

# Communion in Growth

Declaration on the Church, Eucharist,  
and Ministry.

A Report from the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue Commission  
for Finland

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland  
Catholic Church in Finland

Helsinki 2017

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Catholic Church in Finland

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## Introduction

### The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification and the Way Forward

The most valuable fruit of the Lutheran-Catholic theological dialogue to date has been the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (1999) (JD), which has proven relevant beyond that dialogue for Methodists, Anglicans, and Reformed Christians. It has therefore also opened a theological basis for reflection on future ecumenical work. A significant consensus and convergence has been achieved concerning the crucial question of the sinner's justification, which Luther and the other Reformers understood as the "first and chief article",<sup>1</sup> and the "guide and judge over all parts of Christian doctrine".<sup>2</sup>

The JD "offers a differentiated consensus comprised of common statements along with different emphases of each side, with the claim that these differences do not invalidate the commonalities. It is thus a consensus that does not eliminate differences, but rather explicitly includes them."<sup>3</sup>

In the Nordic context the JD's remaining tasks were taken up by the Swedish-Finnish Roman Catholic-Lutheran theological dialogue, which produced the report *Justification in the Life of the Church* (2010, JLC). The group identified "the themes that had previously been brought to the foreground: ecclesiology, the view of the ordained ministry, the role and function of the bishop, the view of Baptism and of the Eucharist etc."<sup>4</sup> as the starting point of their dialogue. These themes were considered from the perspective of the JD.

In the background of the Nordic, and especially the Finnish and Swedish Roman Catholic-Lutheran, dialogue was the ecumenical and pastoral visit of Pope John Paul II to the Nordic countries in June 1989. Shared worship was celebrated with the Church of Sweden and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, accompanied by discussions with the bishops of these Churches. The encounters seem to have made a deep impression on the pope. He remarked to the Catholic Bishop of Helsinki, Paul Verschuren, who was also the Chairman of the Catholic Bishops' Conference in the Nordic countries, that "following this visit, we in Rome have every reason to consider our relations with these churches". In October 1991, in the context of the visit to Rome of the Finnish and Swedish Lutheran Archbishops Bertil Werkström and John Vikström for the celebration of the Jubilee Year of St Birgitta, the pope "appealed to the Archbishops and their delegations to find, if possible, new ecumenical

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1 From Conflict to Communion (FCC) 122, Luther, Smalcald Articles (AS), Book of Concord (BC) 301.

2 FCC 122, WA 39 I 205, 2–3.

3 FCC 123.

4 JLC 8.

ways forward in the Nordic countries”. In 1993, in connection with the celebrations of the anniversary of the 1593 Lutheran Uppsala Synod, Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) proposed that the Lutheran Churches in Sweden and Finland embark on a dialogue about the Church and the ordained ministry with the Catholic Dioceses of Stockholm and Helsinki, indicating that the PCPCU would be happy to support such a dialogue. Archbishop John Vikström responded positively. The dialogue began to take concrete steps.<sup>5</sup>

In 2011, after the Swedish-Finnish Roman Catholic-Lutheran dialogue between 2002 and 2009, Cardinal Kurt Koch, the new president of the PCPCU, suggested that a joint declaration on the Church, Eucharist, and Ministry should be prepared. Such an agreement was needed if the next and crucial steps towards eucharistic communion were to be taken. Now that a differentiated consensus on justification had been achieved, the preparation of such a document would be easier. The first group to reply positively to the call for preparatory work was the American dialogue group, which in 2015 published the document *Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist*.

In Finland the task of formulating a contribution to the international discussion regarding a joint Lutheran-Catholic declaration on the Church, Eucharist, and Ministry was taken up as part of the ongoing theological dialogue continuing the work done in the report *Justification in the Life of the Church* (2010). In March 2014 the Finnish Lutheran-Catholic dialogue group was nominated by the Council for International Relations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF) and by Bishop Teemu Sippo of the Catholic Church in Finland’s Diocese of Helsinki. The group completed this round of dialogue in June 2017. The chairperson of the Lutheran delegation was Bishop Simo Peura; the Catholic delegation’s chairperson was Bishop Teemu Sippo. The Lutheran permanent consultant was Bishop Jari Jolkonen, and the other members of the Lutheran delegation were the Revd Dr Tiina Huhtanen, the Revd Dr Ilmari Karimies, the Revd Dr Tomi Karttunen (Secretary), Adjunct Professor Virpi Mäkinen, and Adjunct Professor Olli-Pekka Vainio (until spring 2016). The members of the Catholic delegation were the Vicar General, the Revd Dr Raimo Goyarrola, the Fr Dr Jan Aarts, the Revd Anders Hamberg, and the Revd Dr Toan Tri Nguyen.

The dialogue group received valuable support from the permanent consultants, Mgr Matthias Türk, of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and Professor Wolfgang Thönissen of the Johann-Adam-Möhler Institute. Fr Dr Augustinus Sander OSB (Maria Laach Abbey) also contributed important insights.

In addition to Cardinal Koch’s initiative the German project *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era: Do they Still Divide?* (1990), which had already made a posi-

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5 JLC 1–2.



tive contribution to the JD, formed part of the project's background. The former PCPCU president Cardinal Walter Kasper's *Harvesting the Fruits. Basic Aspects of Christian Faith in Ecumenical Dialogue* (2009) and the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity's *From Conflict to Communion. Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017* (2013) also contributed important summaries, encouragement, and vision.

In visiting Finland in April 2015, Cardinal Koch formulated the following ecumenical vision for Roman Catholic-Lutheran dialogue in connection with the future joint declaration: "Following the accord which has become possible between Lutherans and Catholics on fundamental issues of the doctrine of justification, the theological implications of this consensus must be placed on the agenda of ecumenical conversations. They will form a further important step on the path towards ecumenical agreement between Lutherans and Catholics, which could ultimately issue in the drafting of a future Joint Declaration, analogous to the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, on Church, Eucharist and Ministry. With such a declaration there is no doubt that a decisive step would be taken towards visible Church communion, which is the goal of all ecumenical efforts. To raise awareness of this goal anew must be an essential task of the approaching Reformation commemoration."<sup>6</sup>

We found further encouragement in the historic Joint Commemoration of the Reformation at Lund Cathedral on 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2016. In his sermon Pope Francis stated: "As Catholics and Lutherans, we have undertaken a common journey of reconciliation. Now, in the context of the commemoration of the Reformation of 1517, we have a new opportunity to accept a common path, one that has taken shape over the past fifty years in the ecumenical dialogue between the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church. Nor can we be resigned to the division and distance that our separation has created between us. We have the opportunity to mend a critical moment of our history by moving beyond the controversies and disagreements that have often prevented us from understanding one another." In the joint Lund Lutheran-Catholic statement a vision for further work was outlined: "Today, we hear God's command to set aside all conflict. We recognize that we are freed by grace to move towards the communion to which God continually calls us."

## **Aim and Method of the Declaration**

As Lutherans and Catholics we share broad agreement on the basic truths of the Christian faith, and the JD is the best sign of this. In this dialogue report, therefore, we wish to make our contribution to a differentiated consensus on the Church's concrete sacramental structures, especially concerning the Eucharist and ministry within the Church's sacramental framework. We thus aim to express our common understand-

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6 Cardinal Koch at the Spring Assembly of the Finnish Ecumenical Council in Helsinki, 27th April, 2015, p. 16.

ing of these matters and to elaborate our remaining differences to discern if they are still church-dividing, and to identify the themes needing further elaboration in our shared ecumenical journey towards full communion.

Traditional theological dialogue has its methodological and practical limits. However, it has also proven successful not only in the JD but in other documents such as *Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry* (1982) and the *Porvoo Common Statement* (1992). In seeking the truth in love, doctrinal dialogue is especially necessary. We do this on the basis and in the light of our common Christian faith, praying for Christ's guidance through God's Holy Spirit. As *Unitatis Redintegratio* encouragingly reminds us: "It is the urgent wish of this Holy Council that the measures undertaken by the sons of the Catholic Church should develop in conjunction with those of our separated brethren so that no obstacle be put in the ways of divine Providence and no preconceived judgments impair the future inspirations of the Holy Spirit."<sup>7</sup>

UR 11 offers some direction for theological dialogue: "The way and method in which the Catholic faith is expressed should never become an obstacle to dialogue with our brethren. It is, of course, essential that the doctrine should be clearly presented in its entirety. Nothing is so foreign to the spirit of ecumenism as a false irenicism, in which the purity of Catholic doctrine suffers loss and its genuine and certain meaning is clouded."

At the same time, the Catholic faith must be explained more profoundly and precisely, in such a way and in such terms as our separated brethren can also really understand.

Moreover, in ecumenical dialogue, Catholic theologians standing fast by the teaching of the Church and investigating the divine mysteries with the separated brethren must proceed with love for the truth, with charity, and with humility. When comparing doctrines with one another, they should remember that in Catholic doctrine there exists a 'hierarchy' of truths, since they vary in their relation to the fundamental Christian faith. Thus the way will be opened by which through fraternal rivalry all will be stirred to a deeper understanding and a clearer presentation of the unfathomable riches of Christ."<sup>8</sup>

The Augsburg Confession offers further direction: "That we may obtain this faith, the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith ... [T]o the true unity of the Church it is enough [*satis est et necesse est*] to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of

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7 UR III/II 24. For example, Cardinal Walter Kasper (*That they may all be one. The call to unity today* 2004, 169) underlines: "Ecumenical dialogue absolutely does not mean abandoning one's own identity [...]. The aim is not to find the lowest common denominator. Ecumenical dialogue does not aim at spiritual impoverishment but at mutual spiritual enrichment. In ecumenical dialogue we discover the truth of the other as our own truth. So through the ecumenical dialogue the Spirit leads us into the whole truth; he heals the wounds of our divisions and endows us with full catholicity." See also Kasper 2006, 10–12.

8 UR 11.

the Sacraments. ... [N]o one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called [*rite vocatus*].”<sup>9</sup>

Thus, the aim is not to forget our differences, but to express the genuine and certain meaning of the Christian faith and doctrine in a way that both traditions can also really understand. We both aim, with charity and humility, to ground our work in love for the truth. The most important thing is never to lose sight of the fundamental Christian faith, so that our encounter may stir us to a deeper understanding and a clearer presentation of the unfathomable riches of Christ. If the true unity of the Church is to be achieved, a common understanding of the ordained [*rite vocatus*] ministry, the justifying word of the Gospel, and the sacraments as an effective means of grace in the context of the Church is required. The idea of a “hierarchy of truths” calls for differentiation in the light of the basic truths of the Christian faith, so that expression may be given to the catholicity of the Church.<sup>10</sup>

The unity in faith we seek is not uniformity; in some respects it is a diversity in which any remaining differences beyond our common agreement are not regarded as church-dividing. Accordingly, the goal is not doctrinal consensus in the form of congruence, but a differentiated consensus consisting of two distinct components:

- A clear statement on the consensus reached in the fundamental and essential content of a previously controversial doctrine.
- An explanation of the remaining doctrinal differences, which are also to be clearly named, and a declaration that they can be considered admissible and thus do not call into question the consensus on the fundamentals and essentials.<sup>11</sup>

The differentiated consensus method, which found its mature form in the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue leading to the JD (1999), therefore entails a twofold process:

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9 CA 5, 7 and 14.

10 Sometimes the term “hierarchy of truths” is misused to imply that some truths are negotiable or that some are less true than others. In fact, the hierarchy of truths is merely the principle of ordering the mysteries of faith based on the varying ways they are related to one another as elements of Christian revelation, as summarised in the Creed. The principle is closely allied to the axiom that the bond of faith which unites Christians is greater than the things which divide them. The essential truths about God and Christ may be grouped under four basic headings: 1) the mystery of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Creator of all things; 2) the mystery of Christ the incarnate Word, who was born of the Virgin Mary, and who suffered, died, and rose for our salvation; 3) the mystery of the Holy Spirit, who is present in the Church, sanctifying and guiding it until the glorious coming of Christ, our Saviour and Judge; and 4) the mystery of the Church, which is Christ’s Mystical Body, in which the Virgin Mary holds the pre-eminent place (General Catechetical Directory, no. 43). Cardinal Schönborn underlines: “The ‘hierarchy of truths’ does not mean ‘a principle of subtraction’, as if faith could be reduced to some ‘essentials’ whereas the ‘rest’ is left free or even dismissed as not significant. The ‘hierarchy of truths ... is a principle of organic structure’. It should not be confused with the degrees of certainty; it simply means that the different truths of faith are ‘organized’ around a center.” (Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, p. 42).

11 Cf. *The Church and Ecclesial Communion* (CEC). Report of the International Roman Catholic-Old Catholic Dialogue Commission 6.1.

1. A consensus in basic truths is elaborated and stated. The aim is to formulate the common understanding of Church, Eucharist, and Ministry together. In this case the classical method of convergence and consensus is applied. A common statement in uniformly accepted language is made. Further descriptions of the special confessional emphasis are added as explication. The focus of the joint formulations is on the fundamental aspects of the doctrines and the dimensions which have traditionally been areas of disagreement. The aim is not to say everything, but to formulate the basic truths extensively and sufficiently thoroughly.
2. Now the doctrinal statements traditionally seen as in conflict are examined to establish if they still exclude each other or if they are simply different expressions of the same basic truth. Here a uniform or common language is not sought; it still remains necessary to translate from one confessional language to the other. If it is stated that doctrinal statements traditionally held to be in conflict no longer entail any church-dividing effects, these statements can be understood and interpreted as different explications of the agreed common understanding. It follows that the differing confessional positions are freed from the constraint of reaching a consensus in form and language on every imaginable doctrinal question. The Joint Declaration presses towards such an authentic consensus on the basic truths of faith regarding the issues in focus. The remaining differing positions as formed by origin and tradition are neither denied nor forgotten, but in the light of the consensus achieved they are not seen as church-dividing.<sup>12</sup>

The following are the especially important remaining questions in the quest to achieve eucharistic communion and visible unity: 1) the episcopacy in apostolic succession; 2) primacy; and 3) the teaching authority of the episcopacy in communion with the Bishop of Rome. Other essential topics are: 4) our understanding of the relationship of the Word of God as expressed in Holy Scripture with the Church's doctrinal teaching (profession of faith, authority); 5) the function of the ministry in the Church; and 6) our understanding of the Eucharist. It is our intention here to elaborate our proposal for overcoming our remaining church-dividing differences concerning these questions. In this way we seek to bring the ELCF and the Catholic Church in Finland closer to each other, and we hope this may serve as a Finnish contribution and gift for the modelling of the future work of the Lutheran – Roman Catholic Commission on Unity.

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12 Cf. Thönissen 2008.

# I THE CHURCH AS COMMUNION IN THE TRIUNE GOD

## 1. Communion Ecclesiology as a Shared Framework

1. The One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church is the Church of the Triune God. His three persons are the foundation of the Church and her mission. God's universal salvific plan for the Church is articulated biblically and theologically in *Lumen gentium* in a way that is acceptable to both Catholics and Lutherans: "He planned to assemble in the holy Church all those who would believe in Christ. Already from the beginning of the world the foreshadowing of the Church took place... It was prepared in a remarkable way throughout the history of the people of Israel and by means of the Old Covenant. In the present era of time the Church was constituted and, by the outpouring of the Spirit, was made manifest. At the end of time it will gloriously achieve completion... When the work which the Father gave the Son to do on earth was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in order that He might continually sanctify the Church, and thus, all those who believe would have access through Christ in one Spirit to the Father. ...The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful, as in a temple. ...In that Body the life of Christ is poured into the believers who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ who suffered and was glorified. Through Baptism we are formed in the likeness of Christ: 'For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body'... All men are called to belong to the new people of God."<sup>13</sup>
2. As the people of God (1 Pet. 2:9–10), the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12), and the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19), the Church was conceived in the history of the people of Israel and fulfilled in the revelation of Jesus Christ and in the sending of the Holy Spirit.<sup>14</sup> The dialogues of the Roman Catholic Church with Lutherans, Reformed, Anglicans, and Methodists "...are united in agreement that the Church as people of God, Body of Christ and Temple of the Holy Spirit, is in intimate relation to the economy of the Trinity. All four dialogues confirm the unique mediation of Jesus Christ, and the role of

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13 LG I–II. Concerning the aspects and criteria of Catholic communion ecclesiology, see the document *Communio in notio* (CN).

14 LG I–II, *Church and Justification* (CJ) 2–3.

the Holy Spirit as primary agent within the Church... In particular, the vision of the Church as communion – in keeping with the pattern of communion in the Holy Trinity – has become increasingly central in all dialogues. Focusing on the notion of the Church as *koinonial*/communion not only highlights the richness of the nature of the Church, but also helps in dealing with significant issues of historical conflict. Such a focus also gives rise to fruitful and promising approaches to overcoming old problems within a larger context, such as participation in the Word of God and in the sacraments (especially the Eucharist) and the exercise of a universal ministry of unity. Issues such as the relationship between the individual and the community, between church ministry and lay people, men and women, are now set within a common framework, rather than seen as exclusive positions.”<sup>15</sup>

3. The Second Vatican Council, together with the work of the World Council of Church's Faith and Order Commission (especially Canberra 1991 and Santiago de Compostela 1993), paved the way for the ecclesiology of *koinonial*/communion. LG I.1 states: “Christ is the Light of nations. Because this is so, this Sacred Synod gathered together in the Holy Spirit eagerly desires, by proclaiming the Gospel to every creature, to bring the light of Christ to all men, a light brightly visible on the countenance of the Church. 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. This it intends to do following faithfully the teaching of previous councils. The present-day conditions of the world add greater urgency to this work of the Church so that all men, joined more closely today by various social, technical and cultural ties, might also attain fuller unity in Christ.” The Holy Synod thus underlines that the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ as the Light of the Nations to every creature is the basic mission of the Church. In describing this communion ecclesiology the synod uses the phrase “the Church is in Christ *like a sacrament*”. In other words, the Church is “a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race”. The ecclesiological formulation “a sign and instrument” has since often been used to explicate the ecumenical understanding of the Church.
4. In the Lutheran tradition the understanding of the communion of saints (*communio sanctorum*) as an instrument of the salvific work of the Triune God is also essential for the understanding of the Church. Luther's early writings in particular describe his understanding of communion (*communio*), an understanding that is also observable in his later writings and in the Large

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15 Kasper: *Harvesting the Fruits* (HF) 2009, D 74.

Catechism. Fundamental to this understanding is the faith in the Triune God as love revealing himself to the believer by word and sacraments while the Holy Spirit joins us with the communion of saints. Participation in Christ through word and sacrament is a sharing in the communion of saints, i.e., in the body of Christ, in which first the wonderful exchange takes place between Christ and the individual Christian, and then the interchange of “benefits” takes place through love between the members of this community, who are still struggling against sin. The mutual forgiveness of transgressions and above all God’s forgiveness of sins are of fundamental importance for the members of this communion (*communio*).<sup>16</sup>

5. In commenting on the Third Article of Faith in the *Large Catechism*, Luther states: “The Creed denominates the holy Christian Church, *communio sanctorum*, a communion of saints... [W]e believe in Him who through the Word daily brings us into the fellowship of this Christian Church, and through the same Word and the forgiveness of sins bestows, increases, and strengthens faith, in order that when He has accomplished it all, and we abide therein, and die to the world and to all evil, He may finally make us perfectly and forever holy; which now we expect in faith through the Word.”
6. In recent decades communion ecclesiology has also found increasing reception among the Lutheran Churches – not least in the Lutheran World Federation’s self-understanding as a “communion of Churches”.<sup>17</sup> For example, the Anglican-Lutheran Porvoo Common Statement clearly presents a sacramental communion ecclesiology in speaking of the Church as a “sign, instrument and foretaste” of the kingdom:

“II A 18: The Church, as communion, must be seen as instrumental to God’s ultimate purpose. It exists for the glory of God to serve, in obedience to the mission of Christ, the reconciliation of humankind and of all creation (Eph. 1. 10). Therefore the Church is sent into the world as a sign, instrument and foretaste of a reality which comes from beyond history [–] the Kingdom of God. The Church embodies the mystery of salvation, of a new humanity reconciled to God and to one another through Jesus Christ (Eph. 2. 14, Col. 1.19–27). Through its ministry of service and proclamation it points to the reality of the Kingdom; and in the power of the Holy Spirit it participates in the divine mission by which the Father sent the Son to be the saviour of the world (1 John 4. 14, cf. John 3. 17).”

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<sup>16</sup> Peura 1997, 120.

<sup>17</sup> For example, communion ecclesiology is endorsed in the statement of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland on the F&O convergence document *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* in November 2015.

7. It has even been suggested that *koinonial* communion ecclesiology is the basis of the ecumenical ecclesiological convergence in the Faith and Order document *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (2013): (I A. 1) “The Christian understanding of the Church and its mission is rooted in the vision of God’s great design (or ‘economy’) for all creation: the ‘kingdom’ which was both promised by and manifested in Jesus Christ. ...The dynamic history of God’s restoration of *koinonia* found its irreversible achievement in the incarnation and paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. The Church, as the body of Christ, acts by the power of the Holy Spirit to continue his life-giving mission in prophetic and compassionate ministry and so participates in God’s work of healing a broken world. Communion, whose source is the very life of the Holy Trinity, is both the gift by which the Church lives and, at the same time, the gift that God calls the Church to offer to a wounded and divided humanity in hope of reconciliation and healing.” (*The Church*, 1. and 13-21)<sup>18</sup>
8. Along the same lines the Lutheran-Roman Catholic report *Church and Justification* (1994) states: “(63) Participation in the communion of the three divine persons is constitutive for the being and life of the church as expressed in the three New Testament descriptions of it as ‘people of God’, ‘body of Christ’ and ‘temple of the Holy Spirit’. Thus the church also shares in the communion of the Father with the Son and of both with the Holy Spirit. The unity of the church as communion of the faithful has its roots in the trinitarian communion itself...”
9. The oneness of the Church implies that striving towards unity is part of the Christian faith and a challenging task in the current context of division. From the Catholic perspective LG 8 opens the door to ecumenical discussions on ecclesiology: “This Church constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him, although many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of its visible structure. These elements, as gifts belonging to the Church of Christ, are forces impelling toward catholic unity.” UR I.4. further concludes: “...[T]he divisions among Christians prevent the Church from attaining the fullness of catholicity proper to her, in those of her sons who, though attached to her by Baptism, are yet separated from full communion with her. Furthermore, the Church herself finds it more difficult to express in actual life her full catholicity in all her bearings. This Sacred Council is gratified to note that the participation by the Catholic faithful in ecumenical work is growing daily. It commends this

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18 Cf. Müller 2017, 238: “Die Einheit der Kirche in der Eucharistie und der Aufbau der Kirche aus der Eucharistie ist unmittelbar in der Offenbarung wurzelnde Einsicht des Glaubens. Die eucharistische Ekklesiologie ist darum nicht ein theologisches Gedankenkonstrukt, sondern die Basis aller ökumenischen Suche nach der Einheit aller Christen in der einen Kirche und der einen Eucharistie.”



work to the bishops everywhere in the world to be vigorously stimulated by them and guided with prudence.”

10. The doctrine of justification was a major question at the time of the sixteenth century controversies. In today’s ecumenical dialogue on Church, Eucharist, and Ministry we can harvest the fruits of *The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (1999). The JD describes the doctrine of justification as an “indispensable criterion” in orienting teaching and practice towards Christ. Yet “43....there are still questions of varying importance which need further clarification. These include, among other topics, the relationship between the Word of God and church doctrine, as well as ecclesiology, authority in the church, ministry, the sacraments, and the relation between justification and social ethics. We are convinced that the consensus we have reached offers a solid basis for this clarification.”
11. Our journey towards full communion presupposes deep theological discussion and agreement on the doctrines of justification and the Church. Yet the deep basis for this shared journey is our common Christian faith in the Triune God and his revelation in Jesus Christ. We yearn to foster our common witness and service through our increased unity. “(5) Strictly and properly speaking, we do not believe in justification and in the church but in the Father who has mercy on us and who gathers us in the church as his people; and in Christ who justifies us and whose body the church is; and in the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us and dwells in the church. Our faith encompasses justification and the church as works of the triune God, which can be properly accepted only in faith in him. We believe in justification and the church as a *mysterium*, a mystery of faith, because we believe solely in God, to whom alone we may completely consign our lives in freedom and love and in whose word alone, which promises salvation, we can establish our whole life with complete trust. Consequently, we can say in common that justification and the church both guide us into the mystery of the triune God and are therefore *mysterium*, the mystery of faith, hope and love.”<sup>19</sup>
12. Ecclesiology has long been identified as a key question for ecumenical development. Ecclesiology gives the framework for an understanding of the ministry and sacraments. If a closer communion between the Churches is to be achieved, a differentiated consensus regarding ecclesiological self-understanding is therefore needed as a joint basis for rapprochement and reconciliation. The point of departure for further elaboration is communion ecclesiology as a shared framework. Accordingly, *we agree* that the Church as communion is the mystery of the personal union of each Christian with the divine Trinity and with the rest of humankind, initiated by faith. Begun as a reality in the

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19 CJ 1.1, 5.

Church on Earth, it is directed towards its eschatological fulfilment in the heavenly Church. Communion is a gift from God, as a fruit of God's initiative wrought in the paschal mystery. The new relationship between the human being and God in Christ is communicated through the sacraments. It also extends to a new relationship between human beings.<sup>20</sup>

## 2. The Sacramental Nature of the Church

13. There is thus a broad consensus on the understanding of the Church as communion in the Triune God. An ecumenical problem arises, however, when we talk about the Church and meet each other in our earthly reality, where the divine and the human, the uncreated and the created meet each other and together build a sacramental unity in which the human is taken up in the divine and the divine is assumed in the human. This is connected with the visible shape of the Church and also with where the Church is situated and how we recognise her. In summary, in the focus of the current Lutheran-Catholic theological dialogue "there stands the fundamental ecumenical problem of the very meaning of the sacramental reality of the Church".<sup>21</sup> The diverse views on the Church's sacramentality imply the question: does the Church have a visible and binding shape?
14. In Lutheran-Catholic theological dialogue this question is connected with the Lutheran understanding of the Church as a creation of the Word (*creatura verbi*) and as "the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered" (CA 7).
15. The post-Reformation Catholic view underlined the importance of membership of the visible Church, her binding doctrine, the sacramental media of grace, and the acceptance of the apostolic constitution and order instituted by Christ in the Holy Spirit as a community of salvation. In the nineteenth century especially Lutherans and Catholics believed there was a dichotomy between their ecclesiological understandings.<sup>22</sup>
16. Ecumenical dialogue has shown that a dichotomy between the Church as a creation of the Word (*creatura verbi*) and the Church as a sacrament of the salvation of the world (*sacramentum salutis mundi*) is unnecessary. Previously

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20 Cf. CN 3, CJ 63–65.

21 HF 79; Müller 2011, 39: "An der Sakramentalität der Kirche scheiden oder einen sich die Geister." Cf. *The Church: Local and Universal* (1990, 25 §), which draws from a wide range of ecumenical dialogues and sees the following as a necessary framework for maintaining unity in legitimate diversity and in agreement about the fundamental aspects of the Church's life: "The ecclesial elements required for full communion within a visibly united church – the goal of the ecumenical movement – are: communion in the fullness of apostolic faith, in sacramental life, in a truly one and mutually recognized ministry, in structures of conciliar relations and decision-making, and in common witness and service in the world."

22 CJ 135.

assumed disagreements have largely lost their importance, because neither side generally recognises itself in the portrait the other used to draw.<sup>23</sup> Both Lutherans and Catholics can today describe and understand the Church as the community of the faithful (*congregatio fidelium*) and as the communion of the saints (*communio sanctorum*). There is no longer a juxtaposition of the “Church of the Word” and the “Church of the sacrament” in our traditions.<sup>24</sup>

17. Martin Luther’s theology is an important frame of reference for an understanding of the sacramental character of the Lutheran theology of the Word, although only the confessional writings are normative in presenting the Lutheran understanding of biblical doctrine. In Luther’s theology the word as the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins is central for his understanding of the Church.<sup>25</sup> The basis of his understanding of the sacramentality of the word is the incarnation of the Word. The Church as a creation of the Word/Gospel (*creatura verbi/evangelii*) includes both the word and sacraments as the visible word and the divinely instituted ministry serving the proclamation of the word and the administration of the sacraments.<sup>26</sup> Participation in Christ through word and sacraments is a sharing in the communion of saints (*communio sanctorum*), the body of Christ.<sup>27</sup> This means that for Luther the relationship between the visible and the invisible is analogous to the doctrine of the two natures of Christ. Luther says that the visible and invisible (or hidden) Church are one as the body and soul are one.<sup>28</sup>
18. The visible sharing in the goods of salvation, and especially in the Eucharist, is the source of invisible communion. This communion brings with it a spiritual solidarity among the Church’s members insofar as they are members of the same body, and it fosters their effective union in charity by constituting “one heart and soul”. Communion also tends towards union in prayer, inspired in all by the Holy Spirit “who fills and unites the whole Church”. In its invisible elements this communion exists not only among the members of the pilgrim Church on earth, but also between them and the heavenly Church. There is a mutual relationship between the pilgrim Church on earth and the heavenly Church in the historical-redemptive mission. “This link between the invisible

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23 CJ 136; Müller 2011, 126 and HF 149–150.

24 Müller 2010, 646, Kasper 2011, 166–167; 2017, 37–38. Cf. *Guidelines for the Divine Service in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland* 2009, vii: “Lutheran divine service is sacramental.”

25 Aurelius 1983, 121.

26 The formulation “divinely instituted ministry” is used by both parties here because the ordained ministry is not usually called a sacrament in the Lutheran tradition, in contrast to Catholic terminology and understanding. If the scripturally based institution by Jesus Christ, the proclamation of the Word of God, and prayer and the laying on of hands by the ordaining bishop in a sacramentally effective act or ordination for a lifelong ministry are understood as the basic elements of ordination as a sacrament, then Lutherans could also call ordination a sacrament. See the discussion below in chapter three on the common understanding of ministry.

27 Peura 1997, 120.

28 WA 6, 296–298.

and visible elements of ecclesial communion constitutes the Church as the Sacrament of salvation.”<sup>29</sup>

19. The Church is in a broad sense a sacrament in which the transcendental dimension is inseparably connected with the created order. The invisible divine dimension of the Church exists, expresses itself, and works in and through visible historical and human realities, which are analogous to the divine and human nature in the one person of Jesus Christ. The principal visible elements of the Church are the Holy Scriptures, the teaching of the Apostles, the sacraments, and the divinely instituted ministry, which are instruments of God’s saving grace.
20. The Lutheran Confessions also underline the importance of the empirical Church as the true Church, but stress that only in faith may we see her true essence. The Church exists within the empirical Church: “Neither, indeed, are we dreaming of a Platonic state..., but we say that this Church exists, namely, the truly believing and righteous men scattered throughout the whole world. We are speaking not of an imaginary Church, which is to be found nowhere; but we say and know certainly that this Church, wherein saints live, is and abides truly upon earth...”<sup>30</sup>
21. The official response of the General Synod of the ELCF to the Faith and Order document *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* sheds more light on the ELCF’s understanding of the Church as sacrament and as the framework of the sacramental ministry in the light of the biblical and early Church traditions: “The Lutheran Confessions emphasise that the Church stands for ever. In essence it is a spiritual people, the righteousness of the heart. In this world this spiritual reality cannot, however, be separated from the external church (CA VI & VIII; Apol. VII & VIII). The Lutheran Church is also comfortable with the New Testament’s language of the Church as a mystery (Eph. 5.32). In a spiritual sense it extends to the other side of this visible reality. Our Church therefore sees it as legitimate to speak about the Church as an instrument of God and as a sacrament. This is anchored in the Eastern Church’s use of terms distinct from those used by the Western Church. The Epistle to the Ephesians refers to the church as a *mysterion*. The Eastern Church also uses this word for what the Western Church calls sacraments. The terms may vary, but the words are connected. The invisible reality of God is present in both the Church itself and in the individual sacraments. Speaking about the Church as a sacrament should not, however, obscure the fact that the Church is at one and the same time a community of the justified and the sinful.”<sup>31</sup>

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29 CN 4 and 6. Cf. CCC III 1030–1032 on the Catholic understanding regarding Purgatory.

30 AC 7–7, 20.

31 ELCF General Synod Official Statement on the F&O document *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, November 2015.

22. From the Catholic perspective the notion of the Church as sacrament integrates the reality of the Church as a visible, structured society and the Church as the mystical body of Christ. Since all sacraments have an outward element, the sign of the sacrament, this ensures the visibility of the Church and underscores the importance of faith becoming visible through its public profession, communion in the sacraments, and unity with the ordained ministry. At the same time, the concept of sacrament avoids the risk that the Church, the body of Christ, is conceived as a mere prolongation of his incarnation, since a sacrament is the real presence of what it signifies under the modality of its sign. Thus understood, the divine and human reality of the Church can be compared to the mystery of the incarnate Word. “So Catholics can distinguish but cannot separate the essence of the Church from her concrete form.”<sup>32</sup> There is thus a clear convergence in Lutheran-Catholic understanding of the human and divine elements of the Church.
23. Together, we can share this scripturally rooted portrait of a Church living in the light of the Gospel contained in the Porvoo Common Statement:
- “It is a Church rooted and grounded in the love and grace of the Lord Christ;
  - it is a Church always joyful, praying continually and giving thanks even in the midst of suffering;
  - it is a pilgrim Church, a people of God with a new heavenly citizenship, a holy nation and a royal priesthood;
  - it is a Church which makes common confession of the apostolic faith in word and in life, the faith common to the whole Church everywhere and at all times;
  - it is a Church with a mission to all in every race and nation, preaching the Gospel, proclaiming the forgiveness of sins, baptizing and celebrating the Eucharist;
  - it is a Church which is served by an ordained apostolic ministry, sent by God to gather and nourish the people of God in each place, uniting and linking them with the Church universal within the whole communion of saints;
  - it is a Church which manifests through its visible communion the healing and uniting power of God amidst the divisions of humankind;
  - it is a Church in which the bonds of communion are strong enough to enable it to bear effective witness in the world, to guard and interpret the apostolic faith, to take decisions, to teach authoritatively, and to share its goods with those in need;
  - it is a Church alive and responsive to the hope which God has set before it, to the wealth and glory of the share God has offered it in the heritage

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32 LG 8a, HF 79.

of his people, and to the vastness of the resources of God's power open to those who trust in him."<sup>33</sup>

24. Yet "there remain fundamental differences about the concrete structures of the Church – namely, the episcopacy in apostolic succession, primacy and the teaching authority of the episcopacy in communion with the bishop of Rome – we have not been able to come to full agreement on the precise meaning of such a sacramental structure".<sup>34</sup> There are reflections on the "sacramental character of the Church, the Church as sacrament of the Kingdom, etc.", but not definitive results. "Both Catholics and Lutherans describe the church analogously to the incarnation, but they draw different conclusions and see different consequences with regard to the relationship between the body of Christ and the visible institution."<sup>35</sup> In aiming to take a step towards a differentiated consensus on the Church's concrete structures, we first need to explicate our joint understanding of the Church as a sacramental framework of the Eucharist and ministry.

### 3. The Common Understanding of the Church

#### 3.1. The Church as an Instrument and Sign of Divine Salvation

25. Both Lutherans and Catholics understand the Church as an instrument and sign of the divine salvation sent to the world to serve and witness to Christ as the "Light of the Nations". As *Lumen gentium* maintains, her mission is to "proclaim the Gospel to every creature, to bring the light of Christ to all men..." (LG 1). The Lutheran Confessions underline that the Church and Gospel belong together: "We further believe that in this Christian Church we have forgiveness of sin, which is wrought through the holy Sacraments and Absolution, moreover, through all manner of consolatory promises of the entire Gospel. Therefore, whatever is to be preached concerning the Sacraments belongs here, and, in short, the whole Gospel and all the offices of Christianity, which also must be preached and taught without ceasing."<sup>36</sup>
26. "Both Catholics and Lutherans see the church as a gift of God, where human beings meet God himself in Word and sacrament. God is present in the life of the church with his justifying grace. The church, which includes both

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33 PCS II A 20.

34 HF 154–155.

35 JLC 219.

36 LC, The Apostles' Creed, 54.

holiness and sin, is not only the place where believers meet God's saving grace, but the church also mediates communion with God and is the instrument of the salvation of man. God's plan of salvation is fulfilled in and through the church."<sup>37</sup>

### 3.2. Justification and the Sacramental Life of the Church

27. *The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* forms the basis for our common understanding of the interconnectedness of justification and the Church's sacramental life. As the Swedish-Finnish Lutheran-Catholic document *Justification in the Life of the Church* (JLC) indicates: "All people are called by God to salvation in Christ. Through Christ alone are we justified, when we receive this salvation in faith. Faith is itself God's gift through the Holy Spirit who works through word and sacrament in the community of believers and who, at the same time, leads believers into that renewal of life which God will bring to completion in eternal life."<sup>38</sup>

### 3.3. Communion and the *Missio Dei*

28. We share the broad ecumenical understanding of the connection between the Church as communion and the *missio Dei* as expressed in the Faith and Order document *The Church*: "25. It is God's design to gather humanity and all of creation into communion under the Lordship of Christ (cf. Eph. 1:10). The Church, as a reflection of the communion of the Triune God, is meant to serve this goal and is called to manifest God's mercy to human beings, helping them to achieve the purpose for which they were created and in which their joy ultimately is found: to praise and glorify God together with all the heavenly hosts."

### 3.4. The Church in Christ like a Sacrament

29. *We agree* that "the church is instrument and sign of salvation and, in this sense, 'sacrament' of salvation".<sup>39</sup> 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...".<sup>40</sup> JLC concludes: "The church is the community in which the crucified and risen Christ is present and continues

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37 JLC 145.

38 JD 3.16; JLC 174.

39 CJ 134.

40 LG I.

his work on earth. Justification is about growing as a member of this body. Just as Christ is called the original sacrament, so the church may be called the fundamental sacrament. This has been expounded thus: ‘The church is not one more sacrament, but that sacramental framework, within which the other sacraments exist. Christ himself is present and active in the church. The church is therefore, both according to Roman-Catholic and Lutheran-Melanchthonian tradition, in a mysterious way an effective sign, something which by grace effects what it signifies.’”<sup>41</sup>

30. The vertical reality of Christ is mysteriously present in the visible, horizontal Church. The Church has no independent sacramental meaning without Christ, but only “in Christ”. Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and human beings (1 Tim. 2:5). God reveals himself in historical words and deeds, conclusively and finally in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. He is true God and true human being. In him, the invisible God has become visible.<sup>42</sup>
31. *We agree* that communion is above all communion with God, while the communion of human beings is a necessary consequence, or even more, an aspect of the same communion with God. It is important to understand that the notion of sacramentality imprints on the notion of communion the unity and the mutual complementarity between its vertical and horizontal dimensions. If this assumption is lacking, the Church as communion dissolves into sociological community and individualistic spiritualism, and the Church is reduced to being mostly a federation of independent local or national communities.<sup>43</sup>

### 3.5. Divine and Human Aspects of the Church

32. *We agree* that the relationships between the visible and the hidden, and the divine and the human aspects of the Church, belong closely together. They can be expressed analogously to the Chalcedonian Christological understanding of the divine and human nature. Both Catholics and Lutherans describe the Church as the body of Christ and the “kingdom of Christ” or “the kingdom of Christ now present in mystery”.<sup>44</sup> From the Catholic perspective LG 8 states: “...[T]he 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.”<sup>45</sup> In the Lutheran tradition the

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41 JLC 144, quoting *Kyrkan som sakrament* (The Church as Sacrament), p. 12.

42 Cf. Kasper 2011, 127.

43 Cf. CN 9; ApC 287.

44 AC 7, 16; LG 3.

45 Lutherans generally do not use the term “hierarchical order” or “hierarchical organ”. However, they can



Church is described as “holy”, for example, in Apology 7.7: “...[T]he Church is defined by the article in the [Apostolic] Creed which teaches us to believe that there is a holy Catholic Church [*sancta catholica ecclesia*].” Martin Luther speaks about the visible Church as the kingdom of grace, in which Christ as the God-man rules by his humanity, and heaven as the kingdom of glory, in which he rules by his divinity. In the visible Church Christ is present and working in a hidden way in the sacraments, Scripture, and ministry, which Luther compares to the doors of the Church. Through his divine nature he rules in immediacy in the heavenly glory.<sup>46</sup>

33. As a divine-human community the Church is simultaneously an institution and an event. “As an institutional event it is an eschatological, spiritual event; as an eschatological event it is simultaneously institutional.”<sup>47</sup> Both vertical and horizontal realities are intertwined in the Church; she lives “in between times”. The Church is thus a community of act-being-unity, where the proclamation of the Gospel lives as a mission to be conducted continually, to each generation, until Christ comes in glory. The Church is not a static organisation for the preservation of doctrine, but a living community in which the Good News about the Word made flesh in Christ is treasured and proclaimed.<sup>48</sup> “The message of the gospel of mercy is central. In Jesus Christ, however, the word became flesh (John 1:14); so the word of the church also assumes concrete shape in the sacraments. All of the sacraments are sacraments of God’s mercy. The sacrament of initiation, baptism, integrates the baptized into the communion of the Church, which is a community of life and love.”<sup>49</sup>

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understand the terminology’s intention in referring to the ordained ministry as divinely instituted. In the Lutheran understanding of the ordained ministry there is also *de facto* an understanding of hierarchy, for example, from the perspective of leadership and various responsibilities.

