of the Church consists of the common intentional acts of meaning and value of her members. The Church is an event of intersubjectivity.[75]

As an "event of intersubjectivity" the Church can no longer be divided between third-person perfection (Mother Church) and the sinfulness of the members.[76] Instead, what is said about "the Church" must be possible to say about *the people who are the Church*.[77] This is a process of *embodiment*, which at the very least removes the distance between "the Church" and those who are Church. When entered into with an openness to conversion this process can be one of self-appropriation, whereby the faithful can move to healing and wholeness as they begin to know themselves in their baptismal identity and missionary nature.[78]

Being Church is a lived experience of communion in the freedom that comes from the unifying power of the Spirit:

> …the house which is the Church that God intends (see 1 Pet 2:5) is the great *communio sanctorum* which will gather all of humanity into the Body of Christ. The initiating subjectivity here is wholly God's, but what it intends is something that is to be unfolded only in and as the transformed subjectivity and intersubjectivity of spiritual creatures. The divine plan began to become real *in statu legis* as the people of Israel, already looking to Christ in hope (a *congregatio sperantium*); it has its present reality *in statu viae* as the Church (the *congregatio fidelium*); it will be fully realized only *in statu patriae* when faith is transformed into sight (the *congregatio comprehendentium*). At every point, what God intends and what

75. Komonchak, *Who are the Church?* 38-39. Human intersubjectivity is described by Lonergan as a carrier or embodiment of meaning, and it can take many forms, including feelings and empathy, communal emotion, physical movements, linguistics, and other communications. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 57-61.

76. See fn.123 in chap.2 for an overview of the language used to describe the Church by recent popes.

77. Komonchak questions the subjectivity of the Church and expresses a hypothesis that should be foundational to ecclesiological thinking: "Of whom is one speaking when one speaks of the Church? To whom does the word refer? Of whom is it true? *In* whom is it true?…with regard to every statement one makes about the Church, one should be prepared to answer those questions." Komonchak, *Who are the Church?* 9.

78. Self-appropriation is introduced in chapter three, see fn.79.

> comes to exist by his efficacious will is a community of spiritual creatures united by the free spiritual operations of faith, hope, and affection. It is all gloriously concrete, and what is concrete is ontologically subjective and intersubjective, constituted in its successive moments by hope, by faith, and by beatifying sight.[79]

Christian community, as an achievement of common meaning, is the "substance of the Church."[80] In this way the kingly function of the whole faithful - as belonging to Christ and sharing in his mission - is fulfilled through their achievement of Christian community.[81]

A further challenge that is particularly pertinent to the contemporary Catholic Church lies in the concept of renewal and its role in continually constituting the Church anew:

> Let us ask the Lord to free the Church from those who would make her grow old, encase her in the past, hold her back or keep her at a standstill. But let us also ask him to free her from another temptation: that of thinking she is young because she accepts everything the world offers her, thinking that she is renewed because she sets her message aside and acts like everybody else. No! The Church is young when she is herself, when she receives ever anew the strength born of God's word, the Eucharist, and the daily presence of Christ and the power of his Spirit in our lives. The Church is young when she shows herself capable of constantly returning to her source (*CV* n.35).

This is a vision of the constant action of the authentic People of God. To receive anew is the language of *metanoia*, a process of turning back to God and entering more deeply into what it means to be Church and to have healthy relationships. This renewing action begins with the people and takes place in the only way it can: through the activities and relationships of people, their discernment of value and the common good, and their responsible acts. Renewal cannot be legislated, it cannot be forced by adherence to rules, nor produced through "better

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79. Komonchak, "The Epistemology of Reception," 191.

80. Joseph A. Komonchak, *Foundations in Ecclesiology* (Boston, MA: Boston College, 1995), 39. This synodal understanding will transform the risk within ecclesiology to consider the Church "to be so unique and transcendent in its origin that it can be described adequately solely in terms of its divine generative principles." Komonchak, "The Epistemology of Reception," 187. "If distinctively theological notions must govern any adequate ecclesiology, exclusive attention to them tends to abstract the Church out of history and out of those quite concrete particular realizations that are the individual churches assembled locally, that is, in particular times, places, and cultures, with distinctive historical tasks to undertake." Ibid.

81. Pope John Paul II described the kingly function in this way as belonging and sharing, in *CL* n.14. See sec.2.4.3 of this thesis.

catechism."[82] Renewal occurs through transformation, described by Haughton as a passionate leap in the dark that cuts across our formative patterns of living in a breakthrough of inner power:

> The explosion of the power of the Spirit happens when the pathetic little spark of faith leaps between the poles of 'crucified' and 'Lord', and the world is consumed in the transforming love of Christ.[83]

Understanding community as constituted by a process of breakdown of formation, conflict, intervention, resolution, and release of power, Haughton describes how the grace of transformation is active in the most common and yet powerfully potential conflicts, where the comfort of one's own "Law" of living breaks down.[84] The challenge to a comfortable and inert Christian identity lies in moments of conflict that break into one's very being. If Christian communities live their meaning as life in the Spirit, then ecclesial renewal indeed involves "total personal revolution."[85] The vision and practical building of synodal structures that support the Church as authentic individuals and communities of faith must allow for space in which conversion can be effected and continue to operate.[86]

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82. Leading up to the 2018 Synod on Youth Los Angeles Auxiliary Bishop Robert Barron, chair of the U.S. Bishops' Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis, called for: "a new apologetics and for substantial improvement in our catechetical outreach," because he believed that young people do not adequately understand church teaching. At the same time, however, young people were calling for "accompaniment and new ideas" - not better catechesis - in the *instrumentum laboris*. This example illustrates how a hierarchical response to a problem assigns agency and authority to the hierarchy and not to the laity, who are perceived as recipients only. It also shows the potential for dialogue and humility to reveal the roots of the problem to both parties. Heidi Schlumpf, "Bishop Barron Calls for Evangelization, Apologetics in Upcoming Youth Synod," *National Catholic Reporter*, 26 Jul 2019, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.ncronline.org/news/people/bishop-barron-calls-evangelization-apologetics-upcoming-youth-synod.

83. Haughton, *The Transformation of Man*, 280.

84. Ibid., 242-80. See the final chapter "The Meaning of the Church." Haughton describes the importance of a formative structure that is oriented to transformation, which can occur when formation breaks down. This fosters "conversion decisions" as the acceptance in grace of the offer of new life.

85. See sec.3.3.2.

86. Consider Pope Francis' introductory remarks to the participants of the Synod on the Family: "to say with *parrhesia* all that one feels," to speak honestly and with humility. Francis, *Greetings to the Synod Fathers During the First General Congregation of the Third Extraordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops*, *Holy See Press Office*, 6 Oct 2014, accessed 16 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/october/documents/papa-francesco_20141006_padri-sinodali.html. This surprising permission for *parrhesia* (to speak boldly) was an essential component to the transformation of assemblies of the Synod of Bishops that this particular meeting instigated. The call to speak with *parrhesia* has been repeated by the pope in his opening remarks to successive assemblies.

5.2.2.3 Effective

Christian meaning functions as effective when it is what directs the vision, planning and activities of the People of God, as opposed to other reasons and influences.[87] A synodal Church achieves this through the missionary discipleship of all members, which is characterised by the themes of journeying; hospitality, encounter, and the "revolution of tenderness"; a polyhedron Church and dialogue; bridge-building; discerning, and being Spirit-led and responsible. This is *evangelisation*, where the activities of discipleship are not inward-looking by either the individual or the *ekklēsia*, but always looking and moving outwards.[88]

Evangelii Gaudium opens with the reminder that it is the transforming experience of being loved by Christ that brings meaning and enrichment beyond the person's own self:

> We become fully human when we become more than human, when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being. Here we find the source and inspiration of all our efforts at evangelization. For if we have received the love which restores meaning to our lives, how can we fail to share that love with others? (*EG* n.8).

The work of transformation is the Spirit that works upon human hearts (*EG* n.117), and the power of the Gospel that works upon cultures (*EG* n.116). For their meaning to be effective the planning and action of Christians must be caught up in these two movements, that is, to be constantly open to conversion as transformed and transforming. The papal documents of *Evangelii Gaudium* and *Laudato Si'* were explored in chapter four as promoting thoughtful discernment of reality and concrete, missionary action. These two texts in particular highlight

87. See Lonergan on the effective function of meaning: Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 77-78.

88. It is particularly the priestly function which is called to synodal action *within* the Church. This can be the primary purpose of an ordained priest who serves the faithful: "The one who presides at the Eucharist must foster communion, which is not just any unity, but one that welcomes the abundant variety of gifts and charisms that the Spirit pours out upon the community" (*QA* n.91). However, the fostering of communion in authenticity and synodality could be recognised as part of the whole faithful's priestly function. This topic of sacramental service in the Catholic Church requires further development within synodal meaning.

a plethora of ways in which conversion may operate in order that these activities may be effective.[89]

Renewal, conversion, and transformation are missionary language, and therefore entirely at the service of Christian evangelisation:

> I dream of a "missionary option", that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation. The renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light: as part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented, to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open, to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth and in this way to elicit a positive response from all those whom Jesus summons to friendship with himself (*EG* n.27).

Conversion is the means by which Christians participate in the redemptive action of the Spirit in the world.[90] It is a demanding path that develops maturity in faith through authenticity; this is described in chapter four as a journey of holiness in community.[91] Holiness was linked by Pope John Paul II in *Christifideles Laici* with the faithful's share in the priesthood of Christ.[92] This is brought about through the unity of their lives with Christ's life, which is made possible only through ongoing conversion and authenticity. Authenticity and three-fold conversion is the path by which the lives of the baptised are meaningful and effective, and "reflect the demands of baptism" (*EG* n.14).

5.2.2.4 Communicative

The human person, when conscious, is constantly involved in the act of communication, through the many forms of intersubjectivity, through prayer and spiritual

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89. *Evangelii Gaudium* mentions: pastoral conversion (*EG* nn.25, 27, 32), missionary conversion (*EG* nn.25, 30), spiritual conversion (*EG* n.201), Christian conversion (*EG* nn.155, 182), conversion of hearts (*EG* nn.14, 230), ecclesial conversion (*EG* n.26), and conversion of the papacy (*EG* n.32). *Laudato Si'* mentions: global ecological conversion (*LS* nn.5, 216-21), interior conversion (*LS* n.217), personal conversion (*LS* n.218), conversion or change of heart (*LS* n.218), and community conversion (*LS* n.219). Another early document of Pope Francis is *Misericordiae Vultus*, which mentions "conversion" and "convert" seven times, in the context of an invitation, or choosing a path, to conversion. The pope's 2020 document, *Querida Amazonia*, mentions only interior conversion (*QA* n.56).

90. "The first work of the grace of the Holy Spirit is *conversion*" (*CCC* n.1989).

91. See sec.4.2 introduction.

92. See *CL* n.14 and sec.2.4.3 of this thesis.

activity, and internally through the operations of a person's intentional consciousness.[93] Christianity is essentially communicative, as Lonergan observes:

> The Christian church is the community that results from the outer communication of Christ's message and from the inner gift of God's love.[94]

The inner gift is God's work, while the outer communication is the work of missionary disciples in evangelisation. The Church itself, that is, the People of God, is the effect of the meaning derived from its originating moment in Christ's revelation, and the proclamation of the gospel through the ages.[95]

Meaning has a communicative function: "[it] induces in the hearer some share in the cognitive, constitutive, or effective meaning of the speaker."[96] In this way the communicative function can operate within the community as the people build up their common meaning through catechesis, worship, liturgy, social justice, recreation - any activity done together that gives witness to their love for each other and for God.[97] Evangelisation involves hospitality, engagement and dialogue with other people, with the aim of witnessing to God's invitation for conversion, and to their common meaning as a Christian community.[98]

The Church hands on not just what it believes but what it is, and, with appreciation for historicity, "there is a growth in the understanding of the realities and the words which have been handed down" (*DV* n.8). Thus the Church is called to be dialogical, with the willingness and capacity to meet the challenge of expanding horizons and engagement with people of

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93. Lonergan states that "human knowing and feeling are incomplete without expression." Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 303. He describes how symbols can produce an "apprehensions of values" through feelings that are evoked in response to symbols: "it is through symbols that mind and body, mind and heart, heart and body communicate." Ibid., 66-67.

94. Ibid., 361.

95. Komonchak, *Who are the Church?* 39-40.

96. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 356.

97. Komonchak lists some forms of communication that fall outside "official" and "ministry" communication: parents speaking to children, the daily witness of individuals and groups, corporal and spiritual works of mercy, forgiveness, the witness of beauty in art, architecture and music, and martyrdom. Komonchak, *Who are the Church?* 45.

98. Pope Francis has frequently clarified the difference between proselytising as removing freedom, and evangelising as bring new life through God's initiative. See fn.69 in chap.3 of this thesis. Note that there are forms of dialogue that do not have a primary aim of evangelising, such as interreligious dialogue. The PCID clarify that one of their aims is: "to promote mutual understanding, respect and collaboration between Catholics and the followers of others religious traditions." PCID, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interelg_pro_20051996_en.html. In this way Catholics may be witnesses to their faith through dialogue while also appreciating the relationship that people of other faiths have with God. This is synodal action within *ad extra* relationships because often something new is achieved - novel experiences, understandings, judgement and friendships - which can enrich and transform the dialogue partners.

other cultures, and to develop the other elements of synodality.[99] Through commitment to conversion and growth in authenticity it will be possible for the Church to achieve this vision of witness, reception, and deeper living of its meaning, which is participation in the kingdom of God and, indeed, in the redemption of the world:

> As the Father sent the Son, so the Son sent the disciples on a mission to continue to the end of time. As the Father and the Son sent the Spirit to the disciples, so they continue to bestow the Spirit on the ever oncoming members of Christ. So the self-communication of the Son and the Spirit proceeds through history by a communication that at once is cognitive, constitutive, and redemptive: it is cognitive, for it discloses in whom we are to believe; it is constitutive, for it crystallizes the inner gift of the love of God into overt Christian fellowship; it is redemptive, for it liberates human liberty from thraldom to sin, and it guides those it liberates to the kingdom of the Father.[100]

Chapter two of this thesis noted how *Lumen Gentium* and Pope John Paul II's *Christifideles Laici*, specify witness, worship, and the *sensus fidei* as elements of the prophetic role of the People of God. Prophetic words and actions are the powerful means by which the Christian meaning is communicated to the world, always from within in a concrete context: "it is only from this position of total immersion that the prophet has the right to speak, and the likelihood of being heard."[101] As a "prophet to the world" - communicating the gospel and challenging the unauthentic - the Church must value all that prepares for transformation, as Haughton explains.[102] Prophecy is rooted in the baptismal identity, and living out this identity requires poverty (in the sense of not clinging to anything that is not of God), penance and humility.[103] Hospitality, encounter and engagement, and dialogue are the means by which the People of God may be authentic in their communication of their meaning as the Body of Christ.

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99. Such as journeying, hospitality, encounter, the "revolution of tenderness," a polyhedron Church, bridge-building, discerning, and being Spirit-led and responsible; as explored in chapter four.

100. Lonergan, "Mission and Spirit," 32.

101. Haughton, *The Transformation of Man*, 254.

102. Ibid., 253.

103. Haughton claims that only a penitent Church, repentant of its real sins which are the sins of the world (which accurately describes the devastating three-fold abuse that has been revealed), can prophetically speak the word of the Lord: "not for some private category of sinfulness which must be purged in order to make it ready to speak *to* the sinful world." Ibid., 254. This understanding is not compatible with hierarchical meaning and the *societas perfecta*.

5.2.3 Commitment to Authenticity

Commitment to authenticity by the Catholic Church will have three key components: an ecclesiology of synodality, responsible and inclusive ecclesial governance, and synodal praxis by all the faithful. Now that a holistic understanding of community and the four functions of meaning have contributed to the foundations of an ecclesiology of synodality of this thesis, the following sections can move to address the practical implications of governance and praxis in a synodal Church. Key elements of these are already emerging as the Church wrestles with its past and present failures and sinfulness. Authenticity requires the Church to embody all of the elements of reform that have been outlined in this thesis, especially humility, open minds and hearts, and co-operation.[104]

Ecclesial reform is a task that expands beyond the sphere of the Catholic Church. It goes even further than the collective spheres of its people and its Christian partners: reform and renewal are part of the Church's being and mission which incorporates the whole world as deeply relational and historical. Authentic governance and praxis incorporates ongoing renewal, and is both concrete and eschatological, here and not yet, for the Church which is for the world.

5.2.4 Synodal Good Governance

Authentic governance within the Catholic Church builds upon the foundations provided by an ecclesiology of synodality.[105] In saying this, however, theology is understood as mediating "between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix,"[106] and so an ecclesiology cannot be established outside of, or prior to, the reality in which it mediates. Put simply, synodality is developing and erupting in spots and spurts throughout the Church as ecclesiological thinking, as synodal practice, and as demands for holistic reform - but particularly for reform in the key area of governance. All are interconnected within the transforming movement of God's Spirit.

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104. Peter Sherlock reminds theologians of this: Peter Sherlock, "Reflections from the Vice-Chancellor," in *Health and Integrity in Church and Ministry Conference Papers*, ed. Stephen Crittenden (Sydney, Australia: 2019), 131-32.

105. "How we understand the church, the Body of Christ and the mission of the people of God, is a powerful basis from which to reform structures, ministry and leadership, including the implementation of contemporary ethical standards of governance and transparency." Ibid., 132.

106. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, xi.

Authentic governance seeks to build up the community of missionary disciples and to ensure that there is a balance amongst the four functions of meaning. Governance does this through developing authenticity in individuals and community: informed consciousness and discernment, removal of bias and unauthenticity, and commitment to conversion. A Church that is informed by synodality understands authentic governance to be intrinsically linked to the authenticity of the People of God. An informed bishop is only so because of a culture of deep listening, learning and dialogue within the diocese; a discerning pastor has a practice of discerning with the parish; and a responsible person of faith can be most truly so from within the heart of a welcoming, compassionate, humble and responsible community. These are the foundations for legitimate authority, to which a ceremony of sacramental ordination is witness and blessing.[107]

What is good governance, and what are its aims and values in an ecclesial context?[108] Governance can be recognised as the source from which all members of an effective organisation draw:

> Governance is a concept central to the efficacy of any human organisation, and refers to the means by which an organisation is directed and controlled in pursuing its mission and strategic objectives. Sound leadership is impossible without good governance addressing crucial matters of concern to every good leader, such as strategic direction, authority, accountability in decision-making, reporting, relationships, and particularly the modelling of principles, beliefs and values. Structures and culture are critical to effective governance and sound leadership.[109]

Good governance has universal principles, which in turn inform the specifics of each unique context and situation.[110] This is especially important for the renewal of the Catholic Church, as Susan Pascoe recognises:

> 'Doing God's work' is not an adequate rationale for ignoring basic governance precepts. Ongoing education in good governance and transparent reporting (both recommended by the Royal Commission)

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107. Ordination is an important component of a conversation around governance because in the Catholic Church it is the only recognised sacramental form of leadership. It is the highest form of authority at most levels (although Pope Francis is bringing women into professional roles in the Roman Curia), and often the only visible form especially to the laity and to those outside the Church.

108. The question of governance was explored at the "Health and Integrity in Church and Ministry Conference," held in Melbourne in 2018.

109. Peter Johnstone, "Church Governance and Leadership: An Autocracy Meets Good Governance," in Crittenden, *Health and Integrity*, 69.

110. Susan Pascoe, "Church Governance and Leadership," in Crittenden, *Health and Integrity*, 58.

> are key means by which to address such behaviours… The onus is on church leaders to reform the institutional church by adopting the general governance principles identified earlier, relating to culture, ethical behaviour and integrity, and to avoid short-term gain at the risk of a longer term loss of moral authority and reputation.[111]

While secular governance research and resources can inform the leadership of the Church, it is useful to recognise that ecclesial membership is diverse. There are many groups who have embraced good governance through models that are rooted in their own Catholic charisms and traditions, while also meeting civil and canonical (Church) laws. These include Catholic charities, schools, social services, and Religious Orders or Institutes - the latter were propelled to renewal by Vatican II which was vigorously engaged with by many women's Orders.[112] Consequently, the governance of these bodies can stand as excellent examples of Catholic leadership that have operated effectively as co-responsible, accountable, and transparent; meeting the demands of civil governance values while also being true to ecclesial values. The *Governance Charter of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea* (ISMAPNG) expresses commitment to the values just mentioned:

> Those who are invited to the ministry of stewardship for ISMAPNG, religious and laity alike, are entrusted with governance of the institutions. In effect this governance, which can thrive only on the mutuality of trust and respect, is the chief means by which the ministry of stewardship is exercised. That is to say, governance is the authorising power which, according to defined areas of responsibility and accountability, must ensure that the institutional ministries of ISMAPNG exist and operate according to all legitimate requirements, that they are true agents of God's mission, and that, in their endeavours to be always relevant and viable, they are faithful to the founding inspiration of Catherine McAuley.[113]

Catholic women's Religious Orders often demonstrate a commitment to models of good governance that can be described as synodal: leadership often takes collegial form (e.g. a leadership group); leaders have set terms of service; there is a focus on dialogue and good communications amongst members; a fostering of learning and growing from mistakes; and an openness to engaging with lay people in ministry or as professional consultants. The

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111. Pascoe, "Church Governance and Leadership," 64.