46 WA 55 668, 29–34; WA 55 1020, 162–1022, 214; WA 57 Collecta ad Paulum 1.3.4., 14–24; WA 2, 457, 20–33.

47 Kasper 2011, 146.

48 Kasper *Die Gottesfrage als Problem der Verkündigung*: Aspekte der Praktischen Theologie. – Die Frage nach Gott. Hrsg. Ratzinger, Joseph, p. 147. Cf. DV, 4, Kasper refers to the German Lutheran theologian D. Bonhoeffer in describing the Church as “Akt-Seins-Einheit” (Gottesfrage 1972, 147). Cf. *Bonhoeffer in Akt und Sein* DBW 2, 109 unfolds the character of the Church as “Akt-Seins-Einheit”: “Die Freiheit Gottes hat sich in die personhafte Gemeinde hineingebunden; und das gerade erweist sich als Gottes Freiheit, daß er sich an den Menschen bindet. Die Gemeinde verfügt wirklich über das Wort der Vergebung ... als christliche Kirche darf sie in Predigt und Sakrament sprechen...”. Cf. also DBW 4 Nachfolge, 231: “Nicht das Wort der Predigt bewirkt unsere Gemeinschaft mit dem Leibe Jesu Christi, das Sakrament muß hinzukommen. Taufe ist Eingliederung in die Einheit des Leibes Christi. Abendmahl ist Erhaltung der Gemeinschaft (koinonia) am Leibe.” For Bonhoeffer’s understanding of the Church as a communion in word and sacrament/act and being in the light of Bonhoeffer’s interpretation of Luther, see Karttunen 2007, 25. Cf. also Müller 2017, 328–329: “Die Kirche ist ‘Christus als Gemeinde existierend’, wie der evangelische Theologe Dietrich Bonhoeffer in seiner Doktorarbeit (1927) glücklich formulierte.“

49 Kasper 2012, 161.

### 3.6. The Visible and Hidden Church and the Visible Signs of the Church

34. As Catholics and Lutherans we wish to avoid a docetic ecclesiology in which the visible and the hidden are separated from each other, or in which the true Church can only be discovered in the invisible. We “are in agreement that the saving activity of the triune God calls and sanctifies believers through audible and visible means of grace which are mediated in an audible and visible ecclesial community. [We] ... also agree that in this world the salvation-community of Christ is hidden, because as a spiritual work of God’s it is unrecognizable by earthly standards, and because sin, which is also present in the church, makes ascertaining its membership uncertain.”<sup>50</sup>
35. In both traditions the Church is at the same time visible and hidden. The Augsburg Confession (CA V, VII) clearly underlines the importance of the visible signs of the Church when, for example, it underlines in articles V and VII the constitutive importance of ministry, word, and sacraments and the continuity of the Church “forever”:

*“Article V: Of the Ministry*

That we may obtain this faith, the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith; ...

*Article VII: Of the Church*

Also they teach that one holy Church is to continue forever. ...”

36. CA thus underlines ministry, word, and sacraments as *notae ecclesiae*. Furthermore, in his *On the Councils and the Church* Martin Luther distinguishes seven marks which are, when seen in relation to the word and sacraments, visible signs of the Church: “[T]he ... Creed teaches us (as we said) that a Christian holy people is to be and to remain on earth until the end of the world. This is an article of faith that cannot be terminated until that which it believes comes, as Christ promises ‘I am with you always, to the close of the age’ [Matt. 28:20].” Luther distinguishes seven external signs of the Church: 1) the holy word of God; 2) the holy sacrament of Baptism; 3) the holy sacrament of the altar; 4) the public office of the keys; 5) “...it consecrates or calls ministers, or has offices that it is to administer. There must be bishops, pastors, or preachers, who publicly and privately give, administer, and use the aforementioned four things or holy possessions in behalf of and in the name of the church, or rather by reason of their institution by Christ...”; 6) prayer, public praise, and thanksgiving to God: “...The creed and the Ten Command-

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50 CJ 4.3, 147. Cf. Kasper 2011, 127–128, 249.

ments are also God's word and belong to the holy possession, whereby the Holy Spirit sanctifies the holy people of Christ"; and 7) "the holy possession of the sacred cross".<sup>51</sup>

37. The incarnation of the Word makes God visible. The reality of the life of the Church is an extension in time and space of that visibility. What was hidden has been revealed. The grace of faith is required to perceive the invisible in the visible. At heart all faith involves an acceptance of the doctrine of creation at the deepest level. The Church on earth, moved and sustained unfailingly by the Spirit of the risen Lord, perpetuates that visibility, audibility, and tangibility. The Church's complex reality is not fully expressed in her historical and empirical aspect, just as the humanity of Christ does not express the fullness of the divine-human reality of the Word made flesh. Yet the visible sacramental and kerygmatic contact with the Church *is* contact with Christ and his salvation.<sup>52</sup>

### 3.7. The One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church

38. *We agree* that as the Church of Jesus Christ the Church is *one* as confessed in the Nicene Creed: "one holy catholic and apostolic Church" (*una sancta catholica et apostolica ecclesia*).
39. *We agree* that as the Church of the Triune God the Church is *holy*. Christ has given himself for her to sanctify her and make the Church a source of sanctification. Her holiness is indestructible. The Church "is to continue forever" (*perpetuo mansura*, CA 7) and "the gates of Hades will not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). Ultimately, she cannot apostatise and fall into error. Yet in her temporal form the Church is not a perfect community. There are weeds among the wheat (Matt. 13:38), wise and foolish bridesmaids (Matt. 25:1), and the net and the fish (Matt. 13:47) in the visible, concrete Church. CA 8 states that in "the assembly of all believers and saints" there are "many false Christians, hypocrites and even open sinners ... among the godly". LG 8 also states: "While Christ, 'holy innocent, undefiled' (Heb. 7:26) knew nothing of sin (2 Cor. 5:21), but came to expiate only the sins of the people (cf. Heb. 2:17), the Church, embracing sinners in her bosom, is at the same time holy and always in need of being purified, and incessantly pursues the path of penance and renewal."<sup>53</sup>

51 *Martin Luther's Works* 41, 148–165. ApC 99 reminds us that Luther, in spite of his criticism, could say: "... in the papacy there are the true Holy Scriptures, true baptism, the true sacrament, the true keys for the forgiveness of sins, the true office of proclamation, and the true catechism." *Concerning Rebaptism* (1528), WA 26, 146f; LW 40, 231f. Also *Commentary on Galatians* (1535), WA 40 I, 69; LW 26, 24.

52 Cf. LG 14; Rm 1:20; CCC 27–35. On the relationship of the visible and hidden in Lutheran theology see also Karimies 2017.

53 CJ 4.4.

40. *We agree* that the Church of the Triune God is *catholic*. In Jesus Christ she has the fullness of revelation, the basis of the Christian faith. She bears and administers the fullness of the means of salvation. The apostolic ministry is divinely instituted to proclaim this Gospel of Christ in word and sacraments. The apostolic commission has a universal character. From Jesus the Church has received the commandment: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19). The catholicity of the Church is manifested in the communion of the local churches.
41. *We agree* that the Church of Jesus Christ is *apostolic*. The calling and sending of the apostles by Christ and their “witness is both a normative origin and an abiding foundation. The church of every age, we believe, is a work of the Holy Spirit, who makes present the apostolic gospel and makes effective the sacraments and apostolic instruction which we have been graced to receive. In faith we accept, as individuals and communities, the call to serve the further transmission of the apostolic gospel, which the Holy Spirit continues to make a *viva vox* of good news and a meaningful way of life in the truth and service of men and women both of our day and in the future lying before us. ... [T]he church in every age continues to be ‘apostolic’ by reason of its faith in and witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is attested by the New Testament.”<sup>54</sup> The Holy Spirit teaches, sanctifies, and governs the Church until Christ returns. The apostolic succession, serving the apostolicity of the whole Church through the apostolic Gospel, is necessary for the preservation of the Church’s substantive apostolicity, which is ultimately Christ, present in his Church until the end of days. Through word and sacraments Christ is sacramentally present in the Church as his body and thus makes the apostolic succession also a sacramental succession.

### **3.8. Always in Need of Being Purified (*semper purificanda*), a Mixed Body (*corpus permixtum*)**

42. While affirming the ultimate holiness of the Church as the Church of the Triune God in union with him and the real presence of Christ in the Church as the basis of her sacramentality, Lutherans and Catholics use the terms “holy” and “sinful” differently to characterise the state of the Church on earth. However, both observe that the Church’s members are engaged in an ongoing struggle against sin and error. In our estimation this is not therefore

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<sup>54</sup> ApC 148, 150.

a church-dividing difference, although we still need further clarification on this matter in the future.<sup>55</sup>

43. *We agree* that the Church is not strictly a prolongation of the incarnation, but a sign and instrument of it, through which Christ acts sacramentally in the world. This relationship allows us to assert the holiness of the Church as the body of Christ and temple of the Holy Spirit at the same time as it allows for an acknowledgement of the sinfulness of her members.<sup>56</sup> With St Augustine we can say together that the Church is a mixed body (*corpus permixtum*).

### 3.9. Mutual Recognition of Baptism

44. *We agree* that Christian Baptism is the basis for membership of the Church. Lutherans and Catholics recognise each other's Baptism.<sup>57</sup> "Catholics and Lutherans together confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. Holy baptism unites us with Christ and makes us participants in his salvation. It is a sacrament instituted by Christ, through which human beings are incorporated into the fellowship of Christ and his church. Baptism in the name of the triune God grants salvation, the forgiveness of sins and deliverance from evil. In baptism, we become the children of God, the Father. We become incorporated into the body of Christ, enlightened by Christ, the Word of God, and born again through the Holy Spirit. As members of the church, we are dwelling-places for the Holy Trinity. Baptism therefore calls us to a new life in faith, hope and love (JD 25, 26, 27). It gives us the daily task of fighting against evil and growing as Christians."<sup>58</sup>
45. This is a clear common basis for us. We are united through Baptism in the same body of Christ. A fundamental ecumenical communion already exists today on the basis of Baptism and its reciprocal recognition. Belonging to Christ and membership in the Church are two aspects of the same Baptism event and cannot be separated from one another. This calls for an ecumenical elaboration of the ecclesiological implications of Baptism. Baptism and its mutual recognition is the foundation of our growing communion, but it does not provide a sufficient foundation for communion in the Lord's Supper between Catholics and Lutherans.<sup>59</sup> For this reason the interconnectedness of the Church, Eucharist, and Ministry requires ecumenical elaboration.

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55 Cf. DW 79.

56 Cf. LG 8.3.

57 FCC 220: "The Second Vatican Council teaches that people who are baptized and believe in Christ but do not belong to the Roman Catholic church 'have been justified by faith in Baptism [and] are members of Christ's body and have a right to be called Christian, and so are correctly accepted as brothers by the children of the Catholic Church' (UR 1.3). Lutheran Christians say the same of their Catholic fellow Christians."

58 JLC 177.

59 Paper on *Mutual Recognition of Baptism and Its Ecclesiological Implications* given by Cardinal Koch in Helsinki,

### 3.10. Baptism and Sanctification

46. *We agree* that in the Church's Christian life "those who are already baptized can, together with their brothers and sisters, develop their opportunities for holiness, which come from their common justification in Christ. As members of the same mystical body of Christ, Christians are bound to one another and must bear one another's burdens. Since Christ came to redeem the whole world, it is also a mission for the church and for individual Christians, both lay and ordained, to witness to the good news in the midst of their daily life. The established practices and forms of the means of grace and of church life – sacramental confession, the Eucharist, prayer, Bible reading, participation in the liturgical and the diaconal life of the church – all provide important support for the call to holiness given in baptism."<sup>60</sup>

### 3.11. The Apostolic Mission of the Church as Worship, Witness, and Service

47. *We agree* that the Church as communion does not exist for herself. She has received a commission; she has been sent to be a sign, instrument, and foretaste of the realisation of the Triune God's purpose in Christ for the whole of humanity and creation. The apostolic mission of the Church is founded on the sending out of the disciples by Christ at the conclusion of his ministry and the empowerment of the Christian community for mission at Pentecost by the gift of the Holy Spirit. The mission of the Church as communion in the Holy Spirit within local, regional, and global contexts reflects the inter-relationship of worship (*leiturgia*), witness (*martyria*), and service (*diakonia*) in the Church's life. The communion of the Church is related to the world through her mission as a sign of God's creative, transformative, and final intention for humanity and creation.<sup>61</sup>

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28th April 2015; Kasper 2017, 38.

60 JLC 203.

61 *The Church as Communion*, LWF Documentation 42/1997; LG 3–5; AG 2 and 9; Kasper 2011, 481–482. Cf. Müller 2017, 393: "Man kann die Lehre des II. Vatikanums über die Kirche als Sakrament des Heils der Welt nur voll verstehen, wenn man seine Umsetzung in der Pastoralkonstitution *Gaudium et spes* in den Blick nimmt. Die Kirche erfüllt ihre Sendung im Heilsplan Gottes nur, wenn sie immer auch 'die Kirche in der Welt von heute' sein will. ... Im Entwurf einer Arbeit, die Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) im Gefängnis plante, sagt er: 'Die Kirche muss aus ihrer Stagnation heraus. Wir müssen auch wieder in die freie Luft der geistigen Auseinandersetzung mit der Welt. Wir müssen es riskieren, anfechtbare Dinge zu sagen, wenn dadurch nur lebenswichtige Fragen angerührt werden.' In *Gaudium et spes* will die katholische Kirche allen Menschen einen aufrichtigen Dialog über die dringenden Herausforderungen und Probleme der globalen und einen Welt anbieten und auch die Zusammenarbeit bei ihrer Lösung." Müller 2017, 369: "Es sind also die beiden Elemente der *Communio* und der *Missio*, die die Jüngergemeinde Jesu als Zeichen und Werkzeug der Einheit der Menschen mit Gott und untereinander konstituieren."

### 3.12. The Church under the Cross

48. *We agree* that the Church gives her witness in this world under and in the shadow of the cross. Martin Luther states in *On Councils and the Church*: "... [T]he holy Christian people are externally recognized by the holy possession of the sacred cross. They must endure every misfortune and persecution, all kinds of trials and evil from the devil, the world, and the flesh (as the Lord's Prayer indicates) by inward sadness, timidity, fear, outward poverty, contempt, illness, and weakness, in order to become like their head, Christ. And the only reason they must suffer is that they steadfastly adhere to Christ and God's word, enduring this for the sake of Christ. ... Wherever you see or hear this, you may know that the holy Christian church is there, as Christ says in Matthew 5 [:11-12], 'Blessed are you when men revile you and utter all kinds of evil against you on my account.' This too is a holy possession whereby the Holy Spirit not only sanctifies his people, but also blesses them." Likewise LG 42 connects the way of the cross to confessing Christ before humans: "From the earliest times, then, some Christians have been called upon – and some will always be called upon – to give the supreme testimony of this love to all men, but especially to persecutors. The Church, then, considers martyrdom as an exceptional gift and as the fullest proof of love. ... Though few are presented such an opportunity, nevertheless all must be prepared to confess Christ before men. They must be prepared to make this profession of faith even in the midst of persecutions, which will never be lacking to the Church, in following the way of the cross."

### 3.13. Our Common Eschatological Hope

49. *We share a common hope* in the final consummation of the kingdom of God, and believe that in this eschatological perspective we are called to work now for the furtherance of justice, to seek peace, and to care for the created world. The obligations of the kingdom are to govern our life in the Church and our concern for the world. "The Christian faith is that God has made peace through Jesus 'by the blood of his cross' (Col. 1:20), so establishing the one valid centre for the unity of the whole human family."<sup>62</sup>

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62 PCS III 32 I; LG 48.

## 4. Unity as Our Call and Mission

50. The overcoming of our Christian divisions is part of our calling (John 17:21). As UR I states: “All in the Church must preserve unity in essentials. But let all, according to the gifts they have received enjoy a proper freedom, in their various forms of spiritual life and discipline, in their different liturgical rites, and even in their theological elaborations of revealed truth. In all things let charity prevail. If they are true to this course of action, they will be giving ever better expression to the authentic catholicity and apostolicity of the Church. ...[T]he divisions among Christians prevent the Church from attaining the fullness of catholicity proper to her, in those of her sons who, though attached to her by Baptism, are yet separated from full communion with her. Furthermore, the Church herself finds it more difficult to express in actual life her full catholicity in all her bearings.” The *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* continues: “This unity which of its very nature requires full visible communion of all Christians is the ultimate goal of the ecumenical movement. The Council affirms that this unity by no means requires the sacrifice of the rich diversity of spirituality, discipline, liturgical rites and elaborations of revealed truth that has grown up among Christians in the measure that this diversity remains faithful to the apostolic Tradition.”
51. Likewise, the Lutheran Confessions underline the Catholic intention of their endeavour: “Only those things have been recounted whereof we thought that it was necessary to speak, in order that it might be understood that in doctrine and ceremonies nothing has been received on our part against Scripture or the Church Catholic. For it is manifest that we have taken most diligent care that no new and ungodly doctrine should creep into our churches.”<sup>63</sup>

In response to our Lord’s prayer for our unity (John 17:21), and to strengthen our common witness and service to the world, with the help of God’s Spirit of unity we seek to formulate our common understanding of the Eucharist and Ministry.

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63 CA Conclusion.



## II EUCHARISTIC COMMUNION

### 1. The Sacraments in General

#### 1.1. Jesus Christ as the Original Sacrament and the Church as a Sacramental Framework

52. Our common understanding of justification, Baptism, and the sacramentality of the Church builds the basis for a differentiated consensus concerning the Eucharist. Because the question of the understanding of the sacraments has been a controversial theme between Lutherans and Catholics for a long time, before attempting to formulate a differentiated consensus concerning the Eucharist the concept “sacrament” in the context of ecclesiology and justification is here elaborated more generally.
53. The intrinsic relationship between justification, the Church, and the sacraments is explicitly stated, as already indicated, in JLC. For example: “Justification is not only an event between God and the individual person. It does of course touch the individual deeply, but it takes place by incorporating the individual into the body of Christ, which is emphasized in the Joint Declaration (JD 11). Thus, if one person is justified, everyone is affected and the body of Christ becomes more complete and is strengthened. The church is the community in which the crucified and risen Christ is present and continues his work on earth. Justification is about growing as a member of this body. Just as Christ is called the original sacrament, so the church may be called the fundamental sacrament.”<sup>64</sup>
54. As a result of the twentieth century liturgical movement word and Eucharist have been brought closer to each other in both Catholic and Lutheran worshipping life. The former juxtaposition of “the Church of the word” and “the Church of the sacraments” is obsolete, because we now understand that word and sacraments are constitutive of both traditions.<sup>65</sup> Behind this development

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<sup>64</sup> JLC 144.

<sup>65</sup> Kasper 2011, 170. See also Müller 2010, 63: “Die Schrift ist im lebendigen Gefüge der aktuellen Lehre und Praxis der Kirche die stetige Grundlage und lebendige Erinnerung an ihren maßgeblichen Ursprung (*norma normans non normata*)” and Thönissen 2014, 153–160 *The Word of God as Basis: A Change of Perspectives in Catholic Theology*.

is the revival of the sacramental understanding of the word, both in Lutheran and in Catholic theology. *Dei Verbum* states: “The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates the body of the Lord, since, especially in the sacred liturgy, she unceasingly receives and offers to the faithful the bread of life from the table both of God’s word and of Christ’s body.”<sup>66</sup> Luther’s *Large Catechism* describes the Church as a “mother” on the basis of his sacramental understanding of the word as a “womb”: “He has a peculiar congregation in the world, which is the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God...”<sup>67</sup> Jesus Christ is present in the word, bringing the gifts of the Gospel. As sign and instrument of salvific communion with the Triune God, the Church is the body of Christ, in which the Saviour is really present. The word and sacraments are instruments of salvation through which the Church lives and new members are born.

55. This development can also be seen in the revival of the theological heritage of the undivided Church in our Churches. Famously, St Augustine said: “The word comes to the element; and so there is a sacrament, that is, a sort of visible word.”<sup>68</sup> In the *Large Catechism* Martin Luther quotes the same sentence of St Augustine both in the context of Baptism and in the context of the sacrament of the altar: “*Accedat verbum ad elementum, et fit sacramentum*. If the Word be joined to the element, it becomes a Sacrament. The saying of St Augustine is so properly and so well put that he has scarcely said anything better. The Word must make a Sacrament of the element, else it remains a mere element.”
56. JLC summarises the historical development of sacramentology as follows: “The sacramental life of the church has developed over the centuries. During the first thousand years of the history of the church, there was talk of both sacraments and ‘mystery’ and the number of the sacraments was not fixed. Medieval theology eventually reached the conclusion that there are seven sacraments, namely baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, ordination, marriage and the anointing of the sick, a view that was sanctioned by the church at the Councils of Lyon (1274) and Florence (1439). The reformers, on the other hand, wanted to concentrate the concept of sacrament to baptism, Holy Communion and possibly penance.”<sup>69</sup>

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66 DV VI, 21.

67 LC Article 3. For Luther’s sacramental understanding of the word see, for example, Peura 1993, 35–69 and for the word as “womb”, the Church as “mother”, and the ministry of the word as “father” see Mannermaa 2005, 79–82 who quotes Luther: “Therefore just as Isaac has the inheritance from his father solely on the basis of the promise and of his birth, without the Law or works, so we are born as heirs by Sarah, the free woman, that is, by the Church. She teaches, cherishes and carries us in her womb, her bosom, and her arms; she shapes and perfects us to the form of Christ, until we grow into perfect manhood (Eph. 4:13). Thus everything happens through the ministry of the Word.” (Lectures on Galatians (1535), LW 26:441–442; WA 40 I, 665, 13–17.

68 *Augustine, Commentary on John*, 80,3.

69 JLC 154.

57. The Lutheran understanding of sacraments in general derives from a certain line of argumentation within the Catholic Church, namely the understanding of St Augustine and Hugh of Saint Victor. The Large Catechism teaches that "...when the Word is joined to the element or natural substance, it becomes a Sacrament, that is, a holy and divine matter and sign".<sup>70</sup> The effect of the sacraments is not dependent on the person who administers them. In Catholic terminology they effect *ex opere operato*.<sup>71</sup> Accordingly, CA 8 states: "Both the Sacraments and Word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, notwithstanding they be administered by evil men." However, St Augustine gave just a broad definition of the sacrament as a "sign of a holy matter" and the likeness of the sacrament with the holy matter it signifies. In the twelfth century Hugh of Saint Victor understood the sacraments more definitively. He underlined that the material element was constitutive of the sacrament if it was to be an effective medium of grace. However, his definition was broad: he counted thirty-two "sacraments". In the same century Peter Lombard concluded that there were seven, which the sixteenth century Reformation contested, listing two, three, or four.
58. The Catholic list of seven sacraments resulted from the question: "Which rites are necessary to the Church's saving mission?"<sup>72</sup> The Reformation list resulted from a similar but not identical question: "Which rites have strictly canonical authority, so that their necessity is *undebatable*?"<sup>73</sup> Thus, it is not necessarily the case that there is disagreement about what the Church must do in any particular circumstance. On the basis of the Lutheran Confessions (AC 13) it can be concluded that there are as many "sacraments" as the narrowness or breadth of the word's definition.<sup>74</sup>
59. In the Lutheran Confessions the criteria for sacraments in the strict sense are: 1) their institution by Christ in Scripture; 2) their promise of grace; and 3) their material element.<sup>75</sup> On this basis it has been concluded that there are actually only two sacraments: Baptism and Eucharist. However, as already

70 LC, Holy Baptism. Hugh of Saint Victor: "Sacramentum est corporale vel material elementum foris sensibiliter propositum ex similitudine representans et ex institutione significans et ex sanctificatione continens aliquam invisibilem et spiritalem gratiam." (See Hugh of Saint Victor: *De sacramentis christiane fidei* (1. 9,2 PL 176,317).

71 Müller 2010, 633.

72 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, sup. IIIae q.65,a4, 65, 4.

73 Luther: *On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, WA 6, 484–573.

74 Jenson 1984, 293–294; JLC 156.

75 AC 13: "If we call Sacraments rites which have the command of God [mandatum Dei], and to which the promise of grace [promissio gratiae] has been added, it is easy to decide what are properly Sacraments. ... The effect of the Word and of the rite is the same, as it has been well said by Augustine that a Sacrament is a visible word, because the rite is received by the eyes, and is, as it were, a picture of the Word, signifying the same thing as the Word. Therefore the effect of both is the same." Large Catechism, Holy Baptism, 74–75: "And here you see that Baptism, both in its power and signification, comprehends also the third Sacrament, which has been called repentance, as it is really nothing else than Baptism. ... [I]f you live in repentance, you walk in Baptism, which not only signifies such a new life, but also produces, begins, and exercises it."

stated, according to the Apology of the Augsburg Confession absolution is also a true sacrament. The Apology even sees it as possible to include ordination and marriage as sacraments. “Confirmation and Extreme Unction are rites received from the Fathers which not even the Church requires as necessary to salvation, because they do not have God’s command. Therefore it is not useless to distinguish these rites from the former, which have God’s express command and a clear promise of grace.”<sup>76</sup>

60. In the Lutheran understanding confirmation, absolution, ordination, and marriage are sacred services in the context of the living out of our Holy Baptism, nourished by the Holy Eucharist in the communion of the Church. They give pastoral support in our Christian vocation and service of the kingdom of God. Word, prayer, and the laying on of hands are essential elements not only in Baptism, but also at confirmation and ordination. Absolution is given to a baptised person, and this prepares that person for the Eucharist. Confirmation is essential for Christian initiation, confession and the anointing of the sick for healing, ordination and marriage for the building of communion and for the sending of the Church. These sacred services proclaim the grace of God in Christ and pastorally support our life according to our God-given vocation. They strengthen our faith, hope, and love and the understanding of the dialectic between law and Gospel in our everyday life. They are part of the Church’s incarnational and sacramental nature, transmitting Christ’s nourishing presence in the midst of life and at its vital turning-points.
61. According to Catholic teaching: “The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament. They bear fruit in those who receive them with the required dispositions.”<sup>77</sup> Lutheran teaching holds that the sacraments are likewise efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. For example, Martin Luther follows the theological intentions of the scholastic *opus operatum* doctrine in understanding Baptism as an effective sign of God’s grace. He is critical only of the understanding of Baptism as a momentary act, not as a continuous gift for the journey of Christian life.<sup>78</sup> In the Large Catechism he writes concerning the reception of Baptism: “Now, since God confirms Baptism by the gifts of His Holy Ghost, as is plainly perceptible in some of the church fathers, as St Bernard ... who were baptized in infancy, and since the holy Christian Church cannot perish until the end or support falseness and wickedness, or for its promotion impart His grace and Spirit.

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76 AC 13.

77 CCC 1131.

78 Huovinen 1991, 91–93.

... Baptism is nothing else than water and the Word of God in and with each other, that is, when the Word is added to the water, Baptism is valid, even though faith be wanting. For my faith does not make Baptism, but receives it.”<sup>79</sup>

62. In Catholic understanding the seven sacraments are not seen as having the same importance.<sup>80</sup> It seems useful to draw a distinction between the major sacraments (*sacramenta maiora*) and the minor sacraments (*sacramenta minora*). Lutheran teaching usually lists only the major sacraments, Baptism and Eucharist, as sacraments in the strict sense. However, Lutherans do not deny the work and gifts of the Holy Spirit given in these other sacred services. They bear fruit in those who receive them in faith. The Lutherans can well understand the symbolic relevance of the number seven concerning the number of sacraments manifesting the wholeness of God’s saving acts for the entire human lifespan. From a Lutheran perspective the old controversy about the number of sacraments should not be considered a church-dividing issue.<sup>81</sup>

## 1.2. The Common Understanding of the Sacraments

63. *We agree* that Christ is the original sacrament and that the Church is the body of Christ. The Church is thus a sacramental framework for the proclamation of the sacramental word of God and for the administration of the sacraments. The sacred services are intended to convey the gifts of God for the whole of life’s journey. From this perspective Lutherans and Catholics together can share the idea of the fullness of grace in the ecclesial life to which the Catholic doctrine of seven sacraments refers, although Lutherans usually understand only Baptism and Eucharist as sacraments in the full sense of the word.
64. *We agree* that Baptism and Eucharist are instituted by Christ according to the Scriptures. They have a promise of grace and a clear material element. As visible word they transmit salvific grace and the forgiveness of sins uniquely and holistically to body and soul. Holy Baptism incorporates us into the communion of Christ’s body, and the Eucharist strengthens our fellowship and unity within this communion. Baptism and Eucharist are effective means of grace and their gifts are received in a justifying way through faith.
65. *We agree* that penance, confirmation, marriage, ordination, and the anointing of the sick (the *sacramenta minora*) are sacramental services<sup>82</sup> in which the grace

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79 LC Holy Baptism.

80 Cf. DS 1603.

81 JLC 155.

82 As already indicated, AC sees it as possible also to call confession and ordination sacraments. Cf. Luther in his Traübüchlein: “Herr Gott, der Du Mann und Weib geschaffen und zum Ehestand verordnet hast, dazu mit Früchte des Leibes gesegnet und das Sakrament Deines lieben Sohns Jesu Christi und der Kirchen, seiner Braut, darin bezeichnet, wir bitten ...”. See also Kasper 2017, 38 about the possibility of overcoming the difference in the understanding of the number of the sacraments, and being flexible concerning the matter.

of Christ is sacramentally mediated through the proclamation of the word of God, and the particular gifts of the Holy Spirit are distributed through these sacramental acts. The word of God and prayer are essential elements in them. They are based on the commandments and promises of Christ in the Scriptures. These sacramental services touch the whole person in particular life situations and strengthen his or her faith, hope, and love. Christ is present in them in the midst of the congregation.<sup>83</sup>

66. *We agree* that it is possible and ecumenically helpful to distinguish between the major sacraments (*sacramenta maiora*) (Baptism and Eucharist) and the minor sacraments (*sacramenta minora*) (penance, confirmation, marriage, ordination, and the anointing of the sick) in describing these seven sacraments. All the other sacraments are related to Baptism and Eucharist, the principal sacraments. The Lutheran Confessions leave the question concerning the number of sacraments open; Catholic teaching defines the number as seven.
67. *We agree* that the authority to administer the sacraments is given in ordination, which is a gift and commitment for life.<sup>84</sup>
68. On the basis of this joint Lutheran-Catholic understanding we conclude that the condemnations of the Reformation era concerning the sacraments in general are no longer applicable. However, this does not mean that further elaboration of these issues will not be needed to pave the way for visible unity in diversity.
69. The condemnations of the Reformation era still need to be dealt with in more detail to reach a solid differentiated consensus on the matter. The rejections of Catholic positions in the Lutheran confessional writings are to be found in the Augsburg Confession, Art. 13, and the Apology, Art. 13 (On the Number and Use of Sacraments). The rejections of Lutheran positions are to be found in Canons 1–13 of Sessio VIII of the Council of Trent (On the Sacraments in General). These rejections are summed up under the following headings: 1) The Constitutive Marks of the Sacraments; 2) The Effect of the Sacraments by virtue of their performance (*ex opere operato*), and the importance of faith (*sola fide*); 3) The Unrepeatability of Certain Sacraments, because of the permanent character they confer (*character indelebilis*); 4) The Priesthood of All the Baptized, and the authority to administer the sacraments; and 5) The Alterability of Forms of Celebration or Worship.<sup>85</sup>

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83 We thus differentiate between a “sacramental” sacred service, which is based on the Scriptures and the ecumenical Christian tradition, and “sacramentals”, which in the Lutheran tradition are understood as “blessings” and in SC 60 are defined as “sacred signs which... signify effects, particularly of a spiritual nature, which are obtained through the intercession of the Church. By them men are disposed to receive the chief effect of the sacraments, and various occasions in life are rendered holy.”

84 Emergency baptism is an exception. However, emergency baptism is confirmed by an ordained priest if the person survives.

85 CRE 72.

## ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

70. When Lutherans emphasise that Baptism and Eucharist are the fundamental sacraments, instituted by Christ with the promise of grace and with a material element, they do not deny the scriptural foundation or the necessity and vital role of ordination, penance, confirmation, marriage, and the anointing of the sick in the Church's mission and ministry. Further discussion is needed on each of these in future dialogue.
71. When Catholics speak of the sevenfold list of sacraments in accordance with the Council of Trent, they do not place all the sacraments at the same level, because there are indeed *maiora sacramenta* (Baptism and Eucharist), while others accompany the Christian along the way in life's various situations. Although some sacraments are not essential for each Christian (priesthood, matrimony, and the anointing of the sick), the seven sacraments are indispensable for the whole Church as the universal sacrament of salvation, part of the sacramental understanding of the Church, and present in the lives of her members. The fact that there is indirect scriptural evidence for some of the sacraments does not imply that these have not been instituted by Christ. The Catholic understanding of institution as a process (*institutio in genere*) affirms that the pre-Easter Christ has instituted the content of the sacraments (*res sacramenti*) and expressed his will for the transmission of grace in human words and signs. The sacramental sign is more precisely defined in the light of the religious tradition of Israel, the praxis of Jesus, and the sign-character of salvific ecclesial service in the early Church.<sup>86</sup>

## **1.3. The General Condemnations of the Reformation Era on Sacraments in a New Light**

### **1.3.1. The Constitutive Characteristics of the Sacraments**

72. As indicated above, the initial rigour suggested by the external fact of the different approaches to the number of sacraments does not apply. In the light of the differentiated discussions in Apologia article 13 the Lutheran concept of the sacraments is not clearly fixed. On the other hand, Council of Trent canon 3 (DS 1603) makes it clear that varying importance was ascribed to the different sacraments: Baptism and Eucharist are understood in medieval theology as *sacramenta maiora* or *principalia*, the greater or principal sacraments. Behind the Catholic and Lutheran positions in the confessional and synodal

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86 Müller 2010, 635–636.

writings lie different interpretations of 1) the institution by Jesus Christ, 2) the meaning of the sacramental sign, and 3) the relationship between the communication of grace and the celebration of a sacrament.<sup>87</sup>

73. Modern biblical scholarship has placed a question mark over the claim that there is a scriptural basis for Christ's institution of all seven sacraments. In evaluating the meaning of this conclusion for the teaching of the Church, we naturally also have to question the presuppositions inherent in such a claim. Theology and biblical scholarship in the service of the Church is intended to deepen our understanding of revelation in the context of the Church's faith. This is thus to be seen in the light of the revelation in Christ within the context of the Church's sacramentality. Lutherans today concede that "Scripture alone is never alone" (*sola scriptura numquam sola*). Although the Bible is the foundation of our understanding of revelation, tradition is also needed in its correct interpretation. In this light Lutherans can admit that all seven sacraments in the Catholic tradition are linked with special divine promises and with Baptism and Eucharist.<sup>88</sup> What is crucial is that which "conveys Christ".
74. Both Catholics and Lutherans stress the constitutive importance of the word in the sacrament and thus the connection between the word and the nonverbal sign in the sacramental act. The sacramental act is proclamation, but the promissory character is expressed not only in words, but in the sacrament as a whole, in the matter and form together (*materia et forma sacramenti*). This is because the promise refers to the whole person, not only to his reason, and also speaks incarnationally to his deeper being.<sup>89</sup> The sacramental understanding of the word is an indication of this.
75. In Catholic teaching grace is participation in the Trinitarian life of God. Grace is first and foremost the gift of the Spirit which justifies and sanctifies us. There are *sacramental graces*, gifts proper to each sacrament. In Lutheran understanding the grace of God is mediated to us through word and sacraments as instruments of the Holy Spirit. Grace is forgiveness of sins and renewal of the human person. An example of the understanding of grace in a wider sense is seen in the Lutheran tradition's recognition that in the New Testament "grace" can also signify the grace of ministry, referring to the "charism" or "gift" of the Holy Spirit that is needed in participating in the ministry of Jesus Christ: "You then, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2:1).<sup>90</sup>

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87 CRE 72–73.

88 CRE 73–74.

89 CRE 74–75.

90 According to Sander 2004, 149, footnote 498 Nikolaus Selnecker, for example, in his ordination examination uses the term "grace of ordination" (*gratia ordinationis*): "quid nominas gratiam Ordinationis? Spiritus Sancti praesentiam et efficaciam in ministerio, et in omnibus ministerii partibus, cum sana doctrina, et verus intellectus et vsu Sacramentorum retinentur, etiamsi Ministri mali sunt" (Melancthon, Opera Latina I 1593, 45 [=54]). Martin



76. Lutheran theology can learn and has learnt from the “contextualisation of grace” which this Catholic concept of a “sacramental grace” specific to each sacrament implies. In the guidelines for the ELCF’s occasional services approved by the Bishops’ Conference the sacramental, incarnational, and contextual character of the occasional services is clear. It is stressed: “The ultimate purpose of the occasional services is to transmit to people fellowship with God and participation in the salvation. ... To the occasional services belongs interaction between the faith of the Church and the living conditions of human beings. ... The occasional services manifest the presence of Christ in the midst of us. ... Christ is present and effective in the sacred services: ‘For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them’. ... God’s word contains and donates, what it promises: Christ, grace and eternal life. ... Although in the Lutheran tradition only Baptism and Eucharist are regarded as sacraments, in all occasional services Christ is present in the midst of the congregation.”<sup>91</sup> Since Vatican II contemporary Catholic theology has stressed the link with Jesus Christ, the primal sacrament. This averts an unduly marked differentiation of a kind that suggests that every sacrament confers an isolated grace.<sup>92</sup>
77. The understanding of the Church as communion and as a sacramental framework can also benefit us ecumenically. When we understand the sacraments in the light of the mission and ministry of the Church as sign and instrument of the salvific plan of the Triune God in Christ, it seems possible to overcome the old controversy regarding the institution of Christ, when Baptism and Eucharist are seen as the principal sacraments, effective means of grace, and the other five are also seen as scripturally rooted for the service of the Gospel.

### 1.3.2. The Effect of the Sacraments by Virtue of their Performance (*ex opere operato*), and the Importance of Faith (*sola fide*)

78. In the ecumenical discussions of recent decades Lutherans and Catholics have reached a broad consensus on the effect of the sacraments. For both it is important to underline both the objective effect of the sacrament and the faith of the communicant in the reception of the gifts of salvation. From this

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Chemnitz also speaks of “*gratia ordinationis*” in a Lutheran context (Examen Concilii Tridentini (1578/1707), hg. von Ed. Preuss, Berlin 1861, 479f.); Valentin Ernst Löscher analyses more extensively the meaning of the ministerial grace in his disputation with Joachim Lange (Timotheus Verinus I, Wittenberg 1718, 280–341). Johannes Mathesius and his understanding of the “gift of the Holy Spirit” in the context of Lutheran ordination theology should also be mentioned (Der Ander teil von der Historien vnsers Herrn Jesu Christi, Nuernberg 1585, fol. CVIIr; Etliche fürneume Hauptartikel vnsers allgemeinen Christlichen Glaubens/kurz verfast / vnd mit gutem grund der heiligen Goettlichen schrifft bewert”, Nuernberg 1567, Sig. S 7r und 8r).