112. See: Vatican II, *Perfectae Caritatis,* Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life, *Holy See Press Office,* 28 Oct 1965, accessed 6 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_perfectae-caritatis_en.html.

113. ISMAPNG, "ISMAPNG Ministry Governance Charter," ver 1.1, Mar 2015, 17.

Church has a variety of established models of good governance that function effectively as support for mission and can be drawn upon for insight as the ecclesiastical structures (those that fall within the jurisdiction of the bishops) of the Catholic Church attempt renewal.

5.2.4.1 Dialogue on Governance in Australia and the USA

Dialogue that addresses ecclesial governance has been pursued in Australia, with two professional contributions being particularly fruitful within synodal meaning: the report prepared for the bishops' conference, *The Light from the Southern Cross* (*TLSC*, 2020), and the *Health and Integrity in Church and Ministry Conference* (2018).[114] *TLSC* is a comprehensive report into good governance within a synodal Church:

> This report, then, is intended as an encouragement to those who exercise power and authority in the Catholic community to see the structures and law in a way that enhances and supports, rather than inhibits, the mission and life of that community. The report seeks to support the prophetic nature of the missionary church by examining and suggesting changes in governance and management that build on its structures in a positive way… The object of this review is to encourage church leaders to locate their canonical authority within the framework of co-responsibility with the whole community of the baptised. Such collaboration will benefit all of God's people and will contribute positively to the good of the society in which the Gospel message is to be proclaimed.[115]

The scope of this report is intended to be of service to the Church beyond Australia, hence the title.

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114. The ACBC and CRA instituted the Implementation Advisory Group to respond to the Royal Commission Report (recommendation 16.7). This group created the Governance Review Project Team (GRPT) who wrote the report: GRPT, *The Light from the Southern Cross: Promoting Co-responsible Governance in the Catholic Church in Australia*, 1 May 2020, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://catholic.org.au/governance. Hereafter *TLSC*.

The "Health and Integrity in Church and Ministry Conference: An Ecumenical Conversation on the Task of Rebuilding and Renewal after the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse" was sponsored by four Catholic male Religious Orders, the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta, and Yarra Theological Union. It was held in August 2018, and featured fifty presenters from Australia, New Zealand, Asia, Europe and the United States. Attendees included survivors of child sexual abuse and their advocates, church leaders, clergy and religious, ministers and church workers, academics, and members of groups advocating for church reform.

A third Australian resource is useful. The RMIT University's Centre for Global Research commissioned the review: Desmond Cahill and Peter Wilkinson, *Child Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church: An Interpretive Review of the Literature and Public Inquiry Reports*, Aug 2017, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.rmit.edu.au/content/dam/rmit/documents/news/church-abuse/child-sex-abuse-and-the-catholic-church.pdf. This is a wide-ranging interpretive literature review on the topic of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church in Australia and elsewhere.

115. *TLSC,* sec.1.3.

In the United States the most significant moves to explore and promote synodality have been the two Conferences of the Leadership Roundtable - "Catholic Partnership Summits" - held in February of 2019 and 2020.[116] Both summits had a strong mix of people contributing as hosts, speakers and participants and can be described as exercises of synodality.[117] As the most recently developed report, the second Catholic Partnership Summit report will be discussed in this section. It clearly recognises and promotes values of synodality, enunciating six guiding principles for the report's forty-four recommendations:

1. impact the Catholic Church based on three principles: accountability, transparency, and co-responsibility,
2. impact the leadership and management culture of the Church, in line with Catholic beliefs, ecclesiology, and canon law,
3. restore trust in the Church based on measurable, visible outcomes,
4. engage both ordained and lay Catholics, working together for the mission,
5. lean forward into new possibilities,
6. be realistic and able to be translated into practical strategy and implementation.[118]

While the report barely mentions the word "conversion," these principles express in a practical way the desire for deep, authentic renewal, and for right relationships within the Church, in accordance with the definitions of community and unity that have been developed in this thesis. Leadership and decision-making should flow from hope and not fear, and the key documents used for this analysis are both realistic and hopeful.

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116. The report from the second summit has built upon the foundations of the first and makes some significant practical recommendations, although the issue of developing ecclesiological foundations still remains a missed opportunity (as critiqued in fn.72 in chap.3 of this thesis). The second report recognises that "a new culture of leadership should be rooted in a theological foundation," and that culture should be "in line with Catholic beliefs, ecclesiology, and canon law," but does not encourage the development of theology as such. CPS, *We are the Body of Christ: Creating a Culture of Co-responsible Leadership*, *Leadership RoundTable*, Feb 2020, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://leadershiproundtable.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/LeadershipRoundtableReport_WearetheBodyofChrist_2020.pdf, 5, 7.

Synodality is understood as a culture of the Catholic Church, with the report quoting Cardinal Joseph Tobin: "[Synodality is] a culture that recognizes the variety of gifts but always searches for and responds to the unifying Spirit." Ibid., 16. "Culture" is a major theme in the document.

117. It is significant that the President of the USCCB, Archbishop José Gomez, is one of the co-hosts of the summit, along with several other archbishops and cardinals, women Religious leaders, Archbishop Charles Scicluna of the Vatican's CDF, and one lay man (representing Catholic Relief Services). CPS, *We are the Body of Christ*, 4.

The CEO and the Deputy Director of the Leadership Roundtable were consulted during the drafting of the Australian *TLSC* report. The reciprocal benefit for the Church of the USA is to see how significant the role of the Australian Royal Commission has been in exposing the scope of ecclesial abuse in Australia, and how beneficial it has been for the Church to hear the recommendations of this secular investigation.

118. Ibid., 5. The "key concepts" on p.7 are a compilation of synodal values.

Good governance leads and nurtures healthy relationships to grow in a culture that is welcoming, humble, courageous, and responsible. Good governance is one of the two concrete synodal solutions to the contemporary challenges and problems of the Catholic Church, for together with synodal praxis it is a visible sign of an authentic Church culture. The key elements of practical governance reform that have been developed and expressed in the Australian and US reports can be summarised as:

- renewal of seminaries and priestly formation[119]
- establishing or mandating ministerial supervision[120]
- reviewing episcopal election, training and ongoing formation[121]
- inclusion of lay women and men in decision-making[122]

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119. See: *TLSC* sec.6.7, "Training and selection of candidates for the priesthood." See also: Royal Commission, *Final Report: Recommendations*, rec.16.20-25. These two documents make recommendations for candidates who are either clergy or Religious. Janiene Wilson critiques the "faulty anthropology" operating in Catholic seminaries: Janiene Wilson, "Implications for Ministry," in Crittenden, *Health and Integrity*, 106-14. *We are the Body of Christ* makes three recommendations around seminaries and the inclusion of, and investment in, lay people in screening, formation, education and management. CPS, *We are the Body of Christ*, 27.

120. *TLSC* recommends that supervision be mandated: "In many jurisdictions across Australia it is mandatory for pastoral associates to have regular and ongoing supervision as a prerequisite for employment. This requirement should extend to priests, and deacons in ministry not to burden them but to support them and assist them in gaining 'supervision' over the ministry in which they are involved." *TLSC*, sec.7.8. The report makes concomitant recommendations for professional development, spirituality and theological formation opportunities. *TLSC*, sec.6.8.1. *We are the Body of Christ* prefers a managerial style, with a recommendation for a "partnership model" that involves pairing management experts with pastoral leaders. CPS, *We are the Body of Christ*, 25. Nevertheless, it does propose holistic support for both clergy and lay leaders that (very importantly) is financially supported: "invest in greater support for lay and ordained pastoral leaders including pastoral care, spiritual direction, sabbaticals, mental health, etc." *Ibid*., 26.

Alan Niven reflects on the challenges, benefits, and issues related to supervision for ministers: Alan Niven, "Supervision Reframed: An Offer of Pastoral Care by the Church and a Spiritual Discipline for the Practitioner," in Crittenden, *Health and Integrity*, 115-25.

121. The Royal Commission recommended that the ACBC request that the Holy See: a) publish criteria for the selection of bishops, including relating to the promotion of child safety; and, b) establish a transparent process for appointing bishops which includes the direct participation of lay people. Royal Commission, *Final Report: Recommendations*, rec.16.8. *TLSC* section 6.3.1 strongly critiques the current processes for the selection and appointment of episcopal leaders in Australia, which involve long delays, secrecy, and superficial (or non-existent) consultation of the faithful. Section 2.7 includes several recommendations around episcopal induction and formation (recommendations 40-41), as well as the ACBC operations (42-44), and several that relate to wider leadership and governance (see 45-55). *We are the Body of Christ* specifies the importance of succession planning, and developing processes of discernment, in partnership with the laity, to identify potential bishops. The report also recommends reforming the structures and approaches of the USCCB. CPS, *We are the Body of Christ*, 26-27.

122. The lack of inclusion of non-clergy in governance and decision-making was a strong critique of the Australian Royal Commission. *TLSC* reinforced this throughout the report - see sec.2.7 "Recommendations," most of which expand upon the number and variety of people involved in various governance activities, formation, oversight, reviews, and decisions; i.e. moving governance from the realm of juridic power to legitimate authority of, and within, the ecclesial community. "Co-responsible governance" is a major theme of *We are the Body of Christ*, with a recommendation to: "Publicly commit to and provide the resources for co-responsible governance and shared decision-making structures at the parish, diocesan, and national level." CPS, *We are the Body of Christ*, 25. This is to be inclusive of women.

- intentional inclusion of young people[123]
- using public juridic persons (PJPs) to expand the scope of real ecclesial authority[124]
- embracing diversity within the Church[125]
- moving to inclusive, transparent and accountable processes[126]
- renewing structures to become effective "organs of communion"[127]

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123. *TLSC* sec.2.4 question 9i asks how the Church can "connect and engage youth in a way that does not isolate their experience and engagement," but unfortunately has no further elaboration. It is interesting to note that the Health and Integrity in Church and Ministry Conference did not publish any papers that engaged with the topic of young people and their contribution to ecclesial life. In contrast, a key concept within *We are the Body of Christ* is that "young adults need to have a seat at the leadership table and a voice in decision-making in the Church today." CPS, *We are the Body of Christ*, 7. As the gulf widens between the age of those in positions of leadership and young people in the Church in Australia the consequences will be that dialogue becomes an even greater challenge, the signs of the times harder to discern, and it will become even more difficult to allow young people to be responsible.

124. Dioceses, parishes, and religious institutes are "public juridic persons" (PJPs) under canon law (*CIC* cc.113-23) and operate through designated physical persons such as bishops or trustees. *Ministerial PJPs* have been created by Religious institutes and are described within the context of responsible ecclesial governance as: "a pioneering model of sponsorship and of lay leadership for ministries [of Religious Orders] to ensure their continuation as works of the Catholic Church… Unlike the other models of stewardship undertaken by bishops, parish priest and congregational leaders, the trustees of ministerial PJPs follow a collegial model of stewardship." Gabrielle McMullen and Des Powell, "Priorities in Governance of Catholic Organisations," in *Hearing, Healing, Hope: The Ministry of Service in Challenging Times*, ed. Gabrielle McMullen, Patrice Scales and Denis Fitzgerald, 229-42 (Redland Bay, QLD: Connor Court Publishing, 2018), 230-31. See *TLSC* sec.6.11.4 for an overview of Ministerial PJPs as an effective governance model, albeit without an established causal link to improved performance (also sec.6.12). Australia has an Association of Ministerial PJPs with a purpose of "developing/supporting MPJP canonical stewards and of representing MPJPs collectively": www.ampjp.org.au.

125. *TLSC* sec.6.5 critiques the failure of the Catholic Church in Australia to embrace diversity, and insists that true co-responsibility is only possible with the participation of First Nations people, refugees and migrants, Catholics of diverse sexualities, as well as those divorced and remarried - that is, *all of the baptised faithful*. This is integrally linked with opportunities for service in the governance and decision-making roles of the Church. *We are the Body of Christ* recognises that Church leadership should reflect the diversity of the People of God. CPS, *We are the Body of Christ*, 7, see 9, 19.

Essentially this is an issue of belonging, of having one's self and gifts received and valued, and being able to participate fully in the life and mission of the Church. An ecclesiology of synodality recognises that the solution lies in the baptismal right of all the faithful and through the building of authentic communities of faith.

126. See: *TLSC* sec.6.9, for a critique of the practices of the ACBC. Recommendation 42 states: "That the operations of the ACBC be made more accountable, inclusive and transparent through an expansion of its advisory membership, staffing and public communication of non-confidential agendas, internal reports and major decisions."

The Leadership Roundtable propose a rigorous change of culture that produces processes of assessment, training, learning, shared responsibility, and third-party reporting. CPS, *We are the Body of Christ*, 25-27.

127. The phrase "organs of communion" was used by Pope Francis in his speech on synodality to describe those elements of the institutional Church that have the strong potential to operate synodally: the presbyteral council, the college of consultors, chapters of canons and the pastoral council. Francis, "Address at the 50th Anniversary." See also *CIC* cc.495-514. While the various documents that are being analysed here rarely use this phrase, they certainly support its meaning of drawing current ecclesial governance structures into synodal listening, learning and dialogue. See CPS, *We are the Body of Christ*, 8, and *TLSC* secs.7.3, 5.2.4. A true "organ of communion" would also support personal conversion and act as a catalyst for institutional conversion - as acknowledged in *TLSC* sec.2.4. *TLSC* mentions conversion frequently, unlike the two US Leadership Roundtable reports. "Organs of communion" as facilitating synodal praxis will be discussed in the next section.

- honouring the principle of subsidiarity[128]
- establishing professional standards for the creation of a culture of safety and care for children and vulnerable adults[129]
- requesting changes to canon law around issues of: handling and reporting cases of sexual abuse,[130] secrecy,[131] and governance[132]
- consideration of voluntary celibacy for clergy[133]

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128. Subsidiarity is a recognition of the authority of the people to be responsible in their own context. *TLSC* draws attention to Pope Francis' call to action on the issue of ecclesial abuse in his "Letter to the People of God," as an example of subsidiarity in action. Subsidiarity is described as a "decentralisation of church governance," but also holding potential for genuine inclusive participation: "The call [to action by the pope] also models an inclusive approach that seeks to involve Catholics, irrespective of their gender, class, ethnicity, sexuality, location, age and other human characteristics." *TLSC*, 5.2.1. See Francis, "Letter to the People of God."

Pope Francis frequently includes the principles of Catholic Social Teaching within his discourse, including that of subsidiarity. See *LS* n.157 where the pope indicates that the common good, respect for the dignity of all persons, and social welfare are all supported by applying the principle of subsidiarity. ARCIC III acknowledge that the pope's encouragement of episcopal conferences supports subsidiarity through: "a greater degree of regional diversity and subsidiarity of Roman Catholic decision-making." ARCIC III, *Walking Together on the Way*, n.148.

129. See fn.15 of this chapter for information on the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS). *We are the Body of Christ* makes a unique appeal for a model of "restorative justice and praxis," as well as protection for whistleblowers. CPS, *We are the Body of Christ*, 26.

130. Royal Commission, *Final Report: Recommendations*, rec.16.9-17.

131. Ibid., rec.16.10. The Commission also suggested that the Catholic bishops of Australia request clarification around the seal of confession. Ibid., rec.16.26.

132. *TLSC* sec.2.7, rec.45.

133. Royal Commission, *Final Report: Recommendations*, rec.16.18-19. The Catholic Church in Germany are discussing the issue of celibacy as part of their current "Synodal Path," and within their episcopal conference. Zita Fletcher, "German Cardinal Calls for 'New Thinking' Ahead of Celibacy Discussion," *America Magazine*, 4 Jan 2019, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2019/01/04/german-cardinal-calls-new-thinking-ahead-celibacy-discussion. In June 2020 the new president of the German bishops' conference, Bishop Georg Bätzing of Limburg, spoke positively about permitting priests an option for either marriage or celibacy. Elise Ann Allen, "New Leader of German Bishops Signals no Retreat from Progressive Line," *Crux Catholic Media*, 16 Jun 2020, accessed 20 Jul 2020, https://cruxnow.com/church-in-europe/2020/06/new-leader-of-german-bishops-signals-no-retreat-from-progressive-line/.

The *instrumentum laboris* of the Synod on the Amazon proposed that priestly ordination be considered for: "older people, preferably indigenous, respected and accepted by their community, even if they have an existing and stable family." Synod of Bishops, *The Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for Integral Ecology*, *Instrumentum Laboris* for the Special Assembly for the Pan Amazon, *General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops*, 2018, accessed 13 Oct 2020, http://www.synod.va/content/sinodoamazonico/en/documents/pan-amazon-synod--the-working-document-for-the-synod-of-bishops.html, n.129, a) 2. The *relatio finale* of the same assembly also declared its support for this proposal, for the good of the people who are deprived of the sacraments and in respectful recognition of the role of legitimate diversity in expressing and serving ecclesial communion and unity. Synod of Bishops, *The Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for Integral Ecology*, *Relatio Finale* for the Special Assembly for the Pan Amazon, *General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops*, 2019, accessed 13 Oct 2020, http://www.synod.va/content/sinodoamazonico/en/documents/final-document-of-the-amazon-synod.html, n.111. The paragraphs of the *relatio finale* are each voted upon by the members of the Synod of Bishops (i.e. the bishops in attendance) and this paragraph received the greatest number of votes in the negative: 128 for, and 41 against.

- working towards consensus on the equality of men and women as sacramental beings[134]

The work of dialogue leading to practical recommendations that is being undertaken in Australia and the US offers examples of the Church being authentic: engaging with reality and the signs of the times, responding to problems that are being perceived more clearly, and seeking renewal. This is the substance for ecclesiological reflection, which requires foundations in synodal meaning in order to flourish and support the renewal of the Church and the development of the People of God in their authenticity. Dialogue, as discussed in the work outlined above, is the principle that provides for intentional building of communities of common meaning, and for an opportunity to be open to the guidance and renewing work of the Spirit. Intrinsically related to the issue of authentic governance is that of synodal praxis, which is to be defined and examined at each level of Catholic ecclesial life.

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134. The language of "ordination of women to the diaconate or priesthood" is deliberately not used here for several reasons. Firstly, this language is recognised as having the power to be incredibly divisive, and some Catholics are prepared to respond to it with hate speech. Robert Mickens points out that underlying a response of fear and high emotion is the result of a tactic by "clericalists" to "constantly raise the specter of a Church schism." This produces such levels of fear that the faithful are pressured into silence. "The clericalists," he concludes, "just a miniscule part of the 1.2 billion-member Church, are seriously violating the rights of the Catholic faithful." Robert Mickens, "Time to Bury the Clergy-centered Church," *La Croix International*, 20 Feb 2020, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://international.la-croix.com/news/time-to-bury-the-clergy-centered-church/11855. Secondly, the situation of the contemporary Church in the vast majority of the world is overwhelmingly influenced, if not outright corrupted, by clericalism: from seminaries to the Vatican, from catechesis to ecclesiology, and from the pious faithful to the bishops and cardinals - all have deep roots that draw upon a classical and patriarchal understanding of the Church's nature and identity. To ordain women into that milieu is to throw them to the wolves. Closely related is a third point; that to ordain women into a clericalist structure is to make women part of the problem, placing the burden of change on their shoulders only, or hiding it altogether.

To honour women, and indeed to honour the Church and Christ, the Catholic Church is invited to move into fuller understanding of women as made in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:27), and therefore completely equal and co-responsible with men. Furthermore, Saint Paul insists that Christian identity transforms *all people* into equal dignity and status, to the point where any boundary that the human mind can consider is overcome by baptism: "for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:26-28). Engaging with the Christological defence of male-only ordination lies outside the scope of this thesis, however Dennis Ferrara provides an excellent analysis and critique of this issue. He points out that the long-standing traditional argument is based on the faulty Scholastic understanding of women as inferior and subject to men, while the male "re-presentation" of Christ (only a man can represent Christ at the altar) is a novel post-Vatican II development. Dennis Michael Ferrara, "The Ordination of Women: Tradition and Meaning," *Theological Studies*, n.55 (1994): 706-19. These details are mentioned because it seems quite clear that informed dialogue around the issue of ordination - in an authentic manner as explicated in this thesis - could produce the only way forward for the People of God: conversion. Painful, bloody, conversion that overturns certainties to the point of transformation, whereby *all people* may be known and valued as sacramental beings; equally baptised into mission, and equally capable of being called to sacramental service with legitimate authority.

5.2.5 Synodal Praxis

The culture of a church that is committed to authenticity and ongoing conversion needs more than good governance to support it - there must be synodal praxis by all the faithful. Essentially, the fruits of synodal praxis may be described as the growth of a person as authentic (and therefore attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible and loving) within a community of faith that values this person, freeing them to develop themselves and their gifts so that, in turn, these may be given within the context of each sphere in which they live in relationship with others, with creation and Creator. This may be described as a *eucharistic life*: gathered, blessed, broken, and sent. It is *living the sacrament of baptism*, in all its hopes and yearnings, sacrifice and responsibilities. It is Church as a community that intentionally provides for an *encounter for conversion*; requiring hospitality and welcome for the dialogue that may potentially be uncomfortable or difficult.