91 ELCF *Guidelines for Occasional Services* 2006, 8.

92 CRE 76.

perspective we can now re-evaluate the accuracy of the condemnations of the Reformation era. The Lutheran Confessions utter their sharpest condemnations against the doctrine that the Mass is “a work which by its performance [*ex opere operato*] takes away the sins of the living and the dead” (CA 24.22, 29; BC 58f.; Apol. 24.9–12: BC 250f.). Against this the Confessions set the importance of faith for the proper working of the sacraments. However, the Council of Trent condemned the assertion that sacramental grace is not communicated through the performance of the sacraments but solely through faith in the promise (canon 8: DS 1608). The condemnations in canons 2, 4–7, and 12 are linked in substance with this fundamental rejection in canon 8, which the Reformers saw as entailing a rejection of the word.<sup>93</sup>

79. In the Lutheran Confessions the focus is on the reception of the sacrament (CA 13.3; BC 36; Apol. 13.18: BC 213). Catholics focus on the objective reality of the sacraments (canons 6 and 8). If these different perspectives are ignored, Lutherans view the Catholic affirmation of the *ex opere operato* doctrine as the affirmation of an automatic, salvific sacramental efficacy, while Catholics see the Lutheran criticism of the *ex opere operato* doctrine as a denial of the efficacy of the sacraments in general. Both reject the other’s interpretation of what they mean. In Catholic doctrine believing reception is also required if the sacrament is to be “for salvation”. The formula about the efficacy of the sacrament *ex opere operato* is in fact intended to stress that the divine offer of grace is independent of the worthiness of the one administering the sacrament and the one receiving it. In defining Christ as the active subject of the sacrament, the intention of the formula is to contradict any view which interprets the sacraments in the sense of a righteousness of works. Conversely, in Lutheran doctrine the sacraments also depend for their existence on Christ’s institution and are independent of the worthiness of the one administering (cf. CA 8.2: BC 33) or receiving them (cf. LC V.17, 61, 69: BC 448, 453f.). However, they effect salvation only through faith. From today’s perspective, continuing the work done in the JD, it seems possible to reach a differentiated consensus on the matter that expresses the intended balance between the objective character of the sacrament and the “disposition” or “faith” of the receiver of its inherent salvific grace.<sup>94</sup>
80. The Lutheran criticism of the *ex opere operato* doctrine is more closely defined by the additional phrase “without a good disposition in the one using them ... without faith” (Apol. 13.18: BC 213). In the background of the criticism lies the Scotist view of the doctrine of the sacraments, not the official Catholic doctrine. The abuses in pre-Reformation eucharistic practice also

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93 CRE 77.

94 CRE 77–78.

moved the Reformers to inveigh against any understanding of the Eucharist which separated its efficacy from the participation of believers, resulting in the popular view that reception of the sacrament had an automatic, magically ritualistic effect. This interpretation was not in accordance with official Catholic doctrine. The phrase *ex opere operato* was from the outset invested with a different meaning, which makes it understandable that the Lutheran Confessions should have rejected it so sharply.<sup>95</sup>

81. The Catholic condemnations underestimate the ecclesial and soteriological importance which the sacraments have for the Lutheran Churches as a *means of salvation*. The Council interpreted the statements of the young Luther in a Zwinglian sense. This influenced canons 4 and 6 (DS 1604, 1606), which therefore did not really meet the opponent's position even at that time. For the Reformers the sacraments of Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and, to a limited extent, penance are necessary for salvation. The dispute with the Anabaptists and the Enthusiasts makes this plain. The Lutheran Reformers did not play off justification by faith alone (*sola fide*) against the celebration of the sacraments, as they were accused of doing. To say that the sacraments do not contain the grace to which they point, but are merely signs (canon 6) is not a true representation of the Lutheran viewpoint. It applies at most to the Zwinglian position, which in this crude form was not accepted by the later Reformed Church either.<sup>96</sup> For example, Luther writes as follows on Holy Baptism in the Large Catechism: "...[W]hat a great, excellent thing Baptism is, which delivers us from the jaws of the devil and makes us God's own, suppresses and takes away sin, and then daily strengthens the new man; and is and remains ever efficacious until we pass from this estate of misery to eternal glory."<sup>97</sup> Luther's criticism of the *ex opere operato* doctrine in *De captivitate babilonica ecclesiae* (1520) did not question the efficacy of the sacrament, but its misuse as a meritorious deed which, he maintained, jeopardised the understanding of justification by faith.<sup>98</sup>
82. In the sixteenth century there was no agreement about the meaning of *faith*. Accordingly, the assumed differences about the doctrine of justification strongly influenced the condemnations with regard to the doctrine of the sacraments. In the light of the JD the situation is now different: "We confess together that sinners are justified by faith in the saving action of God in Christ. By the action of the Holy Spirit in baptism, they are granted the gift of salvation, which lays the basis for the whole Christian life. They place their trust in God's gracious promise by justifying faith, which includes hope in God

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95 CRE 77–78.

96 CRE 78–79.

97 LC Holy Baptism 83.

98 Huovinen 1991, 77.

and love for him. Such a faith is active in love and thus the Christian cannot and should not remain without works. But whatever in the justified precedes or follows the free gift of faith is neither the basis of justification nor merits it.”<sup>99</sup> In this respect canon 5 (DS 1605), which starts from a narrow concept of faith, and from that standpoint condemns the view that the sacraments are “for the nourishing of faith alone”, does not really challenge the Lutheran position, because for the Reformers faith (*fides*) includes, or stresses, everything that the sacraments effect according to the Catholic view.<sup>100</sup>

83. In the light of this new understanding that both Lutherans and Catholics agree that the sacraments are effective means of grace and that the gifts of salvation are received through justifying faith, we regard the condemnations in CA 24.22, 29; BC 58f.; Apol. 24.9–12: BC 250f. and in canon 8: DS 1608, together with canons 2, 4–7, and 12, as incompatible with each other’s teaching as jointly formulated and explicated here.

### 1.3.3. The Unrepeatability of Certain Sacraments

84. Trent canon 9 (DS 1609) condemns the rejection of the teaching that Baptism, confirmation, and ordination imprint an indelible sacramental character (*character indelebilis*) on the recipient of the sacrament. The Confessions do not treat this subject separately, but the writings of the Reformers show that this view is rejected where ordination is concerned. However, in the Lutheran understanding ordination is also unrepeatably effective, and has a lifelong character, although “ontological” terminology is avoided. Baptism and confirmation are also performed only once. The term “character” refers to the unique character of Baptism as a “seal”, which was used in the ancient Church for Baptism as a whole and for the laying on of hands. It signifies belonging to Christ and the gift of the Spirit. This Christological and pneumatological reference implies that both the permanent gift and the permanent obligation (act and being) should be taken into account in the proper understanding of the term. The Lutheran view asserts that God works in Christ through these sacred services. They are unrepeatably effective. A sacrament is both a gift and a call to follow Christ. The Reformers understood the effective character of sacraments. CA 8: “Both the Sacraments and Word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ...” Understood in this way, the doctrines of these partners no longer contradict one another in a way that justifies the continuation of the mutual condemnation or rejection in its previously existing form.<sup>101</sup>

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99 JD 19.

100 CRE 79.

101 CRE 81. According to Catholic theology: “The three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders

### 1.3.4. The Authority to Administer the Sacraments

85. Trent canon 10 (DS 1610) rejects the interpretation that every Christian can administer all the sacraments, which the Reformers never taught.<sup>102</sup> CA 5 and 14: “Of Ecclesiastical Order they teach that no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called [*rite vocatus*].” The Tridentine condemnation in canon 10 must be held to apply neither to CA 5 and 14 (BC 13 and 14) nor to Apology 13.7–13 (BC 212f.). It emerges from these passages that the idea of order is not merely external but a divine institution. It is substantially linked with the sacrament, since the call and authorisation to the divinely instituted ministry of word and sacrament, and to administer the sacraments “in Christ’s stead” (Apol. 7.28; BC 173), is given with God’s command and promise and with the gift of the Holy Spirit at ordination.<sup>103</sup>

### 1.3.5. The Alterability of Liturgical Forms

86. Lutherans assert that specific liturgical forms belong to the adiaphora, as long as the central parts of worship are not affected. In the changes it made to medieval Catholic practice the Lutheran Church was considerably more conservative than the Reformed Churches. Luther rejected the radical reforms of Andreas Karlstadt in his *Invocavit* sermons. Furthermore, the Lutheran Churches in Sweden and Finland differ from most other Lutheran Churches in that the changes at the Reformation were in many respects less radical. The 1571 Church Order by Laurentius Petri assiduously referred to ecclesial tradition wherever this was theologically possible. Much of the medieval liturgy remained in place.<sup>104</sup> However, the Formula of Concord rejects the teaching “that human precepts ... are to be regarded as in themselves divine worship” (FC Epit. X: BC 494; SD X: BC 610ff.). Trent canon 13 (DS 1613) is directed against the contempt, omission, or new introduction “at pleasure” of ceremonies in respect of the traditional, approved order for administering the sacraments. Canon 13 is directed against a subjective caprice in altering the liturgy laid down by the Church. That the liturgy is a matter for the Church,

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confer, in addition to grace, a sacramental character or ‘seal’ by which the Christian shares in Christ’s priesthood and is made a member of the Church according to different states and functions. This configuration to Christ and to the Church, brought about by the Spirit, is indelible; it remains for ever in the Christian as a positive disposition for grace, a promise and guarantee of divine protection, and as a vocation to divine worship and to the service of the Church. Therefore these sacraments can never be repeated” (CCC 1121).

102 Canon 10 (DS 1610): “Si quis dixerit, Christianos omnes in verbo et omnibus sacramentis administrandis habere potestatem: anathema sit.”

103 CRE 82.

104 JLC 73.

and is not at the mercy of the subjective caprice of the individual minister, also accords with the view of the Lutheran Churches.

87. In the Lutheran Church there has always been a basic stock of liturgical elements and ceremonies which have never been surrendered because of their catholicity. During the Lutheran Reformation in the sixteenth century Mikael Agricola based the new Lutheran manual *Mass or Lord's Supper* (1549) on the medieval liturgical practice in Finland, itself based on the Dominican tradition and the manuals *Missale Aboense* (1488) and *Manuale Aboense* (1522).<sup>105</sup> With the liturgical movement and growing ecumenical influence the new consciousness of our shared liturgical heritage has strengthened and has also enriched official worshipping life. The Church Order of the ELCF states: "Divine services and occasional services are to be administered according to the Church Handbook."<sup>106</sup>
88. In the light of the growing ecumenical fellowship in liturgical life it is also justified to state that the condemnation of canon 13 does not apply to the Lutheran tradition as presented here.

## 2. Eucharist

### 2.1. The Biblical Basis of the Eucharist

89. The central narrative of salvation in the Old Testament, the liberation from slavery in Egypt, was given lasting remembrance in the Jewish Passover. Jesus, the Lamb of God, gave to the Jewish Passover its definitive meaning. Jesus's passing over to his Father by his death and resurrection, the new Passover, is anticipated in the supper and celebrated in the Eucharist.<sup>107</sup> On the night before he suffered Jesus Christ instituted the celebration of the new covenant in memory of his own person, his words and his deeds (Matt. 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-34). "For the tradition I received from the Lord and also handed on to you is that on the night he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread, and after he had given thanks, he broke it, and he said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' And in the same way, with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this as a memorial of me.'

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<sup>105</sup> CRE 82; JLC 75.

<sup>106</sup> CO of ELCF 2:1.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. CCC 1340.

Whenever you eat this bread, then, and drink this cup, you are proclaiming the Lord's death until he comes." (1 Cor. 11: 23–26).

90. According to the testimony of the New Testament the Eucharist is the celebration of the Lord's Supper, at which Christ himself is present. It is the celebration of grace, at which he promises to grant his followers the forgiveness of sins and participation in salvation (Matt. 26:28). The Eucharist unites us with Christ and his Church, with other Christians, and with the saints and angels in heaven. Holy Communion is the celebration of spiritual communion and it proclaims and strengthens the unity between Christ and his community: "The bread that we break, is it not a sharing (*koinonia*) 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). The Eucharist is the heavenly banquet of Christ and his Church (Matt. 8:11; Luke 13:29; 14:15; 15:24).
91. Holy Communion is a Eucharist, a thanksgiving celebration, in which, in accordance with the example of Jesus, we give thanks to God for all his good gifts: "Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks, he gave it to them" (Matt. 26:27). The primary meaning of the celebration of the Eucharist is glorification and praise of God (*cultus divinus*) in remembrance of his mighty deeds. It is an act of remembrance, at which we, by the proclamation of the word and the celebration of the meal, remember the words and deeds of Christ in accordance with his commandment, "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). Holy Communion is the meal at which the faith is professed and strengthened, at which the community proclaims the death of the Lord "until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26). Holy Communion is also a foretaste of the festive joy that the community of Christ enjoys in heaven. Jesus says of the Passover: "I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God".<sup>108</sup>

## 2.2. The Common Understanding of the Eucharist

### 2.2.1. The Eucharist as Source of Spiritual Life and Strength for the Faithful and for the Church

92. The sacrament of the Eucharist has many names, but following the common ecumenical practice (Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry) we use here the term

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<sup>108</sup> JLC 222–224. Cf. SC 47: "At the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, our Savior instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his Body and Blood. This he did in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages until he should come again, and so to entrust to his beloved Spouse, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a Paschal banquet 'in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us'." He instituted the Eucharist as the memorial of his death and Resurrection, and commanded his apostles to celebrate it until his return; "thereby he constituted them priests of the New Testament" (CCC 1337; Council of Trent: DS 1740).

“Eucharist” which, for example, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Porvoo Common Statement, and even the Lutheran Confessions use.<sup>109</sup> This is not to imply that we are here reducing the meaning of the Eucharist to only one of its aspects.

93. *We agree* that the Eucharist is the centre of the Church’s life. Both the individual person and the Church gain their spiritual life and strength from the Eucharist. Participation in the Mass is the basic model for Christian living. Baptism incorporates the baptised into the body of Christ and the Eucharist helps him or her to mature and grow therein. The Eucharist is the bread of life and unites its recipients with Christ. Christ gives himself to us as an unmerited gift, which we can only receive and not create for ourselves. The Eucharist is the celebration at which the presence of Christ and the unity of Christians are manifested. It is always in some sense celebrated “on the altar of the world”, since it links heaven and earth.<sup>110</sup>
94. *We agree* that the mystery of the Eucharist is thanksgiving and praise to the Father, the sacrificial memorial of Christ and of his body the Church and the presence of Christ by the power of his word and the Holy Spirit.<sup>111</sup>

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109 AC 24: *sacrificium eucharistikón*. Martin Luther also uses the term “eucharistia”: WA 5, 198,17–19; WA 30 I, 109,32f.; WA 30 I, 122,20f.; WA 54, 426, 13–15. CCC comprehensively explains the varying eucharistic terminology: “II. What is This Sacrament Called?”

1328 The inexhaustible richness of this sacrament is expressed in the different names we give it. Each name evokes certain aspects of it. It is called: Eucharist, because it is an action of thanksgiving to God. The Greek words *eucharistein* and *eulogein* recall the Jewish blessings that proclaim – especially during a meal – God’s works: creation, redemption, and sanctification.

1329 The Lord’s Supper, because of its connection with the supper which the Lord took with his disciples on the eve of his Passion and because it anticipates the wedding feast of the Lamb in the heavenly Jerusalem. *The Breaking of Bread*, because Jesus used this rite, part of a Jewish meal when as master of the table he blessed and distributed the bread, above all at the Last Supper. It is by this action that his disciples will recognize him after his Resurrection, and it is this expression that the first Christians will use to designate their Eucharistic assemblies; by doing so they signified that all who eat the one broken bread, Christ, enter into communion with him and form but one body in him. *The Eucharistic assembly (synaxis)*, because the Eucharist is celebrated amid the assembly of the faithful, the visible expression of the Church.

1330 *The memorial* of the Lord’s Passion and Resurrection.

*The Holy Sacrifice*, because it makes present the one sacrifice of Christ the Savior and includes the Church’s offering. The terms holy sacrifice of the Mass, “sacrifice of praise,” spiritual sacrifice, pure and holy sacrifice are also used, since it completes and surpasses all the sacrifices of the Old Covenant.

*The Holy and Divine Liturgy*, because the Church’s whole liturgy finds its center and most intense expression in the celebration of this sacrament; in the same sense we also call its celebration the Sacred Mysteries. We speak of the Most Blessed Sacrament because it is the Sacrament of sacraments. The Eucharistic species reserved in the tabernacle are designated by this same name.

1331 *Holy Communion*, because by this sacrament we unite ourselves to Christ, who makes us sharers in his Body and Blood to form a single body. We also call it: the holy things (*ta bagia; sancta*) – the first meaning of the phrase “communion of saints” in the Apostles’ Creed – the bread of angels, bread from heaven, medicine of immortality viaticum....

1332 *Holy Mass (Missa)*, because the liturgy in which the mystery of salvation is accomplished concludes with the sending forth (*missio*) of the faithful, so that they may fulfill God’s will in their daily lives.”

110 JLC 215; *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, n. 8. Moreover, we can thus agree with the consensus reached in the Anglican-Catholic dialogue ARCIC on the centrality of the Eucharist, see HF 84.

111 CCC 1358.



95. *We agree* that “in the Eucharist, the sanctifying action of God in our regard and our worship of him reach their high point. It contains the whole spiritual good of the Church, Christ himself, our Pasch. Communion with divine life and the unity of the People of God are both expressed and effected by the Eucharist. Through the Eucharistic celebration we are united already with the liturgy of heaven and we have a foretaste of eternal life.”<sup>112</sup> In his sermon on *The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ* (1519) Martin Luther emphasised the importance of the Holy Communion for the life of the Church. In the Eucharist we are united with Christ and incorporated in him with all the saints. This unity of Christ with his body gives the Church its character as *communio*. The ultimate purpose of our transformation is to have the same form as Christ (*conformitas Christi*).<sup>113</sup> In the ELCF Mass order – as well as in the Catholic prefaces – the preface of the Eucharistic Prayer ends with a reference to the liturgy of heaven.<sup>114</sup>
96. *We agree* on the centrality of the Eucharist for the mission of the Church: “The meal and the longing to bear witness to what this communion with Christ and his church means, show that the Eucharist also implies a mission to preach and to evangelize.”<sup>115</sup>
97. *We agree* that the “Church as communion” means the “Church as eucharistic communion”, having thus a sacramental nature.<sup>116</sup>

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112 CoCC 274. See also DW 31–32.

113 Peura 1997, 99–100: The *unio cum Christo* makes possible the miraculous exchange (*commercium admirabile*).

114 ELCF Mass order: “It is truly right and dignified that we give you thanks always and everywhere, holy Lord, almighty God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. He has suffered and died for us and opened for us the way to eternal life. We thank you for this gift from heaven, and with all your angels and saints we sing our praise to you.” Cf. Roman Missale, Common Preface V: “It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord. His Death we celebrate in love, his Resurrection we confess with living faith, and his Coming in glory we await with unwavering hope. And so, with all the Angels and Saints, we praise you, as without end we acclaim...”

115 JLC 243. The Anglican-Catholic affirmation in *Harvesting the Fruits*, 84 follows similar lines of thought (ARCIC Eucharist, 4). The missional and salvific nature of the Eucharist is also connected with its eschatological dimension: (ARCIC Eucharist, 4; cf. 11).

116 Cf. CN, n 5. “Ecclesial communion, into which each individual is introduced by faith and by Baptism, has its root and centre in the Blessed Eucharist. Indeed, Baptism is an incorporation into a body that the risen Lord builds up and keeps alive through the Eucharist, so that this body can truly be called the Body of Christ. The Eucharist is the creative force and source of communion among the members of the Church, precisely because it unites each one of them with Christ himself: ‘Really sharing in the body of the Lord in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with him and with one another. ‘Because the bread is one, we, though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread’ (*1 Cor 10, 17*). Hence, the pauline expression the Church is the Body of Christ means that the Eucharist, in which the Lord gives us his Body and transforms us into one Body, is where the Church expresses herself permanently in most essential form. While present everywhere, she is yet only one, just as Christ is one.”

## ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

98. It was already affirmed in the document *Eucharist*: “Lutherans and Catholics confess together the conviction that by its very essence the Eucharist is a communal meal” (para. 63) and “Catholics and Lutherans are at one in the conviction that bread and wine belong to the complete form of the Eucharist” (para. 64). We can share this agreement, but wish to explicate the following:
99. Lutherans emphasise the communal character of the eucharistic meal as essential for the understanding of the eucharistic sign in its fullness.<sup>117</sup> According to Lutheran practice faithfulness to the Eucharist’s nature as communion means that both the congregation and the ordained minister are present at the celebration of the Eucharist. The celebration of the Eucharist without the congregation or without the priest is in tension with the institution of Christ and the practice of the early Church. The communal emphasis thus implies that there is a reciprocal relationship between the priest and the congregation.<sup>118</sup>
100. In Catholic tradition, for historical rather than theological reasons, the priest has celebrated Mass on his own, but it is stressed that it is desirable that at least one Catholic, for example a server, should be present as a representative of the community. The Second Vatican Council underlined that the celebration of the Eucharist that is to be given priority is the one at which the faithful are present. However, there are exceptions, for example, in such cases when no faithful attend a public Mass.<sup>119</sup> This difference is not church-dividing.

### **2.2.2. The Eucharist as a Sacrifice Grounded in the Presence of the Unique and Sufficient Sacrifice of Christ**

101. The New Testament uses the word *ephapax* (“once and for all”) for the sacrifice of Christ on the cross at Golgotha (Heb. 10:10). The term means sufficient, perfect, unique, and unrepeatable. *We agree* that, rightly understood, the Eucharist is a sacrifice. Christ is not only the food and drink of Holy Communion, but also its host and its celebrant. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church Christ is the actual subject of the liturgy. Martin Luther says the same thing in a different way: “Christ is the cook, the server, the food and the drink of Holy Communion.” The Eucharist can be called a sacrifice because Christ “the high priest of the good things that have come”

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117 Cf. AS II 8–9.

118 Cf. JLC 221.

119 JLC 221. SC III B 27: “It is to be stressed that whenever rites, according to their specific nature, make provision for communal celebration involving the presence and active participation of the faithful, this way of celebrating them is to be preferred, so far as possible, to a celebration that is individual and quasi-private. This applies with especial force to the celebration of Mass and the administration of the sacraments, even though every Mass has of itself a public and social nature.”

(Heb. 9:11) gives himself for us to the Father. It is a sacrificial meal at which the crucified and sacrificed Lord distributes the fruits of his passion to the faithful and at which the community makes a “thanksgiving sacrifice” to the glory of God (Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:5).<sup>120</sup>

102. *We agree* that 1) the sacrifice of Christ for the sins of the world is unique and sufficient, and this sacrifice cannot be continued, repeated, replaced, or complemented, and 2) the Lord is present in the Eucharist and his sacrifice at Golgotha becomes present in an effective way in the celebration of the Eucharist. The eucharistic memorial is no mere calling to mind of a past event or of its significance, but is the Church’s living proclamation of God’s mighty acts. In the Eucharistic Prayer the Church continues to make a perpetual memorial of Christ’s death, and his members, united with God and one another, give thanks for all his mercies.<sup>121</sup>
103. *We agree* that the sacrificial character of the Eucharist can be expressed in many ways. In the context of the celebration we 1) bring bread and wine to the altar at the beginning of the celebration as an offering and a sign of thanksgiving for creation; 2) Christ is present as the sacrificed and crucified Lord; 3) the Eucharist is in word and deed a remembrance of the sacrifice of the passion of Christ (*memoria passionis*); 4) the sacrifice of Christ’s passion is present here and now in the Eucharist (*repraesentatio passionis*); 5) the fruits, effects, and gift of the cross are given personally to the faithful who receive the sacrament (*applicatio sacramentis*); 6) we bring a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God when we confess our sins, give thanks, pray, and celebrate Holy Communion in accordance with the institution of Christ and the encouragement of the apostle (Rom. 12:1); 7) the Eucharist obliges us to sacrifice ourselves in mutual love and service to one another.<sup>122</sup>
104. *We agree* that the Eucharist is a gift in return, since it is sacrament and sacrifice. The sacrament is God’s gift of reconciliation and redemption, which comes first

120 JLC 225. CCC 1136: “Liturgy is an ‘action’ of the whole Christ (*Christus totus*).” Also CCC 1084–1090; WA 23, 270, 9–11: “Denn her hats nicht alleine eingesetzt, sondern machts und helts auch selbs, vnd ist der koch, kelner, speise und trank selbs.” StA I, 303, 11–15: “Auss welchen Worten wir lernen, das wir nit Christum, sondern Christus uns oppfert, und nach der meys is es leydlich, yha nuetzlich, das wir mess ein oppfer heyssen, nit umb yret willen, sondern das wir uns mit Christo oppfern.”

121 JLC 226; CRE 121; *The Eucharist as Sacrifice*, 7; *The Eucharist* 56: “Catholic and Lutheran Christians together recognize that in the Lord’s Supper Jesus Christ ‘is present as the Crucified who died for our sins and who rose again for our justification, as the one-for-all sacrifice for the sins of the world’ [USA III, I, 1a, 188]. This sacrifice can be neither continued, nor repeated, nor replaced, nor complemented; but rather it can and should become effective ever anew in the midst of the congregation. There are different interpretations among us regarding the nature and extent of this effectiveness.” Cf. Müller 2017, 495: “Überwunden konnte auch das Missverständnis des Messopfers als einer Ergänzung des einmaligen Kreuzesopfers. Die Eucharistie ist vielmehr die sakramentale Vergegenwärtigung des Kreuzesopfers durch den Dienst des geweihten Priesters, wobei Christus selbst der eigentliche Handelnde ist, der auch die gläubige und tätige Hingabe der Gläubigen als Glieder seines ekklesialen Leibes in seine Hingabe an den Vater mit einbezieht und somit die *Communio* mit Gott in der Liebe bewirkt.”

122 JLC 228.

and in which he himself is given to us in the Holy Communion, sanctifying and feeding us for everlasting life. Through Christ's presence in the Eucharist his sacrifice on the cross is present in it. In the Eucharist we are united with the present propitiatory sacrifice of Christ. This unique divine sacrifice is manifested in the double, separate consecration of the bread and wine. The Church's sacrifice of praise (*sacrificium laudis*) is our response to God's gift. It is a thanksgiving sacrifice of the whole body of Christ, the Church, to the glory and honour of God. The response includes in the wider sense all good deeds that spring from faith in daily life. In the wider sense this eucharistic sacrifice includes the proclamation of the Gospel, the profession of faith, the Eucharistic Prayer and thanksgiving, all of which take place at the Mass. In this sense the Mass as a whole can be seen as a sacrifice in which Christ first gives himself and his forgiveness to us and we respond by giving ourselves in thanksgiving to him. In criticising the medieval teaching of the sacrifice of the Mass, the Reformers feared these two aspects might be confused and that the view of the sacrament as God's free gift dissolved, with the Mass being perceived as a human act performed to satisfy God. We wish to recover the sacramental meaning of the Eucharist, i.e. to understand it as a sacramental form, of which the content is the unique sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We can thus find common agreement regarding the earlier controversies.<sup>123</sup> In the Eucharist we receive Jesus Christ as the everlasting gift of God to us. By receiving him, we in response take part in his dedication to the Father.

105. *We agree* that the sacrifice of the Mass is based on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. The unique sacrifice of Jesus Christ is made sacramentally present in the Eucharist. Through the anamnesis (*memoria*), which breaks the boundaries of time and place, his offer is present (*repraesentatio*) and actualised in the Mass. The second person of the Triune God is really present in the Eucharist as a reconciling and redemptive sacrifice to God. The priest acts in the person of Christ (*in persona Christi*) when he consecrates the elements of bread and wine and invokes the Holy Spirit (*epiclesis*), administers the consecrated elements, the body and blood of Christ, to the communicants (*applicatio*), and leads the thanksgiving prayer.
106. *We agree* that there is an intimate and constitutive connection between Christ's sacrifice, the Eucharist, and the Church. The Church "draws her life from the Eucharist"<sup>124</sup> since the Eucharist makes present Christ's redeeming sacrifice.<sup>125</sup> The Eucharist is Christ, who gives himself to us and continually builds us

123 JLC 229. For the Anglican-Catholic consensus on the sacrificial character of the Eucharist the notion of *memoria* is essential in formulating the basis of a common understanding of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist: HF, 85; ARCIC Eucharist, 5; cf. 3.

124 John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, n. 1

125 John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, n. 21.

up as his body. Hence, in the striking interplay between the Eucharist which builds up the Church, and the Church herself, which celebrates the Eucharist,<sup>126</sup> “the primary causality is expressed in the first formula: the Church is able to celebrate and adore the mystery of Christ present in the Eucharist precisely because Christ first gave himself to her in the sacrifice of the Cross. The Church’s ability to ‘make’ the Eucharist is completely rooted in Christ’s self-gift to her.”<sup>127</sup> The memorial of Christ is “the supreme sacramental manifestation of communion in the Church”.<sup>128</sup>

107. In the light of this consensus on the basic truths of the Eucharist as sacrifice, grounded in the formulation of the living presence of the unique sacrifice of Christ in the Mass, we can say that the condemnations in the Lutheran confessional writings (Epit. 7.22; SD 7.107) as well as those in Trent (DS 1751–1759), are not applicable.<sup>129</sup> This explicates further the differentiated consensus expressed in the JD and the implication of justification in the context of the Eucharist. In the wider sense the Mass as a whole can be seen as a sacrifice, in which Christ first gives himself and his forgiveness to us and we respond by giving ourselves in thanksgiving to him.

### ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

108. Catholics prefer to stress the effective presence of the sacrifice of the Lord at Golgotha in the celebration of the Eucharist. The Eucharist therefore brings the sacrifice of Christ to the foreground without repeating it. The sacrifice of Christ on the cross could be termed an absolute sacrifice; the sacrifice of the Mass on the other hand is a relative sacrifice in that it is essentially linked to the sacrifice on the cross and cannot be conceived without it. The sacrifice of the Mass draws all its power from the sacrifice of the cross, and applies the fruits thereof to people. Traditionally, it is spoken of as representation (*repraesentatio*), remembrance (*memoria*), and application (*applicatio*). Both in the sacrifice on the cross and in the sacrifice of the Eucharist the glorification

126 Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Redemptor Hominis*, 4.3.1979, n. 20; cf. Apostolic letter *Dominicae cenae*.

127 Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Sacramentum caritatis*, n. 14.

128 John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, n. 38.

129 Cf. AC 24: “Moreover, the proximate species of sacrifice are two, and there are no more. One is the *propitiatory sacrifice*, i.e., a work which makes satisfaction for guilt and punishment, i.e., one that reconciles God, or appeases God’s wrath, or which merits the remission of sins for others. The other species is the *eucharistic sacrifice*, which does not merit the remission of sins or reconciliation, but is rendered by those who have been reconciled, in order that we may give thanks or return gratitude for the remission of sins that has been received, or for other benefits received. ... These two species of sacrifice we ought especially to have in view and placed before the eyes in this controversy, as well as in many other discussions; and especial care must be taken lest they be confounded. ... But in fact there has been only one propitiatory sacrifice in the world, namely, the death of Christ, as the Epistle to the Hebrews 10:4 teaches: It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. And a little after, of the [obedience and] will of Christ, 10:10: By the which will we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

- of God is primary, along with atonement, thanksgiving, and appeal. The sacrifice should not be reduced to one of these alone, because then the connection between the sacrifice on the cross and the sacrifice of the Mass would be lost.
109. Because of the sacramental nature of the Church the fundamental question arises of the relationship of Christ alone (*solus Christus*) to the whole Christ, head and members (*totus Christus, caput et membra*). Christ is the head of the Church in relation to the members of the Church, his body.<sup>130</sup> The mystery of Christ as head encompasses and involves the mystery of the Church (cf. Eph. 1:9–10; Col. 1:19–20). Indeed, the Father sees the Son with the Church (his Body). For this reason, “The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of the Church. The Church which is the Body of Christ participates in the offering of her Head. With him, she herself is offered whole and entire. She unites herself to his intercession with the Father for all men. In the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ becomes also the sacrifice of the members of his Body. The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer, and work, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire a new value. Christ’s sacrifice present on the altar makes it possible for all generations of Christians to be united with his offering.”<sup>131</sup>
110. Lutherans prefer particularly to underline the unique nature of the sacrifice of Christ, even though that sacrifice is present in the Eucharist. “From a Reformation perspective it is however unusual to describe the church as involved in the sacrifice of Christ in the Eucharist. When Lutherans wish to speak of sacrifice, it is natural to make a connection with the theology of the cross, so that our service to our fellow human beings in the world can be seen as an aspect of our following Christ, and as a way to share the sufferings of Christ. The main perspective in the Reformation view must be to consider oneself as ‘a living and holy sacrifice’ in daily life on the basis of the Letter to the Romans, chapter 12. This is an important aspect of that offering, or sacrificium, of which the Lutheran Confessions speak, and which is reflected in the Lutheran Eucharistic prayers.”<sup>132</sup>
111. Together, we can understand the Church as a communion, which includes both the pilgrim Church and the triumphant Church. Accordingly, we celebrate the Eucharist in the presence of the angels and all the saints. We also affirm the Eucharist’s eschatological dimension, which is a reflection of eternal life in Christ with all the saints and the faithful of all times. The prayer of intercession for the dead and for those who are absent is legitimate and

130 See, for example, Augustine’s *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 74.4: “*totus Christus, caput, et corpus*” [Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* LI-C, eds. E. Dekkers & J. Fraipont, CCSL 39, 1027]. The same teaching is found in Aquinas: “*totus Christus, idest ecclesia et caput ejus.*” See Thomas Aquinas, *Expositio in Psalmos*, in *id.*, *Opera Omnia*, vol. 14 Typis Petri Fiacadori: Parmae 1813 148-353, at 157 [*Commentary on Psalm 3*, n. 5].

131 CCC 1368.

132 JLC 230.

meaningful.<sup>133</sup> In our future dialogue we should discuss how we understand eschatology and life after death in more detail.<sup>134</sup>

### 2.2.3. The Whole and Entire Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

112. *We agree* on the true, real, and substantial presence of Jesus Christ in the Lord's Supper. *From Conflict to Communion* summarises our common understanding as follows: "In the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper Jesus Christ true God and true man, is present wholly and entirely, in his Body and Blood, under the signs of bread and wine."<sup>135</sup> This common statement affirms all the essential elements of faith in the eucharistic presence of Jesus Christ without adopting the conceptual terminology of transubstantiation, which is not seen to be Church-dividing. Both Catholics and Lutherans understand that "the exalted Lord is present in the Lord's Supper in the body and blood he gave with his divinity and his humanity through the word of promise in the gifts of bread and wine in the power of the Holy Spirit for reception through the congregation".<sup>136</sup> The different forms of expression that Catholics and Lutherans use with regard to the Eucharist spring from the same conviction of faith. These are not, therefore, issues that divide the Church. Both traditions wish to stress that the body and blood of Christ in a true, real, and substantial

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133 Cf. DW 31.

134 For the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue on eschatology see the American dialogue report *The Hope of Eternal Life* (2011); and for Luther's understanding of purgatory the article by Augustinus Sander in *Luther-Lexikon* (2014) by Volker Leppin. Sander asserts that purgatory was an open theological question for Luther. Cf. according to Parvio 1975, 51 the Finnish Lutheran Reformer Mikael Agricola was more conservative than his Swedish colleague Olavus Petri, for example, and accepted the doctrine of purgatory. In some of the prayers of his Prayer Book (1544) and in some other materials there are references to purgatory. Agricola held that release from purgatory happened through prayer and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. This understanding is analogous to the medieval Catholic understanding, which underlined the importance of the Mass as sacrifice.

135 FCC 154; *Eucharist* 16. The formulation "wholly and entirely" implies that when we receive the body and blood of our Lord, it also includes his soul and divinity.

136 FCC 154; CRE 115 and 101: "1. Through their sacramental use, the Eucharistic offerings of bread and wine undergo that change which has from ancient times been termed *conversio or mutatio* ('transformation' or 'change'). The 'transformation of essence' which takes place in this feast and its offerings of bread and wine, in the power of the Holy Spirit, through the Word, cannot be revoked. It has an eschatological significance and designates the ultimate essence of this 'food for eternal life'. 2. The clear and unambiguous acknowledgement of the true presence of Jesus Christ is not necessarily tied to the explanatory models offered by the doctrines of transubstantiation and ubiquity. But it is important that the danger of either falsifying or attenuating this acknowledgement should be averted by together agreeing that the presence is not spatial or natural in kind and that the sacrament should not be understood in a merely commemorative or figurative sense. 3. 'The Eucharistic meal is the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, the sacrament of his real presence. Christ fulfills in a variety of ways his promise to be always with his own even to the end of the world. But Christ's mode of presence in the Eucharist is unique. Jesus said over the bread and wine of the Eucharist: 'This is my body ... this is my blood ...' What Christ declared is true, and is fulfilled every time the Eucharist is celebrated. The Church confesses Christ's real, living and active presence in the Eucharist.'; DW 30: "Lutherans and Catholics agree that in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Jesus Christ himself is present: He is present truly, substantially, as a person, and he is present in his entirety, as Son of God and a human being." Cf. ARCIC *Eucharist*, 6, footnote on transubstantiation. As Lutherans and Catholics we can also share the agreement reached in the Anglican-Catholic dialogue (HF 86, ARCIC, *Eucharist* 6, 8, 9 and *Eucharist Elucidation* 6).

(*vere, realiter et substantialiter*) way is present in, with, and under the outward signs of bread and wine. The criticism of the Reformation era (DS 1651–1652; Epit. 7.22; SD 7.107) is thus not applicable today.

113. The content of this agreement can also be formulated using the language of the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*: “Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharist in a unique and incomparable way. He is present in a true, real and substantial way, with his Body and his Blood, with his Soul and his Divinity. In the Eucharist, therefore, there is present in a sacramental way, that is, under the Eucharistic species of bread and wine, Christ whole and entire, God and Man.”<sup>137</sup> The Lutheran Confessions affirm: “...[I]n the Lord’s Supper the body and blood of Christ are truly and substantially present, and are truly tendered, with those things which are seen, bread and wine, to those who receive the Sacrament” (AC 10). Accordingly, *we agree* that the bread and wine change (*mutatio, conversio*) into the body and blood of Christ through the consecration at the Eucharist.<sup>138</sup> Therefore, at the consecration in the Eucharist it is said: “This is my body”; “This is my blood”.

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137 CoCC 281. AC 10: *Of the Holy Supper*. “The Tenth Article has been approved, in which we confess that we believe, that in the Lord’s Supper the body and blood of Christ are truly and substantially present, and are truly tendered, with those things which are seen, bread and wine, to those who receive the Sacrament. This belief we constantly defend, as the subject has been carefully examined and considered. For since Paul says, 1 Cor. 10:16, that the bread is the communion of the Lord’s body, etc., it would follow, if the Lord’s body were not truly present, that the bread is not a communion of the body, but only of the spirit of Christ.” It is true that Martin Luther criticised the doctrine of transubstantiation. In modern research Luther’s criticism is however sometimes given a disproportionately large role. For Luther the concept of transubstantiation was more unnecessary than false. Since theology was to be independent of philosophy, Luther thought it was safer to explain Christ’s presence in the elements on the basis of Chalcedonian Christology. “Just as each thing is in respect to Christ, so it is also in respect to the sacraments.” Despite Luther’s criticism of the concept of transubstantiation, he defended sacramental realism and the doctrine of the real presence against spiritual interpretations. He developed many arguments for the real presence and many counter-arguments against the spiritual view. For Luther’s eucharistic theology and practice see *Jolkkonen* 2004 and 2010. Thus, the term itself is not church-dividing, because the matter (*re*) itself is clear and biblical: “This is my body”; “This is my blood”.

138 *Eucharist* 51: “The ecumenical discussion has shown that these two positions must no longer be regarded as opposed in a way that leads to separation. The Lutheran tradition affirms the Catholic tradition that the consecrated elements do not simply remain bread and wine but rather by the power of the creative word are given as the body and blood of Christ. In this sense Lutherans also could occasionally speak, as does the Greek tradition, of a ‘change’ [AC X, 2; cf. also USA III, II, 2c, 195]. The concept of transubstantiation for its part is intended as a confession and preservation of the mystery character of the Eucharistic presence; it is not intended as an explanation of how this change occurs.” (Windsor, No. 6, note 2.) JLC 233 and footnote 120: WA 30 I, 122, 20–21: “Summa: Eucharistia est panis et vinum coniunctum, mutatum in corpus et sanguinem Christi” (Katechismus Predigt 1528). Cf StA I 278, 31–279, 4 (Abendmahls Predigt 1519). AC 10: “... [W]e have ascertained that not only the Roman Church affirms the bodily presence of Christ, but the Greek Church also both now believes, and formerly believed, the same. For the canon of the Mass among them testifies to this, in which the priest clearly prays that the bread may be changed [*mutato pane*] and become the very body of Christ. And Vulgarius, who seems to us to be not a silly writer, says distinctly that bread is not a mere figure, but is truly changed into flesh [*mutari*]. And there is a long exposition of Cyril on John 15, in which he teaches that Christ is corporeally offered us in the Supper.”