Synods have been both a form of governance and of diverse participation at many levels for the Catholic Church since its earliest days. For institutional structures to become "organs of communion" they need to come to life in the real flesh and blood of the Church (as the name "organ" implies); the People of God themselves become communion through authentic community, and their participation in the structures and processes of synod and council is one visible activity of the Church as synodal. This emerges out of the dialogue, discerning, listening and learning that are the leaven through the whole of ecclesial life. Spadaro describes this as *synodal praxis*,[135] and it was reintroduced to the institutional structures by Pope Francis through his innovative Synod on the Family:

> The experiences of the synods of 2014 and 2015 on the family were decisive. In them a synodal praxis was developed that has now become stable. Above all the principle is established which regulates the stages of the process: People of God, Episcopal College, Bishop of Rome, one listening to the other 'and all listening to the Holy Spirit.' Each then following the three phases of development: listening, decision, action. The synods have to be the true result of an

135. "The reform of the Church requires we *make a step forward in adopting a renewed synodal praxis* that is able to engage everyone. This is not a mere operation of institutional engineering. The ITC asserts that it is a matter, above all, of entering into a process of conversion, availability to the gift of the Spirit of Christ, both at the personal level and at the pastoral level, to develop a style and a synodal praxis that respects more and more the demands of communicating the joy of the Gospel and responding to the signs of the times." Antonio Spadaro and Carlos Galli, "The Synodal Church," *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 26 Oct 2018, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://laciviltacattolica.com/the-synodal-church/. Spadaro is referring to the ITC's *SYN*.

> extended consultation of the faithful in the dioceses and put into place an accompaniment in the phase of action.[136]

Synodality in the Church operates through authentic synodal praxis at all levels and in all communities, supported and guided by good governance, and in dialogue with an ecclesiology of synodality. The next sections will examine synodal praxis at the various levels of the Catholic Church, informed by concrete examples which have emerged in recent times.

5.2.5.1 The People of God

Synodal praxis constitutes the unity of communities. As previously defined in this thesis, unity is evidence of a community that has achieved (and continues to achieve) common meaning: it is dialogical in nature and oriented to conversion, with an appreciation of the diversity of members and their gifts. Any structure or process that supports the growth and activity of ecclesial unity therefore has the potential to contribute to synodality, which ultimately forms the People of God as missionary disciples. Synodal praxis can be encouraged or even mandated,[137] but it is only an authentic community that may live it fully and effectively. Therefore the first level to be discussed is the base from which synodal activity springs - the parish.

Christians are typically baptised into a parish community; gathering around the altar for nourishment, providing a hub of welcome and belonging, and offering further entry into shared meaning:

> 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 in the midst of their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach (*EG* n.28).

Ideally, the parish achieves this vision of missionary preparation and sending forth when together the people know themselves as eucharistic, and the balance of their living of the four

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136. Spadaro and Galli, "The Synodal Church." The initial topic of this thesis section was "synodal participation," but Spadaro's quote is a reminder that synodality takes time (because it is a process of conversion towards authenticity) and is an ongoing commitment. The definition of the word "praxis" - as "habitual or established practice" - affirms this meaning more so than "participation." *American Heritage Dictionary*, s.v. "praxis."

137. One example is the introduction of *parrhesia* to the Synod of Bishops - see fn.86 in this chapter.

functions of Christian meaning contributes to a healthy and attractive environment. Unfortunately the Catholic Church is not in a position to describe the broad sweep of its parishes in this manner, due to the effects of the challenges identified earlier in this chapter. Pastoral conversion - as a commitment to synodality - begins here with the people and the parish. The Church's "organs of communion" draw their life and activity from the base that is the People of God, as Pope Francis proposes:

> Only to the extent that these organizations keep connected to the "base" and start from people and their daily problems, can a synodal Church begin to take shape: these means, even when they prove wearisome, must be valued as an opportunity for listening and sharing.[138]

Parish life is not self-contained but exists within the wider sphere of Catholic life that is the responsibility of the local bishop - the diocese. Pastoral renewal is about relationships, but in order for it to be programmatic, wide-ranging, and effective, the stimulus needs to be directed across the whole diocese. One such synodal activity is the diocesan synod, which has recently been used to great effect in the USA. Using the flexible example of the Synod on the Family (2014/2015), and drawing upon the pastoral approach of Pope Francis' exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, three dioceses crafted their own style of synodal praxis.[139]

The characteristics exhibited by all three diocesan synods reveal a number of insights into the practice of synodality. Renewal as the conversion and transformation of all who were

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138. Francis, "Address at the 50th Anniversary."

139. The Diocese of San Diego, California, held their own Synod on the Family in October 2016. See: The Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego, *Synod on the Family website*, accessed 16 Oct 2020, http://www.sdcatholic.org/en-us/diocese/synodonthefamily.aspx. Participants reflected on the San Diego Synod as an experience of pastoral renewal, through layers of listening, learning and accompanying. See: Maureen K. Day, "A Synod, not a Solution: San Diego's Grassroots Effort to Respond to *Amoris Laetitia*," *America Magazine*, 30 Jun 2017, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2017/06/30/synod-not-solution-san-diegos-grassroots-effort-respond-amoris-laetitia.

Synod16 was designed as part of a broad evangelization initiative by the Diocese of Detroit, Michigan, called "Unleash the Gospel." *Unleash the Gospel website*, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.unleashthegospel.org. It was held in November 2016, with a goal to move "from a maintenance-focused Church to a mission-focused Church." Archdiocese of Detroit, *diocesan website*, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.aod.org/synod16.

The Diocese of Gary, Indiana, held their first ever synod in June 2017, on the weekend of Pentecost. Unfortunately the synod website of the Diocese of Gary has since been removed.

involved was the ultimate goal of each synod.[140] The synodal activities took place over one to three years and had three clear phases. The preparation phase involved considerable preparation accomplished at both parish and diocese levels, including white papers from theologians and establishing working groups. Diverse views were deliberately sought out and welcomed,[141] and a wide variety of people collaborated in roles as leaders and in the key work of hospitality. The celebration phase was the synod itself, a meeting conducted over two days and producing concrete aims for diocesan ministry.[142] The cultural and social context and history of the dioceses were incorporated into an exploration of local Christian identity, with creativity emerging unplanned out of synod processes.[143] Spirituality was an important part of synod preparation and celebration, contributing to a cultivation of humility within the synods.[144] Good communications were developed; honest pastoral letters were written by the bishops to their people out of their synod experience,[145] and diocesan websites transformed

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140. Archbishop Vigneron of Detroit made this clear throughout his post-synodal pastoral letter: "…the Archdiocese, following the call of Pope Francis, is resolved to undergo a 'missionary conversion,' a change in our culture, such that every person at every level of the Church, through personal encounter with Jesus Christ, embraces his or her identity as a son or daughter of God and, in the power of the Holy Spirit, is formed and sent forth as a joyful missionary disciple." Allen H. Vigneron, "Unleash the Gospel," Post-synodal Pastoral Letter, *Archdiocese of Detroit website*, 3 Jun 2017, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.unleashthegospel.org/the-letter/.

Bishop Donald Hying of Gary used his pre-synod pastoral letter to encourage renewal through synodality: "I sense the Holy Spirit calling all of us, starting with me, to a renewal of faith, a deepened prayer life and some strategic thinking about our future together." Donald J. Hying, "Go, Therefore, and Make Disciples of All Nations," Pastoral Letter, *Diocese of Gary website*, 25 Feb 2016, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://dioceseofgary.org/bishop-donald-j-hying-dd.

141. The diversity of participants, when guided by the context of the Synod, proved to be a rich source of pastoral reflection and insight. Day, "A Synod, not a Solution."

142. For the eighteen months prior to the synod every parish held a listening session and was then represented at deanery session. Kristen Whitney Daniels, "Gary Diocese's First Synod Hopes to 'Move the Mission of the Church'," *National Catholic Reporter*, 20 Jun 2017, accessed 25 Jul 2020, https://www.ncronline.org/news/parish/gary-dioceses-first-synod-hopes-move-mission-church. The results from those various sessions were used to create the concrete initiatives that were voted upon by delegates during the synod. The voting process was an open and transparent one, with public reporting on the percentage of support for each item. *Top Synod Initiatives* (voting report from the Gary Diocesan Synod, held 2-4 June 2017, this document is no longer available online).

143. See Appendix D for examples.

144. Synod celebrations included Mass and Eucharistic processions, while the Diocese of Gary invited the faithful to pray a "Novena to the Holy Spirit in Advance of Our Diocesan Synod," which was also hosted across nine parishes. The Detroit synod preparations included a "Mass for Pardon" on 7th October 2016. Participants of that synod also conducted a review into the "good and bad habits" present in their local Church and the list was published in the post-synodal pastoral letter "Unleash the Gospel."

145. Bishop Hying wrote to his people in his pre-synod pastoral letter and revealed his personal conversion: "In my travels around the diocese, meeting thousands of people… I have served the Lord alongside you. I have prayed for and with you. I can honestly say that I have fallen in love with you and this diocese." Hying, "Go, Therefore, and Make Disciples of All Nations."

from bland, unchanging sites to portals of engagement with a dynamic community.[146] The final phase of implementation was brought about by synod implementation committees who were to take up the initiatives of the synods for engagement by parishes into the future. These synods were successful in building more enthusiastic and engaged Catholic communities through synodal praxis. They demonstrate the role that diocesan synods can play in connecting synodal praxis with good governance, while attending to the holistic functioning of Christian meaning. They also reveal how building up the community with the full and humble involvement of the clergy has the potential power to break down the barriers and biases of clericalism and hierarchicalism.

The Plenary Council of the Catholic Church in Australia also aims for an evangelisation of the faithful, in the context of a nation of Catholics who have suffered greatly from the impact of clericalism and hierarchicalism.[147] A plenary council differs from diocesan synods in two fundamental ways: scope and authority. As a nation-wide event, a plenary council would ideally build upon the synod praxis that is already operative in the local churches throughout its domain. In terms of authority, diocesan synods produce "initiatives" not decrees; as explained in Table 1 in section 2.5.1, the bishop alone holds any legislative power for the diocese. In a plenary council, however, the bishops have deliberative powers (*CIC* c.443 §§1-3) with the final decrees sent to the Holy See for approval.

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146. A visible characteristic of the three US Synods is their embrace of sophisticated and modern information technology. The websites of the Synods are attractive and informative; comprehensive in their use of reports, photos, summaries, explanations, access to documents, videos and further links, they are nevertheless clear and easy to use. The appreciation of media technology by the US dioceses demonstrates how media can be used by a community to reach out beyond itself, to capture the essence of its own vitality and offer this gift to others. Reporting to parishes on the synodal process, as well as engaging with secular media outlets, are time-consuming but necessary tasks. Technology and communications are further aspects of the synodal process that require expertise and collaboration for the benefit of building up parishes and dioceses.

147. Initially planned to commence in October 2020, the Plenary Council of Australia (PC2020) has been delayed by at least 12 months by the COVID-19 pandemic. The two sessions have been rescheduled to October 2021 and July 2022. The PC2020 is structured in successive stages that build upon each other: Phase I ("Listening and Dialogue"), Phase II ("Listening and Discernment"), Assembly 1 (in Adelaide), and Assembly 2 (in Sydney). In Assembly 1 the delegates will prepare using the thematic papers written by Writing and Discernment Groups. Membership of the council as delegates (with voting rights) or as those with consultative votes is strictly determined by canon law, see *CIC* cc.443-44.

Similar to the Synod on the Family's collection of data through a questionnaire, the PC2020 posed a single question in Phase I: "*what do you think the Holy Spirit is asking of us in Australia at this time?*" People were invited to form groups (of any type and size) to discuss the question within "Listening and Dialogue Encounters," and to submit their response online. An analysis of the 17,457 submissions received from over 222,000 participants was commissioned by the ACBC and summarised in a report: NCPR, *Summary of Submissions May 2018 - March 2019*, *NCPR website*, Mar 2019, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/pro-research-projects/plenary-council-2020/.

Furthermore, in a plenary council the number of consultors is extremely restricted by canon law, although other "guests" may be invited.[148]

The issue at the heart of this brief analysis of diocesan synods and plenary councils is one of *authority*, which was defined in chapter four as legitimate power arising out of the collaboration of an authentic community.[149] The challenge for the Catholic Church is to recognise where the synodal activity is occurring along the timeline of progress in synodal praxis: is the synod or council acting out of the authenticity of a community who have achieved unity (and for whom their episcopate are co-responsible in, and representative of, their meaning-making and building)? Or is the synod or council trying to achieve a beginning, a kick-start to fire up the faithful's recognition of their Christian calling to mission and to be responsible? Arguably the latter is what occurred for the universal Church at the Second Vatican Council, for the Synod of Bishops at the Synod on the Family, and for the people of the three local Churches who held diocesan synods in the US. It is what is hoped for the Catholic Church in Australia, as it approaches a plenary council with very few diocesan synods having being held in preparation.[150] It is the openness to the unknown in the people of those events who invited the Holy Spirit to direct their renewal, but there was also present a commitment to the elements that build authentic individuals and communities: hospitality, encounter, dialogue, conversion, discernment, and the development of one's intentional consciousness in humility and mercy.

Voting rights, attendance and representation at synodal events are valid concerns that should be engaged with when they are revealed to be restricting participation. The real power,

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148. "Presbyters and other members of the Christian faithful can also be called to particular councils, but with only a consultative vote and in such a way that their number does not exceed half the number of those mentioned in §§1-3" (*CIC* c.443 §4). "Others can also be invited as guests to particular councils" (*CIC* c.443 §6).

149. See sec.4.3.2.

150. Since 1834 there have been at least 138 diocesan synods in Australia across 28 dioceses - barely a handful of these were held after Vatican II. Pre-Vatican II synods involved clerics only. In the history of the Catholic Church in Australia there have been just two provincial councils or synods for the Australian Province (1844 and 1869) and one for the Melbourne Province (1907). There have been four plenary synods or national councils (1885, 1895, 1905, and 1937). Wilkinson, *Catholic Synods in Australia*. See fn.165 in chap.2 of this thesis.

Diocesan pastoral councils also contribute to the experience of synodal praxis that would be desirable before a plenary council. The NCPR's 2019 *Church Governance Survey* revealed that of the thirty dioceses in Australia that responded, only ten had pastoral councils. Furthermore, only one of these made minutes of meetings available to the general public. *TLSC*, appendix 3, chap.3.

however, lies in the synodal praxis before, during and after the event by the entire community, as recognised by canon lawyer Rik Torfs:[151]

> The organisation of the synod is one thing; its truly consultative force and its real power are another. During my career as a canon lawyer, my students of all continents were advocating the usefulness of synods with a true decision-making power. It could be an ideal solution. Yet in my eyes, other issues, including the power of governance exercised by laypeople and independent tribunals, should be achieved first in order to create a shift in mentality, before truly effective synods have a chance of being successful. One should not forget that synods that nourish expectations but do not lead to visible results will be a source of frustration and may cause laypeople to refrain from further participation in projects without concrete consequences.[152]

The legitimate authority of synods is dependent on the greater spheres of synodal praxis in the Church, and the same can be stated about the authority of the clergy, forms of governance, Religious, lay associations, etc. The Catholic Church is a community of communities, each constituted by common meaning and each only achieving a portion of the unity that is ultimately an eschatological sharing in the unity of the Trinity. Striving for unity in the here and now will require creative synodal praxis.

An entirely novel synodal body has been created recently by the Bishops' Conference of Latin America (CELAM): the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon.[153] The intent of the ecclesial conference is for an evangelising renewal guided by synodality.[154] Operational details for this conference are not yet available, but the Amazon region has a long history of productive partnerships and dialogues and it is likely that this body will become a model for

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151. To speak of synodal praxis by the whole community is not to suggest that all the roles and ministries of the faithful are interchangeable, or blend into vague homogeneity. On the contrary, authentic communities are more vibrant and animated because of their diversity of gifts, and because those gifts are offered and accepted freely. As stated previously, baptism blows away all human boundaries. Synods and councils should be the activities that celebrate and move forward the work of people who are living this reality and who are co-operating with the Spirit.

152. Rik Torfs, "Canon Law and the Recommendations of the Royal Commission," in Crittenden, *Health and Integrity*, 89.

153. The Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon was created out of the ongoing discernment of the Church in the pan-Amazon, and in response to the dialogue and decrees of the Synod on the Amazon and its post-synodal exhortation *Querida Amazonia*. CELAM have a long history of working in partnerships with groups such as REPAM (Red Eclesial Pan-Amazónica, a group representing the people of the Amazon and supported by Caritas), Caritas, and representatives of native peoples. See: Caritas and REPAM website, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.caritas.org/what-we-do/development/repam/.

154. See: CELAM and REPAM, "Official Statement About the Project of Constitution of the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon," 29 Jun 2020, accessed 16 Oct 2020, http://www.synod.va/content/sinodoamazonico/en/news/celam-_-repam--official-statement-about-the-project-of-constitut.html.

other regions to emulate. In a fully functioning system of ecclesial synodality an ecclesial conference may well be the link that is needed for laity and Religious to participate with full authority at the level of *regional Church*. Something akin to a regional synod (such as the recent Synod on the Amazon) or plenary council (which differs because its authority lies with the local conference of bishops, not the Synod of Bishops) could be called and ordered by the ecclesial conference. This would be the first type of synodal event where together the faithful establish the topic and vote upon propositions, and where (like current regional synods and councils) the final decrees are sent to, and approved by, the Holy See. This could bring true synodal praxis to the Catholic Church; supporting fair and representative attendance and voting rights in an entirely new and innovative way, and without compromising (but rather supporting and informing) the activity of the episcopal bodies.[155]

Another contemporary exploration into novel synodal praxis is the Synodal Path of the Church in Germany. In December 2019 Bishop Reinhard Marx, the then-president of the German Bishops' Conference, publicly invited the Catholics of Germany to participate in a journey of renewal that would be entirely synodal.[156] The letter was co-signed by Prof. Dr Thomas Sternberg, President of the Central Committee of German Catholics, as a visible sign of inclusive leadership that supported the Path's claim of synodality.[157] It is an invitation to develop synodal praxis (as a sort of making a path as it is walked) and to enter into co-

155. For example, delegates with voting rights could include: the regional ecclesial conference, the regional conference of bishops, a small number of representatives of the Synod of Bishops, and delegates who were selected through voting at diocesan synods. A small number of elected delegates could represent various organs of communion in the local Churches, such as the presbyteral councils, diocesan pastoral councils, parish pastoral councils, and Religious Orders, of whom all may have voting rights. The theme of the regional synod may suggest a number of specialists to be invited (such as educationalists, abuse and trauma experts, ecumenical and interfaith partners, etc.), all of whom could be considered for voting rights, if appropriate.

These concepts of regional ecclesial conferences and synods with inclusive authority would first require changes to canon law. Pope John Paul II noted when promulgating the current code of canon law: "During the course of the centuries, the Catholic Church has been accustomed to reform and renew the laws of canonical discipline so that, in constant fidelity to her divine Founder, they may be better adapted to the saving mission entrusted to her." John Paul II, *Sacrae Disciplinae Leges*, Apostolic Constitution For the Promulgation of the New Code of Canon Law, *Holy See Press Office*, 25 Jan 1983, accessed 16 Oct 2020, http://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/eng/documents/cic_introduction_en.html. A reform and renewal of canon law in the light of synodal meaning could begin with the addition of canons permitting regional ecclesial conferences, and widening the selection criteria for delegates of synods and plenary councils.

156. Reinhard Marx and Thomas Sternberg, "A Path of Conversion and Renewal," *Der Synodale Weg*, 1 Dec 2019, accessed 16 Oct 2020, https://www.zdk.de/veroeffentlichungen/pressemeldungen/detail/-Ein-Weg-der-Umkehr-und-Erneuerung--1292Q/.

157. Previously the Catholic Society of Germany, this group is a lay body that represents various Catholic organisations in Germany. Central Committee of German Catholics, accessed 29 Jul 2020, https://www.zdk.de.

responsibility for the issues of the Church in Germany, which readily acknowledges the reality of ecclesial abuse and cover up, and seeks to engage with the issues.[158]

Conclusion

Synodality will support the evangelising activity of the ecclesial community. Three elements have been described as key to the appropriation of synodality by the Catholic Church: an ecclesiology of synodality, good governance, and synodal praxis. An ecclesiology of synodality provides the foundations for a healthy and holistic understanding of the People of God - their mission, and contemporary ecclesial service - that is dynamic, relational, and responsible. It also provides foundations for recognising clericalism and hierarchicalism as destructive biases, and for their removal as unauthentic through committing to authenticity. This task must be done for, and by, the entire People of God, through their co-operation and co-responsibility. Good governance and synodal praxis would both encourage wide-spread growth in authenticity and, in turn, the authenticity of the people would demand good governance and synodal praxis. It is a continual process that is rooted in commitment to conversion, and which prioritises renewal over inertia, diversity over uniformity, and synodal meaning over hierarchical. An authentic Christian community can be supported in their witness to the gospel through a balanced approach to the four functions of meaning.