## **Explicating the Common Understanding**

114. In speaking of the “real presence” of Christ in the Eucharist and preferring not to use any specifically philosophical terminology in theological explanations, *Lutherans* nevertheless wish to emphasise the true and substantial character of the eucharistic presence. They teach that the body and blood of Christ are really present in (*in*), with (*cum*), and under (*sub*) the elements of bread and wine. Lutherans also use the Chalcedonian formula and permanent union (*unio*) “inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably” as an analogy for the whole which consists of the visible and hidden when the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist is described. Although Luther had questions about the word transubstantiation, he never considered this term to be in conflict with God’s revelation. Lutherans can also say that the bread and wine change into the body and blood of Christ.<sup>139</sup>
115. In using the term “transubstantiation”, Catholics understand the change as a complete change of the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of Christ’s body and blood so that only the species of bread and wine remain. However, following the intention of the Council of Trent, Pope Paul VI, in *Mysterium Fidei*, acknowledged the legitimacy of fresh ways of expressing this change even through the use of new words (transform, “traselementize”), provided that they kept and reflected what transubstantiation was intended to express: “...these formulas are adapted to all men of all times and all places. 25) They can, it is true, be made clearer and more obvious; and doing this is of great benefit. But it must always be done in such a way that they retain the meaning in which they have been used, so that with the advance of an understanding of the faith, the truth of faith will remain unchanged.”<sup>140</sup>

### **2.2.4. The Epiclesis Rediscovered**

116. The ecumenical movement has helped to overcome the point of controversy between the Eastern and Western Churches regarding the epiclesis, the invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the gifts of bread and wine. Lutherans and Catholics accept the role of the Spirit in the transformation of the eucharistic elements into the body and blood of the Lord.<sup>141</sup>

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139 JLC 233.

140 *Mysterium Fidei* 24–25.

141 CCC 1353 “In the epiclesis, the Church asks the Father to send his Holy Spirit (or the power of his blessing) on the bread and wine, so that by his power they may become the body and blood of Jesus Christ and so that those who take part in the Eucharist may be one body and one spirit (some liturgical traditions put the epiclesis after the anamnesis). In the institution narrative, the power of the words and the action of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit, make sacramentally present under the species of bread and wine Christ’s body and blood, his sacrifice offered on the cross once for all.” See HF 87.

117. *We agree* that “The Eucharist unfolds in two great parts which together form one, single act of worship. The Liturgy of the Word involves proclaiming and listening to the Word of God. The Liturgy of the Eucharist includes the presentation of the bread and wine, the prayer or the anaphora containing the words of consecration, and communion.”<sup>142</sup> Through the consecratory words and prayer of thanksgiving, a word of faith addressed to the Father, the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ by the action of the Holy Spirit. At Holy Communion we eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood. In the epiclesis we also ask that we may receive Holy Communion worthily in faith and receive strength to love our neighbours. The truth affirmed in faith about the Eucharist must shape the content and form of the liturgy.<sup>143</sup>

### 2.2.5. The Liturgical Tradition of the Undivided Church as a Shared Heritage

118. The Lutheran theology of the Mass emphasises incarnation, the theology of the word of God, and the real presence, and in general follows the Latin tradition. The Augsburg Confession states that the Lutheran Mass is celebrated according to the “model of the Church”, following the guidelines of Scripture and the Fathers (*ex Scriptura et patribus*). CA 24 *Of the Mass* states: “Falsely are our churches accused of abolishing the Mass; for the Mass is retained among us, and celebrated with the highest reverence. Nearly all the usual ceremonies are also preserved, save that the parts sung in Latin are interspersed here and there with German hymns, which have been added to teach the people. ... Forasmuch, therefore, as the Mass with us has the example of the Church, taken from the Scripture and the Fathers, we are confident that it cannot be disapproved, especially since public ceremonies, for the most part like those hitherto in use, are retained...” In evaluating the decisions of the Lutheran Reformers, it is important to give due attention to their intentions and to remember that they lacked a clear picture of the divine service in the early Church. Furthermore, many of the sources were found during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These findings have enriched both Lutheran and Catholic liturgical life and increased ecumenical interaction on the basis of the joint heritage of the undivided Church.<sup>144</sup>

119. JLC describes the manifestation of the common heritage in both Catholic and Lutheran liturgical life. There are clear convergences and many similarities in the Mass and in eucharistic spirituality, in the priest’s liturgical vestments, in the liturgical calendar, in the order and conduct of the Mass, and in reverence for the sacrament: “... [O]ur churches are not only agreed on the doctrine

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142 CoCC 277.

143 Cf. ARCIC *Eucharist*, 9.

144 Jolkkonen 2002, 231, 240.

of justification but have also achieved greater communion in the sacramental life. We are united in our view of the Eucharist itself, as we have analysed it here. The differences in detail are no longer considered to be church dividing. ... Quite often the medieval Catholic churches have been preserved with their reredoses, images of the saints and murals. ... In ... Finland the recommendations in the Report of the International Catholic-Lutheran Study Commission, *The Eucharist*, have largely been put into practice, namely that 'the truth affirmed in faith about the Eucharist must shape the content and form of the liturgy'. Both church traditions stress in their pastoral practice that nobody should approach communion unworthily and they begin the Mass with a confession of sin. While the Lutheran Churches entrust the evaluation of worthiness to the communicants themselves, the Catholic Church has issued special rules about this. No church has however completely open admission to communion."<sup>145</sup> A further example of ecumenical renewal in ELCF Church life stemming from the common Lutheran and Catholic tradition is the rediscovery of the sign of the cross in private liturgical life based on the instructions given in Luther's Catechisms.

120. In all *Lutheran* and *Catholic* orders of the Mass, both old and new, the words of institution, or the dominical words of consecration, are central. There is also no doubt that these words are perceived as the most important part of the Mass. They are surrounded by several symbolic actions that underline their significance. The need for an epiclesis has been less clear. In the old Roman canon, which today is the First Eucharistic Prayer, there is a prayer asking for the help of the power of God to transform the bread and wine into a spiritual gift. Although the Holy Spirit is not explicitly mentioned, this prayer has subsequently been understood as an epiclesis. Historically, the epiclesis could also be placed either before or after the words of consecration, and it has then been a prayer asking for the transformation of either the elements or the communicants. In the ELCF Mass order there are four alternatives for an epiclesis. Our Churches consider the epiclesis as a natural part of their ordinary rites.
121. In the ELCF Mass order (Communion Service) there are four parts: I Introduction, II God's Word, III The Holy Supper, and IV Conclusion. The Word and the Eucharist are the main parts, because word and sacraments are effective means of grace, and therefore every Mass is a "celebration of the saving presence of God". The main parts of the Holy Communion are: the Preparation of the Lord's table (*Offertorium*); the Eucharistic Prayer (*sursum corda*, the Prayer, the Preface, the *Sanctus*, the post-Sanctus, the Words of Institution, the *Epiclesis* and the doxology); the Lord's Prayer; the Greeting of Peace; the *Agnus Dei*; the Communion; and the Prayer of Thanksgiving.

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145 JLC 249–251.

122. The Catholic Mass order is very similar: Introductory Rites, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist, and Concluding Rites with the Blessing and Dismissal. The Liturgy of the Eucharist includes the Presentation of the Gifts and Prayer over the Offerings, the Eucharistic Prayer, the Lord's Prayer, the Sign of Peace, the Agnus Dei, Communion, and Prayer after Communion. The main part is the Eucharistic Prayer including: a) the *thanksgiving* (expressed especially in the Preface); b) the acclamation, by which the whole congregation, joining with the heavenly powers, sings the *Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy)*; c) the *epiclesis* and d) the *institution narrative (consecration)*; e) the *anamnesis*; f) the *oblation*, by which, in this memorial, the Church offers the unblemished sacrificial Victim to the Father in the Holy Spirit; g) the *intercessions*, through which expression is given to the fact that the Eucharist is celebrated in communion with the whole Church in heaven and on earth, and that the oblation is made for her and for all her members, living and dead, who are called to participate in the redemption and salvation purchased by the Body and Blood of Christ; h) the *concluding doxology*.
123. *We agree* that the Mass is to be celebrated according to the approved liturgical books of the Church.
124. The Eucharistic liturgies of both traditions have increasingly converged since the decisions of the Second Vatican Council, especially in Finland. The influence of the liturgical movement of the twentieth century is also in the background in this development.

## 2.2.6. The Ordained Minister of the Eucharist

125. *We agree* that in the celebration of the sacramental liturgy the celebrating assembly, the community of the baptised, is the *leitourgos*, each according to his/her function. Certain members are called by God, in and through the Church, to a special service of the community.<sup>146</sup> Jesus Christ has instituted the priesthood for the proclamation of the word and the administration of the sacraments in the Church. The Eucharist is celebrated by a priest or bishop. The celebrant acts in the person of Christ the Head, and in the name of the Church.<sup>147</sup> Accordingly, only a person who is ordained and authorised by a validly ordained bishop can celebrate the Eucharist in our Churches.<sup>148</sup> The ordained minister celebrates the Eucharist *in persona Christi*: "...When they offer the Word of God, when they offer the Sacraments, they offer them

146 CCC 1140–44.

147 CoCC 278.

148 JLC 239. In the guidelines for the divine service in the ELCF (Guidelines of ELCF 77), approved by the Bishops' Conference, it is instructed: "...[T]he priest leading the liturgy, that is the celebrant, always administers the following parts: benediction, introduction, prayer of the day, the whole Eucharistic prayer, ... the Our Father, the distribution of the Eucharist, the thanksgiving prayer, and the Lord's benediction."

in the stead and place of Christ (*Christi vice et loco*).<sup>149</sup> “... [T]hrough the ministry of the bishop, God consecrates priests, that being made sharers by special title in the priesthood of Christ, they might act as his ministers in performing sacred functions. ... [T]he Eucharistic Action, over which the priest presides, is the very heart of the congregation.”<sup>150</sup>

### ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

126. According to the *Catholic view* only those Churches which possess the sacrament of ordination have preserved the sacramental nature of the Eucharist in its fullness. For Catholics it is the common celebration of the Eucharist and, through the sacrament of ordination, the apostolic succession which constitute such visible bonds of unity that they show directly that the Church is one. A common celebration of the Eucharist is thus possible when there is a mutual recognition of the ministries between the Churches.<sup>151</sup>
127. The ministry is, according to the *Lutheran view*, instituted by God. Although ordination is not usually designated a sacrament, it is understood as an effective sacramental act in which the Holy Spirit donates the gifts of God for the ordained ministry. The purpose of the priesthood is to preach the word of God, the Gospel, purely and clearly, and to administer the sacraments in accordance with the institution of Christ. Without an appropriate calling (*rite vocatus*), nobody can publicly perform these duties.<sup>152</sup> The Lutheran Church aims to live in continuity with the apostles and their proclamation. The same Lord who sent the apostles continues to be present in the Church. The Spirit keeps the Church in the apostolic tradition until the fulfilment of history in the kingdom of God. The Church’s apostolic tradition entails a continuity in the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles: the witness to the apostolic faith; the proclamation and fresh interpretation of the Gospel; the celebration of Baptism and Eucharist; the transmission of ministerial responsibilities; communion in prayer, love, joy, and suffering; service to the sick and needy; unity among the local Churches; and sharing the gifts which the Lord has given to each.<sup>153</sup> The ELCF also holds that a common celebration of the Eucharist is possible when there is a mutual recognition of the ministries between the Churches.<sup>154</sup>

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149 AC 7 and 8, 28. Cf. HF 88 regarding the agreement in the Anglican-Catholic dialogue (*ARCIC Ministry*, 12–13).

150 PO 5. Cf. *ARCIC Ministry and Ordination* 1973 II 12–13.

151 JLC 240.

152 JLC 241; CA 5, 14.

153 BEM, Textual Part, On Ministry, no. 34. PCS, no. 36.

154 The ecumenical guidelines of the ELCF, *A Church of Encounter* 9: “In the course of a dialogue the possibility of sharing in Holy Communion may arise. This requires the achievement of a necessary consensus on key doctrinal

128. Concerning the pastoral question of how we as Lutherans and Catholics can support ecumenical marriages in which one spouse is Catholic and the other Lutheran, we need further discussion and cooperation locally for spiritual guidance and pastoral accompaniment. This should include the question of whether there are pastoral cases in which a Lutheran-Catholic couple might jointly take part in a Catholic or Lutheran Eucharist as support for their personal and shared journey in their marriage as Christians.<sup>155</sup>

### 2.2.7. Communion under Both Kinds

129. *We agree* that the sign of communion is more complete when given under both kinds, since in that form the sign of the eucharistic meal appears at its clearest. The validity of the Eucharist is based on the consecration and on Christ's presence in the species, not on the manner in which they are used. Therefore, those who receive only the consecrated bread also receive the whole Christ. In Lutheran practice communion under both kinds is the norm because Christ used both bread and wine when he instituted the Eucharist. Catholics generally agree concerning the merits of communion under both kinds in principle, but the practical application varies and communion in many local Churches is predominantly administered under one kind. However, in the Catholic particular Churches in the Nordic countries communion is often administered under both kinds. In view of our common understanding of the theological principle the practice, which in any case is not absolute, is not church-dividing.<sup>156</sup> The condemnations of the Reformation era (DS 1653; Epit. 7.22; SD 7.107) are thus not applicable today.

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points. These are the questions of baptism, Eucharist, and the church's ordained ministry."

155 According to Canon Law 844, 2–3§: "§2. Whenever necessity requires it or true spiritual advantage suggests it, and provided that danger of error or of indifferentism is avoided, the Christian faithful for whom it is physically or morally impossible to approach a Catholic minister are permitted to receive the sacraments of penance, Eucharist, and anointing of the sick from non-Catholic ministers in whose Churches these sacraments are valid. §3. Catholic ministers administer the sacraments of penance, Eucharist, and anointing of the sick licitly to members of Eastern Churches which do not have full communion with the Catholic Church if they seek such on their own accord and are properly disposed. This is also valid for members of other Churches which in the judgment of the Apostolic See are in the same condition in regard to the sacraments as these Eastern Churches. §4. If the danger of death is present or if, in the judgment of the diocesan bishop or conference of bishops, some other grave necessity urges it, Catholic ministers administer these same sacraments [penance, Eucharist, anointing of the sick] licitly also to other Christians not having full communion with the Catholic Church, who cannot approach a minister of their own community and who seek such on their own accord, provided that they manifest Catholic faith in respect to these sacraments and are properly disposed. §5. For the cases mentioned in §§2, 3, and 4, the diocesan bishop or conference of bishops is not to issue general norms except after consultation at least with the local competent authority of the interested non-Catholic Church or community." In the ELCF the Bishops' Conference has the authority to give instructions regarding the pastoral guidelines for admission to the Eucharist. Furthermore, according to ELCF CO 2:11 a person who is not a member of the Church may receive the Eucharist if that person is sick or in an emergency and comprehends the meaning of the Eucharist.

156 CRE 116; JLC 236. Cf. AC 22: "It cannot be doubted that it is godly and in accordance with the institution of Christ and the words of Paul to use both parts in the Lord's Supper. For Christ instituted both parts, and

## ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

130. On the basis of Christ's institution and the sacrament's symbolism Lutherans stress that both the body and blood of the Lord should be administered to communicants. In teaching this Lutherans do not deny that the whole of Christ is received as gift even when communion is administered in one kind; nor do they deny the validity of such a Eucharist. Even at Lutheran celebrations of the Eucharist communion may sometimes be administered in only one kind to an individual for pastoral reasons.<sup>157</sup>
131. The Catholic Church holds to the medieval tradition, approved by the Council of Trent, according to which communicants may, for practical reasons, receive the elements in one kind. However, even if the administration of communion in only one kind is a legitimate practice, the Second Vatican Council permits the administration of the elements in both kinds in various contexts: "The dogmatic principles which were laid down by the Council of Trent remaining intact, communion under both kinds may be granted when the bishops think fit, not only to clerics and religious, but also to the laity, in cases to be determined by the Apostolic See."<sup>158</sup> It is recommended that the chalice be offered "in the cases set forth in the liturgical books", and this is increasingly practised.<sup>159</sup>

### **2.2.8. Other Points of Consensus**

132. *We agree* that "[t]he Eucharist was foreshadowed in the Old Covenant above all in the annual Passover meal celebrated every year by the Jews with unleavened bread to commemorate their hasty, liberating departure from Egypt. Jesus foretold it in his teaching and he instituted it when he celebrated the Last Supper with his apostles in a Passover meal. The Church, faithful to the command of her Lord, 'Do this in memory of me' (1 Corinthians 11:24), has

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instituted them not for a part of the Church, but for the entire Church. ...And, indeed, if we assume that we are free to use either one part or both, how can the prohibition [to use both kinds] be defended?"

CCC 1390 "Since Christ is sacramentally present under each of the species, communion under the species of bread alone makes it possible to receive all the fruits of Eucharistic grace. For pastoral reasons this manner of receiving communion has been legitimately established as the most common form in the Latin rite. But 'the sign of communion is more complete when given under both kinds, since in that form the sign of the Eucharistic meal appears more clearly.'" GIRM 240.

157 JLC 237 and footnote *The Eucharist* 64. WA 6, 502-507, AS III, 6 (Concerning the Sacrament of the Altar), 2-4.

158 SC 55 b.

159 CRE 109. Cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, n. 100: "So that the fullness of the sign may be made more clearly evident to the faithful in the course of the Eucharistic banquet, lay members of Christ's faithful, too, are admitted to Communion under both kinds, in the cases set forth in the liturgical books, preceded and continually accompanied by proper catechesis regarding the dogmatic principles on this matter laid down by the Ecumenical Council of Trent."

always celebrated the Eucharist, especially on Sunday, the day of the Resurrection of Jesus.”<sup>160</sup> The Roman Canon also mentions the sacrifices of Abel, Abraham, and Melchizedek as foreshadowing the sacrifice of the Mass. In the ELCF Mass order the Eucharistic Prayer likewise starts with a recollection of salvation history (appendix 1).

133. *We agree* that for the celebration of the Eucharist “[t]he essential elements are wheat bread and grape wine”.<sup>161</sup> The ELCF guidelines instruct: “According to the tradition of the Church and according to ecumenical practice the bread must be made of wheat. ... ‘As Eucharistic wine is used, according to the tradition of the churches and according to general practice, grape wine’.”<sup>162</sup> Catholics emphasise that the use of bread made with wheat and wine is directly connected with the validity of the sacrament.
134. *We agree* that “the Eucharist is the manifestation of the unity of the church”<sup>163</sup> and “the celebration at which the presence of Christ and the unity of the Christians are manifested”.<sup>164</sup> The Eucharist is thus “constitutive of the Church’s being and activity. This is why Christian antiquity used the same words, *Corpus Christi*, to designate Christ’s body born of the Virgin Mary, his Eucharistic body and his ecclesial body. This clear datum of the tradition helps us to appreciate the inseparability of Christ and the Church.”<sup>165</sup> For example, during the administration of the Holy Communion in the Mass the priest says: “The Body of Christ” (*Corpus Christi*) and the faithful answer: “Amen”. In this “Amen” the believer manifests his/her faith and incorporation into the threefold meanings of “the Body of Christ”: human, sacramental, and ecclesial.

### 2.2.9. Convergence on the Duration of the Eucharistic Presence

135. *We agree* that there is a convergence today between Catholics and Lutherans concerning the duration of the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine after the celebration of the Eucharist itself. Although the Lutheran Confessions have reservations about keeping the host outside the Mass (*SD 7.86: extra usum*), these refer to the kind of use where there is no intention of eating the bread or drinking the wine in accordance with the institution of Christ, and where the consecrated host is used for something else. “*Extra*

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160 CoCC 276.

161 CoCC 279.

162 Guidelines of ELCF 97.

163 JLC 209.

164 JLC 215. See also DW 32.

165 Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Sacramentum caritatis*, n. 15.



*usum*” cannot be interpreted in such a way that real presence is limited to the immediate reception of the elements during the Mass.<sup>166</sup>

### ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

136. The Lutheran Churches have learnt to apply their faith in the sacrament as mystery in practice. In the Lutheran Mass there are elements of eucharistic adoration (e.g. elevation, standing, bowing, and kneeling), and the Finnish Lutheran bishops have issued instructions that the remaining eucharistic species should be handled with reverence because of their consecration as the body and blood of Christ. According to the *Guidelines for the High Mass in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland* the goal should be that only as much of the elements as is needed should be consecrated and the consecrated elements should be completely consumed during the celebration of the Eucharist. If this is impossible, the elements should either be consumed after the Mass or reserved for administration at a subsequent Mass. The guidelines allow those who serve in the diaconal ministry to administer the consecrated elements to the sick. It has become increasingly common either to reserve the eucharistic elements in a special place or to consume them completely. A range of views may be found in the parishes, but the guidelines for worship commended by the Bishops’ Conference make clear that a simple rule should be followed: “The aim is that the consecrated elements are used during the Eucharist. The priest reserves for the consecration only the amount needed. If some of the consecrated elements remain, they are consumed after the administration of the Eucharist or in the sacristy after the Mass. If a lot remains of the consecrated elements, they may be reserved in a separate container for later use. No subsequent consecration is needed, but the elements are sacramentally administered to the faithful with the elements consecrated at a later Mass.” This rule implies that the presence remains until the purpose of the consecration, Holy Communion, has been fulfilled.<sup>167</sup>
137. In the Catholic tradition “[t]he tabernacle was first intended for the reservation of the Eucharist in a worthy place so that it could be brought to the sick and those absent outside of Mass. As faith in the real presence of Christ in his Eucharist deepened, the Church became conscious of the meaning of silent adoration of the Lord present under the Eucharistic species. It is for this reason that the tabernacle should be located in an especially worthy place in

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166 JLC 234.

167 Guidelines of ELCF 102. See also JLC 235. Cf. Luther WA 54, 426, 13–15: “XV. In Eucharistia sacramento venerabili et adorabili est et exhibitur et sumitur vere et reipsa corpus et sanguis Christi tam a dignis quam indignis.”

the church and should be constructed in such a way that it emphasizes and manifests the truth of the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.”<sup>168</sup>

## 2.3. Towards Overcoming the Doctrinal Condemnations on the Eucharist

### 2.3.1. The Challenge of Doctrinal Condemnations - The Council of Trent as an Example

138. Since the Reformation in the sixteenth century there have been doctrinal condemnations between our Churches concerning eucharistic doctrine and practice. Our ecumenical endeavour to reconcile these disagreements through deepening our common theological understanding of this sacrament has been fruitful over the last fifty years and has paved the way to a differentiated consensus. The international Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue Commission stated in its final report *The Eucharist* in 1978 that the basic truths are common for both Catholics and Lutherans, and that different emphases on these issues do not as such divide the Church.<sup>169</sup> Our dialogue has this agreement as its background. The common basic view is also reflected in the Mass order of the ELCF, which follows that of the Catholic Church to a higher degree than do the liturgies of many other Lutheran Churches. Lutherans and Catholics have also developed their ecumenical understanding by learning from the liturgical movement of the twentieth century. This has contributed to bringing the traditions closer together.<sup>170</sup>
139. The German *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era – Do They Still Divide?* project stated: “The Tridentine canons concerning eucharistic theory and practice are subdivided into three sections: Canons on the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist (*Canones de ss. Eucharisticae sacramento*): DS 1651–61; Canons on Communion Under Both Species and That of Little Children (*Canones de communione sub utraque specie et parvulorum*): DS 1731–34; and Canons on the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass (*Canones de ss. Missae sacrificio*): DS 1751–59.”
140. This division also designates the three thematic sections to which the relevant rejections in the Lutheran Confessions chiefly refer. They are directed against 1) “the sophistry” of the doctrine of transubstantiation, 2) the denial of the chalice to the laity, and 3) the doctrine that the Mass is a good work

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168 CCC 1379.

169 *Eucharist* 51: “The ecumenical discussion has shown that these two positions must no longer be regarded as opposed in a way that leads to separation.”

170 JLC 217.

and a sacrifice.<sup>171</sup> This critique of the Mass is seen as especially important here, because it is closely connected with the fundamental Lutheran emphasis expressed in the doctrine of justification through faith.<sup>172</sup> The ecumenical breakthrough of the JD also suggests that the understandings of sacrifice in the context of justification are now easier to reconcile. As our differentiated consensus above (2.2.2) shows, the sacrifice can now be jointly understood in the context of the Church's sacramentality, not as a work of human self-justification.<sup>173</sup> The Lutheran-Catholic international dialogue document *The Eucharist* had articulated a significant and growing convergence regarding these themes as early as 1978.<sup>174</sup>

141. In this document our focus is on the substantial agreement and differentiated consensus reached above (chapter 2.2.) concerning the main themes of the condemnations regarding the Mass as sacrifice, the cup of the laity, and transubstantiation. It is not our intention to rehearse the discussion of the German Condemnations project, which succeeded in explicating the common ground concerning many historically disputed questions that even today need clarification. The condemnations are only briefly described here in the light of these agreements. We have already considered the condemnations in the Book of Concord concerning transubstantiation, the cup of the laity, and the Mass as sacrifice (chapters 2.2.3., 2.2.7., 2.2.2.); it now remains for us to elaborate the condemnations concerning the Eucharist at the Council of Trent. A detailed discussion regarding the official lifting of these condemnations should be carried out later by the Catholic Church and the Lutheran Communion.

### 2.3.2. The Doctrine of Transubstantiation (Canones de Eucharistia 1-11)

142. *Canon 1* of the Tridentine Decree on the Eucharist condemns those who deny “that in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist there are truly, really, and substantially contained the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore the whole Christ, but shall say that He is in it as by a sign or figure, or force (*ut in signo vel figura, aut virtute*)” (DS 1651). This is a rejection of the attitude that understands a sign as a merely external label drawing attention to something. The Lutheran understanding of the real presence is certainly not affected by this. As indicated in the consensus above (2.2.3.), in spite of differences in the terminology regarding the real presence, the Lutheran Reformers – in fundamental agreement with the

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171 Cf., e.g., CA 13: CA 24.28f., 30ff.; BC 59f.; AC 13.18ff.; BC 213 f.; AC 24.11f., 14, 27ff., 48, 60; BC 251, 251, 254f., 258, 260; AS II.2; BC 293ff.

172 Cf. AC 4.210; BC 136, with reference to Biel.

173 CRE 84.

174 Transubstantiation: *Eucharist* 51, cup of the laity: *Eucharist* 64 and sacrifice: *Eucharist* 61.

Catholic Church – stressed that in the Lord’s Supper Jesus Christ is “truly and substantially” (*vere et substantialiter*) present in his body and blood, and permits himself to be received by us under the species of bread and wine.<sup>175</sup>

143. *Canon 2* In Sessio XIII (1551), in *Canon 2* On the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist (*de ss. Eucharistiae sacramento*), the Council of Trent endorsed as the doctrine of the Church a “wonderful and singular conversion” (*mirabilem ... et singularem conversionem*), a transformation “of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the entire substance of the wine into the blood, the species of the bread and wine only remaining”. It added that the Catholic Church has “fittingly and properly” (*aptissime*) called this transformation (*conversio, mutatio*) a transformation of substance (*transsubstantiatio*) (DS 1652). The Formula of Concord “rejects and condemns” the doctrine of transubstantiation when it is held to maintain that the bread and wine are transformed into Christ’s body and blood in the sense of an annihilation (*annihilatio*) of the substance of the bread and wine, so that “only the exterior appearance remains” (*accidentia sine subiecto*).<sup>176</sup> As already indicated in the common understanding above (2.2.3.), after a series of theological dialogues we have reached an agreement on the key issue: the “change” (*conversio, mutatio*) of the eucharistic elements as a consequence of the real presence of Christ, whatever terminological differences there may be. Transubstantiation is a doctrinal explanation of the conversion/change as the key issue. The Council of Trent’s condemnation of the view that “in the sacred and holy sacrament of the Eucharist there remains the substance of bread and wine” (canon 2: DS 1652) does not apply to the Lutheran position if it is simply its intention to state that the bread and wine continue to exist as physical and chemical entities.<sup>177</sup>
144. *Canon 3* condemns those who teach that the whole Christ is not present in one species (*sub unaquaque specie et sub singulis cuiusque speciei partibus separatio facta totum Christum contineri*). The Lutheran Confessions teach that the whole Christ is present in both species, in the consecrated bread and wine. As already stated above (2.2.7), we can share the principle that the the sign of communion is more complete when both bread and wine are administered, and this difference in practice is not church-dividing.
145. *Canon 4*. Tridentine canon 4 condemns all those who say that the true presence of the Lord’s body and blood is in the sacrament “only in use (*in usu*), while it is taken (*dum sumitur*), not however before or after” (DS 1654). While Lutherans believe in the “change” of the Eucharistic elements, they emphasise that this is an ontological change which cannot be speculatively restricted to a particular moment. Canon 4’s rejection does not apply, therefore, to the

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175 Cf. CRE 89–90, 92.

176 Cf. FC Epit. 7.22: BC 484; SD 7.107f.: BC 588.

177 Cf. CRE 98–99; Ratzinger 1967, 153.

- Lutheran doctrine in its understanding of “use”, but only to a view which directly identifies “use” with “reception”.<sup>178</sup> The Second Vatican Council made it clear that the feast itself stands at the centre of eucharistic devotion (SC 55).
146. *Canon 5* of the Decree on the Eucharist (DS 1655) condemns the view that the special fruit of the Eucharist is the remission of sins.<sup>179</sup> The Reformers consider the forgiveness of sins to mean the comprehensive aspect of the fellowship (*koinonia*) with God that has once more been bestowed. The individual aspect is not separated from the social.<sup>180</sup> In Luther’s theology *unio* and *communio* also belong together.<sup>181</sup> Even in the sixteenth century it was commonly believed (DS 1638) that the forgiveness of sins ought certainly to be mentioned in any description of the Eucharist.<sup>182</sup>
147. *Canon 6* concerns the veneration of Christ in the celebration of the Eucharist (DS 1656). Lutherans and Catholics are united in teaching that adoration is given to the Lord present in the feast, not to “the visible forms of the elements of bread and wine”.<sup>183</sup> In the Lutheran Mass the adoration of Christ is approved and practised, for example, when the consecrated elements are elevated, or when the faithful receive Holy Communion. The Lutheran Confessions express concern about the misuse of the consecrated elements. They do not deny the adoration of Christ really present in the eucharistic elements as such. *We agree* on the adoration of the Eucharist as a “great mystery of mercy”.<sup>184</sup>
148. *Canon 7* (DS 1657) concerns the reservation of the Eucharist. Although the primary Lutheran practice is to consume all the eucharistic elements at the

178 CRE 102. FC SD 7.86f: BC 584f. According to Jolkkonen 2010, 131, Luther wrote two letters to Simon Wolferinus with Bugenhagen protesting strongly that his “*in usu*” understanding implied that the real presence ended the moment the Mass was over: “Luther ... thought it was a scandal that the priest in question saw fit to mix the consecrated bread and wine with the unconsecrated elements after the Mass. The Reformer asked who the priest had learned this from and whose example he was following. Luther rebuked Wolferinus for arousing, in general, with his incorrect use, speculation over the duration of the real presence, which was both dogmatically and pastorally ‘a scandalous and detrimental issue’. First, it was dangerous to claim to know for certain when the real presence ended. Secondly, the disrespectful behavior of the said minister harmed the congregation’s sense of faith and aroused offense and sophistry.”

179 CRE 111. AC 24.90: BC 266; cf. AC 13.22: BC 214; CA 24.30–33: BC 59f.

180 BC 352, CRE 111.

181 Peura 1997, 118–119, WA 30 I, 26, 26–27, 18. For example, in the prefatio according to the ELCF’s liturgy of the Mass the fellowship aspect of the Eucharist is clear: “He has suffered death on behalf of us and through his resurrection opened for us the way to the eternal life. We thank you for this gift of heaven and sing praise to you with the angels and all the saints.”

182 In Catholic theology it is problematic to say that the Eucharist is instituted for the remission of mortal sins. On the other hand, if one affirms that the Eucharist has the remission of venial sins as one of its effects, this is completely true and unproblematic. It is evident that the interpretation of the remission of sins (*remissio peccatorum*) as the fruit of the Eucharist was simply not unequivocally clear in controversial discussion. In conclusion, CRE fittingly states that where a narrow interpretation of the forgiveness of sins was involved (or still is), canon 5 (DS 1655) – which itself starts incompletely – still applies. But where the “forgiveness of sins” is seen as being one with the new fellowship (*communio*) with God conferred through grace as in our Lutheran and Catholic interpretation, the canon is null and void (CRE 111–112).

183 CRE 103. Cf. FC SD 7.126: BC 591; FC Epit. 7.19: BC 484.

184 *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, I, 11.

celebration, it is permitted to reserve the consecrated elements in a ciborium if what remains can be administered to the sick during the week.<sup>185</sup>

149. *Canon 8*, concerning eating the body and blood of Christ only spiritually and not sacramentally and really (DS 1658), is not directed towards the Lutheran understanding of the real presence of Christ in the sacrament.
150. *Canon 9*, concerning regular partaking in the Eucharist at least once a year (DS 1659), does not apply to Lutherans, who encourage members of the Church frequently to partake in the Eucharist, independently after confirmation and before that with a person who takes responsibility for a child's Christian education.
151. *Canon 10*, concerning the administration of the Eucharist to the celebrant by himself (DS 1660) is not directed against Lutherans, because when only one Lutheran priest celebrates the Eucharist he or she can administer the Eucharist to him or herself.
152. *Canon 11*, concerning faith as the only preparation for the Eucharist (DS 1661), cannot be applied to Lutherans, because a member can only participate independently in the Holy Communion after they have been confirmed, and at every Mass there is a common confession, a liturgy of the word, and prayers to prepare the communicant for the Eucharist.<sup>186</sup>

### **2.3.3. Communion under Both Kinds and the Communion of Small Children (Canones de Communionem sub utraque Species et Parvulorum 1-4)**

153. *Canon 1* (DS 1731), concerning receiving the Eucharist in both kinds as necessary for salvation, does not apply because this is not Lutheran teaching.
154. *Canon 2*, concerning the criticism of the Catholic Church for administering the Eucharist in only one kind to the laity and those priests who are not celebrating, is not a source of disagreement in the light of current teaching (2.2.7).
155. *Canon 3*, concerning not receiving the whole Christ under the one species, does not apply to Lutheran teaching. Although Lutherans usually distribute the communion under both kinds, they do not deny the validity of the Eucharist when it is received under one kind (2.2.7).
156. *Canon 4*, concerning the necessity of the Eucharist for the salvation of children under the "age of discretion", is not directed against Lutheran teaching. In the ELCF children are invited and permitted to take part in the Holy Communion under the guidance of a person responsible for their Christian education; usually, however, they take part only after confirmation school.

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185 ELCF Guidelines, 99, 102.

186 JLC 253.

### 2.3.4. The Mass as Sacrifice (Canones de Missae Sacrificium 1-9)

157. *Canon 1*, (DS 1751), concerns the Mass as sacrifice. Above (2.2.2.) we have formulated a differentiated consensus on the understanding of the sacrifice and the Mass as sacrifice from the perspective of the presence of the unique and unrepeatable sacrifice of Christ in the Mass. The offering of Christ on the cross is sacramentally present in the sacrificial offering. His unique offering as the basis of the sacrament and the sacrificial offering must be kept together to avoid the gift and the offering being separated from each other.<sup>187</sup> As a consequence, the first Tridentine canon (DS 1751) and the condemnations of the Lutheran Confessions may be seen in a new light. The Tridentine condemnation is directed against the severance of the cross and the Mass, the complete separation of the sacrament of Jesus's body and blood from his sacrifice.
158. *Canon 2* concerns the priestly celebration of the Eucharist. We have agreed above (2.2.6.) that it is the task of ordained priests or bishops to celebrate the Eucharist. In both Catholic and Lutheran understanding the priest functions in the person of Christ (*in persona Christi*).<sup>188</sup>
159. *Canon 3* concerns the Mass understood only as a sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise. We have above (2.2.2.) differentiated seven different meanings for "sacrifice" in the context of the Mass.
160. *Canon 4*: The Reformers' criticism is encapsulated in the thesis that the Roman doctrine of the sacrifice of the Mass contradicts "the full sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, which was once and for all" (CA 24.21, 25ff.: BC 58; Apol. 24.56ff., 62f.: BC 259f). We have formulated our agreement (2.2.2.) concerning this canon.<sup>189</sup>
161. *Canon 5* concerns the celebration of the Mass in order to honour the saints and to ask for their intercessions.<sup>190</sup> Lutherans can also accept the honouring of the saints (CA 21, AC 21), and even admit that the angels and the saints pray for the Church in heaven (AC 21,9).<sup>191</sup> Trent had already corrected the

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187 Cf. *Eucharist* 56.

188 CRE 86. Cf. AC 24.53ff.: BC 259f.; FC Epit. 7.8: BC 482; SD 7. 74: BC 583.

189 CRE 84–85. *Canon 4*. Si quis dixerit, blasphemiam irrogari sanctissimo Christi sacrifice in cruce peracto per Missae sacrificium, aut illi per hoc derogari: anathema sit. Smalcald Articles, Part II, Article II: Of the Mass: "...Fifthly. But since the Mass is nothing else and can be nothing else (as the Canon and all books declare), than a work of men (even of wicked scoundrels), by which one attempts to reconcile himself and others to God, and to obtain and merit the remission of sins and grace (for thus the Mass is observed when it is observed at the very best; otherwise what purpose would it serve?), for this very reason it must and should [certainly] be condemned and rejected. For this directly conflicts with the chief article, which says that it is not a wicked or a godly hiring of the Mass with his own work, but the Lamb of God and the Son of God, that taketh away our sins."

190 CRE 112–114.

191 CA 21; CS 242. Cf. also CS 250: "Die Reliquienverehrung ist als eine Form der Heiligenverehrung anzusehen. Sie geht auf die Frühzeit der Kirche zurück. Der zugrundeliegende Gedanke ist die Treue Gottes, die sich zum ganzen Menschen, also auch zu seinem Leib, bekennt" and CS 252: "Die liebevolle Aufbewahrung von

view that particular forms of the Mass, and “series of Masses”, could not fail in their effect for the redemption of “poor souls” in purgatory.<sup>192</sup>

162. *Canon 6* concerns the Canon of the Mass being in error and the need to abolish it. Martin Luther was strongly critical of the text of the Roman Canon, because he understood it in the light of Gabriel Biel’s commentary.<sup>193</sup> Even after Trent there were different interpretations of this prayer in Catholic theology. Today both Lutherans and Catholics use their own Eucharistic prayers. The liturgical life of both Churches, inspired by the heritage of the Early Church and the ecumenical liturgical movement of the twentieth century, has developed. On the basis of our common understanding above (2.2.2), there is a differentiated consensus concerning the Mass.
163. *Canon 7* (DS 1757) asserts a fundamental justification of outward ceremonies, signs, and vestments in the eucharistic celebration. From today’s perspective it can be seen that even in the sixteenth century there was no disagreement about the ancillary character of outward ceremonies. Following the theological reflection and practical liturgical renewal resulting from Vatican II, our mutual convergence is even closer.
164. *Canon 8*, concerning the Masses in which the priest alone takes part in the eucharistic communion, has been discussed above (2.2.1.).
165. *Canon 9* concerns the silent reading of the words of consecration in the Canon of the Roman rite, the celebration of the Mass only in the vernacular, and the mixing of water with the eucharistic wine. Here, the condemnations also appear in a new light. Lutherans underline the centrality of the words of consecration. It is possible to recite or read them. Lutherans do not argue that the Mass should only be celebrated in the vernacular, or that water should not be mixed with the eucharistic wine (canon 9: DS 1759; cap. 7: DS 1748, AC 24). The guidelines approved by the ELCF Bishops’ Conference allow the mixing of water with the eucharistic wine.<sup>194</sup>

## 2.4. Conclusion

166. JLC defines the substantial elements of the Eucharist on which agreement is necessary if the fullness of the eucharistic mystery in each other’s traditions is to be recognised: “bread and wine, the Eucharistic Prayer including the words of institution by Christ and some form of epiclesis or invocation of the Holy

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Erinnerungszeichen an Menschen, die wir ehren, begegnet uns auch im evangelischen Bereich. Sofern das ehrende Gedenken und der Dank an Gott dabei leitend sind, wird dagegen nichts eingewendet. Wo aber durch Reliquienverehrung eine Vermittlung der Gnade erwartet würde, gilt heute der gemeinsame Widerspruch.”

192 CRE 112.

193 Gabriel Biel (1415–95): *Expositio Canonis Missae* (1499).

194 ELCF Guidelines, 99.



Spirit, faith in the real presence of Jesus Christ in bread and wine, faith in the actuality of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, faith in the sacramental nature of the Eucharist and recognition of the validity and the sacramental nature of the ministry”.<sup>195</sup> If these are the substantial elements on which agreement is required, there seems good reason to hope that a differentiated consensus on the basis of the scope of our agreements in the basic truths of faith regarding the Eucharist may be reached. However, before any further conclusions are drawn, we need further discussion on the last issue: recognition of the validity and sacramental character of the ministry.