Good governance recognises that the People of God share in the *tria munera Christi* and are therefore to be encouraged and formed in their function as priest-prophet-king for the world. The exclusivity of hierarchical meaning has led to the corruptions of clericalism and hierarchicalism, bringing to the *ekklēsia* an overly juridical ecclesiology, burdensome levels of expectations and administration upon clergy, and a disengagement from responsibility by the laity. The consequence has been confusion and a form of apathy towards evangelisation by the People of God; accompanied as these are by the horrors of ecclesial abuse, the faithful have a distinct need for full ecclesial participation. For too long the laity have been considered spectators, docile children instead of mature and responsible for the mission of the

158. See also canon lawyer Brendan Daly: Brendan Daly, "Synodality and its Consequences for Canon Law," in Crittenden, *Health and Integrity*, 102. Bradford Hinze describes three pathways of synodality: 1) the "synodal way"; 2) the way of restorative justice; and 3) the way of seekers at the margins. The first "synodal way" has as examples of synodal praxis the Limerick Diocesan Synod of 2016, the Australian Plenary Council, and the German Synodal Way. Bradford Hinze, "Can we Find a Way Together? The Challenge of Synodality in a Wounded and Wounding Church," *Irish Theological Quarterly*, n. 85/3 (2020): 216-23.

Church - priestly, prophetic and royal in their responsibility because they share in the *tria munera Christi*.[159]

Synodal praxis is already evident across each level of ecclesial life. However, the possibility of universal, synodal praxis for the contemporary Church currently relies on episcopal initiative, and genuine synodal authority is very much restricted by canon law. Synodal praxis as the activity of dynamic communities is the foundation from which legitimate authority emerges. The function of bishops to govern, teach and sanctify is understood within synodality as only effective - *authentic* - when the bishops operate out of the dynamic communion of the People of God. This communion can be a reality existing in every authentic ecclesial community: within a parish, between parishes that are gathered as a local Church, between dioceses, within Conferences and Regions, and in the many ways in which relationships branch out beyond these boundaries. Synodality as the authentic Catholic Church requires two movements: the upwards motion of building and renewal through the creative contributions of the entire People of God and their partners; and the downwards power of healing love.[160] Both movements are in the Spirit, and in harmony together they work for the redemption of the *ekklēsia* and the world.

159. The role of ordained priest has a particular contribution to a synodal Church and there is scope for research into this topic. The contemporary Catholic Church has received the notion of priesthood from a hierarchical imagination, and it remains exclusive. One of the tasks of an authentic Church will be to tease out the strands of ordination, roles, functions, and authority and consider them in the light of synodality. Perhaps as a synodal Church moves further into authenticity it may reveal inclusive forms of leadership and service that embrace the gifts of the entire People of God as made in the image and likeness of God.

160. See fn.50 in this chapter. See also: Lonergan, “Healing and Creating in History,” 100-108.

Conclusion

This thesis sought to establish that the Catholic Church is authentic to the extent to which it functions synodally. Accordingly, the thesis has produced foundations from which an ecclesiology of synodality can be developed, through a methodological approach that is historical and transcendental. Synodality marks an era of breakthrough from hierarchical meaning to synodal meaning. The dynamic and relational ecclesiological developments of the Second Vatican Council have been deepened and more fully integrated through the application of synodal meaning to all ecclesial meaning. This has moved the concept of collegiality, the theology of the laity, communion ecclesiology, and other, sometimes disparate theologies, as well as all roles and functions of the People of God, into the comprehensive framework of synodality as supported by transcendental consciousness.

There are three inter-related components that comprise a synodal Church: an ecclesiology of synodality, synodal praxis, and good governance. All involve the key concepts of participation, responsibility, and authority, as understood through synodal meaning, which replaces the hierarchical meaning of these concepts and the underpinning neo-Scholastic philosophic foundations. Synodal foundations have been built up from biblical insights into community, unity, and transformation. Using a transcendental understanding of the human person, a comprehensive understanding of community as an achievement of common meaning forms the basis of understanding the *ekklēsia*. Thus the Catholic Church's self-knowledge as "One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic" is transformed into a relational and dynamic reality.[1]

Unity is evidence of the achievement of a community of common meaning. As synodal, the Catholic Church is a community of dynamic and relational communities, whose living of common meaning brings the achievement of love and communion with each other, creation, and Creator. Together, the community of the People of God are the eucharistic Body of Christ; gathered, blessed, broken and given to the world. Unity is central to mission. Only authentic communities are capable of effective evangelisation, as it is the visible unity and love among believers that witness to, and make present, the divine love in the world.[2] The

1. Cf. *CCC* nn.811-70, *SYN* n.45f, and *LG* nn.8, 26.
2. Coloe, "John 17:1-26: The Missionary Prayer of Jesus," 12.

Synod on the Family was the first major foray into a meeting between the unity represented by the episcopacy and their authority, and the unity represented by the baptismal identity of the entire faithful and their authority, which is traditionally known as the *sensus fidei*. One task of a synodal Church will be to continue the work of drawing the episcopacy into synodal governance and praxis, as founded on an ecclesiology of synodality.

The holiness of a synodal Church lies in the community's journey of growing in authenticity. This involves a commitment to a culture of conversion with a desire for transformation, and to be transforming. God's holy Church is authentic people of faith with open hearts and open minds, accepting a position of vulnerability in order to offer hospitality; to encounter other people and their horizons which challenge one's own; and to become dialogical, in mercy and humility. As a journey of authenticity holiness is no earthly state of perfection, but only a constant process of recognising and removing unauthenticity, in oneself and in community, society and the world. In this way the "revolution of tenderness" is participation in Christ's redemption of the world.

The Catholic Church is baptismal in identity and missionary in nature. The *ekklēsia*'s meaning as a sacramental community is thus interwoven with the call to be evangelising or missionary disciples:

> He takes us from the midst of his people and he sends us to his people; without this sense of belonging we cannot understand our deepest identity (*EG* n.268).

The Church's catholicity flows from both its missionary nature, which is a dynamic and responsible living of all four functions of meaning as Church, and from its sacramental unity, entered into through baptism. Thus the People of God are transformed (in baptism) and transforming (as evangelisers). The evangelising of a synodal Church draws the world into God's loving communion. It is welcoming, inclusive, dialogical, and self-giving for the world.

The apostolic communion of the baptised extends through history from the disciples of Jesus to the visible community today, as the communion of saints in the grace of God. The identity of the Church - the entire People of God - is rooted in their common baptismal identity, handed down from the Apostles, along with the Christological functions of priest, prophet and king. They are Spirit-led through their growth in authenticity and cultivation of the *sensus fidei*. The authentic communal living of baptismal identity brings meaning to the

Church as a sacrament of unity (*LG* n.1). It is this living that is the second component of synodality: synodal praxis. The third component, good governance, is necessary for guiding and leading the Church in a responsible and inclusive manner at all levels of ecclesial life. The three aspects of synodality are interdependent and support the progress of all members of the Church in their authenticity. At the heart of being Church is to bring God's kingdom into the world, breaking through unauthenticity with the power of self-sacrificing love that was revealed by Christ:

> If human historical process is such a compound of progress and decline then its redemption would be effected by faith, hope, and charity.[3]

The Catholic Church as authentic is *redemptive*, a power achieved - in Christ - through self-transcendence and self-sacrificing love. Lonergan describes the authentic Church as a "self-constituting process of redemption":

> The Christian church is a fully conscious process of self-constitution and communication: it is structured, outgoing, constructive and redemptive.[4]

To this succinct summary of the foundations contained in this thesis can be added the words of the Gospel of John, where Jesus reminds his disciples - then and now - that the effects of mutual love are transformational:

> Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:34b-35).

Synodality is preparation for, and participation in, transformation of oneself, one's community, and the world through love. Hence the importance of the promotion and development of synodality within the Catholic Church.

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3. Lonergan, "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness," 8.

4. This is not a verbatim quote but is drawn from several pages and summarised using Lonergan's words. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 362-64, 366f.

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Appendix A

This appendix lists abbreviations for documents that are used in this thesis in chronological order.

Table 2 lists conciliar, papal and curial documents of the Catholic Church.

Table 3 lists other documents.

Table 2: Conciliar, Papal and Curial Documents of the Catholic Church That Are Used in This Thesis and Their Abbreviations - in Chronological Order

Date of Promulgation	Author	Title	Type and/or Subtitle	Abbreviation
1870 24 April	Vatican I	*Dei Filius*	Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith	*DF*
1870 18 July	Vatican I	*Pastor Aeternus*	First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ	*PA*
1896 29 June	Leo XIII	*Satis Cognitum*	Encyclical on the Unity of the Church	*SaC*
1906 11 February	Pius X	*Vehementer Nos*	Encyclical on the French Law of Separation	*VN*
1928 6 January	Pius XI	*Mortalium Animos*	Encyclical on Religious Unity	*MA*
1943 29 June	Pius XII	*Mystici Corporis Christi*	Encyclical on the Mystical Body of Christ	*MCC*
1963 4 December	Vatican II	*Sacrosanctum Concilium*	Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy	*SC*
1963 4 December	Vatican II	*Inter Mirifica*	Decree on the Media of Social Communications	*IM*
1964 6 August	Paul VI	*Ecclesiam Suam*	Encyclical On the Church	*ES*
1964 21 November	Vatican II	*Lumen Gentium*	Dogmatic Constitution on the Church	*LG*
1964 21 November	Vatican II	*Unitatis Redintegratio*	Decree on Ecumenism	*UR*
1964 21 November	Vatican II	*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*	Decree on the Catholic Churches of the Eastern Rite	-
1965 15 September	Paul VI	*Apostolica Sollicitudo*	Apostolic Letter Issued *Motu Proprio* Establishing the Synod of Bishops for the Universal Church	*AS*
1965 28 October	Vatican II	*Christus Dominus*	Decree Concerning the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church	*CD*