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195 JLC 350.

### III. COMMUNION AND SACRAMENTAL MINISTRY

#### 1. The Biblical and Historical Background of the Ministry

##### 1.1 The Ministry in the New Testament

167. We now present a short overview regarding the biblical and historical background of the ministry, together with the main strands of the development of the understanding of ordained ministry and the Petrine Ministry to focus on their essential elements. This summary seeks to increase the common understanding of the development so far to provide a background for the formulation of a differentiated consensus, but not to make a comprehensive contribution on the topic.<sup>196</sup> In presenting the background, we are especially grateful to the Catholic-Lutheran dialogue report, *The Apostolicity of the Church*, and to the German Lutheran-Catholic document, *Communio Sanctorum*. We use a selection of ecumenical research literature concerning the historical development to give focus and orientation to our endeavour.

168. All four Gospels recount that Jesus had already selected a group of twelve disciples during his Galilean ministry. Sometimes Jesus selects a smaller group of three from among the Twelve – most often Peter, James, and John – to witness particular events (Mark 9:2; Mark 14:32; paralleled by Matthew). Sometimes Peter speaks on behalf of the larger group, and he is mentioned first in all the lists of the Twelve, corresponding to the fact that in the Synoptic tradition he and his brother Andrew were the first to be called (Mark 1:16-20). The Twelve were called to be with Jesus and to participate in his mission (cf. Matt. 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16; and John 6:70). “He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives him who sent me” (Matt. 10:40); “He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects me rejects him who sent me” (Luke 10:16). The mission given by Jesus to his apostles represents an extension of his own

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196 Cf. Müller 2017, 139-140: “Eine Grund-Kennntnis der Geschichte des Papsttums und der Entwicklung der Primatsidee muss allerdings vorausgesetzt werden, um gewisse Stereotypen und Allgemeinplätze zu relativieren, wie sie in der populistischen Anti-Rom-Polemik oder auch in schwärmerischen Papst-Apologitiken häufig anzutreffen sind.”

ministry of proclamation and healing (Mark 6:7–13; Matt. 10:1–11:2; Luke 9:1–6). They share his message, and his power and authority over demons and diseases. Jesus continues his own mission in them. “As the Father has sent me, even so I send you” (John 20:21; cf. 13:20; 17:18). Just as Jesus has a mission which comes to him directly from God and makes present the very authority of God (cf. Matt. 7:29; 21:23; Mark 1:27; 11:28; Luke 20:2; 24:19), so too the apostles have a mission which comes to them from Jesus. In essence the apostles are sent by Christ (*missi a Christo*). The early Christian community was convinced of the abiding presence of the Lord even after Jesus no longer appeared to them. Matthew and Luke, and also John, attest to a final, universal commissioning of the apostles by the risen Christ.<sup>197</sup>

169. For Paul the apostolic mission is fundamental for the growth of the Church (*ekklesia*). Through the apostles’ proclamation the word of God becomes effective in faith and Jesus Christ is laid as the foundation of the Church in ever new places. In this the apostle, like those who follow him and who build on this foundation, is a servant of God (1 Cor. 3:5–11). The foundational role of an apostle is a matter of priority in time and in sequence, but it also has a formative function. It implies a responsibility of setting a norm that may subsequently be further explored, developed, and applied, but not abandoned and distorted. This is why the apostle Paul writes his letters to congregations he has founded, and why others later write letters in Paul’s name when he is no longer around to react. The Pastoral Letters go further in spelling out the apostle Paul’s role as a founder both in view of his exemplary way of life (2 Tim. 4:7) and his teaching “in faith and truth” (1 Tim. 2:7). In the Pauline tradition, represented by the Letter to the Ephesians, the Church herself becomes a thematic focus of reflection. Apostles are mentioned in Eph. 4:11 in a context similar to 1 Cor. 12. The various gifts all serve to build up the body of Christ as apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers in his Church.<sup>198</sup>
170. The selection of the Twelve during Jesus’s ministry in Galilee and the mandate they receive at the last supper (Luke 22:22–38) prepare them for their role in the restoration of Israel, as is described in eschatological terms: in the kingdom of God they will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes (v. 30). In preparation for the election, the criteria for service as an apostle are listed (Acts 1:21–22). The criteria cannot be fulfilled beyond the first generation. According to Luke the college (*collegium*) of the twelve apostles has a unique and singular function in the history of the people of God. The assignment is to become a witness of Jesus’s resurrection (Luke 24:48 and Acts 1:8,22).

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197 ApC 1–13.

198 ApC 17–27.

Having been an eyewitness (*autoptes*) is a requirement, but this alone does not make an apostle. The task of the Twelve is to attest to the continuity between the crucified Jesus they knew and the resurrected Lord, and to bear witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.<sup>199</sup>

171. Among the disciples Peter has a special leading role. Jesus prays that his faith will not fail and asks him to strengthen his brethren after he has converted (Luke 22:32). He is a shepherd, whom Christ has called to “feed my sheep” (John 21:15–17). After his confession of Christ as the “Messiah, the Son of the living God” Jesus promised to build his Church “on this rock”, Cephas (*Kepha*, Mark 3:16; Matt. 16:18; John 1:42). In the biblical narrative the immediate basis of this promise is Peter’s confession of Jesus Christ as the “Messiah”: “... [F]lesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.” (Matt. 16:17–18) Through the apostle Peter Jesus gave to his Church and to the other apostles the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 16:19). Apostolic power and responsibility rest above all in proclaiming salvation in Jesus Christ for all people, as shown by the assignments of Jesus to his disciples in John 20:23 and the double commandment (Matt. 28:18–20) to baptise and to teach. The power to bind and to release also includes the power to decide on right and false doctrine. In his sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2:14–36) Peter is the first disciple to proclaim the Gospel in public.<sup>200</sup>
172. The apostolic ministry of the Twelve is focused on Israel, and their eschatological role becomes effective as the fallen dwelling of David is rebuilt (Acts 15:16). They teach, they defend the faith, and they work miracles. They also take part in the laying on of hands so that those who have been baptised may receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:16–17). They install “the Seven” by prayer and the laying on of hands, as reported in Acts 6:6. Despite the Lukan focus on the apostolic college of the Twelve, the apostles function within the whole community, all of whose members (Acts 2:3) receive the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost. Their common life is formed by devotion to the apostles’ teaching, to fellowship and the sharing of resources, to the breaking of bread, and to the prayers (Acts 2:42).<sup>201</sup>
173. The canonical writings of the New Testament reflect a phase during which different ecclesial patterns developed, coexisted, and interacted. The Church has never been without persons holding specific responsibilities and authority, and functions and tasks make sense only when persons undertake them. In the Pauline Churches a charismatic profile should not be understood to exclude

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199 ApC 28–31.

200 CS, para. 158–163.

201 ApC 32–34.

order and governance. Nevertheless, there is a strong affirmation in the New Testament of the calling of the whole people of God as the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:4–11, 12–27). By means of the gifts of the Spirit God creates and maintains the Church and gives birth each day to faith, love, and new life. In several writings there are indications that ecclesial offices and titles were being formed, but they were not yet precisely defined or generally accepted.<sup>202</sup>

174. The term *episkopos* is used five times in the New Testament. In 1 Pet. 2:25 Christ is called “the shepherd and *episkopos* of your souls”. In the other cases the term refers to leaders in a local Church. The image of a shepherd serves to illustrate their role as the protectors and guardians of the flock – and of themselves as well. The Pastoral Letters are concerned about the protection of the apostolic heritage in a situation in which it is perceived as being under threat and attack by distorted speculation and subversive behaviour. They teach faith and love, and firmly establish church order. The Church is ordered as the “household of God”, with moral expectations and clearly set standards of behaviour according to one’s place, and with a defined allocation of authority (1 Tim. 3:14–15). God has entrusted the management of the household (Tit. 1:7) to a steward (*oikonomos*) in the person of the bishop (*episkopos*). The crucial responsibility of this pastoral office is the official teaching of the community holding fast to sound doctrine (Tit. 1:9). This is the legacy (*depositum, paratheke*) that they have received from Paul through his disciples and messengers, Timothy and Titus, whose task has been to guard it faithfully (1 Tim. 1:11; 6:20). The apostolic legacy also includes the formative example of the apostle himself (1 Tim. 1:16).<sup>203</sup>
175. Some scholars suggest that there is already a tendency towards a threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter, and deacon (*episkopos, presbyteros, diakonos*) in the Pastoral Letters. However, their precise functions and relationship to each other are not at all clear. It seems that *episkopoi* and *diakonoi* on the one hand, and *presbyteroi* on the other, represent two co-existing traditions within the Church. *Presbyteros* (in Jerusalem) and *episkopos* (in Hellenistic communities) are two names for the same office. It is clear in any case that by the side of the apostles there were persons whose ministry is seen in some way as representing Christ. Their task is to serve the Lord and the congregation. They serve at the sacramental meal and by proclamation, teaching, and caritative work. Their function is partly to share in leading the congregation – primarily the function of the bishop (*episkopos*) and/or priest (*presbyteros*), partly to assist him and/or them. They are called *diakonoi*.<sup>204</sup>

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202 ApC 35–37.

203 ApC 38.45.

204 *Det kyrkliga ämbetet*, 23–24; Nguyen 2016, 73–74. Nguyen also provides further literature on the topic. He suggests that J.D. Quinn concludes that “all *episkopoi* were *presbyteroi* but all *presbyteroi* were not *episkopoi*” (J.D.

176. The Pastoral Letters attest to a rite of ordination through the laying on of hands. In 2 Tim. 1:6 Timothy is reminded to “rekindle the gift (*charisma*) of God” that he has within him through Paul’s laying on of hands. A similar rite, seemingly referring to the same occasion, is mentioned in 1 Tim. 4:14. Three elements seem to be involved in the rite: a gift (charism), a prophecy, and the laying on of hands. What does seem clear is the fact that the notion of charism occurs in the Pastoral Letters only in connection with an act of ordination. The enabling gift of the Spirit is conferred through the laying on of hands and is perceived as the charism of ministry. Accordingly, the rite of ordination is to be interpreted in epicletic terms, and the laying on of hands functions as a rite of initiation into a position of spiritual leadership. It is connected to the truth of the doctrine that Timothy is called upon to proclaim and defend. The Pastoral Letters do not isolate the rite from the life of the Church as a whole or from the authentic preaching of the Gospel and the teaching of sound doctrine. The rite demonstrates that the Church is permanently subject to the guidance of the Spirit by means of an ordered transition through the personal transmission from one generation to another. The Acts of the Apostles also affirms a connection between the laying on of hands and the gift of the Spirit (Acts 8:14–17 and 19:5–6).<sup>205</sup>
177. The assurance of an abiding divine presence empowered and guided the apostolic community. At the heart of the apostolic proclamation and teaching were the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Church has ever since endeavoured to remain faithful to the apostolic witness, and the canon of the Bible eventually became a normative exposition of this concern. The Pastoral Letters express a growing concern for the forms of transmission, since a continuity with the teaching of the apostles is a measure of faithfulness and a ground of credibility. The paramount task for those in leadership positions in the Church is therefore to teach and to safeguard the transmission of sound doctrine, which is constantly under threat. They are entrusted with the apostolic legacy, in Greek *paratheke*, (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:14), and in Latin *depositum*. This is a tradition of faith (*depositum fidei*), but it also comprises a legacy of life (*depositum vitae*), inviting the community to adhere to the apostolic life in its spiritual discipline and practices. The faithfulness of the Church to the apostolic Gospel requires certain traditional forms and a particular ecclesial ministry of proclamation, reconciliation, and teaching to ensure the orderly transmission of the apostolic ministry.<sup>206</sup> This brings us to

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Quinn, “Ministry in the New Testament”, in *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue IV: Eucharist and Ministry*, cit., 69–100, at 97). For the origin of the presbyterate as distinct from that of the episcopate and the diaconate see F.M. Young, “On *episkopos* and *presbyteros*,” in *Journal of Theological Studies* 45 (1994) 142–48.

205 ApC 50–52.

206 ApC 54–64.

questions concerning ordained ministry, episcopal ministry, priesthood, the ministry of the deacon, and the ministry of unity.

## 1.2. The Patristic Time: the Connection between Communion, Tradition, and Succession

178. From the earliest times Christians recognised the *presbyteroi-episkopoi* as the successors of the apostles. Their special responsibility was to safeguard and hand on the apostolic tradition.<sup>207</sup> From the mid-second century, with the consolidation of the monarchical episcopate, the apostolic tradition (*paradosis*) as the guarantor of the “rule of faith” is preserved by the succession (*diadoché*) of the bishop in his see (*sedes, cathedras*), founded by the apostles. The apostolic tradition precedes and includes the apostolic succession. The *diadoché* (succession) designates the places where the apostolic tradition perpetuates. In the first letter of Clement (44:1–2.4) the episcopacy (*episkopé*) is seen as the task transmitted by the apostles to the men who were instituted to succeed them. Apostolicity (*apostolé*), which is the continuation of the very mission of Christ, is followed by the one and undivided episcopacy (*episkopé*).<sup>208</sup>
179. The sufficiency of the succession from apostolicity (*apostolé*) to episcopacy (*episkopé*), which is not succession without doctrinal content, is traditionally ensured by the see (*cathedra*) in which the bishops succeed each other. However, this is not to be understood on the basis of a “pipeline-theory”, which views the ritual validation in isolation from the sacramental communion of the Church.<sup>209</sup> This is an indication of a fragmented medieval, juridical, and ultimately individualistic ecclesiology that is in tension with the sacramental communion ecclesiological approach, which underlines not only the Christological but also the pneumatological and eschatological character of the Church of the apostles. The interplay of *communio, traditio, and successio* is an indication of this.<sup>210</sup>

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207 Nguyen 2016, 123.

208 Nguyen 2016, 91–124.

209 Cf. ApC 291: “It is Catholic doctrine that an individual bishop is not in apostolic succession by his being part of a historically verifiable and uninterrupted chain of imposition of hands through his predecessors to one of the apostles. It is instead essential that he be in communion with the whole order of bishops which as a whole succeeds the apostolic college and its mission. Thus the consensus of the bishops among themselves is the decisive sign of the apostolicity of their teaching.” Cf. also Müller 2017, 493: “Indiskutabel ist die Karikatur der Lehre von der apostolischen Sukzession als einer Kette von Handauflegungen, die von sich aus gleichsam mechanisch die Identität der Kirche im Wandel der Zeiten garantieren (!) soll. Das Wesentliche ist gerade der innere Verweisungszusammenhang von Botschaft und Bote (Röm 10,14f).“

210 Apostolicity and succession are distinct, but they are not to be set against each other. There is an important interplay between legitimate office and authentic doctrine. Moreover, the apostolic succession serves the preservation of the apostolic tradition in ecclesial communion. This is seen in the early practice of participation by local Churches in the appointment of their own bishops. At a new bishop’s ordination, at least three bishops were necessary as consecrators, and the new bishop received the “letters of communion” from his fellow bishops (Canon 4 of Nicaea, 325). Since all the bishops who stand in apostolic succession participate in one Spirit in

180. With regard to the relationship between Scripture and tradition in the safeguarding and transmission of the apostolic legacy, it is important to note that Irenaeus (c.130–c.200) already avers that the criterion of true faith is not constituted by the writings of the New Testament alone (*sola scriptura numquam sola*). After all, the rules of faith (*regula fidei*) guided the proclamation even before the canon of Holy Scripture was synodally confirmed.<sup>211</sup> Nevertheless, Holy Scripture is a faithful testimony of the tradition – ultimately Christ himself (cf. *was Christum treibet*). The sign of succession (*successio*) needs a living witness and faithfulness to tradition (*traditio*). A bishop is found in succession if he is the legitimate successor of his predecessors and if he remains faithful to the doctrine of the Church. There is a connection between succession (*successio*) and tradition (*traditio*), but also between succession and communion (*communio*). The basic elements of substantive apostolicity are communion (*communio*), succession (*successio*), and tradition (*traditio*, apostolic faith/Gospel), which are in interplay with each other.<sup>212</sup> In addition to the faithfulness of a single bishop the consonance of bishops among themselves is very important for the apostolicity of their teaching together with the whole people of God (*sensus fidelium*), which gives expression to the apostolicity of the whole Church, the communion of saints (*communio sanctorum*). There is no communion without common faith, which is expressed in the Bible and tradition (the apostolic faith) and served by the ministry in succession as bonds of communion.
181. Irenaeus underlined that episcopal ministry, Holy Scripture, and tradition together safeguarded the preservation of genuine apostolic faith and succession. In the fifth century Vincent of Lérins emphasised consentient agreement in avoiding a dangerous alteration or change that was transformative of a doctrine's very nature and essence (*aliquid ex alio in aliud*). What has been believed and transmitted as the apostolic faith “always, everywhere, and by everyone” (*semper, ubique, et ab omnibus*) was decisive. Concretely, this meant for him that a proper confession of the faith (*profectus*) was assured first through the Scriptures and then through the tradition of the Church. The doctrinal consensus was known and preserved in the life of the Church in all its constitutive facets.<sup>213</sup> The apostolic ministerial succession was necessary, but it was not *the* guarantee, but *a* guarantee. Without tradition and communion it did not guarantee fidelity to the revealed deposit. It was the precondition for understanding the continuity between the apostolic and post-apostolic

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the one mission, they form together the one order of bishops (*ordo episcoporum*), in Cyprian's words, “a one and indivisible episcopate” (*De Unit.* 4).

211 For the relationship between dogma and biblical interpretation see, for example, Pihkala 2017, 156–180.

212 Cf. ApC 291.

213 Guarino 2013, 92.



Church. The Church was an institution permanently linked to her origins and, simultaneously, a construction in the Holy Spirit, which constantly renewed that beginning.<sup>214</sup>

182. Concerning the concrete form of the historic and apostolic succession, the understanding of the threefold character of ministry already had its roots in the New Testament and developed into a basic form in the early Church as a leadership office in three parts. The bishops were primarily called to lead the Church in a certain region; priests to lead the local congregation; and deacons to work in proclamation and diaconal service. Episcopacy had a special responsibility for the doctrine and unity of the Church. The first documented representative of this view was Ignatius of Antioch (c.50 – c.98–117).<sup>215</sup>

### 1.3. The Medieval Time: the Great Schism of the West and the Council of Constance

183. Following the fall of Western Rome the bishops also took on secular functions in the West.<sup>216</sup> Gradually, many became prince bishops, rulers within the feudal system. These prince bishops were not necessarily ordained as priests or consecrated as bishops, and there were distinct auxiliary bishops (*Weibbischof*).<sup>217</sup>

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214 There is a slight difference in meaning between “apostolic ministry” and “apostolic succession”. Apostolic ministry deals with ministry as such. Apostolic succession deals with its two components, namely, the apostolicity of tradition and of ministry. The apostolic succession is the process by which the Church of the post-apostolic generations continues as the same Church established by Christ on the apostolic foundation. The succession seeks to realise and serve the plenitude of salvation present in Christ until its absolute fulfilment in the Holy Spirit.

215 *Biskop, präst och diakon*, 16–17. In his Letter to the Philadelphians Ignatius of Antioch writes: “4:1 Be diligent, therefore, to use one eucharist, for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup, for union with his blood; one altar, even as there is one bishop, together with the presbytery and the deacons, who are my fellow-servants, to the end that whatever ye do, ye may do it according unto God.”

216 Regarding the historical development of the Petrine Ministry, three periods in ecclesiastical history which have influenced its understanding can be distinguished: 1. From the post-apostolic period until the fourth century. The characteristic feature of ecclesiological understanding is the communion (*communio*) of local Churches in an organisational and spiritual exchange with each other. 2. The period from the fourth century until the First Vatican Council and its reception in the middle of the twentieth century was characterised by the transformation under Emperors Constantine (313) and Theodosius (380) which resulted in a close relationship between Church and state. Christianity became the state religion of Rome and the bishops, and the Bishop of Rome especially as the Primate of the capital of West Rome, received many political and administrative duties. Since the fourth century the Bishop of Rome has more often been called “pope” than the other Patriarchs of the pentarchy. Rome’s theological pre-eminence became increasingly normative in the emergency situations of the fourth and fifth centuries. By the fifth century the Bishop of Rome was explicitly understood as the successor to the apostle Peter. Ecclesiologically, the image of the Church as the “body of Christ” and the emphasis on vertical structures began to replace the emphasis on communion. 3. The Second Vatican Council and the reception of its documents, which continues to this day. The constitution *Lumen gentium* (LG 9–17) assesses the various biblical images of the Church and also underlines the Church as the People of God. Early Church communion ecclesiology and the striving for a consensus within the whole Church has received renewed importance (CS, para. 166–175).

217 In medieval Germany some prince bishops at first refused to practise their power to ordain, but this meant there was a growing number of unordained prince bishops who could not perform any spiritual services. For example, in the list of bishops in the church of Cologne from the middle of the sixteenth until the middle of the seventeenth centuries there were seven prince archbishops, none of whom was ordained bishop, although

The criticism in Augsburg Confession 28 of the power of the bishops is to be understood in this context: “There has been great controversy concerning the Power of Bishops, in which some have awkwardly confounded the power of the Church and the power of the sword. ... [T]he power of the Keys, or the power of the bishops, according to the Gospel, is a power or commandment of God, to preach the Gospel, to remit and retain sins, and to administer Sacraments.”<sup>218</sup> Furthermore, the Petrine Ministry was affected by the Great Schism of the West, which began in 1378 and brought with it a crisis in the Church’s authority for forty years until the Council of Constance (1414–1418). There were for a period three popes.<sup>219</sup>

184. Among the decisions of the Council of Constance relevant to the Reformers’ critique are:

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their nominations had been confirmed by the pope (Brandt 1988, 1–16). Concerning prince bishops see also Osborne 1988 and Santantoni 2000, 217–251. In the medieval period the orders of the significance and value of the threefold ministry (bishop, presbyter, and deacon) in relation to the sacrament of the Eucharist and its celebration were recognised. It was celebrated by the presbyter, a person ordained to priestly ministry. Bishops also celebrated the Eucharist on the basis of their priesthood. Their power over presbyters was not based on ordination and its sacramentality but on their governing and jurisdictional rights. At the sacramental level the highest power belonged to the priest, because he had the power over the sacramental body of Christ. Bishops only had canonical jurisdiction over the ecclesial body. To the bishop belonged the power to ordain, but ordination conducted by a priest was also known. The episcopacy’s theologically thin position was also visible in that a bishop was not ordained but consecrated. Episcopacy was not seen as a sacrament but as a non-sacramental office and title. Thus, a fundamental distinction was made between the power to ordain and the power of jurisdiction. A bishop did not get the power of jurisdiction on the basis of his consecration, but received it from the pope as a separate authorisation (lat. *missio canonica*). Although the bishops were seen as successors of the apostles, the episcopacy had no directly Christological foundation as did the presbyterate. The power of a bishop was delegated by the pope (Ratzinger 1987, Osborne 1988, Santantoni 2000, 217–251, Pohjola 2014).

218 Cf. Müller 2017, 145–146: “Papst und Bischöfe dürfen sich nicht nur auf ihre Autorität berufen, die ihnen zweifellos von Gott gegeben ist, sie müssen auch ihrer Herde ein Vorbild sein (1 Petr 5,4). Die Krise der Glaubwürdigkeit der Kirche im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert war von ihren führenden Repräsentanten mitverschuldet.“ Müller 2017, 239 adds: “Die vom Papst zu bewahrende Orthodoxie umfasst auch die Sorge, dass nicht aus mangelnder Eindeutigkeit falsche praktische Konsequenzen gezogen werden, die das Heil gefährden. Es gibt auch eine Häresie der Praxis. Dies trifft sicher auf den Ablasshandel Tetzels zu, der, von seinen kirchlichen Oberen gedeckt, der Anlass war zur Kirchenspaltung im 16. Jahrhundert.“

219 From the beginning of the fourteenth century until 1377, when Gregory XI succeeded in restoring it to Rome, the Petrine seat was in Avignon. After Gregory’s death in March 1378 Urban VI (1378–1389) was elected in response to the fear that the papacy might be returned to Avignon. The cardinals were dissatisfied with him and elected among themselves Clement VII (1378–1394), who failed to secure the seat in Rome and took up residence in Avignon, resulting in a rivalry for obedience. In Rome Boniface IX (1389), Innocent VII (1404), and Gregory XII (1406) were elected to succeed Urban VI. In Avignon Benedict XIII was elected to succeed Clement VII in 1394. There was a widespread jurisdictional conflict and mounting spiritual anxiety. In Pisa another claimant emerged in 1410. Ultimately, the Council of Constance was summoned under imperial pressure by the Pisan Pope, John XXIII (1410–1415). The Council deposed him along with his Avignonese rival, Benedict XIII, and accepted the “resignation” of the Roman claimant, Gregory XII. The Council elected a successor, Martin V (1417–31), the first pope in forty years to command the allegiance of the whole Latin Church. The Council of Basel (1431–1437/49) subsequently stated that Councils were above the pope, but the pope quickly released himself from the bind of conciliarity. The union with the Orthodox Church in 1438 at the Council of Florence (1439–42) led to the loss of conciliarity and the pope excommunicated the Council of Basel. Thus, the Catholic Church had undergone a traumatic experience in the century before Martin Luther, and there was much discussion concerning the correct balance between the power of the Roman Pontiff and the Council of Bishops.

“1158. If a pope is foreknown as damned and is evil, and is therefore a limb of the devil, he does not have authority over the faithful given to him by anyone, except perhaps by the emperor. ...

1160. It is against sacred scripture for ecclesiastics to have possessions. ...

1163. Those who stop preaching or hearing the word of God on account of an excommunication issued by men are themselves excommunicated and will be regarded as traitors of Christ on the day of judgement.”

#### 1.4. The Reformation Era

185. Luther and Melanchthon wished to preserve the Church’s episcopal structure. They took the institution of the episcopate for granted, but asked about the nature and limits of contemporary legitimate episcopal authority.<sup>220</sup> In the course of the emergency (*Nothandlung*) in Wittenberg the Catholic bishops had in general ceased to ordain priests for the congregations that had joined the reformation movement. *Reformatio Wittenbergensis* explains the Lutherans’ decision to practise ordination.<sup>221</sup> Its main principle was that bishops should ordain, which is exemplified by the ordinations of Nikolaus von Amsdorf in Naumburg in 1542 and Georg von Anhalt in Merseburg in 1545. Both ordinations followed in principle the contemporary Catholic form of episcopal ordination. Luther also maintained that a priest should be ordained anew when he becomes a bishop. The bishop’s ordination in Merseburg, which Luther undertook after Bishop Matthias von Jagow, who had originally been asked to conduct the ordination, had died, intentionally followed in its emphasis on the word of God, prayer, and the laying on of hands the concrete ecclesial reality of early Christianity. It seems clear that Georg von Anhalt’s reforming Catholic theology of ordination followed in its essential points the contemporary sixteenth-century Catholic consensus.<sup>222</sup> In the sixteenth century there was no clear official doctrine of the ministry of bishop in the Catholic Church; only individual features were present. Luther should be seen more in this light than the more rigorous light of the Second Vatican Council. However, it is also relevant that the Second Vatican Council adopted essential aspects from the early and Eastern Churches’ understanding of the episcopal ministry. Luther also understood the ministry within the framework of communion ecclesiology.<sup>223</sup>

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220 AC 14: “...it is our greatest wish to maintain church-polity and the grades in the Church [old church-regulations and the government of bishops]...” Sander 2004, 49, footnote 97; 211, footnote 813; 232: “Nam sicuti sepius T.C. testatus sum, Me non optare ruinam Episcopatum, sed reformationem” (Brief Luthers an Georg [von Anhalt] vom 20. Mai 1539. In: WA.B. VIII, 432). See also Nguyen 2016, 274–275.

221 CR 5, 595–603.

222 Sander 2004, 70–90, 126–140, 233–235.

223 Meßner 1997, 223.

186. Luther did not question the institution of the papacy itself at the beginning of his reforming work. Previously, Luther had considered that the pope at least had the right to call for obedience in the Church in accordance with human law (*iure humano*), and that God at least recognised this. Gradually, however, a new argument emerged in his thinking which saw the papacy as being against the will of God. An impasse was reached after a harsh exchange. Luther saw the pope's claim to divine authority and obedience as corrupting the whole Church and the redemptive work of Christ. He stated that the Church had existed for more than five hundred years without the pope, and that the Orthodox continued to survive without him. The papacy was not biblically grounded, and was at best a human arrangement (*iure humano*).<sup>224</sup> From today's perspective Luther's statements, especially after 1521 concerning the pope as Antichrist, cannot be taken as a constructive ecumenical basis for dialogue on the Petrine Ministry.<sup>225</sup> Lutheran theology now acknowledges that Luther's statements after 1521 were historically conditioned. Reformers such as Melanchthon and Johannes Aepinus (1499–1553) were open to the reform of the papal institution. The Reformation made no fundamental objection to a ministry of leadership in the universal Church. Even the later Luther wrote some positive assessments of the papacy, for example, *Von der Wiedertaufe an zwei Pfarrherrn* (1528). In his lecture on the Galatians (1531) Luther says that he is prepared to honour the pope if he will allow his conscience to be free in the justification by faith and not compel him to offend God.<sup>226</sup> Nevertheless, Luther's harsh words against the pope serve as an indication of the tragic and regrettable result of the conflict which led to the division of the Church, and which only patient ecumenical work and prayer have taught us to repair through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It should also be remembered that neither Luther nor the Catholic Church of his time had a systematic ecclesiology, and even less an elaborated doctrine of the papacy in the Church.<sup>227</sup>
187. In 1537 Philipp Melanchthon wrote *The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope* (*Tractatus de potestate et primatu papae*), which he intended as an

224 Cf. Klausnitzer 2004, 262–264, 268–269. WA 7, 433; WA 8, 708; WA 54, 227. The final work *Wider das Papsttum zu Rom, vom Teufel gestiftet* (1545), WA 54, 206–299. See also, for example, Jolkkonen 2004, 3–15.

225 AS 4.10: “Haec doctrina praeclare ostendit papam esse ipsum verum Antichristum...”.

226 Klausnitzer 2004, 270. *Lecture on the Galatians* WA 40 I, 181, 11–13. Cf. also *Von der Wiedertaufe an zwei Pfarrherrn* WA 26, 144–174: “Wir bekennen aber, das unter dem Bapstum viel Christliches gutes, ja alles Christlich gut sey ... Ich sage, das unter dem Bapst die rechte Christenheit ist, ja der rechte ausbund der Christenheit und viel frumer, grosser heiligen. ... Ist denn nu unter dem Bapst die Christenheit, so mus sie warlich Christus leib und glied sein, Ist sie sein leib, so hat sie rechten geist, Evangelion, glauben, fauffe, Sacrament, schlussel, predig ampt. gebet, heilige schriff und alles, was die Christenheit haben sol. Sind wir doch auch noch alle unter dem Bapstum und haben solche Christen guter davon. ... Kan der Bapst dis mein heucheln leiden und annemen, so bin ich freilich ein untertheniger son und frumer paist, Und wills auch warlich mit hertzen freuden sein und gern alles widder ruffen, was ich yhm sonst zu leide gethan habe.”.

227 Klausnitzer 2004, 272. However, there was much discussion on the papacy, the power of the pope and the power of the councils, and whether such power was earthly or ecclesial. It started even in the mid-thirteenth century.

addition to CA.<sup>228</sup> Melanchthon interprets Matthew 16:18 and John 21:17 as contesting the primacy of Peter, maintaining that the Scriptures speak here of a collective subject, the college of apostles. He therefore teaches that the pope has no divinely instituted position as universal bishop (*episcopus oecumenicus*). According to divine right (*iure divino*) he has neither spiritual nor temporal power. Even if the pope did have primacy *iure divino*, he could not demand obedience if he defended ungodly worship, idolatry, and a doctrine contrary to the Gospel.<sup>229</sup> However, like Luther, Melanchthon did not categorically reject the possibility of a reformed papacy if the pope were to acknowledge justification as the truth of the Gospel.<sup>230</sup>

188. The Council of Trent did not develop a unified ecclesiology, but strengthened the papacy. However, the Council underlined the significance of the ministry of bishop for Catholic ecclesiology. The pope had no exclusive jurisdiction, which underlined the key position of the ministry of bishop in the understanding of ordained ministry. The ministry of the pope could not be understood in isolation, but only in its relationship to the ministry of bishop. The Petrine succession could not surpass the bishops' apostolic succession. Instead, the Petrine Ministry and the pope were to be seen as complementary.<sup>231</sup>

### 1.5. The Ministry of the Bishop and Papacy since the First Vatican Council

189. The First Vatican Council (1869–1871) was convened when the pope's sovereignty as a monarch was seen as the guarantee of Christendom, and Christendom as the guarantee of the king's sovereignty. The witness of the magisterium was weakened and the power to decide on the content of the faith (*determinatio fidei*) was emphasised. In the papal Bull *Ineffabilis Deus*

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228 The text begins with three critical claims: "1. The Roman Pontiff claims for himself [in the first place] that by divine right he is [supreme] above all bishops and pastors [in all Christendom]. 2. Secondly, he adds that by divine right he has both swords, i.e., the authority also of bestowing kingdoms [enthroning and deposing kings, regulating secular dominions etc.]. And 3. thirdly, he says that to believe this is necessary for salvation. And for these reasons the Roman bishop calls himself [and boasts that he is] the vicar of Christ on earth." In this text Melanchthon also questions the idea that the pope in the Petrine Ministry is the "rock" on which Christ would build his Church, seeing the "rock" as Peter's confession to Christ. However, if the pope serves the Gospel of Christ in his ministry, these two positions do not need to be seen as contradictory: "...[I]n these passages Peter is the representative of the entire assembly of the apostles, and for this reason they do not accord to Peter any prerogative or superiority, or lordship [which he had, or was to have had, in preference to the other apostles]. However, as to the declaration: Upon this rock I will build My Church, certainly the Church has not been built upon the authority of man, but upon the ministry of the confession which Peter made, in which he proclaims that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. He accordingly addresses him as a minister: Upon this rock, i.e., upon this ministry. [Therefore he addresses him as a minister of this office in which this confession and doctrine is to be in operation and says: Upon this rock, i.e., this preaching and ministry.]"

229 Klausnitzer 2004, 285–288.

230 Klausnitzer 2004, 289.

231 Klausnitzer 2004, 309–311.

- (1854) Pius IX's definition of the Immaculate Conception in practice affirmed the infallibility of the papal magisterium.<sup>232</sup>
190. In the First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Pastor Aeternus* (1870) the Petrine Ministry is defined as belonging to the Church's unchangeable essence. The Bishop of Rome is understood as the legitimate successor to the Petrine Ministry. The pope has a power of jurisdiction which is "truly episcopal" (*vere episcopalis*) and "immediate" (*immediate*). It is "ordinary", i.e. it belongs to the ministry and is not delegated power. As a counterbalance the other bishops are "true shepherds" (*veri pastores*), not delegates of the pope. From this supreme jurisdictional power the supreme jurisdictional power of the pope in doctrinal questions is derived.<sup>233</sup>
191. *Pastor Aeternus* maintains that when the pope speaks *ex cathedra* he explicitly and intentionally declares an endpoint to the discussion. Not all papal acts are expressions of the infallible *magisterium*. Infallibility refers only to the truths of faith and moral life that are in accordance with revelation. *Ex cathedra* decisions are extremely rare. The infallibility of the pope is an expression of the Church's infallibility as a whole. He assists the keeping and faithful representation of the deposition of faith (*fides depositum*). The infallible teaching of the pope presupposes a consensus of the Church based on the Bible and tradition.<sup>234</sup>
192. The Second Vatican Council brought *Pastor Aeternus* into a new context within the collegiality of bishops. The bishops as a whole are the "successors of the apostles" (LG 18,1; 20,1; 23,2; 24,1) and build the fundament of the Church with the pope (LG 19). The ministries of teaching and leadership which are received in episcopal ordination can be exercised only in the college of bishops with the pope and bishops (LG 21,2). The binding centre and leading institution is the Bishop of Rome, and the college cannot function against him (LG III, 22).<sup>235</sup> The Council corrected a one-sided ecclesiology through use of biblical and patristic images and language and modern theological reflection. Thus, the Catholic Church can learn from other Churches and ecclesial communities as partial signs that belong to the full constitution of the Church.<sup>236</sup> Contemporary Catholic theological discussion underlines the biblical and ecclesial necessity of the pope's ministry, but the dogmas about the pope are newly contextualised in the Church and in Catholic communion ecclesiology.<sup>237</sup>

232 Klausnitzer 2004, 373–384, 387.

233 Klausnitzer 2004, 394–414.

234 Klausnitzer 2004, 414–416; Kasper 2011, 365–366; Huhtanen 2016, 73.

235 Klausnitzer 2004, 432–433. See also ApC 419: "Vatican's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church modifies the treatment of the hierarchy and papal infallibility by placing them within the witness given by the whole people of God in its prophetic role."

236 Klausnitzer 2004, 434.

237 Klausnitzer 2004, 441. Cf. Müller 2017, 324: "Die Einbettung der Dogmatischen Konstitution *Pastor Aeternus*

193. Attention should also be paid to the distinction between divine order (*divina ordinatione*) and divine law (*iure divino*). For the Tridentine fathers divine right (*iure divino*) implied direct institution by Christ, but divine ordination (*divina ordinatione*) implied “willed by God, but historically developed”.<sup>238</sup> Luther clearly saw that there had been diversification within the ministry from the beginning, which from the perspective of the Catholic Church remained an open question until the Second Vatican Council. It is our ecumenical task together to develop our understanding of the ministry in a way that serves the Gospel of Christ and the unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity of the Church and her faith – that which is taught everywhere, always, and by everyone (*ubique, semper et ab omnibus*). The intention is to formulate our differentiated consensus concerning the ordained ministry. We understand that the discussion about the Petrine Ministry in particular must continue if a jointly recognised and renewed ministry of unity for the Church is to be attained. However, our aim is to formulate a common understanding of this ministry at this stage as an expression of our growth in communion.<sup>239</sup>

## 2. The Common Understanding of the Ministry

### 2.1. The Common Priesthood and the Ordained Ministry

194. Ministry in the Church means, firstly, the special ordained ministry in the service of the salvific ministry of Christ, and secondly, the actualisation of the salvific ministry of Christ on the basis of Baptism and confirmation that is the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet. 2:5,9; Rev. 1:6). The existence of a special ministry is constitutive of the Church. Ministry in the Church as a whole is subordinated to the one ministry of Jesus Christ. “It is Jesus Christ who, in the Holy Spirit, is acting in the preaching of the Word of God, in the administration of the sacraments, and in the pastoral service. Jesus Christ,

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vom 18. Juli 1870 in das Gesamtbild der Dogmatischen Konstitution über die Kirche *Lumen gentium* vom 21. November 1964 ist leicht, weil es sich um kompatible Ansätze handelt. Die *Communio*-Ekklesiologie ergibt sich nicht aus der Konstruktion eines abstrakten Prinzips, sondern aus der Natur der Kirche als *Communio* mit Gott und untereinander. ... Bedeutsam ist, dass sowohl das I. wie das II. Vatikanum die beiden Dogmatischen Konstitutionen über die Kirche mit den beiden Dogmatischen Konstitutionen über die Offenbarung prinzipiell verknüpft hat. So wie es nicht *Lumen gentium* ohne *Dei verbum* gibt, so gibt es nicht *Pastor aeternus* ohne *Dei Filius*.”

238 DS 1776: “Canon 6. Si quis dixerit, in Ecclesia catholica non esse hierarchiam, divina ordinatione institutam, quae constat ex episcopis, presbyteris et ministris: anathema sit.”