Date of Promulgation	Author	Title	Type and/or Subtitle	Abbreviation
1965 28 October	Vatican II	*Gravissimum Educationis*	Declaration on Christian Education	*GEd*
1965 28 October	Vatican II	*Nostra Aetate*	Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions	-
1965 28 October	Vatican II	*Optatam Totius*	Decree on Priestly Training	*OT*
1965 18 November	Vatican II	*Apostolicam Actuositatem*	Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity	*AA*
1965 18 November	Vatican II	*Dei Verbum*	Dogmatic Constitution on the Divine Revelation	*DV*
1965 7 December	Vatican II	*Dignitatis Humanae*	Declaration on Religious Freedom	*DH*
1965 7 December	Vatican II	*Ad Gentes*	Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church	*AG*
1965 7 December	Vatican II	*Gaudium et Spes*	Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World	*GS*
1965 28 October	Vatican II	*Perfectae Caritatis*	Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life	*PC*
1965 7 December	Vatican II	*Presbyterorum Ordinis*	Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests	*PO*
1966 6 August	Paul VI	*Ecclesiae Sanctae*	Apostolic Letter issued *motu proprio*	-
1976 15 October	John Paul II	*Inter Insigniores*	Declaration on the Question of Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood	*InIn*
1983 January	John Paul II	*Code of Canon Law*	Canon law of the universal Latin rite Catholic Church	*CIC*
1988 30 December	John Paul II	*Christifideles Laici*	Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation On the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World	*CL*
1992 28 May	Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith	*Communionis Notio*	Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion	*CN*
1992 11 October	John Paul II	*Catechism of the Catholic Church*	Catechism of the universal Latin rite Catholic Church	*CCC*
2003 16 October	John Paul II	*Pastores Gregis*	Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Bishop	*PG*
2013 24 November	Francis	*Evangelii Gaudium*	Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World	*EG*

Date of Promulgation	Author	Title	Type and/or Subtitle	Abbreviation
2014 10 June	International Theological Commission	*Sensus Fidei*	Document *Sensus Fidei* in the Life of the Church	*SF*
2015 11 April	Francis	*Misericordiae Vultus*	Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy	*MV*
2015 24 May	Francis	*Laudato Si'*	Encyclical Letter On Care for our Common Home	*LS*
2016 19 March	Francis	*Amoris Laetitia*	Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on Love in the Family	*AL*
2018 2 March	International Theological Commission	*Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*	Document	*SYN*
2018 19 March	Francis	*Gaudete et Exsultate*	Apostolic Exhortation on the Call to Holiness in Today's World	*GE*
2018 15 September	Francis	*Episcopalis Communio*	Apostolic Constitution on the Synod of Bishops	*EC*
2019 25 March	Francis	*Christus Vivit*	Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation	*CV*
2020 2 February	Francis	*Querida Amazonia*	Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation	*QA*

Table 3: Other Documents and Their Abbreviations - in Chronological Order

Date of Publication	Author	Title	Type and/or Subtitle	Abbreviation
2015 December	Australian Catholic Bishops Conference	*Ratio Nationalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*	Programme for Priestly Formation in Australia	*PPFA*
2019 May	Catholic Professional Standards Ltd	*National Catholic Safeguarding Standards*		*NCSS*
2020 1 May	Governance Review Project Team	*The Light from the Southern Cross*	Promoting Co-responsible Governance in the Catholic Church in Australia	*TLSC*

Appendix B

This appendix briefly analyses and critiques the references within Pope Francis' major documents. Analysing the references within papal documents is a very useful exercise that brings insight to the intentions of the various popes. References reveal how Pope Francis values tradition and/or novelty, especially in comparison to the other post-Vatican II popes.[1]

Pope Francis' first solo document is *Evangelii Gaudium*, which has 217 endnotes containing approximately 231 references. Typical for a papal text these references include previous popes, theologians, saints, canon law and the catechism, and Vatican II documents. Also typical is a lack of women's voices, apart from occasional mention of a name, a rare, short quote from a female saint, and reference to the Blessed Virgin Mary (*EG* mentions female saints twice; *MV* 2x; *GE* 4x; *CV* 3x saints and 1x blessed; while *QA* mentions 2x female poets and 2x writers). The 231 references in the endnotes of *EG* include one female (therefore 0.43% of the total references are female), and the text has 27 instances of individual saints of which one is a woman (3.7%).

Novel references introduced by Pope Francis include a high number of:

- quotes from a wide variety of conferences of bishops (he is the first pope to do so),
- Pope Francis' own teaching moments, such as addresses and lectures,
- miscellaneous experts from a broad professional and ethnic background,
- *propositio* (statements proposed for voting upon by the Synod of Bishops at that particular assembly).

These novelties are present throughout the catalogue of Pope Francis' documents and a number of conclusions can be drawn:

1) Pope Francis is careful to place himself firmly in the tradition of the papacy, using the insights of past popes, theologians, and Councils, just as previous popes have.

2) The Synod of Bishops and their work in assembly, as well as Conferences of Bishops, are deliberately given significant voices in the documents. This acts to raise the legitimate authority of the contributions of these bodies.

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1. As noted in fn.44 in chap.2, Pope Paul VI is considered to be the first pope to personally write his encyclicals.

3) By referencing his catechesis sessions the pope legitimises occasions where he is teaching and engaging with the faithful, and brings these moments of encounter into the authority of the document.

4) Pope Francis demonstrates his desire to diversify the references in a significant papal document. In doing so he emphasises the diversity of the Church as well as giving legitimate authority to those diverse voices.

5) A major weakness and point of criticism of Pope Francis is his complete lack of reference to women experts: no female theologians, canonists or other ecclesial experts have been given a voice in the papal documents of Pope Francis.

Through his official texts Pope Francis intentionally includes references from a diverse range of the Church, rich in experience and authentic in communion and legitimate authority. He is demonstrating through example how authority in a synodal Church can be co-operative and diverse, but his efforts are compromised by his bias against female expertise.

Appendix C

This appendix records the instances of the phrase "sense of" (in Latin, *sensus*)[1] in the English versions of key official ecclesiological documents. The first column splits results into four values: responsibility, unity, community, and human dignity. The second column lists the particular instances of "sense of" that are positive, column three lists any that are negative, and column four gives the document references. Note that the values of unity and community could arguably be combined, but are separated to keep the former more universal in nature.

Table 4 analyses Vatican II: *Gaudium et Spes* (1965).

Table 5 analyses Pope John Paul II: *Christifideles Laici* (1988).

Table 6 analyses Pope Francis: *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013)*, Misericordiae Vultus* (2015)*, Laudato Si'* (2015)*, Amoris Laetitia* (2016)*, Gaudete et Exsultate* (2018)*, Christus Vivit* (2019)*,* and *Querida Amazonia* (2020).

Table 4. Vatican II: *Gaudium et Spes*

Value	Sub-categories (positive)	Sub-categories (negative)	Document
Responsibility	• sense of responsibility • inward sense of service to the common good		• GS nn.31, 50, 52, 55, 56, 57, 67, 74, 75 • GS nn.73, 75
Unity			
Community	• sense of solidarity • religious, moral and social sense		• GS n.57 • GS n.59
Human Dignity	• full sense of mutual self-giving and human procreation • sense of autonomy • sense of human dignity • inward sense of justice and kindliness		• GS n.51 • GS n.55 • GS n.73 • GS n.73

1. See fn.105 in chap.4 for a definition of *sensus*.

Table 5. Pope John Paul II: *Christifideles Laici*

Value	Sub-categories (positive)	Sub-categories (negative)	Document
Responsibility	• sense of responsibility		• CL nn.20, 31, 61, 64
Unity	• sense of human existence, to communion with God and with all people • sense of human suffering		• CL nn.28, 34, 36, 62 • CL n.54
Community	• sense of fellowship • sense of communion as Church • sense of the Church		• CL n.20 • CL nn.61, 64 twice • CL n.62
Human Dignity	• sense of the sacred and to prayer • sense of the dignity of the human person • sense of the divine vocation • sense of duty		• CL n.4 • CL nn.5, 16, 28 • CL n.15 • CL n.41

Table 6. Pope Francis: *Evangelii Gaudium, Misericordiae Vultus, Laudato Si', Amoris Laetitia, Gaudete et Exsultate, Christus Vivit, and Querida Amazonia*

Value	Sub-categories (positive)	Sub-categories (negative)	Document
Responsibility	• sense of responsibility • sense of the common good • sense of truth		• LS nn.25, 116, 118, 179, 196, 206; AL n.270; QA nn.37, 50, 70; MV n.4 twice • LS n.204 • CV n.89

Value	Sub-categories (positive)	Sub-categories (negative)	Document
Unity		• false sense of security	• EG n.49
		• sense of disorientation	• EG n.64
	• unified and complete sense of human life		• EG n.75
	• sense of the profound unity of reality		• EG n.226
	• sense of mystery		• EG n.279
	• sense of deep communion		• LS n.91
	• sense of the whole		• LS n.151
		• sense of imbalance	• LS n.225
	• sense of reality		• AL n.97; GE n.140; CV n.110
Community	• sense of belonging to the Church		• EG nn.63, 105, 268; CV n.240
	• sense of social belonging		• LS n.151; AL n.100
	• sense of personal and collective sin		• EG n.64
	• sense of community		• EG n.102; AL n.191; QA nn.20, 36
		• sense of isolation	• LS nn.47, 237; AL n.158
	• sense of fraternity		• LS n.92
	• sense of the meaning of life and community		• LS nn.145, 179
		• sense of uprootedness	• LS n.149; QA n.21
	• sense of solidarity		• LS nn.162, 232; QA n.70
		• sense of helplessness	• AL n.35
	• sense of fulfilment and participation		• AL n.48; CV n.273
		• sense of being orphaned	• AL n.173; CV n.216x2
	• sense of closeness and stability		• AL n.226
	• sense of mission		• AL n.254
	• sense of home		• AL n.276

Value	Sub-categories (positive)	Sub-categories (negative)	Document
Human Dignity	• deep religious sense		• EG n.72
	• sense of discretion and measure		• EG n.84
	• sense of personal dignity		• LS n.152; QA n.30
	• sense of self-esteem		• LS n.212
	• sense of happiness and peace		• AL n.96
	• sense of beauty		• AL n.127
	• sense of wonder		• AL n.151
	• sense of modesty		• AL n.282x2
		• sense of anxiety	• GE n.111
	• sense of humour		• GE n.126, fn101
		• sense of guilt	• CV n.83
	• sense of purpose		• CV n.216
	• sense of indignation		• QA n.17
	• sense of identity		• QA n.35
	• sense of gratitude		• QA n.70; MV n.5
	• sense of faith		• MV n.11

Appendix D

This appendix illustrates some of the creativity that emerged from the diocesan synods in the USA, as discussed in section 5.2.5.1.

While the planning details of a synod - such as the logistics and finances - can appear to be a very rigid process, the creative seeds that appear and bloom are signs of a fully engaged community. The people of the Diocese of Gary assembled a cross made from tiles representing each parish for display during the opening Mass of their Synod, see Figure 1.

Figure 1. The Diocese of Gary Cross Representing Parishes

Source: https://www.ncronline.org/news/parish/gary-dioceses-first-synod-hopes-move-mission-church

The people of the Archdiocese of Detroit redesigned their Coat of Arms in a creative act that visibly symbolised their transformation through the synodal process. The design, displayed in Figure 2, incorporates symbols that were identified as meaningful during the synod.

Figure 2. The New Coat of Arms of the Archdiocese of Detroit

Source: https://www.aod.org/coat-of-arms