239 Cf. *Malta Report* 1972, 62: “It was nevertheless agreed that the question of altar fellowship and of mutual recognition of ministerial offices should not be unconditionally dependent on a consensus on the question of primacy.”

acting in the present, takes the minister into his service; the minister is only his tool and instrument.”<sup>240</sup>

195. The ministry is Christologically and pneumatologically anchored and based. This means “[t]he christologically based authority (*exousia*) of the ministry must be exercised in the Holy Spirit. The minister must bring Christ’s cross into the present not only through his words and the administration of the sacraments, but through his whole life and his service (2 Cor. 4:8–18; 11:22–33). The church’s ministers must constantly look afresh to Jesus Christ and be renewed by him. They must also heed the Spirit which acts in the other members of the church. The ministers as well as the other church members are dependent day by day on the renewed forgiveness of their sins. Following the example of Jesus Christ, the ministry in the church cannot claim any worldly advantages, but must rather be characterized by radical obedience and service.”<sup>241</sup>
196. Concerning the priesthood of all baptised believers, “Catholics and Lutherans are in agreement that all the baptized who believe in Christ share in the priesthood of Christ and are thus commissioned to ‘proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light’ (1 Pet. 2:9). Hence no member lacks a part to play in the mission of the whole body” (ApC 273).<sup>242</sup> Through Baptism all Christians participate in Christ’s priesthood, and together they are a single priestly people (*Ministry* 13). However, the ministry of the public proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments in the Church is a ministry that includes a special responsibility for the unity, and hence for the guidance, of the congregation (*Ministry* 17), and is not entrusted to all.<sup>243</sup>
197. *We agree* that though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ. The ordained ministry should be exercised personally, collegially, and communally.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> *Ministry* 21. We thus use the term “Ministry” here as a joint ecumenical term as it is used in the Faith and Order document *Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry* (BEM 1982): “b) The word *ministry* in its broadest sense denotes the service to which the whole people of God is called ... c) The term *ordained ministry* refers to persons who have received a charism and whom the church appoints for service by ordination through the invocation of the Spirit and the laying on of hands. d) Many churches use the word *priest* to denote certain ordained ministers. ... 12. All members of the believing community, ordained and lay, are interrelated.”

<sup>241</sup> *Ministry* 22.

<sup>242</sup> FCC 177; ApC 273; JLC 356.

<sup>243</sup> CRE 148.

<sup>244</sup> Although in a strict sense the term “college” refers to the college of bishops, both between the bishop and his priests and between the priests, the collegial dimension is important. As stated in LG 28: “Priests, prudent cooperators with the Episcopal order, (72\*) its aid and instrument, called to serve the people of God, constitute one priesthood (73\*) with their bishop although bound by a diversity of duties. ... In virtue of their common sacred ordination and mission, all priests are bound together in intimate brotherhood, which naturally and freely manifests itself in mutual aid, spiritual as well as material, pastoral as well as personal, in their meetings



## ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

198. Catholic teaching formulates the interconnectedness of the common and ministerial priesthoods in LG 10: “Therefore all the disciples of Christ, persevering in prayer and praising God, should present themselves as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. Everywhere on earth they must bear witness to Christ and give an answer to those who seek an account of that hope of eternal life which is in them. Though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ.”
199. The multilateral document *Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry* (1982) states: “Jesus called the Twelve to be representatives of the renewed Israel. At that moment they represent the whole people of God and at the same time exercise a special role in the midst of that community. After the resurrection they are among the leaders of the community. It can be said that the apostles prefigure both the Church as a whole and the persons within it who are entrusted with the specific authority and responsibility. The role of the apostles as witnesses to the resurrection of Christ is unique and unrepeatable. There is therefore a difference between the apostles and the ordained ministers whose ministries are founded on theirs.”<sup>245</sup> BEM further underlines: “The ordained ministry should be exercised in a personal [cf. LG 20; Lund 47], collegial [cf. LG 23; Lund 48] and communal [cf. LG 27; Lund 49] way.”<sup>246</sup> Both Catholics and Lutherans can accept this principle and the underlying view of the apostolicity of the whole Church.<sup>247</sup>

## **2.2. The Ordained Ministry: An Integral Element within the Sacramentality of the Church**

### **2.2.1. The Sacramental Ordination in the Service of Word and Sacraments**

200. *We agree* that the Church is sacramental because of the real presence of Christ in her through word and sacraments. The living presence of Jesus Christ in the Church through the Spirit continues to be the source as well as the model for all authentic leadership by ordained ministers. The ordained ministry is

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and in communion of life, of labor and charity.”

245 BEM II A 10

246 BEM III B 26

247 HF 50.

instituted by God in service to the word and sacraments as a lifelong vocation.<sup>248</sup> Ordination cannot be repeated.

201. *We agree* that ordination to the sacred ministry is sacramental. It is an instrumental act in which the gift of the Holy Spirit is prayed for and transmitted through the promises in God's word and the laying on of hands. In Catholic teaching ordination is one of the sacraments. In the light of the Lutheran Confessions it is likewise possible to understand ordination, "the imposition of hands", as a sacrament if it is understood as ordination to the ministry of word and sacraments based on God's command and promises.<sup>249</sup> At ordination God the Father gives Christ's own ministry (*in persona Christi*), and the Holy Spirit sanctifies and gives charisms for the Church's ministry. Thus, the ordained ministry is understood as a participation in the mission of the Triune God within the communion (*koinonia*) of the Church. It is Christologically and pneumatologically rooted in the apostolicity of the whole Church, in which the priesthood of all believers and the ordained ministry work together in a complementary way.<sup>250</sup>

202. *We agree* that the ordained person is "ordered" to Christ in a recapitulative relationship to the Church. The ordained ministry represents Christ in a relationship of headship, being at the same time one with the baptised, who are joined to Christ as members of his body. The ordained person is a baptised member of the Church, who has been "ordered" to face the congregation in the person of Christ (*in persona Christi*). This relationship to Christ is important, because it is Christ who acts in the sacraments. The ordained person's relationship to Christ is thus inseparable from the person's relationship to the Church as the body of Christ, the people of God, and the temple of the Holy Spirit.<sup>251</sup>

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248 JLC 239 and 279.

249 AC 13: "They are accordingly called priests ... to teach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments to the people. ... But if ordination be understood as applying to the ministry of the Word, we are not unwilling to call ordination a sacrament. For the ministry of the Word has God's command and glorious promises. ... If ordination be understood in this way, neither will we refuse to call the imposition of hands a sacrament. For the Church has the command to appoint ministers, which should be most pleasing to us, because we know that God approves this ministry, and is present in the ministry." Sander, 2008, 223 also refers to a Lutheran Catechism from the sixteenth century which addresses the possibility that ordination may be seen as a sacrament that is different from Baptism and Eucharist, but is nevertheless a divine act: "Est ne Ritus Ordinationis ad Ministerium Sacramentum? Non est eo modo Sacramentum, sicut Baptismus et Coena Domini, Quia non est additus promissioni Gratiae [sic], vt fidem in vtenibus confirmet, Nec est sigillum iustitiae apud Deum. Quia vero habet additam Promissionem de donando Spiritu sancto ad Ministerium Euangelij, et quod Deus per illud et per rite vocatos velit in cordibus esse efficax ad salute, ideo quidam Ritus Ordinationis inter Sacramenta numerant." Catechesis doctrinae christinae in usum scholarum Pomeraniae, Gryphiswaldiae 1582, in: Johann Michael Reu (Hg.), Quellen zur Geschichte des kirchlichen Unterrichts in der evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands zwischen 1530 und 1600, Teil I, Band III/2,1, Gütersloh 1916, 248–288, here 273.

250 Pohjola, 2014, 312; Karttunen 2015, 61; Nguyen 2016, 141. Accordingly, we can also agree with the ARCIC affirmation concerning ordination (ARCIC *Ministry*, 13–15; cf. *Ministry Elucidation*, 2–3; *Clarifications*).

251 Nguyen 2016, 613. Cf. LG 10; SC 33; CCC 1552.

203. *We agree* that the ordained ministry serves the life and mission of the Church in proclaiming in word and deed the Gospel of Christ as the “Light of the Nations”. CA 5 (“Of the Ministry”) affirms: “That we may obtain this faith, the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith; where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel, to wit, that God, not for our own merits, but for Christ’s sake, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ’s sake.”<sup>252</sup> LG also emphasises the salvation as the aim of the ministries issued by Christ: “18. For the nurturing and constant growth of the People of God, Christ the Lord instituted in His Church a variety of ministries, which work for the good of the whole body. For those ministers, who are endowed with sacred power, serve their brethren, so that all who are of the People of God, and therefore enjoy a true Christian dignity, working toward a common goal freely and in an orderly way, may arrive at salvation.”
204. *We agree* that the ordained ministry is constitutive and necessary for the Church: “God instituted the ministry and it is necessary for the being of the church, since the word of God and its public proclamation in word and sacrament are necessary for faith in Jesus Christ to arise and be preserved and together with this for the church to come into being and be preserved as believers who make up the body of Christ in the unity of faith.”<sup>253</sup> “We hold the ordained ministry of word and sacrament to be an office of divine institution and as such a gift of God to his Church. Ordained ministers are related, as are all Christians, both to the priesthood of Christ and to the priesthood of the Church. The basic unity of the ordained ministry is expressed in the service of word and sacrament.”<sup>254</sup>

### 2.2.2. The Key Elements of Ministerial Ordination

205. *We agree* that the word “ordination” in our Churches is reserved for the sacramental act which integrates a person into the order of bishops, presbyters, or deacons, and goes beyond a simple election, designation, delegation, or institution by the community, for it confers a gift of the Holy Spirit which can come only from Christ himself through his Church. Ordination can be

252 CA 5: “De ministerio ecclesiastico: Ut hanc fidem consequamur, institutum est ministerium docendi evangelii et porrigendi sacramenta. Nam per verbum et sacramenta tamquam per instrumenta donatur spiritus sanctus, qui fidem efficit, ubi et quando visum est Deo, in his, qui audiunt evangelium, scilicet quod Deus non propter nostra merita, sed propter Christum iustificet hos, qui credunt se propter Christum in gratiam recipi. Gala. 3: Ut promissionem spiritus accipiamus per fidem.”

253 ApC 276, FCC 178.

254 PCS 32 j.

performed only by validly ordained bishops representing the communion of the Church.<sup>255</sup>

206. Since the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus in the third century the essential elements of ordination have been the epicletic ordination prayer and laying on of hands by the bishop. The laying on of hands constitutes the visible sign of ordination.<sup>256</sup> The sacramental and effective character of ordination is expressed in the ordination prayers.
207. In the medieval formulas some new elements enrich the ordination liturgy: vesting, anointment, and the transmission of the instruments. The theological meaning of these new elements, including the traditional laying on of hands, becomes an open question. It is doctrinally unclear which elements are essential or only illustrative. A mainstream opinion holds that the transmission of instruments is the visible sacramental sign of ordination. In the Apostolic constitution “*Sacramentum ordinis*” of 30th November 1947 (DS 3857–3861) Pope Pius XII declared that the transmission of instruments was unnecessary for the validity of ordination, and declared that only the laying on of hands was the sacramental sign (“*materia*”) of ordination.
208. Both Luther and Lutherans maintain a strongly theological focus on the ordination liturgy. They emphasise that the key elements of ordination are 1) prayer, 2) the Word of God, and 3) the laying on of hands. The anamnetic and epicletic prayer (the *prex ordinationis* in a narrow sense and the other prayers of the ordination rite in a wider sense) is understood as both anabatic and catabatic. This means that the impetratory prayer of the Church (the bishop and the faithful) is fulfilled because God himself extends his grace to the ordinands. The Word of God concerning the sacred ministry and its institution is constitutive for ordination and actually brings its content into effect. Some Lutheran ordination rites use the “ordination formula”, a verbally concentrated combination of prayer and the Word of God to underline the sacramental effect of both. The function of the laying on of hands is to afford a visual focus on the meaning of ordination as the transmission of the gift of the Holy Spirit and the transfer of the office.<sup>257</sup>

### 2.2.3. A Lutheran Perspective on the Catholic Understanding of Ordination in the Roman Pontifical 1990

209. In the Catholic Rite of Ordination of Priests in the *Roman Pontifical* 1990 the key elements of ordination are present from a Lutheran perspective: 1) the *Word* (Liturgy of the Word and Homily); 2) an epicletic ordination *prayer*

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255 See the structural elements of the Catholic and Lutheran rites in tables 4 and 5 below.

256 CCC 1538; DS 3860; Pius XII, *Sacramentum ordinis*; Pohjola 2014, 29–30.

257 See the structural elements of the Catholic and Lutheran rites in tables 4–5 below.

(*Veni creator spiritus*, the litany, and a prayer for the ordinands); and 3) the *laying on of hands*. Ordination takes place in the context of the Mass, as is also the contemporary Lutheran practice in Finland. The Catholic ordination liturgy contains more liturgically enriching illustrative elements than does the Lutheran. However, in the Finnish Lutheran tradition there are also such illustrative elements, for example, the vesting in stole and chasuble. These visual and performative symbolic elements are not contrary to the theological core. In both the Catholic and Lutheran rites the transmission of the gift of the Holy Spirit through word, prayer, and the laying on of hands in episcopally administered ordination are clearly central. Thus, the ordination rite also follows the early Church tradition in its essentials.

#### **2.2.4. A Catholic Perspective on the Lutheran Understanding of Ordination in the ELCF Ordination Rite 2003**

210. In the ELCF ordination rites many elements are present that are common to both of us. The proclamation of the word of God has a firmly established place. While the Holy Spirit is invoked in an epicletic sense (especially in the hymns), the forms used in the ordination prayers are, in their wording, predominantly Trinitarian. The laying on of hands is retained and given due importance. In priestly ordination vestiges of the practice of having the priests present join in this part of the rite are retained through mandating that those assisting the bishop at ordination also lay their hands on the ordinands. At the ordination of a bishop the immemorial custom of having several bishops present and participating in the laying on of hands is maintained. The ELCF form contains a declaratory prayer and an invocation of the Holy Trinity that declare the ordinands to be priests, but lacks some of those parts of the Catholic ordination rite (such as anointing and handing over the paten and chalice) that, though not necessary for validity, are of great significance. In Catholic theology a sacrament requires not only correct matter and form but also intention in order to be valid, and it is therefore of interest to study the wording of the prayers. The ELCF form emphasises the proclamation of the Gospel in word and sacrament. The Lutheran rite of ordination lacks an explicit mention of the sanctifying task of the priest, especially the commission to celebrate the Holy Mass, considered essential from a Catholic perspective. However, it might be seen as implicit in the word “priest” (*sacerdos*) and in the charge to administer the sacraments, as well as in the vesting with a chasuble. In the prayers and addresses to ordinands and people there is nothing explicitly contrary to a Catholic understanding of ordination. The formulations used can be read and understood in a Catholic sense.

### 3. The Ministry of Deacon

211. In the tradition of the Church the threefold ministry of bishop, priest, and deacon gradually came to be seen as involving the kind of substantive ecclesial repositioning that merited sacramental ordination (cf. Hippolytus's *Apostolic Tradition*). These ordained ministries were uniquely linked to the apostolic office, which was concerned with preserving the apostolicity of the Church, the unity of faith, and communion. "The threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter, and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it."<sup>258</sup>
212. *We agree* that at episcopal ordination the Holy Spirit's gift for the fulfilment of the tasks of a specific ministry is granted through word, prayer, and the laying on of hands for deacons, priests, and bishops. This development of the threefold ministry can be seen as an expression of the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and it is more than a matter of arbitrary human choice.
213. *We agree* that bishops, priests, and deacons ultimately all participate in the ministry of Christ. Together with the whole people of God, in a complementary way, the ordained ministry is instituted for the divine mission of the Church to serve the salvific plan of the Triune God. Thus, ordination is a setting apart and an investiture by Christ himself for his Church. The laying on of hands by the bishop, with the anamnestic prayer, constitutes the visible sign of ordination.<sup>259</sup>
214. *We agree* that the ministry of deacon has its roots in the New Testament understanding of ministry. It fulfils permanent functions given by Christ to his Church and it is based on the ministry of *diakonos*, already known in apostolic times (e.g. Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8).<sup>260</sup> St Irenaeus already saw the origin of the diaconate in the institution of the "Seven" mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (6:1–6), which also gives expression to the caritative dimension of diaconal ministry. The ministry of the deacon has always been greatly esteemed in the Church. St Paul refers to deacons and bishops in the exordium of his Epistle to the Philippians (cf. Phil. 1:1), while in his first Epistle to

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258 BEM, Ministry, para. 22; PCS 32 j.

259 Cf. CCC 1538, 1547, 1547. According to the statement by the ELCF Bishops' Conference 2/2011, p. 11 the ministry of deacon is a "spiritual office (*ordo*) alongside the ministry of priest into which the deacon is ordained". The liturgical orders of the ELCF display a concretely threefold understanding of ministry in which bishops, priests, and deacons are ordained, and the gift of the Holy Spirit is prayed for. See also the Bishops' Conference's guidelines for ordination to the ministry of deacon, 26th May 2016: [http://sakasti.evl.fi/sakasti.nsf/0/A78B3114D64D8273C22577030039EE08/\\$FILE/Suositus-diaconian-virka.pdf](http://sakasti.evl.fi/sakasti.nsf/0/A78B3114D64D8273C22577030039EE08/$FILE/Suositus-diaconian-virka.pdf). The ELCF understanding is close here to the understanding formulated in the Church of Sweden report (1990, 16) *Bishop, Priest and Deacon in the Church of Sweden*: "With its task to proclaim the gospel in action the ministry of deacon has its given point of departure in the communion of instruments of grace in the worship service and it is together with the ministry of bishop and the ministry of priest a natural part of the constitutive ministry of the Church, which is described in the article 5 of the Augsburg Confession."

260 ELCF Bishops' Conference 2/2011, p. 2.

Timothy he lists the qualities and virtues which they should possess if they are to exercise their ministry worthily (cf. 1 Tim. 3:8–13). The patristic literature also witnesses to the Church’s ministerial structure as including the diaconate. St Ignatius of Antioch considers a Church without bishop, priest, or deacon unthinkable. He underlines that the ministry of deacons is “the ministry of Jesus Christ, who was with the Father before time began and who appeared at the end of time”. The Diaconate flourished in the Western Church until the fifth century. However, it then experienced a slow decline, which ended in its surviving only as an intermediate stage for candidates preparing for priestly ordination. In the Lutheran tradition the diaconate was rediscovered in the nineteenth century as a special vocation which emphasised the practical and charitable dimension of this ministry.<sup>261</sup>

215. *We agree* that deacons share in Christ’s mission in a special way. In the Catholic Church deacons assist the bishop and priests in the celebration of the Eucharist, in assisting at and blessing marriages, in the proclamation of the Gospel, in presiding over funerals, and in various ministries of charity, among other tasks.<sup>262</sup> In the Lutheran tradition the ministry of deacons is likewise rooted in the eucharistic life of the Church. However, the concrete ministry and education of Lutheran deacons is largely oriented towards various social and charitable works in acting for the poor and most vulnerable, and witnessing to Christ in the world in faith and love. Deacons also proclaim the Gospel, teach, and exercise liturgical functions in assisting the bishop or priest in the administration of the Eucharist, as readers, or in leading the intercessory prayers. They can bring the sacrament to the elderly and sick who are unable to attend Mass. According to the Church Order of the ELCF (4:3): “A parish and its members are to practise diaconal work, the purpose of which is to give help on the basis of Christian love especially to those who are most in need and who are not aided otherwise” (Matt. 25)
216. Since the Second Vatican Council the Latin Church has restored the permanent diaconate, which the Churches of the East have always maintained. The permanent diaconate can be conferred on married men and constitutes an important enrichment of the Church’s mission. In the ELCF both men and women can function as deacons. As in the ELCF, in the Catholic Church the ecclesial and spiritual identity of deacons in their diaconal ministry in liturgical and pastoral life or in social and charitable works is also strengthened by the imposition of hands, which has come down from the apostles. This binds them

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261 *Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons/Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* II 2.

262 CCC 1570.

more closely to the altar, and their ministry is made more fruitful through the gift of the Holy Spirit, charism, and the sacramental grace of the diaconate.<sup>263</sup>

### **Explicating the Common Understanding**

217. According to the Council of Trent the hierarchy of the three offices, even though it is not divinely instituted, is nonetheless divinely ordered (*divina ordinatione*: DS 1776). The Lutheran Churches at least leave it open as to whether this is not a development which could have taken place under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and is more than a matter of arbitrary human choice, for Lutherans also maintain that the Spirit is at work in the Church and her history. Lutherans declared they were prepared to accept for themselves, as a matter of ecclesiastical order, the distinction between bishops and priests given through a right to ordain reserved for bishops (Treatise 64 and 73: BC 490 and 493; AS III.10, 1ff.: BC 324), the proviso being that the bishops should tolerate Lutheran doctrine and accept Lutheran pastors (CA 28.69ff.: BC 93f.; Apol. 14.1ff.: BC 214f.). To this extent, therefore, the condemnation at the beginning of the Council of Trent's canon 7, which was directed against a denial of any subordination of priests to bishops (DS 1777), is not applicable.<sup>264</sup>
218. Catholics emphasise that the bishop has the fullness of the sacrament of Holy Orders, because his episcopal ordination invests him with that fullness, a directly sacramental succession to the apostolic function. From the Lutheran perspective the bishop as the supreme shepherd of the diocese, on the basis of his/her episcopal ordination and episcopal see, also has an overall spiritual responsibility (*episkopé*) for parish life in the diocese and has in that sense the "fullness" of Holy Orders. Moreover, there is an ecumenical consensus that authority in the Church is exercised personally, collegially, and communally.

## **4. The Common Understanding of the Episcopal Ministry**

### **4.1. Sacramental Episcopal Ordination through Word, Prayer, and the Laying on of Hands**

219. The office of bishop was preserved at the Reformation in the Lutheran Church in Finland – at that time part of the Church of Sweden. The ordination of

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<sup>263</sup> CCC 1571.

<sup>264</sup> CRE 153–154.



a bishop in historic succession is a sign of the Church's apostolicity and of her episcopal ministry. It is a matter of historical record that the episcopal succession was maintained by the Lutheran bishops in the sixteenth century. The first Lutheran Church Order in Sweden and Finland, published in 1571, states that the office of bishop stems from the Holy Spirit, the giver of all good gifts. Subsequently, in the Lutheran Church in Finland, as in the Catholic Church, bishops have continued to be ordained by bishops.<sup>265</sup>

220. *We agree* that ordination is carried out by a bishop through word, prayer, and the laying on of hands. Ordination is not understood as merely a demonstrative public confirmation of the call, but as an instrumental and sacramentally effective act, in which the ministry is concretely given. The ordination is based on the self-giving love of the Triune God. It is an expression of the mission of God in the world.
221. *We agree* that both men and women have an important vocation in the Church's ministry in the world. The Vatican II Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, No. 9 states: "Since in our times women have an ever more active share in the whole life of society, it is very important that they participate more widely also in the various fields of the Church's apostolate." Yet there is a difference in the understandings between our Churches – and partly within our Churches – on the question of the ordination of women.

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265 JLC 358; Brodd 1988, 152. Cf. Sander 2004, 96, footnote 295: "Daß der historisch gewordene Episkopat andererseits eine, wenn auch nicht unmittelbar gott-gestiftete, so doch gott-gewollte kirchliche Dauereinrichtung darstellt, kann beispielweise in der lateinischen Ausgabe von Laurentius Petris reformatorischer Kirchenordnung für Schweden – ganz im Sinne Georgs [von Anhalt] ...so formuliert werden: ...Haec ordinatio et constitutio utilissima est et sine dubio a Spiritu Sancto itaque per totum Christianismum recepta et approbata, manebit etiam quoad hic mundus durabit' (Matti Parvio (Hrsg.), *Canon ecclesiasticus*, 162f. In 1884, when Finland was an autonomous Grand Duchy in the Russian Empire, the ELCF lost four bishops within ten months. All three dioceses were without bishops. The situation was understood as an emergency, and the new Archbishop was ordained by Axel Fredrik Granfelt, professor emeritus of systematic theology at Helsinki University. Subsequently, Swedish and Estonian Lutheran bishops were present at episcopal ordinations and took part in the laying on of hands, and following the 1936 agreement on intercommunion with the Church of England Anglican bishops also participated in the laying on of hands, and especially since the signing of the Porvoo Declaration in 1996. The bishop's ordinal has been part of ELCF church law for a long time, but has been included in the Church Handbook only since 1886. Between 1886 and 1963 it was called "On installing a bishop in his office". Since 1963 the title has been "Ordination of a bishop", in accordance with the tradition of the 1571 Church Order by Archbishop Laurentius Petri. Sander 2004, 108 points out that also in the Catholic tradition an ordination conferred by a priest is not a totally excluded possibility in emergency situations. According to Sander 2004, 106, footnote 334, in the medieval Catholic Church some abbots received the right to ordain their subordinates from the pope, and this included presbyteral ordinations. In 1400 Pope Boniface IX's Bull *Sacrae Religionis* gave this privilege to the abbot of the Augustinian monastery of St Osyth and his successors in the Diocese London, but this was cancelled in 1403 when the Bishop of London protested (DS 1145f.). In 1427 the Cistercian monastery of Altzelle in the Diocese of Meißen received the privilege from Pope Martin V for five years in the Bull *Gerentes ad vos*. In 1489 Pope Innocent VIII gave Abbot Johannes von Citeaux the right to ordain deacons in the Bull *Exposit tuae devotionis* 1489 (DS 1435). The Cistercians made use of this privilege until the eighteenth century. Sander 2004, 108, footnote 340 also observes that on 22nd October 1921 in the autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which had broken from the Moscow Patriarchate for political reasons, an ordination of bishops conducted by a priest was carried out following the known practice of the early Alexandrine Church, but this ordination did not in principle raise questions about the episcopal order or doctrinal tradition of the Orthodox Church.

## Explicating the Common Understanding

222. It is Christ who remains the final and actual donor of the divine gifts in the Church and who continues to be visible through them.<sup>266</sup> This is why the transmission of the apostolic office is achieved through ordination, which includes a rite with a visible sign and the invocation of God (*epiclesis*) to grant to the ordinand the Spirit's gift and the powers that are needed for fulfilling the divine mission. From New Testament times this visible sign has been the laying on of hands. Ordained ministers act "in the name and in the person of Christ the Head in the midst of the community".<sup>267</sup> Ordination is ultimately the Spirit's gift, by which the Church proclaims her dependence on and obedience to the Lord's command and relies on the almighty promise of God.<sup>268</sup>
223. The authority of the ordained minister to proclaim the Gospel and to administer the sacraments is conferred sacramentally and exercised within a eucharistic community. Through sacramental ordination Christ's authoritative mission of teaching, sanctifying, and governing continues in the Church through the apostles' successors. The foundation of the authority and legitimacy of the bishop lies in Christ's sacramental presence, not in his special capacity to interpret the Scriptures. The bishop receives this representative authorisation in the laying on of hands. This takes place in the Church, and the Holy Spirit is conferred by it.<sup>269</sup>
224. The sacramental and effective character of ordination is expressed in the ordination prayers. In the episcopal ordination of the ELCF it is prayed: "We pray that you would grant the gift of your Holy Spirit to your servant NN. who has now been ordained to the office of bishop. Give him/her endurance and faithfulness, humility and wisdom in serving your people. Encourage him/her in proclaiming the Gospel in purity and in defending your truth. Help

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266 Cf. CCC 1548–1551.

267 LG 21/2; AC 13. Cf. CCC 1591; CA 7–8 & CA 13; JLC 279, footnote 161.

268 CCC 1581 "This sacrament configures the recipient to Christ by a special grace of the Holy Spirit, so that he may serve as Christ's instrument for his Church. By ordination one is enabled to act as a representative of Christ, Head of the Church, in his triple office of priest, prophet, and king." In the prayer of the day in the ordination rite of the ELCF the ordaining bishop leads the congregation in prayer as follows: "Look graciously upon our brothers and sisters, who today will be ordained to the office of priest. Grant them the gift of your Holy Spirit that they may boldly proclaim the Gospel to the glory of your name and the building up of your church." In the context of the ordination act itself the ordaining Bishop says: "By the authority, which the church of Christ has, according to the will of God, given to me, I ordain you into priestly ministry in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." At the laying on of hands the bishop says: "May the Triune God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, bless you and sanctify you to serve the church of Christ always and everywhere." The following prayer says: "...Give the gift of the Holy Spirit to your servants who have now been ordained." Cf. also AC 7 and 8 28: "...[O]n account of the call of the Church, they represent the person of Christ, and do not represent their own persons, as Christ testifies, Luke 10:16: He that heareth you heareth Me. [Thus even Judas was sent to preach.] When they offer the Word of God, when they offer the Sacraments, they offer them in the stead and place of Christ [*Christi vice et loco*]."

269 Cf. LG 21/2; PCS IV C 47.

him/her to support parish workers and others who bear responsibility.” In the Catholic rite for episcopal ordination (1968) it is prayed: “Through the Spirit who gives the grace of high priesthood grant him the power to forgive sins as you have commanded, to assign ministries as you have decreed, and to loose every bond by the authority which you gave to your apostles. May he be pleasing to you by his gentleness and purity of heart, presenting a fragrant offering to you, through Jesus Christ, your Son, through whom glory and power and honour are yours with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, now and forever.”

225. Luther also spoke of the special gift of the Holy Spirit in connection with the laying on of hands in, among other places, his ordination formula of 1535. The ordained is equipped for the ministry by the Spirit, and this entails a permanent claim on the person; ordination is not repeated. This means that “Lutherans in practice have the equivalent of the Catholic doctrine of the ‘priestly character’” (Malta 60).<sup>270</sup> The Lutheran-Catholic report *Ministry* (1982) further developed this convergence and underlined that in the more recent Catholic doctrinal statements the ordination and permanent character (*character indelebilis*) are “understood in terms of the promise and mission which permanently mark the ordained and claim them for the service of Christ” more than they are as a means of personal sanctification. Lutheran tradition also maintains that “even if one avoids the use of the concept of the *character indelebilis* because of its ontological implications, the act of ordination is characterized by a uniqueness which cannot be given up. It remains valid even if the service of a specific congregation is abandoned.”<sup>271</sup>
226. The ELCF General Synod approved women’s ordination in 1986. The Catholic Church recognises herself to be bound by Jesus’s choosing of only men to form the college of the twelve apostles. They did the same when they chose collaborators to succeed them in their ministry.
227. The Catholic Church is not in a position to admit women to ordination on the basis of her practice and doctrine.<sup>272</sup> However, on the basis of Lutheran-Catholic dialogue she “is able to strive for a consensus on the nature and significance of the ministry without the different conceptions of the persons to be ordained fundamentally endangering such a consensus and its practical consequences for the growing unity of the church”.<sup>273</sup>

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270 CRE 152.

271 *Ministry* A 2.6, para. 37–38.

272 According to Catholic understanding only a baptised man can validly receive ordination to the priesthood (canon 1024 CIC). In his Apostolic Letter *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* of 22 May 1994 Pope John Paul II presented this doctrine as being required to be held definitively. *Ministry* C IV, para. 37.

273 *Ministry* A 2.3, para. 25.

228. The current Lutheran perspective is that the ordination of women did not entail any dogmatic or liturgical change to the ministerial office, but that women have assumed the same ministry as men. It is therefore seen as a change of practice, not doctrine.<sup>274</sup> As the dialogue between the Old Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic Church indicates, in spite of this divergence they can say together: “This point of difference is however located on a different plane from those previously mentioned. For both the Old Catholic and the Roman Catholic Church share in essence the same understanding of the three-fold sacramental *ordo* of the Church whereby its centre, the episcopal office – understood in the light of the above exposition of the *episcopé* (cf. 13–15; 20–26) – is grounded in the mission to which Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit commissioned and empowered the apostles.”<sup>275</sup>
229. Most member Churches of the LWF ordain women. The LWF and its member Churches which ordain women see the priesthood as a vocation also for women and are committed to this. According to their understanding of the Gospel the ordination of women is not against Jesus’s command, but is rather based on the mission of the Church to proclaim the Gospel and celebrate the sacraments. According to the LWF Lund statement the “mission of the church requires the gifts of both men and women in the public ministry of word and sacraments”.<sup>276</sup>
230. However, there are Lutheran Churches within the LWF and outside it which do not ordain women, and there is internal diversity concerning this question both in the Churches which ordain women and those which do not. What is significant is that these LWF member Churches have remained in communion with each other despite their differences concerning the ordination of women.<sup>277</sup> Neither the LWF nor the ELCF sees the ordination of women as a church-dividing issue. However, the theological and practical implications of this divergence call for further elaboration.

## 4.2. Episcopal Ministry in Apostolic Succession as a Sign of Fidelity to the Divine Mission

231. *We agree* that episcopal ministry in apostolic succession is received through collegial succession, which incorporates the bishops into the episcopal college. The college of bishops is the successor of the college of apostles: the bishops do not succeed the bishops who precede them, but the apostles. The gift and

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274 *Ministry* 25. See also the study on Admission of Women to the Ministry by Hervé Legrand OP and John Vikström in *Ministry*, p. 88–107.

275 CEC 6.3.3. The question of the ordination of women to priestly ministry (2009).

276 LWF Lund statement 2007, 40–41.

277 Cf. DW IV B 4.

task transmitted by the laying on of hands does not pass “from bishop to bishop”, but comes down “from above”. The bishops together, like the apostles, are gathered around Jesus and are sent out by him in the divine mission.

232. *We agree* that the episcopal office was developed in the Church out of fidelity to the divine apostolic mission, under the direction of the Holy Spirit. The PCS summarises this as follows: “k. We believe that a ministry of *pastoral oversight (episcopate)*, exercised in personal, collegial and communal ways, is necessary as witness to and safeguard of the unity and apostolicity of the Church.” Both Lutherans and Catholics stress the doctrinal and pastoral dimensions of the ministry of shepherding. This underlines our unity concerning the different tasks of the ministry.

### ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

233. Like Catholics, Lutherans can recognise that the distinction between local and regional offices in the Church was “more than the result of purely historical and human developments, or a matter of sociological necessity” but was “the action of the Spirit” (*Ministry* 45). This is especially true of the episcopal office.<sup>278</sup>

### **4.3. The Complementarity of the Sacramental and Historical Perspective of Apostolicity**

234. “We understand apostolicity as continuity in faith, in the life of the church and in the structures and ministry of the church. The ministerial succession serves the continuity of the life of the church in Christ and should thus be considered as both a constituent part and an expression of the apostolicity of the church. The same applies to the consecration of a bishop in historic succession through the laying on of hands. We understand apostolicity both in its sacramental perspective, in which the Lord is alive and present, and in its historical perspective, in which the continuity of the structures of the church are preserved.”<sup>279</sup> “There are many elements within this apostolic tradition. The most important are doctrinal succession, continuity of the sacramental life, and the apostolic succession of ministry. In these elements the sacramental and historical perspectives complement each other.”<sup>280</sup> The sacramentality of the Church makes the apostolic succession a sacramental succession.
235. The Porvoo Agreement aptly describes the apostolicity of the ministry in connection with the apostolicity of the whole Church: “Within the apostolicity of the whole Church is an apostolic succession of the ministry which serves and

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278 CRE 155.

279 JLC 361.

280 *The Office of Bishop*, 142.

is a focus of the continuity of the Church in its life in Christ and its faithfulness to the words and acts of Jesus transmitted by the apostles. The ordained ministry has a particular responsibility for witnessing to this tradition and for proclaiming it afresh with authority in every generation.”<sup>281</sup>

### ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

236. Catholic teaching underlines that the apostolic succession ensures the continuity and unity of the apostolic faith in a sacramental and collegial continuity. The succession as the “sign and guarantee” of apostolicity is understood Christologically and pneumatologically. Through the historic succession the episcopate is a gift of Christ and the Spirit that is always inscribed in the normal *oikonomia* of salvation. It guarantees the objectivity of apostolic faith and sacramental grace, and the objectivity of stable ecclesial institution. However, there have been schisms in the Church and bishops who have not followed the apostolic tradition. Succession of itself is not seen as a guarantee of fidelity to tradition, but the absence of the succession is the absence of an essential element of the nature of the Church. There can be apostolic succession without apostolic fidelity, but there can be no full apostolic fidelity without the apostolic succession. The bishops are essential to the Church (*ad esse Ecclesiae*) insofar as they assure the *diakonia* of word, sacrament, and discipline.<sup>282</sup> As gift and task the episcopal office calls for a responsible “living-out” in communion with the whole Church. The episcopate is “a necessary service of the gospel which is itself necessary for salvation”.<sup>283</sup> In this sense the succession is a necessity. When the whole people of God (*sensus fidelium*) is taken more into account, the episcopate as sign and guarantee of apostolicity will become more fully realisable in the whole Church for all the world.
237. Lutheran teaching in the light of the PCS<sup>284</sup> understands continuity in apostolic succession as being signified in the ordination of a bishop. At ordination a bishop receives the sign of divine approval and a permanent commission to lead his particular Church in the common and apostolic life of all the Churches. The succession is understood within the continuity of the apostolic life and mission of the whole Church. The succession in the episcopal office is a visible and personal way of focusing the apostolicity of the whole Church.

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281 PCS A 40.

282 Cf. LG 24/1.

283 CJ 196.

284 PCS C 46, 51. In 2001, following the signing of the Porvoo Common Declaration in 1996, the Church Order of the ELCF was amended to exclude the possibility of occasional ordination by cathedral deans. ELCF Church Order 5:1 states: “The ordination to priestly ministry is carried out by a bishop. In case of the episcopal office being vacant or the bishop being hindered, the diocesan chapter can invite another bishop to carry out the priestly ordination.”

The ultimate ground of the fidelity of the Church is likewise understood Christologically and pneumatologically. The guarantee of continuity with the apostles within the Church is the promise of the Lord and the presence of the Holy Spirit at work in the whole Church. The succession as sign, indicated in the historic episcopal succession, is therefore a penultimate necessity and does not by itself guarantee the fidelity of a Church to every aspect of the apostolic faith, life, and mission. The Augsburg Confession stresses that the Churches “are bound by divine law to be obedient to the bishops” (CA 28.21: BC 84), in respect of their commission to proclaim the Gospel and administer the sacraments, forgive sins, condemn doctrine contrary to the Gospel, and exclude notorious sinners from the community” (CA 28.21: BC 84). Thus, there is a significant consensus and convergence on the understanding of the nature of the apostolic succession within the sacramentality of the Church. The remaining differences do not appear to be church-dividing.

#### 4.4. The Authority of Bishops

238. *We agree* that the “authority of the bishop is founded on the authority of the word of God. When the bishops proclaim the gospel, they act in the name of Christ and with his authority. The bishops carry a special responsibility for the apostolic mission of the church by providing spiritual leadership in their dioceses, a leadership that is exercised in community with the entire people of God (*sensus fidelium*). The bishops’ leadership serves the mission of the whole church and thus has a radical missionary dimension. Their authority within the church serves those who are as yet outside the church, and the purpose of the authority is the proclamation of the gospel of the forgiveness of sins. In this task, the bishops are the successors of the apostles, who were gathered around Christ and who were sent out by him.”<sup>285</sup>
239. *We agree* that, by virtue of episcopal ordination, the bishop’s authority is *proper* because it is exercised in his own name; *ordinary* because it is based on the episcopal ordination; and *immediate* because it can be exercised directly without the obligation to use any intermediaries. However, here also the authority exercised is personal, collegial, and communal. A bishop exercises his office, even within his own local Church, only in relationship to the permanent body of bishops and in service of the apostolicity of the whole Church. Catholic bishops are not vicars of the pope; nor are Lutheran bishops vicars of the archbishop. Each bishop is an authorised bishop in his (her) diocese,

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285 JLC 299.

sent to serve the Church of Christ. The bishop has no absolute power, but is regulated by the Gospel and law of the Church.<sup>286</sup>

240. *We agree* that, as far as their teaching authority and pastoral government are concerned, all bishops are united in a college. They exercise this office individually in reference to that part of the people of God that is assigned to them. In exercising their office bishops should stand in the midst of their people as those who serve as good shepherds who know their sheep and whose sheep know them.<sup>287</sup> They ought to exercise their authority of oversight, not as masters, but as servants.<sup>288</sup>
241. *We agree* that, “among the principal duties of bishops the preaching of the Gospel occupies a pre-eminent place. For bishops are preachers of the faith, who lead new disciples to Christ, and they are authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ, who preach to the people committed to them the faith they must believe and put into practice, and by the light of the Holy Spirit illustrate that faith.”<sup>289</sup> “The bishops’ leadership serves the mission of the whole church and thus has a radical missionary dimension.”<sup>290</sup> The congregations and priests are bound by divine law to listen to the bishops out of respect for their commission to proclaim the Gospel and administer the sacraments, forgive sins, and condemn doctrine contrary to the Gospel.<sup>291</sup>

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286 LG 27/1; cf. LG 21–22. AC 28: “... [T]he bishop has the power of the order, i.e., the ministry of the Word and Sacraments; he has also the power of jurisdiction, i.e., the authority to excommunicate those guilty of open crimes, and again to absolve them if they are converted and seek absolution. But their power is not to be tyrannical, i.e., without a fixed law; nor regal, i.e., above law; but they have a fixed command and a fixed Word of God, according to which they ought to teach, and according to which they ought to exercise their jurisdiction.” The Church Order of the ELCF (18:1) outlines seven different episcopal tasks. In the Catholic Church there is a Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops, the *Apostolorum Successores*.

287 Cf. Paul VI’s Decree *Christus Dominus*, n. 3 and n. 16, Smalcald Articles, part III, Article X: “If the bishops would be true bishops ... [they] would devote themselves to the Church and the Gospel.”

288 Cf. JLC 285 and *The Office of Bishop*, p. 139.

289 LG 25.

290 JLC 299.

291 Cf. CA 28.21: BC 84. CRE 154–155. CA 28: “[B]y divine right, there belongs to the bishops as bishops, that is, to those to whom has been committed the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments, no jurisdiction except to forgive sins, to judge doctrine, to reject doctrines contrary to the Gospel, and to exclude from the communion of the Church wicked men, whose wickedness is known, and this without human force, simply by the Word. Herein the congregations of necessity and by divine right must obey them, according to Luke 10:16; He that heareth you heareth Me.” Cf. the German text: “Nach göttlichem Recht besteht deshalb das bischöfliche Amt darin, das Evangelium zu predigen, Sünden zu vergeben, Lehre zu (be)urteilen und die Lehre, die gegen das Evangelium ist, zu verwerfen und die Gottlosen, deren gottloses Wesen offenkundig ist, aus der christlichen Gemeinde auszuschließen – [und zwar] ohne menschliche Gewalt, sonder allein durch Gottes Wort (sine vi humana, sed verbo). Und hierin sind die Pfarrleute und die Kirchen den Bischöfen gehorsam zu sein schuldig gemäß dieses Spruches Christi Lk 10: ‚Wer euch hört, der hört mich‘.”



## ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

242. The bishops are the visible principle and foundation of unity in their own local<sup>292</sup> Churches. As a college they visibly represent unity among the local Churches. A particular bishop represents and manifests a local Church within the communion of particular Churches. As a college all the bishops in their relationship to one another signify the relationship between the particular Churches, namely, the communion of communions. The college of bishops makes visible these ecclesial interrelationships within the bishops' personal communion. According to current Catholic terminology the "fullness of order" represented in the episcopacy is none other than this communion within the episcopal college, which is related to and serves the apostolicity of the whole ecclesial communion.
243. In current Catholic teaching a bishop differs from a presbyter in his representative function. He represents a local Church within the communion of Churches. A presbyter does not, because he is not a member of the college of bishops. This representative function is inseparable from governance, but here governance is seen through the lens of sacramentality rather than the lens of jurisdiction. Pastoral leadership, liturgical presidency, and authoritative teaching – the kingly, priestly, and prophetic roles of the bishop – are functions of the bishop's *ordo* in the community. This ecclesial relationship is signified and constituted by the sacrament of ordination. There is thus both a Christological and an ecclesial reference to the sign of the sacrament of ordination, and the fullness of the sacrament of orders refers to the bishop's ability to represent a particular Church in the communion of particular Churches.<sup>293</sup> Ordination to the episcopacy therefore requires the participation of more than one bishop, whereas the ordination of the presbyter and the deacon, although they are sent to serve always and everywhere, is distinctively tied to the local congregation.
244. In Lutheran teaching the bishops represent the Church as the supreme shepherds of the diocese's parishes and clergy. The Bishops' Conference decides on the representation of the Church in questions related to the unity of the Church, ecumenical relationships, global mission, and the Church's relations with other religions.<sup>294</sup> Here also the Church's leadership is thus personal, collegial, and communal. As in Catholic teaching ordination to the episcopacy requires the participation of more than one bishop, unlike the ordination of the presbyter and the deacon. The ELCF also follows the commitment in the Porvoo Declaration in this respect: "(vi) to invite one another's bishops

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292 In the Catholic Church not every "particular Church" is a "local" Church, but in this document we use the word "local" loosely, as is the general practice in ecumenical documents.

293 Cf. CKS 66.

294 ELCF Church Law 21:2; Church Order 18:1.

normally to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of bishops as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church”.

#### **4.5. The Episcopal Ministry in the Service of the Apostolic Mission of the Church**

245. *We agree* that “the ministry of the bishop should serve the apostolic mission of the church. The task of the bishops is to be teachers, shepherds and priests. They guide with the word of God, they lead the church in prayer and mission and they administer the sacraments. Within that framework, they have the specific task of oversight of their respective dioceses and of ordaining new holders of the ministry of the church. They should exercise their authority of oversight, not as masters, but as servants.”<sup>295</sup>

#### ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

246. In the early Church the bishops were seen as representing bonds of unity between the local Churches through the maintenance of eucharistic communion (Ignatius), continuity in apostolic teaching (Irenaeus), and cooperative supervision of the Churches (Cyprian). The faithful transmission of the apostolic witness (*traditio*) is ensured by the legitimate appointment through apostolic succession (*successio apostolica*) in the ecclesial communion. A bishop is found in the succession if he is the legitimate successor of his predecessors and if he remains faithful to the apostolic tradition. The succession is thus connected to both tradition and communion.

247. In the current Catholic understanding the collegial succession expresses the intimate bond between the succession (*successio*) and communion (*communio*): one is a bishop in communion with the other bishops. Episcopal succession is in the first and last analysis the process of the Church remaining identical with the apostolic foundation in all forms of current inculturation. Apostolicity means not only continuity but also identity. However, the proportionality between the apostolic college and the episcopal college stresses no identity between the apostles and the bishops. These are their successors in the college. The college of bishops is ontologically the college of the successors of the apostles, not the college of individual bishops, who together compose the college. The college of bishops is not understood as the sum of the bishops placed in charge of the local Churches, nor as the result of their communion, but as an essential element of the universal Church as a reality that is prior to the office of chair in the particular Churches. The structure is transmitted by succession (in person and in content) from a college to another college,

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295 JLC 285.

structured in head and members. The head is always the successor of Peter, because Peter is always the head of the apostolic college.

248. The Lutheran understanding likewise underlines the interconnectedness of *successio*, *traditio*, and *communio*. The Lutheran-Catholic global dialogue brings an ecumenical perspective to the question: “Catholicity is the means and expression of apostolicity. If catholicity is a sign of apostolicity, then apostolicity is a condition for catholicity. Thus fidelity to the apostolic gospel has priority in the interplay of *traditio*, *successio* and *communio*.”<sup>296</sup> The Lutheran Confessions are critical towards some “human traditions” in the light of the judgement of their understanding of Holy Scripture.<sup>297</sup> This can be understood in the light of the emphasis on the priority of the apostolic Gospel. All enactments “which are not contrary to the Holy Gospel” may be retained. For example, for the Reformers the early Church’s creeds are based on the witness of Holy Scripture and so have authority as accurate summaries of the Gospel and as defences against error. The Augsburg Confession explicitly holds to these creeds and develops their content in its doctrine of justification. CA also adopts the early Church’s condemnation of doctrinal errors. The Reformers thus demonstrate the catholicity of their teaching, to which they add numerous references to the Church Fathers, who are for them witnesses to how Scripture may be correctly interpreted.<sup>298</sup>

249. In implying the importance of the interplay between succession, tradition, and communion as instruments of the apostolic mission of the Church, CA 28 states: “The churches ... ask only that they would release unjust burdens which are new and have been received contrary to the custom of the Church

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296 ApC 291.

297 For an example of the Lutheran criticism of “human traditions” see CA 26: “Of the Distinction of Meats. It has been the general persuasion, not of the people alone, but also of those teaching in the churches, that making Distinctions of Meats, and like traditions of men, are works profitable to merit grace, and able to make satisfactions for sins. And that the world so thought, appears from this, that new ceremonies, new orders, new holy-days, and new fastings were daily instituted, and the teachers in the churches did exact these works as a service necessary to merit grace, and did greatly terrify men’s consciences, if they should omit any of these things. From this persuasion concerning traditions much detriment has resulted in the Church. *First*, the doctrine of grace and of the righteousness of faith has been obscured by it, which is the chief part of the Gospel, and ought to stand out as the most prominent in the Church, in order that the merit of Christ may be well known, and faith, which believes that sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake be exalted far above works. Wherefore Paul also lays the greatest stress on this article, putting aside the Law and human traditions, in order to show that Christian righteousness is something else than such works, to wit, the faith which believes that sins are freely forgiven for Christ’s sake. But this doctrine of Paul has been almost wholly smothered by traditions, which have produced an opinion that, by making distinctions in meats and like services, we must merit grace and righteousness. In treating of repentance, there was no mention made of faith; only those works of satisfaction were set forth; in these the entire repentance seemed to consist. ... *Secondly*, these traditions have obscured the commandments of God, because traditions were placed far above the commandments of God. ... *Thirdly*, traditions brought great danger to consciences; for it was impossible to keep all traditions, and yet men judged these observances to be necessary acts of worship. Gerson writes that many fell into despair, and that some even took their own lives, because they felt that they were not able to satisfy the traditions, and they had all the while not heard any consolation of the righteousness of faith and grace.”

298 ApC 445–446.

Catholic. ... It is not our design now to wrest the government from the bishops, but this one thing is asked, namely, that they allow the Gospel to be purely taught, and that they relax some few observances which cannot be kept without sin.” Luther writes in the *Smalcald Articles* on the benefits of the college of bishops serving the apostolic Gospel – even if this is alongside his critical remarks on the papacy: “[T]he Church can never be better governed and preserved than if we all live under one head, Christ, and all the bishops ... be diligently joined in unity of doctrine, faith, Sacraments, prayer, and works of love, etc. ...”

#### 4.6. The Apostolic Dimension of the Ordination of a Bishop

250. *We agree* that the foundation for apostolic continuity is the steady focus of the Church on the redemptive death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and on the apostolic witness to this Gospel.<sup>299</sup>
251. *We agree* that apostolicity is continuity in faith in the life of the Church and in the structures and ministry of the Church. The ministerial succession is a constituent part and an expression of the apostolicity of the Church. The same applies to the ordination of a bishop in historic succession through the laying on of hands. This apostolic tradition contains many elements in which the sacramental and the historical perspectives complement one another.<sup>300</sup>
252. *We agree* that a newly ordained bishop does not become first a bishop and later a member of the college, but he is a bishop by virtue of having been sacramentally installed in the college of bishops, as it “is already to be seen in that custom, going back to antiquity, of calling together several bishops to take part in raising a newly-elected person to the ministry of the high priesthood” (LG 22/1). The position of the bishops is described by Luke 10:16 (LG 20), a saying of the Lord which was also fundamental in the Lutheran interpretation of the authority of the episcopal office (CA 28.22: BC 84) and of the ordained ministry in general (Apol. 7.28: BC 173).<sup>301</sup>
253. *We agree* that our partner in dialogue has kept many inward and outward elements of apostolicity and that this applies to the succession in faith and life and to the apostolic structure of the Church. We also recognise that the ministry of our Churches has fulfilled its mission to preserve faithfulness to the apostolic Gospel in the central matters of faith that are considered in the JD.<sup>302</sup>

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299 JLC 360.

300 JLC 361.

301 CRE 156.

302 JLC 362.

## ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

254. Although the ELCF does not describe the ordination of a bishop as a sacrament and does not speak of the fullness of the sacramental sign in the episcopal ministry, the ordination of a bishop, like the ordination of a priest or deacon, is understood as a sacramentally effective act in which the gifts of the Holy Spirit are given for the ministry through the word of God, prayer, and the laying on of hands. Ordination is carried out by validly ordained bishops who represent the communion of the Church. The bishop has a special ministry as a Church leader, serving the unity, sanctity, catholicity, and apostolicity of the Church in promoting the proclamation of the Gospel, the administration of the sacraments, and faith and love.
255. The PCS affirms: “Continuity in apostolic succession is signified in the ordination or consecration of a bishop. In this act the people of God gather to affirm the choice of and pray for the chosen candidate. At the laying on of hands by the ordaining bishop and other representatives [bishops] with prayer, the whole Church calls upon God in confidence of his promise to pour out the Holy Spirit on his covenant people (Is. 11. 1–3, cf. *Veni Creator Spiritus*). ... On the one hand, by the laying on of hands with prayer a gift of grace already given by God is recognized and confirmed; on the other hand, it is perfected for service. The precise significance or intention of the laying on of hands as a sign is determined by the prayer or declaration which accompanies it. In the case of the episcopate, to ordain by prayer and the laying on of hands is to do what the apostles did, and the Church through the ages.
256. “In the consecration of a bishop the sign is effective in four ways: first it bears witness to the Church’s trust in God’s faithfulness to his people and in the promised presence of Christ with his Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to the end of time; secondly, it expresses the Church’s intention to be faithful to God’s initiative and gift by living in the continuity of the apostolic faith and tradition; thirdly, the participation of a group of bishops in the laying on of hands signifies their and their churches’ acceptance of the new bishop and so of the catholicity of the churches: fourthly, it transmits ministerial office and its authority in accordance with God’s will and institution. Thus in the act of consecration a bishop receives the sign of divine approval and a permanent commission to lead his particular church in the common faith and apostolic life of all the churches.”<sup>303</sup>
257. “The continuity signified in the consecration of a bishop to episcopal ministry cannot be separated from the continuity of life and witness of the diocese to which he is called. In the particular circumstances of our churches, the

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303 PCS C 47–48.

continuity represented by the occupation of the historic sees is more than personal. The care to maintain a diocesan and parochial pattern of pastoral life and ministry reflects an intention of the churches to continue to exercise the apostolic ministry of word and sacrament of the universal Church. ... To ordain a bishop in historic succession (that is, in intended continuity from the apostles themselves) is also a sign. In so doing the Church communicates its care for continuity in the whole of its life and mission, and reinforces its determination to manifest the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles. To make the meaning of the sign fully intelligible it is necessary to include in the service of ordination a public declaration of the faith of the Church and an exposition of the ministry to which the new bishop is called. In this way the sign of historic episcopal succession is placed clearly in its full context of the continuity of proclamation of the gospel of Christ and the mission of his Church.”<sup>304</sup>

258. In Catholic teaching the sacramental nature of the succession refers not only to the rite of episcopal ordination, but also to the exercise of the ministry (cf. LG 21). This leads to an insertion within the sacramental ambit of the transmission of the entire apostolic tradition and sheds interesting light in better understanding the succession as “sign and guarantee” of the apostolic tradition.
259. From the Lutheran perspective the apostolic succession is also a guarantee, but it “does not by itself guarantee the fidelity of the church to every aspect of the apostolic faith, life and mission. There have been schisms in the history of the churches using the sign of historic succession. Nor does the sign guarantee the personal faithfulness of the bishop. Nonetheless, the retention of the sign remains a permanent challenge to fidelity and to unity, a summons to witness to, and a commission to realise more fully, the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles.”<sup>305</sup>

## **5. The Ministry of Peter as a Service to the Wholeness and Unity of the Church**

### **5.1. The Divine Mission of St Peter and the Petrine Ministry Today**

260. *We agree* that Jesus Christ directly commissioned St Peter to “feed my sheep” (John 21:15–17), “you must strengthen your brothers” (Luke 22:32), and to “bind and loose” (Matt. 16:18–19), and that Peter had a leading teaching

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304 PCS C 47–49 and D 50.

305 PCS D 51.

and pastoral position among the disciples. At the same time Jesus gave the apostolic ministry to all the apostles (Matt. 18:18; 28:18–20). This ministry of proclaiming the Gospel, baptising, and teaching is divinely instituted (*iure divino*). However, the Petrine Ministry as we know it has developed historically into its current form.<sup>306</sup> Even early in the Church's history the Bishop of Rome had a certain primacy in the Church. Our ecumenical task is now to understand better, and ecumenically, the legacy of the undivided Church, the motives of the Reformation, and current reality for the benefit of the mission and ministry of the Church in regard to the Petrine Ministry. These efforts to promote unity, witness, and service may be seen as willed by God.

### **Explicating the Common Understanding**

261. The Lutheran Reformers' critique of the Petrine Ministry may be seen as implying criticism of the claim of the Petrine office to divine institution (*ius divinum*), not as a fundamental rejection of the ministry or even its divine background as such. In a situation of conflict the Reformers saw the Petrine Ministry in a critical light. The following points were essential in their critique: 1) the prohibition of all criticism of the pope, alongside a critique based on Holy Scripture; 2) the power of the pope to state new commandments and doctrines which were binding for the faith; and 3) the salvific necessity to be obedient to the pope. The Reformers' human institution (*iure humano*) claim<sup>307</sup> was intended to reject the maximalist interpretation of the divine institution (*ius divinum*) claim regarding the Petrine office. The *ius divinum* claim as such could have been accepted if the Catholic Church had not connected it with implications and features which in the eyes of the Reformers might lead to a maximalist and overflowing general concept. For example, in his thesis on indulgences Luther did not question the primacy of the pope *iure divino*. He later affirmed that he followed the pope when he acted in accordance with the canons that conformed with the Holy Bible, the Church Fathers, and the Church's canons and decretals.<sup>308</sup> The Reformers' rejection of the *ius divinum* claim of the papal ministry was thus neither fundamental

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306 Cf. CS 164; Klausnitzer 2004, 481. Klausnitzer 2004, 511–512 refers to the American exegetical study *Peter in the New Testament: A Collaborative Assessment* 1971–73. Cf. Aarts 1989 and R. Goyarrola, *Iglesia de Roma y ministerio petrino*, Roma 2002.

307 In *A Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope* Melancthon argues against the superior character of the office of the Bishop of Rome on the basis of his interpretation of the decisions of the Council of Nice: "VI. The Council of Nice resolved that the bishop of Alexandria should administer the churches in the East, and the Roman bishop the suburban, i.e., those which were in the Roman provinces in the West. From this start by a human law, i.e. the resolution of the Council, the authority of the Roman bishop first arose. If the Roman bishop already had the superiority by divine law, it would not have been lawful for the Council to take any right from him and transfer it to the bishop of Alexandria; nay, all the bishops of the East ought perpetually to have sought ordination and confirmation from the bishop of Rome."

308 Huovinen 2010, 276–277.

nor categorical.<sup>309</sup> Their critique should also be seen in the context of the contemporary Catholic critique.<sup>310</sup>

262. The Reformers understood the concept of “divine institution” (*iure divino*) as encompassing all that was explicitly instituted by Christ in Holy Scripture, and all other institutions as “human institutions” (*iure humano*). However, they understood the institution of the apostolic ministry, and thus the ministry of the Church, as divinely instituted (*iure divino*) in the light of Scripture. The Reformers’ criticism was directed against those practices which they understood as contrary to the right teaching of the Gospel, and especially against the right understanding of the doctrine of justification. They would have accepted the office of the pope if he had supported their understanding of the proclamation of the Gospel. We can conclude that the Reformers would have understood a Petrine Ministry that supported the mission and ministry of the Church in the light of their understanding of justification and Gospel as willed by God.<sup>311</sup> Following the JD there is therefore no substantial obstacle to understanding the Petrine Ministry as a pastoral ministry willed by God.

## 5.2. The Ministry of Unity

263. *We agree* that when a Lutheran-Catholic differentiated consensus on the theological and practical renewal of this ministry is reached, the Bishop of Rome can function as a visible sign and instrument of the unity of the Church. The community of bishops as such “is a realization and representation of the one church of Jesus Christ” (*Ministry* 68). In the history of the Church this community has taken its bearings from several congregations which enjoy particular prominence because of their apostolic origin. Among them the congregation of Rome, with its bishop, has enjoyed particular precedence since ancient times. The Reformers did not dispute this. Agreement with Rome and with the incumbent of the episcopal see in Rome was accepted as one criterion for the unity of the whole Church, but it was never the sole criterion. In particular

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309 GKP, 47.

310 This criticism of the papal office is not unknown among Catholics either. Many saints have given examples of it. During the Reformation period St Robert Bellarmine was able to state: “Just as it is licit to resist a Pontiff who attacks the body, so it is licit to resist him who attacks souls, or who disturbs the civil order, or above him, who tries to destroy the Church. It is licit to resist him by not doing what he orders and by impeding the execution of his will.” St Cajetan also affirms that “one must resist a pope who openly destroys the Church”. An historical example of this can be found, for example, in the opposition to the erroneous teaching of a private opinion of Pope John XXII as a question open to discussion at that time.

311 Cf., for example, Meyer 2010, 343–344, interprets the intention of Melanchthon’s Treatise as not to categorically deny the *ius divinum* of the papal primacy. Melanchthon states: “Even if (*etiamsi*) the bishop of Rome did possess the primacy by divine right (*iure divino*), he should not be obeyed inasmuch as he defends impious forms of worship and doctrines which are in conflict with the gospel.” Meyer sees Melanchthon’s criticism as not aimed at rejecting the *iure divino* claim categorically, but rather aimed at a maximalist interpretation that exempted papal decisions from all criticism even against claims on the basis of Holy Scripture and their testimony to the Gospel.



it was also presupposed that the Bishop of Rome himself should be in agreement with the Gospel. The Reformation's judgement of the pope can find no application to a papacy whose office is subordinated to the Gospel. Today many Lutheran Christians welcome the fact that in the Catholic Church the Petrine office is seen and lived as a ministry for the unity of the Church. The Lutheran Churches are also asking themselves about such a "service to the unity of the church at the universal level" (*Ministry* 73). Accordingly, "the Petrine office of the Bishop of Rome also need not be excluded by Lutherans as a visible sign of the unity of the church as a whole 'insofar as [this office] is subordinated to the primacy of the gospel by theological reinterpretation and practical restructuring'"<sup>312</sup>

264. *We agree* that the exercise of the Petrine Ministry should be understood on the basis of the Gospel, that is, from its essential place in the saving mystery of Christ and the building up of the Church. In this sense there is no contradiction between the ecclesiological concepts of service and power. In the Lutheran tradition the doctrine of justification is traditionally the key criterion in evaluating the "purity" of the Gospel. Now that the JD has articulated "a common understanding of our justification by God's grace through faith in Christ", the most important obstacle to a renewed common understanding of the ministry of the pope has been overcome. The JD concluded: "43. Our consensus in basic truths of the doctrine of justification must come to influence the life and teachings of our churches." Although Martin Luther was critical of the Petrine office, he was ready to rethink his critique if the pope allowed the proclamation of justification by faith through God's grace in Christ.<sup>313</sup>
265. *We agree* that a special ministry for the universal Church (*communio ecclesiarum*) as a visible sign and instrument of her unity and apostolic continuity in the service of the proclamation of the apostolic Gospel promotes the purposes of the Triune God for his Church. The unity of the Church is part of the divine plan and commandment. The Trinitarian faith, as the basis of the Church's nature and mission, and the prayer of Jesus for his own are signs of this (John 17:21). The renewed ministry of primate of the communion of Churches (*primatus communionis ecclesiarum*) can serve the unity of the Church.<sup>314</sup> The original and renewed Petrine office is to be seen in the context of unity in

312 *Ministry* 73; cf. Malta 66; CRE 159. Cf. Müller 2017, 383: "Der Primat hat nichts mit irgendeiner Herrschaft über andere Kirchen zu tun. Seiner inneren Natur nach besteht er im 'Vorsitz der Liebe', d.h. er ist die erste Cathedra in der Kirche, sowohl in der römischen Partikularkirche wie in der katholischen Weltkirche, und zugleich Dienst an der Einheit und Gemeinschaft aller Kirchen und Gläubigen in Gott dem Vater und dem Sohn und dem Heiligen Geist."

313 Luther famously declared (1531): "If we achieve that it is acknowledged, God alone by sole grace justifies through Christ, then we want not only to carry the pope in our hands, but to kiss him on the foot." WA 40 I, 181. Cf. Müller 2017, 113: "Nachfolger Petri zu sein heißt somit, allen Menschen Jesus als den göttlichen Heilsbringer zu bezeugen und ihnen in der Autorität Christi das Glaubensbekenntnis der Kirche vorzulegen."

314 GKP, 178–179; cf. Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* 32.

diversity, protecting both the unity of the Church and faith and legitimate diversity in her life in the episcopally and synodally led local Churches. This gives expression to the apostolicity and catholicity of the Church of Christ, to the fullness and universality of the Christian faith.

### ***Explicating the Common Understanding***

266. The Bishop of Rome expresses the purpose of the Petrine charism, that is, the unity of faith and communion of all believers, “the perpetual and visible principle and foundation of unity both of the Bishops and of the multitude of the faithful” (LG 23), and therefore has a specific ministerial grace for serving that unity of faith and communion which is important for the Church in the fulfilment of her saving mission. (UR 1).<sup>315</sup>
267. For both Lutherans and Catholics “it is essential to be aware of the interrelationship of the individual and regional churches” (*Ministry* 72). The Churches of the Lutheran Reformation have recognised the need for a “ministry of leadership and of pastoral supervision” (*Ministry* 42). The possibility of an office to serve Christian unity at the level of the universal Church was never excluded as a matter of principle by the Reformation. Lutherans now regret that Luther used the expression “Antichrist” of the papal office, and the resulting history of mutual abuse.

### **5.3. The Petrine Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Whole Church**

268. *We agree* that the Petrine Ministry should be seen in the context of the apostolicity of the whole Church, serving the communion of the Church personally, collegially, and communally. Where the ecumenical aim of the visible unity of the universal Church (*communio ecclesiarum*) is concerned, the embeddedness of the Petrine Ministry in collegial and synodal structures, which includes the whole people of God, together with the principle of subsidiarity, are also necessary preconditions for ecumenical rapprochement. This includes the canonical decisions supporting these structures following the direction given by the Second Vatican Council. As Pope Francis stated in his address on the fiftieth anniversary of the institution of the Synod of Bishops on 17<sup>th</sup> October 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.

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<sup>315</sup> Cf. LG 26, CN 11 and cf. CN 14; LG 8/2, 26. The ministry of the successor of Peter as something interior to each particular Church is a necessary expression of the fundamental mutual interiority between the universal and local Church in Catholic teaching.

It is precisely this path of *synodality* which God expects of the Church of the third millennium.”

269. *We agree* that the Holy Scripture as *norma normans*, the source of sources, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the heart of the word of God are foundational for the apostolic mission of the Church and her teaching ministry.<sup>316</sup> DV 10 concludes: “This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it scrupulously and explaining it faithfully in accord with a divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed.” The Petrine Ministry and magisterium in the service of protecting and promoting this central message can benefit the whole of Christianity. We wish to support common efforts to interpret the ministry of the Bishop of Rome in the context of the apostolicity of the whole Church in the light of the ecumenical imperatives in *From Conflict to Communion*: “Lutherans and Catholics should jointly rediscover the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ for our time. ... Catholics and Lutherans should witness together to the mercy of God in proclamation and service to the world.”<sup>317</sup>

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316 ApC 434: “[T]he Scriptures are for Lutherans and Catholics the source, rule, guideline, and criterion of correctness and purity of the church’s proclamation, of its elaboration of doctrine, and of its sacramental and pastoral practice.” ApC 443: “When Catholics affirm that tradition is indispensable in the interpretation of the word of God (Ut unum sint, 79; cf. nos. 404–406, above), they are connecting the gospel and Scripture with the Christian faith lived and transmitted in history, where transmission has given rise to valid expressions of that faith. Such expressions are: the rule of faith (nos. 320–322 above), and conciliar formulations of articles of faith (nos. 337–340 above). These relate to God’s saving work as concentrated summaries and clarifications of what is announced in the apostolic gospel and documented in the books of Scripture.” Cf. DV 24–25: “24. Sacred theology rests on the written word of God, together with sacred tradition, as its primary and perpetual foundation. By scrutinizing in the light of faith all truth stored up in the mystery of Christ, theology is most powerfully strengthened and constantly rejuvenated by that word. For the Sacred Scriptures contain the word of God and since they are inspired, really are the word of God; and so the study of the sacred page is, as it were, the soul of sacred theology. (3) By the same word of Scripture the ministry of the word also, that is, pastoral preaching, catechetics and all Christian instruction, in which the liturgical homily must hold the foremost place, is nourished in a healthy way and flourishes in a holy way. 25. Therefore, all the clergy must hold fast to the Sacred Scriptures through diligent sacred reading and careful study, especially the priests of Christ and others, such as deacons and catechists who are legitimately active in the ministry of the word.” CA end of part one: “This is about the Sum of our Doctrine, in which, as can be seen, there is nothing that varies from the Scriptures, or from the Church Catholic, or from the Church of Rome as known from its writers.” [As far as it is known from the writings of the Church Fathers.] CA XXVIII: “Augustine (Contra Petiliani Epistolam): Neither must we submit to Catholic bishops if they chance to err, or hold anything contrary to the Canonical Scriptures of God.”

317 FCC 243–244. Cf. Müller 2017, 388: “Der hl. Augustinus spricht vom Ende ohne Ende, wenn er seine gewaltige Geschichtstheologie in seinen 22 Büchern über die Gottesbürgerschaft beschließt... Denn das eben ist unser Endziel, zu einem Reich zu gelangen, dem kein Ziel durch ein Ende gesetzt ist.“ Bis dahin entspricht die Kirche ihrer Sendung, Zeichen und Werkzeug zu sein für die innigste Vereinigung der Menschen mit Gott und für die Einheit der Menschheit (vgl. LG 1). Das ist insbesondere der Dienst des Papstes, die Menschen in Wahrheit und Gerechtigkeit zu vereinen und sie zur Einheit mit Gott zu führen. Denn der Papst ist das sichtbare Prinzip der Einheit der Kirche, in der die Einheit der Menschheit und ihre Gemeinschaft mit Gott vorausgebildet und vorweggenommen wird.“ Müller 2017, 565–566: “Wir sind überzeugt, dass im Tiefsten die Gründe für den Säkularismus oder die innere Distanzierung vieler von der christlichen Überlieferung nicht intellektuelle Schwierigkeiten mit einzelnen Glaubenslehren der Kirche sind, sondern ein mangelndes Vertrauen in die weltverändernde und hoffnungsgebende Kraft der Liebe Gottes... Das Christentum wird bei uns an Kraft

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270. In Catholic teaching there is a relationship of proportionality between the Twelve and the college of bishops. Although Peter is the first apostle and has received a ministry of universal scope, the other apostles also have a ministry that is not confined to certain places or people. By contrast, in the episcopal college only the pope has inherited a universal personal ministry, while the other bishops' ministry is considered individually limited. The bishops take care of the whole Church only with the pope and together with the bishops. The Petrine succession has a theological significance only in the apostolic succession and in the transmission of the apostolic tradition (*traditio apostolica*), and therefore of the Petrine tradition (*traditio Petri*).<sup>318</sup> Personal succession is also known in Lutheran and Luther's theology. Luther presupposes that the Christian faith is always transmitted by certain concrete persons. The list of fathers in Genesis is an indication of the blessing and care of God for his people. There are always persons among whom the Church and the word of God can be found. The true Church has a historically recognisable succession. As a spiritual realm it always has a visible form. Theologically, there are no obstacles for understanding succession in the office of the Bishop of Rome as a chain which indicates the visible and historical nature of the Church and serves the apostolicity of the whole Church.<sup>319</sup>

### 5.4. The Episcopal Ministry of the Bishop of Rome

271. Various ministerial functions of the Bishop of Rome can be discerned e.g.: bishop of a local Church, Metropolitan of the Province of Rome, Primate of

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gewinnen, der Glaube wieder als Geschenk erfahren, wenn wir begreifen, dass Gott die Liebe ist. Das ist auch das große Anliegen von Papst Franziskus, der nicht müde wird, einer hoffnungsschwachen und vom Fanatismus zerrissenen Welt die Botschaft von der Liebe und Güte Jesu Christi und der Gerechtigkeit und Barmherzigkeit Gottes zu verkünden. Damit erfüllt er den Auftrag, der ihm im heiligen Petrus von Jesus im Abendmahlsaal erteilt worden ist: ‚Stärke deine Brüder!‘ Und dieser Auftrag kann nur in der Kraft der Verheißung Jesu erfüllt werden: ‚Ich habe für dich gebetet, dass dein Glaube nicht erlischt‘ (Lk 22,32). Das ist die Mission des Papstes von Rom und Hirten der universalen Kirche.“

318 The characteristics of exercising the primacy must thus be understood primarily from two fundamental premises: the unity of the episcopate and the episcopal character of the primacy itself. As episcopacy is a “one and undivided” reality, the primacy of the pope implies the authority effectively to serve the unity of all the bishops and all the faithful, and is exercised at various levels, which relate to the supervision of the transmission of the word, sacramental and liturgical celebration, mission, discipline, and the Christian life. The office of the Bishop of Rome can only be understood in relation to the office of the episcopal college. As successor to the seat of Peter the Bishop of Rome is the first of the bishops, who by reason of his primacy has special responsibility and competence for the unity of the Church. Vid. John Paul II, *Ut unum sint*, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *The primacy of the successor of Peter in the mystery of the Church*.

319 Huovinen 1985, 38; Forsberg 1984. GKP, 95 quotes WA 40 I, 59, 16–23: “Die Apostel . . . sind ohne Vermittlung von Christus selbst berufen worden, wie die Propheten im Alten Testament von Gott selbst. Die Apostel haben nachher ihre Schüler berufen, wie Paulus den Timotheus, Titus usw. Die haben daraufhin Bischöfe berufen, wie Tit 1 sagt, die Bischöfe ihre Nachfolger bis in unsere Zeiten und sodann bis zum Ende der Welt.”

Italy, officeholder of the Petrine Ministry. *We agree* that the Petrine Ministry is an episcopal office within the episcopal college of bishops. The Bishop of Rome takes care of episcopal duties and, as with the other bishops, these duties are divinely instituted (*iure divino*) (cf. CA 28). The Petrine Ministry is understood according to the sacramental nature of the Church as a sign and service to the wholeness and unity of the Church. The episcopacy of this service shows the heart of its meaning, which is to be a sign of apostolic identity in the divine mission of the whole Church.

## 5.5. The Ministry to Protect the Freedom of the Gospel and the Fundamental Truths of Christian Faith

272. *We agree* that the purpose of the doctrines of infallibility and primacy of jurisdiction can be understood as: 1) to help to ensure the unity of the Church is secured in the fundamental questions of Christian faith whenever they are threatened; and 2) to protect the freedom of the Gospel's proclamation. Where Catholics speak of infallibility, Lutherans speak of the *status confessionis* as an expression of the firm commitment to reject new unchristian doctrines which are against the Scripture and the apostolic and Catholic faith, as already expressed in the Conclusion of the Augsburg Confession.<sup>320</sup> In all his duties the Roman Pontiff is also bound to be absolutely loyal to the apostolic faith and the revelation of the Triune God in Christ.<sup>321</sup> LG 25: "...[W]hen either the Roman Pontiff or the Body of Bishops together with him defines a judgment, they pronounce it in accordance with Revelation itself, which all are obliged to abide by and be in conformity with..." DV I, 2 reveals the core of the biblical revelation: "In His goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will (see Eph. 1:9) by which through Christ, the Word made flesh, man might in the Holy Spirit have access to the Father and come to share in the divine nature (see Eph. 2:18; 2 Pet. 1:4)."

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320 *Gemeinschaft der Kirchen und Petrusamt* (GKP), 129, 180; CA Conclusion.

321 GKP, 163. Cf. Müller 2017, 196–197: "Und nun hat der Vater in Petrus der ganzen Kirche die innergöttliche und messianische Gottessohnschaft Jesu geoffenbart. Das ganze Glaubensbekenntnis der Kirche mit den einzelnen Artikeln ist wurzelhaft zusammengefasst in der Erkenntnis des Vaters im Sohn durch den Heiligen Geist (Lk 10,21 f.). Alle lehramtlichen Erklärungen zu den Mysterien der Trinität, der Gott-Menschheit des Erlösers, zur Gnade und den Sakramenten seit 2000 Jahren sind nichts anderes als die Entfaltung und Sicherung des Bekenntnisses, dass Jesus der Messias, der Sohn des lebendigen Gottes ist. Im Glauben an die Gottessohnschaft Christi sind alle Glaubenslehren der Kirche enthalten und konzentriert." Cf. also Müller 2017, 287: "Der Grund des Primates der Kirche des hl. Petrus zu Rom liegt also im Willen Christi und der Einsetzung des römischen Bischofs zum universalen Hirten. Aber das Ziel des gesamten Wirkens und aller ihrer Hirten ist nicht eine kaiserähnliche Herrschaft über weltliche Angelegenheiten, sondern die Sorge um das ewige Heil der Menschen. Und als Aufgabe in dieser Welt kommt hinzu, die Würde des Menschen als Bild und Gleichnis Gottes zu verkünden und zu verteidigen."

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273. In Catholic understanding the pope, like all the faithful, is subordinate to the Word of God (DV 10), to the Catholic faith, and is the guarantor of obedience to the Church and, in this sense, servant of the servants (*servus servorum*). He does not make arbitrary decisions, but is spokesman for the will of the Lord, who speaks to humans in the Scriptures lived and interpreted by tradition; in other words, the episcopacy (*episkopé*) of the primacy has limits set by divine law and by the Church's divine, inviolable constitution found in revelation. The Successor of Peter is the rock which guarantees a rigorous fidelity to the Word of God against arbitrariness and conformism: hence the witness character of his primacy.<sup>322</sup>
274. The Petrine Ministry affects all dimensions of episcopacy: the office of teaching, sanctifying, and governing (*munus docendi, sanctificandi et regendi*).<sup>323</sup> In practice the pope functions collegially through the organisation of the Church. Direct interventions are rare. The sacramentality of this ministry is not rooted in the Petrine Ministry as such, but in the undivided episcopacy, which is the key to understanding the primacy of the pope. The pope, being head of the college, serves the episcopate and the whole communion of the faithful (*communio fidelium*), always for the good of the Church (*bonum Ecclesiae*).
275. It is important to explicate the restrictions to the pope's jurisdictional primacy when discussing the ecumenical possibility of a ministry of unity which would also include jurisdictional power. In the context of the decision-making process of the First Vatican Council it was explained that certain restrictions do exist:

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322 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: *The Primacy of the Successor of Peter in the Mystery of the Church*, no. 7. Cf. Müller 2017, 365: "...ereignet sich im Glaubenssinn des Gottesvolkes keine neue Offenbarung, sondern in ihm wird die ‚ein für alle Mal‘ (Hebr 10,10) ergangene Heils-Offenbarung Gottes in Jesus Christus vollständig bewahrt und auf den Menschen von heute und morgen bezogen. Es geht nicht darum, die Offenbarung der Welt anzupassen, sondern die Welt für Gott zu gewinnen."

323 According to the office of teaching (*munus docendi*), given its episcopal nature, the primacy of the Bishop of Rome is first of all expressed in transmitting the word of God; thus, it includes a specific, particular responsibility for the mission of evangelisation, since ecclesial communion is something essentially intended to be expanded. The pope's episcopal task in relation to the transmission of the word of God extends to the whole Church. As such, it is a supreme and universal magisterial office; it is a function that involves a charism: the special assistance of the Holy Spirit to the successor of Peter, which also means, in certain cases, the prerogative of magisterial infallibility *ex cathedra* on the basis of the witness to the truth of the revelation. Through the office of sanctification (*munus sanctificandi*) the unity of the Church reaches its highest expression in the Eucharist. This communion is also necessarily based on the unity of the episcopate. Therefore, every celebration of the Eucharist is performed in union not only with the proper bishop, but also with the pope, with the episcopal order, with all the clergy, and with the entire people of God. Cf. CN, n. 14; *The Primacy of the Successor of Peter in the Mystery of the Church*, n. 11. As an element of the governing office (*munus regendi*) the jurisdictional power (*potestas iurisdictionis*) of the pope is episcopal, derived from the common sacrament of the episcopate: the pope is not the bishop of bishops. This means he has the juridical competence of *episkopé* on the basis of canon law. The Bishop of Rome's power of jurisdiction acquires the properties of universal, full, supreme, and ordinary at the time of acceptance of the canonical mission entrusted to him. Accordingly, the Petrine service in the Catholic Church reaches all the local Churches and all the faithful directly and immediately (cf. Klausnitzer 2004, 410).

1) The power of a bishop is not inferred from the power of the pope and the pope cannot change the status of an ecumenical council; 2) according to divine justice the pope must respect the revelation and earlier council decisions and likewise the basic order of the Church, the ministry of the bishop, and thus the life of the dioceses as well as conciliarity and collegiality; 3) papal power is exercised in the local Churches only in an emergency case; 4) papal power can be exercised only for the construction of the Church, not for her destruction. This would imply acting contrary to divine law and especially against episcopal order. Accordingly, even the First Vatican Council did not make an absolute monarch of the pope.<sup>324</sup> The Second Vatican Council anchored the papal ministry into a communion ecclesiological framework. A diocese is a particular Church, a local Church. It is not the *whole* Church, but it is in a full sense *the* Church. On the basis of eucharistic or communion ecclesiology this implies that there is a communion of *Churches*.<sup>325</sup> The understanding of the communion of the Church (*communio ecclesiae*) as a communion of Churches (*communio ecclesiarum*) affords new possibilities for ecumenical dialogue and rapprochement on the understanding of the Petrine Ministry. An important sign of this understanding is that the canonical distinction between power to ordain and power to guide/jurisdictional power was reconciled in the sacramental episcopal ordination by *Vaticanum II*. Both powers are directly received at ordination and at the bishop's ordination. This is why the bishops are referred to as "vicars and ambassadors of Jesus Christ ... and not the vicars of the Roman Pontiff" (LG 27).<sup>326</sup>

## 6. Towards Overcoming the Doctrinal Condemnations on Ministry

276. In 1982 the document *Ministry* concluded: "...Lutherans and Catholics start from the common conviction that the trend towards the emergence of the special ministry which finds expression in the New Testament is of norma-

324 GKP, 75–80, 181–182. Cf. CS, para. 194: "Nach evangelisch-lutherischer Theologie kann zu einem universalen Leitungsamt folgendes gesagt werden: 1. Gegen einen gesamtkirchlichen 'Petrusdienst' als pastoraler Dienst an der weltweiten Gemeinschaft der Kirchen und ihrer gemeinsamen Bezeugung der Wahrheit gibt es keine grundsätzlichen Einwände. 2. Dieser Dienst müßte in Strukturen kollegialer und synodaler Gesamtverantwortung verpflichtend eingebunden sein, und er müßte die Eigenständigkeit der regionalen Teilkirchen – einschließlic ihrer konfessionellen Prägung – achten. 3. In Lehrfragen müßten die Überordnung der Heiligen Schrift sowie die Gesamtverantwortung aller Getauften gewahrt sein."

325 LG 13: "... [W]ithin the Church particular Churches hold a rightful place; these Churches retain their own traditions, without in any way opposing the primacy of the Chair of Peter, which presides over the whole assembly of charity (11\*) and protects legitimate differences, while at the same time assuring that such differences do not hinder unity but rather contribute toward it."

326 GKP, 82–84. LG 23: "...in quibus et ex quibus una et unica Ecclesia catholica existit". LG 27: "vicarii et legati Christi ... neque vicarii Romanorum Pontificum".

- tive significance for the post-apostolic church.”<sup>327</sup> The recent joint Lutheran-Catholic report *From Conflict to Communion* (2013) lists the following shared understandings on the ministry on the basis of the Catholic-Lutheran dialogue document *The Apostolicity of the Church* (2006): 1) the priesthood of the baptised; 2) the divine source of ministry; 3) the ministry of word and sacrament, and the ordination rite with prayer and laying on of hands; 4) the local and regional ministry; 5) apostolicity; and 6) service to the Church universal.<sup>328</sup>
277. *Ministry* elaborated the “...open theological problem as to how one theologially defines more exactly the relationship of the one special ministry to the various other ministries and services in the church, and whether, therefore, and to what extent some of the characteristics attributed to the special ministry in what follows also belong analogously to other ministries and services”.<sup>329</sup> These divergences in the understanding of the ministry are listed in more detail by *From Conflict to Communion*: 1) episcopacy; 2) priesthood; 3) the fullness of the sacramental sign; and 4) the worldwide ministry. All in all, the office of ministry presents “both considerable obstacles to common understanding and also hopeful perspectives for rapprochement” (FCC 194).
278. The Swedish-Finnish dialogue report *Justification in the Life of the Church* therefore raises the basic question concerning our journey towards full communion: “What are the necessary visible signs in the ministry of the church, i.e. which are the elements in the nature of the ministry and in the visible fellowship of the ministers that are required in order that the ministry may be mutually recognized?”<sup>330</sup> A further question is: “Which differences in the structure of ministry could we accept without threatening the differentiated common view of the ordained ministry?”<sup>331</sup>
279. During the sixteenth century Reformation differences arose concerning the tendency to restrict the view of ministry to the concept of sacrificial priest-

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327 *Ministry* 17.

328 Cf. FCC 177–186, HF 56–119.

329 *Ministry* 17.

330 JLC 312:

- What signs or elements should be included in the historic episcopal succession?
- Is it even possible to speak of a defect if the ministry exists within the framework of the apostolicity of the whole church and the apostolic faith?
- What does it mean if historic episcopal succession has been preserved without communion with the Roman Catholic Church?
- What does it mean if the historic episcopal succession has been broken for a period and the church again makes use of it?
- The International Lutheran-Catholic Study Commission proposes the model of differentiated consensus by the acceptance of “the possibility of differing structures of ministry which realize and serve the fundamental intention of ministerial office.” Which differences in the structure of ministry could we accept without threatening the differentiated common view of the ordained ministry?

331 JLC 312.



hood (*sacerdos*) and the priest's power or authority (*potestas*) in the offering of the eucharistic sacrifice. The Reformation stressed the primacy of the task of proclamation and the administration of the sacraments. The Reformers rejected the notion that the ministry was a sacrificial priesthood because they no less rejected the view that the sacrifice of the Mass was a human work, a (bloodless) repetition or complement of the one sacrifice of Christ. The Council of Trent, on the other hand, while making it clear that the eucharistic sacrifice was to be viewed as a sacramental representation (*repraesentatio*) of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, which was once and for all (DS 1740), still held fast in its doctrinal decrees to the relationship of the priest (*sacerdos*) to the sacrifice of the Mass (DS 1752). At the same time the reform decrees stressed the task of preaching, and its practice was emphatically encouraged (Sess. 5, Decree on Biblical Studies and on Preaching, no. 9; also Sess. 23 c.1).<sup>332</sup>

280. Today the rhetoric of that earlier century, with its one-sided emphases on both sides, has been softened by two developments. The Second Vatican Council describes the priestly office in the light of the bishop's office, and as participation in that office (LG 21 and 28, PO 2 and 7). Here the fundamental and outstanding importance of the task of proclamation is again emphasised. This has its foundation in the theology of the Word, which the Council emphasised (DV). Accordingly, the terms ministry (*ministerium*) and office or function (*munus*) are placed in the foreground of the Church's ministry.<sup>333</sup> As has already been summarised in the common understanding of the Eucharist as sacrifice, a common understanding is emerging regarding the link between the concept of sacrifice and the Eucharist as an anamnestic participation of the celebrant or minister with the congregation in the one sacrifice of Christ. In the anamnesis Christ makes himself present by virtue of his promise, "This is my body", "This is my blood". This agreement allows Lutherans to dispense with their protest against the sacerdotal interpretation of the spiritual office, because there the fundamental and outstanding importance of the charge of proclamation for the understanding of the ministry of the Church is now recognised. Lutherans, for their part, see the ministerial office not as a mere preaching ministry but always also as a ministry for the administration of the sacraments (CA 14: BC 36). In this respect Tridentine canon 1 (DS 1771), which condemns the narrower view, is not applicable.<sup>334</sup>
281. Before the Second Vatican Council there were no magisterial statements concerning the validity or invalidity of the ordained ministry in the Lutheran

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332 CRE 148–149.

333 It should also be noted that both Lutherans and Catholics use the term "pappi", which means "father" in Finnish (Russian *pop*, Greek *papas*, Latin *papa*). The Augsburg Confession speaks explicitly of "priests" (*sacerdotes*), for example CA 23 *Vom Ebestand der Priester* (*De coniugio sacerdotum*).

334 CRE 149–150.

Church, although it was traditionally assumed that they were invalid.<sup>335</sup> UR 3 states: “Though the ecclesial Communities which are separated from us lack the fullness of unity with us flowing from Baptism, and though we believe they have not retained the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Orders [*sacramenti Ordinis defectum*], nevertheless when they commemorate His death and resurrection in the Lord’s Supper, they profess that it signifies life in communion with Christ and look forward to His coming in glory.”<sup>336</sup>

282. Building on Vatican II’s recognition of elements of sanctification outside the Catholic Church (cf. LG 15; UR 3), and in particular in relation to the sacraments celebrated in other Churches and ecclesial bodies, it is widely accepted in Lutheran-Catholic theological dialogue that the expression *defectus ordinis* “does not mean a total lack, but a defect in the full form of the ministry”.<sup>337</sup> Since the ecclesial communities possess traces of the church (*vestigia ecclesiae*), or more precisely, since the one Church of Christ is present and operative in these communities in a real albeit imperfect way (cf. UUS 11), some Catholic theologians conclude that these communities possess something which is essentially but deficiently the ministry.
283. The dialogue has moved from interpreting the *defectus* as a “lack of the fullness of ministry” to pinpointing this lack of fullness: the historic episcopal succession. *Facing Unity* (1984) suggests that full recognition of the Lutheran ministry would only be possible through “full Church communion”, of which “fellowship in the historical episcopacy is an essential part” (FU 95). Here the *defectus* points to the issues of the relationship between Church communion and historic episcopate.
284. *From Conflict to Communion* (2013) reasserts that for Catholics Lutheran ordinations lack a fullness of sacramental sign (cf. FCC 191). The earlier Study Document *The Apostolicity of the Church* (2006) provides an explanation of the Catholic doctrine as follows: “[T]he practice and doctrine of apostolic succession in the episcopate is, together with the threefold ministry, part of the complete structure of the church. This succession is realized in a corporate manner as bishops are taken into the college of Catholic bishops and thereby have the power to ordain. Therefore it is also Catholic doctrine that in Lutheran churches the sacramental sign of ordination is not fully present because those who ordain do not act in communion with the Catholic episcopal college.

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335 *Ministry* 75.

336 UR III, 2,22.

337 W. Kasper, “The Apostolic Succession: An Ecumenical Problem”, in *id.*, *Leadership in the Church* (New York: Crossroad, 2003) 114–43, at 136.

Therefore the Second Vatican Council speaks of a *defectus sacramenti ordinis* (UR 22) in these churches.”<sup>338</sup>

285. The sacramental sign of ordination is related to the concrete historical form, to the episcopal college with its head. Perhaps for this reason the US document *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation* (2004) tends to see the *defectus* as being linked to the full substance of the Eucharist, and thus to some form of structural communion with the ministry of Peter (cf. CKS 106-109). Sacramentality and collegiality go together. More clearly, the Nordic report *Justification in the Life of the Church* (2010) states that behind the *defectus ordinis* primarily lies an ecclesiological deficit: ordinations do not take place in any form of structural communion with the Successor of Peter (cf. JLC 267). *The Ministry in the Church* (1981) had already alluded to the Catholic view that the Petrine office must also be taken into consideration for a full recognition of ministries in any reconciliation of the Churches (cf. *Ministry* 78). The core of the *defectus ordinis* is basically expanded to the lack of unity, catholicity, and apostolicity (*defectus unitatis, catholicitatis et apostolicitatis*). For this reason it should be remembered that the Catholic view intimately links succession, sacrament, communion, and apostolic tradition, and the sacramental aspect cannot be ignored, while at the same time it should not be considered as the only relevant dimension.
286. The historical form of mediation – the sacramentality of the episcopate – needs to be examined in relation to the sacramental nature of the Church (cf. FCC 218). Thus, the most important precondition for the mutual recognition of ministries is an agreement about the essence of the Church, her basic sacramental structure, and her significance for the mediation of salvation. Only this larger ecclesiological context will give us right judgment in discerning the remaining divergences. We must first agree about what the Church is, and what Church unity requires, before reaching a satisfactory solution in the recognition of each other’s ministries.
287. In the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran Churches it may be possible to achieve further consensus and convergence in the understanding of the historic episcopate as a sign and servant of the apostolicity of the Church, as well as in our understanding of ministry. The Anglican-Lutheran Communion of Porvoo Churches, with its emphasis on substantial apostolicity in the Church through the interconnectedness of succession (*successio*), tradition (*traditio*), and communion (*communio*), suggests this.
288. The Swedish-Finnish dialogue report *Justification in the Life of the Church* concludes: “The Lutheran view of ministry includes a sacramental aspect,

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338 ApC 283; quoted in FCC 191.

- even though Lutherans do not speak of a special indelible character (*character indelebilis*.)” This is further explained in a footnote (para. 279, footnote 161): “Lutherans are not used to speaking of ordination as a sacrament. They rather understand the ministry of the church as a means of grace, in which God is present. From this perspective, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession makes it possible to speak of ordination as a sacrament (AC XIII, 11–13). Historically, this distinction can be noted in the fact that Lutherans have wanted to reserve the term sacrament only for rites that transmit the grace of salvation (AC XIII, 1–6). But this also shows that Lutherans link the ministry of the church, to which the minister is ordained, to the sacramental nature of the church, since the ministry can be called sacramental. When the minister carries out his ministry it takes place ‘in the place of Christ’ (AC VII/VIII, 47).”
289. In Lutheran theology ordination is based on the self-giving love of the Triune God. Ordination is an expression of the mission of God in the world. At ordination God the Father gives to one of his creatures, with all his or her gifts, Christ’s own ministry, and the Holy Spirit sanctifies and gives charisms for the Church’s ministry. Thus, the ordained ministry is understood as a participation in the life of the Triune God within the communion (*koinonia*) of the Church. The ordained ministry is understood within created reality in a Christologically and pneumatologically balanced way in the context of the apostolicity of the whole Church, in which the priesthood of all believers and the ordained ministry work together in a complementary way.<sup>339</sup>
290. This can be described as a sacramental view of ordination. In the ELCF ordination is carried out by the bishop through word, prayer, and the laying on of hands. Ordination is not understood as merely a demonstrative public confirmation of the call, but as an instrumental and sacramentally effective act, in which the ministry is concretely given. A fundamental element is the word of God, proclaimed and read, the sacramental word of the Bible. Certain texts are seen as fundamental to the divine mandate of the ministry (Matt. 28:18–20; John 15:16; John 20:21–23; Eph. 4:11–13; 1. Tim. 4:12–16). The word of God constitutes the ministry, the ordination, and the service of ministry. The promises of the word also provide the ordination prayer’s content and the assurance that it will be heard: in the ELCF the bishop prays: “Grant them the gift of your Holy Spirit that they may boldly proclaim the Gospel to the glory of your name and the building up of your church” and: “May God, the Triune, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, bless and sanctify you so that you may always and everywhere serve the Church of Christ” and: “We pray that you would grant the gift of your Holy Spirit to your servants,

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339 Karttunen 2015, 61.

who have now been ordained to the office of priest. Grant them endurance in the office of atonement.”<sup>340</sup>

291. The validity of the sacrament of ordination – connected with the understanding of a valid episcopate<sup>341</sup> – raises the essential question as to whether we need to be unanimous on the strictly defined term “sacrament”, or whether it is enough to understand the sacramental character of ordination within the sacramentality of the Church. “Sacramentality” in this context refers to the understanding that “through the act of ordination the Holy Spirit gives grace strengthening the ordained person for the life-time ministry of word and sacrament”.<sup>342</sup> The Lutheran Confessions appear to leave open the question of ordination as sacrament in a more definitive sense: “But if ordination is understood with reference to the ministry of the Word, we have no objection to calling ordination a sacrament.” (AC XIII)<sup>343</sup> The Lutheran Reformation thus considered it possible to recognise an ordination carried out through prayer and the laying on of hands as a sacrament, provided that the office was understood as a ministry of proclamation and the administration of the sacraments, and was not defined as a sacrificial ministry in the sense of the sacrificial concept, which the Reformation rejected because it might overshadow the unique sacrifice of Christ on the cross. In the light of our common differentiated understanding of this sacrifice (cf. 4.2.2.) the situation has remarkably changed. Although Lutherans have not generally adopted the terminology that describes the act of ordination as a sacrament, they have kept the essential components of the act itself, which the medieval Church was the first to call a “sacrament” in its narrower sense.<sup>344</sup>
292. Since 1947 the Catholic Church has made it clear that it is not the handing over of the eucharistic vessels that is constitutive of the act of ordination (DS 1326) but solely the ordination prayer (*forma*) in connection with the laying on of hands (*materia*, DS 3859). Taken together this means that the most important reasons for the Lutheran critique of the sacramental character of ordination have been eliminated. Consequently, the condemnations of the Council of Trent, which were levelled at this criticism (cf. DS 1773–75), are

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340 Karttunen 2015, 60; Pohjola 2014, 307. “Ordination shall be administered by the bishop. When there is a vacancy in see or if the bishop is prevented, the Diocesan Chapter may call another bishop to officiate at the ordination” (ELCF Church Order 5:1 § 2 mom.).

341 Cf. *Dominus Iesus* 17: “[T]he ecclesial communities which have not preserved the valid Episcopate and the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic mystery, are not Churches in the proper sense; however, those who are baptized in these communities are, by Baptism, incorporated in Christ and thus are in a certain communion, albeit imperfect, with the Church. Baptism in fact tends per se toward the full development of life in Christ, through the integral profession of faith, the Eucharist, and full communion in the Church.”

342 *Ministry* 33.

343 AC 13: “Si autem ordo de ministerio verbi intelligatur, non gravatim vocaverimus ordinem sacramentum.” See also *From Conflict to Communion*, paragraphs 166–169.

344 CRE 151. We can also agree with the ARCIC affirmation of sacramental ministry (*Clarifications* 1994).

no longer applicable. However, the question arises for the Catholic Church as to whether the wide degree of agreement about the essential components of the act of ordination does not justify recognition of the validity of Lutheran ordination, provided that a common understanding can be reached about the observance of the apostolic succession in this act.<sup>345</sup>

293. If we understand the Church as the presence of Jesus Christ, who is the basic sacrament as the incarnate Word, is it enough for a differentiated consensus to understand the ministry of word and sacrament, and ordination within this context, as a means of grace in which God is present? After all, the ministry of word and sacrament – traditionally in threefold form – would thus be understood as integral to the Church’s constitution, and episcopally celebrated ordination as a lifelong vocation and as a sacramentally effective, instrumental act in which the word of God, prayer, and the laying on of hands are the basic elements. As with the Anglican-Lutheran Porvoo Communion of Churches, might one way of building a bridge towards mutually recognised ordained ministry be that a Catholic bishop would participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of Lutheran bishops as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church? Naturally, the recognition of ordained ministry on the basis of our ecumenical theological endeavour would be needed first. It seems possible to see the differentiated consensus formulated in this document explicating a more fundamental agreement than has been possible in earlier Catholic-Lutheran discussions because of the wide agreement on the ordained ministry within the framework of the sacramentality of the Church.

## 7. Issues for Further Study

294. FCC states that Lutherans and Catholics require “further ecumenical conversation ... on: the relation between the visibility and invisibility of the church, the relation between the universal and local church, the church as sacrament, the necessity of sacramental ordination in the life of the church, and the sacramental character of episcopal consecration”. This document sheds more light on most of these themes. However, the relationship between the universal and local Church in particular needs more concrete explication in future discussions, although there is an agreement on the necessity of the interplay between the local, regional, and universal levels in the Church as an expression of her catholicity.
295. Although there is wide agreement on the nature of the ordained ministry, there is no consensus concerning who can or cannot be ordained. The ordination

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345 CRE 151–152.

of women to the priesthood and to the episcopate is a complicating factor for the Catholic Church.<sup>346</sup> This is a significant difference between Catholics and Lutherans, although within these traditions there are also differing views. For the full mutual recognition of ordained ministry the relationship between Scripture, tradition, and teaching authority needs to be clear. There is also a need to agree on the relationship between the foundation and form of the apostolic office. The question of the object of the ministry cannot push the question of the person of the minister into the background, since both are related. The binomial of “ordination” and “mission” is actually inseparable in sacramental theology.

296. Concerning the relationship between Scripture and tradition, which is interconnected with the understanding of authoritative teaching in the Church, FCC concludes: “Lutherans and Catholics are in such an extensive agreement that their different emphases do not of themselves require maintaining the present division of the churches. In this area, there is unity in reconciled diversity (ApC 448).”<sup>347</sup> However, there are differences with regard to the exercise of authority. The following questions from JLC remain valid and require more attention in future dialogue: “The Lutheran Churches can be asked the questions: In what way does their locally anchored synodal structure take the catholicity of the church into account? What is the role of the bishop in relation to the local parish with regard to spiritual leadership and to the General Synod respectively with regard to the leadership at the national level? How do the bishops avoid too subjective opinions that go beyond that which is taught everywhere, always and by everyone (*ubique, semper et ab omnibus*) about the Christian faith? What does the inclusion of women in the priesthood and in episcopacy mean for ecumenism?”<sup>348</sup> The Catholic Church may be asked how the fundamental agreement that there are several instances of witness to God’s word, which include the whole body of the faithful and its sense of faith (ApC 420; 455; 457) should be reflected in the official structures of leadership and spiritual discernment at the parish, diocesan and universal Church levels.
297. Although further reflection on the Petrine Ministry has been presented here and the consensus seems to be growing, the following statement in JLC remains

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346 Cf. ARCIC: “...the principles upon which ... doctrinal agreement rests are not affected by such ordinations; for it was concerned with the origin and nature of the ordained ministry and not with the question who can or cannot be ordained” (ARCIC Ministry Elucidation, 5, citing Letter of Pope Paul VI to Archbishop Donald Coggan, 23 March 1976, AAS 68).

347 FCC 210 and footnote 82: “These issues also have been explored in Germany by the Ökumenischer Arbeitskreis evangelischer und katholischer Theologen; their work is available in W. Pannenberg und Th. Schneider (eds), *Verbindliches Zeugnis*, 3 vols (Freiburg: Herder and Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992, 1995, 1998).”

348 JLC 308.

pertinent: “Further discussion is needed on the specific form that this universal ministry, which should protect the primacy of the gospel, should take.”<sup>349</sup>

298. The basic question regarding the Petrine Ministry as the safeguard of the whole Church’s apostolicity is to examine the way in which the concrete office as the vocation of the successor of Peter should be seen as essential and necessary for the Church. We can agree on the primacy of the Bishop of Rome during the first millennium and that the visible unity of Lutherans and Catholics today is impossible without a common differentiated understanding of the Petrine Ministry. Pope John Paul II affirmed: “The Catholic Church, both in her *praxis* and in her solemn documents, holds that the communion of the particular Churches with the Church of Rome, and of their bishops with the Bishop of Rome, is—in God’s plan—an essential requisite of full and visible communion.”<sup>350</sup> It is obvious that the episcopal and Petrine functions are part of the Holy Spirit’s leadership of the Church through the apostolic ministry. We can say that St Peter received a direct mission from Jesus Christ and that the ministry of Peter in pastoral service to the unity of the Church and joint ecumenical efforts to understand its meaning is willed by God, but how can we jointly express the meaning and implications of this for our concrete ecclesial realities and structures? The question of the primacy of jurisdiction is especially difficult and sensitive.
299. The First Vatican Council explicitly rejects the understanding of the Petrine Ministry as constituting solely a primacy of honour. It is to have “true and proper jurisdiction”: “If anyone, therefore, shall say that Blessed Peter the Apostle was not appointed the Prince of all the Apostles and the visible Head of the whole Church Militant; or that the same, directly and immediately, received from the same, Our Lord Jesus Christ, a primacy of honour only, and not of true and proper jurisdiction; let him be anathema.”<sup>351</sup> It follows that from a Catholic perspective there should be a consensus that being in communion with the Bishop of Rome is a precondition for the full visible unity of the Church. In some ecumenical discussions it has been suggested that the primacy of the Bishop of Rome could mean that the pope would serve as chair and convenor of the ecumenical council and as moderator in conflict situations.<sup>352</sup> Would this be enough?

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349 JLC 366.

350 *Ut Unum Sint* (UUS), para. 97.

351 Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ, *Pastor Aeternus* I.

352 For example, the *Saint Irenaeus Joint Orthodox-Catholic working group* stated in thesis 7 of its Rabat communique in 2014: “A better understanding of the Catholic concept of primacy at the universal level would be reached by making a clearer distinction between the role of the pope as head of the Latin Church and his role as primate in the world-wide communion of the churches. A universal primacy, drawing on the practice of the first millennium, could be recognized, for example, in the moderation of disputes, and taking initiatives in the ecumenical councils.” The Lutheran-Catholic dialogue report CS asks: “(200) Darüber hinaus ist die Frage zu stellen, ob und wieweit die römisch-katholische Kirche grundsätzlich die Möglichkeit sieht, eine From der



300. It can also be asked what implications arise from the fact that the Church of Constantinople is seen by the Church of Rome as a sister Church, although there is no consensus on the primacy of Peter and thus no full communion, for the understanding of apostolic succession in Lutheran-Catholic relations. Pope John Paul II states: “The structures of the Church in the East and in the West evolved in reference to that Apostolic heritage. Her unity during the first millennium was maintained within those same structures through the Bishops, Successors of the Apostles, in communion with the Bishop of Rome. If today at the end of the second millennium we are seeking to restore full communion, it is to that unity, thus structured, which we must look.”<sup>353</sup>
301. In Catholic theology a renewed reception of Vatican I after Vatican II and in the current ecumenical context is also called for. In *Ut Unum Sint* Pope John Paul II encouraged ecumenical dialogue on the Petrine Ministry as a ministry of unity encouraged by the heritage of the undivided Church and “open to the new situation” in “exercising the primacy”: “I am convinced that I have a particular responsibility in this regard, above all in acknowledging the ecumenical aspirations of the majority of the Christian Communities and in heeding the request made of me to find a way of exercising the primacy which, while in no way renouncing what is essential to its mission, is nonetheless open to a new situation. For a whole millennium Christians were united in a brotherly fraternal communion of faith and sacramental life ... If disagreements in belief and discipline arose among them, the Roman See acted by common consent as moderator.”<sup>354</sup> Would the role of the pope as moderator in disagreements in belief and discipline be a future role for the Petrine Ministry within the universal Church?
302. In reflecting on a future form of the Petrine Ministry that would also be acceptable to Lutherans, the implications of the *communio ecclesiarum* should be concretised in the spirit of the apostolicity of the whole Church. This would encompass the Petrine Ministry being seen not only in the context of

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Gemeinschaft der nicht römisch-katholischen Kirchen mit dem Papst zu verwirklichen, in der das Wesen des petrinischen Einheitsdienstes gewahrt wird, in der es aber andere rechtliche Formen gibt als diejenigen, die seit dem Mittelalter und besonders in der Neuzeit als maßgeblich herausgestellt worden sind. Ansätze für die Weiterführung des Gesprächs in dieser Frage könnten sein:

- die Möglichkeit einer Orientierung an der Primatsübung im ersten christlichen Jahrtausend ungeachtet späterer Entwicklungen;
- die Unterscheidung der Ämter, die die Person des Papstes in sich vereinigt: Bischof von Rom, Hirte der Gesamtkirche, Haupt des Bischofkollegiums, Patriarch des Abendlandes, Primas von Italien, Erzbischof und Metropolit der Kirchenprovinz Rom, Souverän des Staates der Vatikanstadt;
- die Gestalt der Kirche als *communio* von Schwesterkirchen;
- die Entwicklung des Verhältnisses zwischen der Kirche von Rom und den mit ihr unierten katholischen Ostkirchen;
- die legitime Vielfalt in Liturgie, Theologie, Spiritualität, Leitung und Praxis.”

353 UUS 55.

354 UUS 95, UR 14.

the college of bishops, but also in the context of the conciliar structures and their development for the universal Church, which would also require the development of a joint canonical framework. It should be asked what we as Churches can learn from each other, and acknowledged that legitimate diversity is needed in liturgy, theology, spirituality, leadership, and praxis as expressions of the full Catholic heritage of the Christian Church.<sup>355</sup>

## 8. Conclusion

303. The differentiated consensus on ministry presented here brings rapprochement a step nearer than the convergence and consensus reached by the Lutheran-Catholic study documents *Apostolicity of the Church* and *Justification in the Life of the Church*. The consensus achieved does not aim to be an exhaustive treatment of ministry, although it includes more than presbyterial ministry and also presents agreements on the ministry of deacon, episcopal ministry, and the Petrine Ministry.
304. The document seeks to express our basic agreement in doctrinal areas that have been a source of controversy, in part since the time of the Condemnations of the Reformation Era, in the wider context of our common convictions about the ministry and the Church's sacramentality. The aim is to reach and give expression to consensus on questions where agreement is indispensable for unity. The basic question is the concrete structure of a sacramentally understood ecclesiology. In addition to the previous dialogues our intention has been to elaborate our understanding of the sacramentality of the Church, Baptism and Eucharist as the principal sacraments, and the sacramentality of the ordained ministry, including the ministry of deacon, episcopal ministry, and the Petrine Ministry, as a service to the wholeness and unity of the Church.
305. The consensus affirms and brings further the conclusions reached in the project *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era*. The sixteenth century condemnations seem not to apply when they are seen in the light of this broad consensus on the basic truths of the Church, the Eucharist, and the ministry. It seems that the Second Vatican Council's understanding of the ordained ministry as lacking the fullness of a sacramental sign (*defectus sacramenti ordinis*) can also be questioned on the basis of the differentiated consensus we have attained. It therefore seems plausible to suggest that the Catholic Church might eventually re-evaluate her understanding of the Lutheran ministry in the light of the results of this dialogue. This would be a significant further step towards full communion.

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355 GKP, 164; CS 200.

## IV THE SIGNIFICANCE AND SCOPE OF THE CONSENSUS REACHED

306. UR II 22 states: “Though the ecclesial Communities which are separated from us lack the fullness of unity with us flowing from Baptism, and though we believe they have not retained the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Orders, nevertheless when they commemorate His death and resurrection in the Lord’s Supper, they profess that it signifies life in communion with Christ and look forward to His coming in glory. Therefore the teaching concerning the Lord’s Supper, the other sacraments, worship, the ministry of the Church, must be the subject of the dialogue.” In producing this dialogue document we have drawn from the earlier discussions and agreements on this subject and searched for a further differentiated consensus in order to reach sufficient common understanding and common conclusions concerning teaching and the ecclesial practices on the preservation of the “proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness”. We can summarise the consensus agreements and the conclusions based on the differentiated consensus as follows:

### The Church

307. *We agree* (cf. 25–49) that the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church is the Church of the Triune God. His three persons are the foundation of the Church and her universal mission in the world. In this body the life of Christ is poured into the faithful who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way with the Christ who suffered and was glorified. Through Baptism we are formed in the likeness of Christ. All human beings are called to belong to the people of God. The Church embodies the mystery of salvation, of a new humanity reconciled to God and to one another through Jesus Christ. Through her ministry of service and proclamation of the Gospel she points to the reality of the kingdom as a sacramental sign and instrument of salvation through the continuing presence of Christ. In the power of the Holy Spirit she participates in the divine mission by which the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Despite all her human failings she is the dawn of the kingdom of God, the renewal of the divine creation on the journey to the God who is all in all.

308. Ecumenical dialogue has shown that there does not need to be a dichotomy between the Church as a creation of the Word (*creatura verbi*) and the Church

as a sacrament of the salvation of the world (*sacramentum salutis mundi*). Both Lutherans and Catholics can describe and understand the Church today as a community of the faithful (*congregatio fidelium*), and as the communion of saints (*communio sanctorum*). There is no longer a contradiction between the “Church of the word” and the “Church of the sacrament” in these traditions. The Church is not one more sacrament, but that sacramental framework within which the other sacraments exist. Christ himself is present and active in the Church. Therefore in a mysterious way she is an effective sign, something which by grace effects what it signifies.

309. The Church is in a broad sense a sacrament in which the transcendent dimension is inseparably connected with created reality. The invisible divine dimension of the Church exists, expresses itself, and works in and through visible historical and human realities, analogous to the divine and human nature in the one person of Jesus Christ. The principal visible elements of the Church are the Holy Scriptures, the teaching of the apostles, the sacraments, and the divinely instituted ministry. These are instruments of God’s saving grace.
310. As an earthly community the Church is constituted of offices and ministries which bear responsibility for the Church’s exercise of her fundamental expressions of witness (*martyria*), worship (*leitourgia*), and service (*diakonia*), which have their focus on the proclamation of the Gospel and in the celebration of the Eucharist. Concretely, this takes place in the local Church. In each local Church the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of the creed through participation in the life and salvation opened by the Triune God is present, as is the unity and communion with the other local Churches which this implies. This unity and communion is manifested in an ultimately universal communion of communions of local Churches (*communio communionum ecclesiarum*).

## The Sacraments in General

311. On the basis of our differentiated understanding of the sacraments in general (cf. 63–69), and in the light of the distinction between the major sacraments (*sacramenta maiora*) (Baptism, Eucharist) and the minor sacraments (*sacramenta minora*) as divinely instituted sacred services and effective sacramental instruments in the work of the kingdom of God, we can conclude that the condemnations of the sixteenth century regarding the number of the sacraments no longer apply. We share the same sacramental intention to undertake the Church’s mission, and *we agree* that Baptism and Eucharist are the principal sacraments and the others are related to them.
312. We have reached a differentiated consensus on holy orders. Furthermore, the difference in our understanding of the other *sacramenta minora* (confirma-

tion, penance, the anointing of the sick and marriage) needs to be discussed in detail in future dialogue.

## The Eucharist

313. *We agree* that the Eucharist is the centre of the Church's life (cf. 2.2.1.–2.2.8.: agreements on the Eucharist) and that both the faithful and the Church gain their spiritual life and strength from the Eucharist. Participation in the Mass is the basic model for the Christian life.
314. *We agree* that the authority to administer the sacraments is given in ordination, which is a gift and commitment for life.
315. *We agree* that 1) the sacrifice of Christ for the sins of the world is unique and sufficient, and this sacrifice cannot be continued, repeated, replaced, or complemented; and 2) the Lord is present in the Eucharist and his sacrifice at Golgotha becomes present in an effective way in the celebration of the Eucharist.
316. *We agree* that the sacrifice of the Mass is based on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. The unique sacrifice of Jesus Christ is made sacramentally present in the Eucharist. Through anamnesis (*memoria*), which breaks the boundaries of time and place, his offer is present (*repraesentatio*) and actualised in the Mass. The second person of the Triune God is really present in the Eucharist as a reconciling and redemptive sacrifice to God. The priest acts *in persona Christi* when he consecrates the elements of bread and wine and invokes the Holy Spirit on them (*epiclesis*), administers the consecrated elements, the body and blood of Christ, to the communicants (*applicatio*), and leads the thanksgiving prayer.
317. *We agree* that the sacrificial character of the Eucharist can be expressed in many ways. In the context of the eucharistic celebration 1) bread and wine are brought to the altar at the beginning of the celebration as an offering and sign of thanksgiving for creation; 2) Christ is present as the sacrificed and crucified Lord; 3) the Eucharist is in word and deed a remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ's passion (*memoria passionis*); 4) the sacrifice of Christ's passion is present here and now in the Eucharist (*repraesentatio passionis*); 5) the fruits, effects, and gift of the cross are given personally to the faithful who receive the sacrament (*applicatio sacramentis*); 6) we bring a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God when we confess our sins, give thanks, pray, and celebrate Holy Communion in accordance with the institution of Christ and the encouragement of the apostle (Rom. 12:1); 7) The Eucharist obliges us to sacrifice ourselves in mutual love and service to one another.
318. *We agree* and affirm the joint understanding in *From Conflict to Communion*: "In the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper Jesus Christ true God and true man, is

present wholly and entirely, in his Body and Blood, under the signs of bread and wine.” (Eucharist 16)<sup>356</sup> This common statement affirms all the essential elements of faith in the eucharistic presence of Jesus Christ without adopting the conceptual terminology of transubstantiation. Both Catholics and Lutherans understand that “the exalted Lord is present in the Lord’s Supper in the body and blood he gave with his divinity and his humanity through the word of promise in the gifts of bread and wine in the power of the Holy Spirit for reception through the congregation”. The different forms of expression that Catholics and Lutherans use with regard to the Eucharist thus spring from the same conviction of faith, and these are therefore not issues that divide the Church. Both traditions seek to stress that the body and blood of Christ are truly, really, and substantially (*vere, realiter et substantialiter*) present in, with, and under the outward signs of bread and wine. The bread and wine change (*mutari, conversio*) into the body and blood of Christ at the consecration at the Eucharist. It is therefore said at the consecration: “This is my body”; “This is my blood”.

319. *We agree* that there is a convergence today between Catholics and Lutherans concerning the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine after the celebration of the Eucharist itself.
320. *We agree* that the Eucharist unfolds in two great parts which together form one, single act of worship. The Liturgy of the Word involves proclaiming and listening to the word of God. The Liturgy of the Eucharist includes the presentation of the bread and wine, the prayer or the anaphora containing the words of consecration, and communion. Through the consecratory words and prayer of thanksgiving, a word of faith addressed to the Father, the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ by the action of the Holy Spirit. In the communion we eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood. In the epiclesis we also pray that we may receive communion worthily in faith and be strengthened to love our neighbours.
321. *We agree* that the Eucharist is celebrated by a priest or bishop. The celebrant acts in the person of Christ the Head and in the name of the Church. Accordingly, only a person who is ordained and authorised by a validly ordained bishop can celebrate the Eucharist in our Churches.
322. *We agree* that there is an intimate and constitutive connection between Christ’s sacrifice, the Eucharist, and the Church. The Church draws her life from the Eucharist since the Eucharist makes present Christ’s redeeming sacrifice.
323. *We agree* that the Eucharist is the manifestation of the unity of the church and the celebration at which the presence of Christ and the unity of the Christians are manifested.

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356 FCC 154.

324. *We agree* on the centrality of the Eucharist for the mission of the Church.
325. *We agree* that the sign of communion is more complete when given under both kinds, since in that form the sign of the eucharistic meal appears at its clearest. In Lutheran practice communion under both kinds is the norm. In Catholic understanding the merits of this practice are generally accepted in principle, but the practical application of this principle varies and communion in many local Churches is predominantly administered under one kind. However, in the Catholic particular Churches in the Nordic countries, communion is often administered under both kinds. In view of the common understanding regarding the theological principle the practice, which in any case is not absolute, is not church-dividing.
326. In the light of this consensus on the basic truths of the Eucharist as sacrifice, grounded in the living presence of the unique sacrifice of Christ in the Mass, it seems reasonable to say that the mutual condemnations of the sixteenth century are no longer applicable.

## The Common Priesthood and the Ordained Ministry

327. *We agree* (cf. 194–197) that all who are baptised and believe in Christ share in his priesthood and are thus commissioned to “proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Pet. 2:9). Hence, every member has a part to play in the mission of the whole body (ApC 273). However, the ministry of the public proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments in the Church (a ministry that includes a special responsibility for the unity and hence for the guidance of the congregation: *Ministry* 17) is not entrusted to all.
328. *We agree* that though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial priesthood are nonetheless interrelated: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ. The ordained ministry should be exercised personally, collegially, and communally.
329. *We agree* that the ordained ministry of word and sacrament is an office of divine institution and as such a gift of God to his Church. Ordained ministers are related, as are all Christians, both to the priesthood of Christ and to the priesthood of the Church. The basic oneness of the ordained ministry is expressed in the service of word and sacrament.
330. *We agree* (cf. 200–204) that the Church is sacramental because of the real presence of Christ in her through word and sacrament. His living presence in the Church through the Spirit continues to be the source as well as the model for all authentic leadership by ordained ministers. The ordained ministry is

constitutive of the Church. Ordination is a lifelong vocation and cannot be repeated.

331. *We agree* that ordination to the sacred ministry is sacramental. It is an instrumental act in which the gift of the Holy Spirit is prayed for and transmitted through the promises in God's word and the laying on of hands. In Catholic teaching ordination is one of the sacraments. In the light of the Lutheran Confessions it is likewise possible to understand ordination, "the imposition of hands", as a sacrament if it is understood as ordination to the ministry of word and sacraments based on God's command and promises.
332. *We agree* that ordination is carried out by validly ordained bishops who represent the communion of the Church through word, prayer, and the laying on of hands. Ordination is understood as an instrumental and sacramentally effective act, in which the ministry is concretely given. At ordination God the Father gives Christ's own ministry (*in persona Christi*), and the Holy Spirit sanctifies and gives charisms for the Church's ministry. Thus, the ordained ministry is understood as a participation in the mission of the Triune God within the communion (*koinonia*) of the Church. It is Christologically and pneumatologically rooted in the context of the apostolicity of the whole Church, in which the priesthood of all believers and the ordained ministry work together in a complementary way.
333. *We agree* that both men and women have an important vocation in the ministry of the Church in the world. It can be asked whether the basic consensus on the sacramentality of the ordained ministry endures, although there are different views concerning who can be ordained.

## The Ministry of Deacon

334. *We agree* (cf. 212–216) that in episcopal ordination the Holy Spirit's gift for the fulfilment of the tasks of the specific ministry is granted through word, prayer, and the laying on of hands for deacons, priests, and bishops. The development of the threefold ministry can be seen as an expression of the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and is more than a matter of arbitrary human choice.
335. *We agree* that the word "ordination" is reserved for the sacramental act for ordaining bishops, presbyters, and deacons. The laying on of hands by the bishop, constitutes the visible sign of ordination.
336. *We agree* that the ministry of the deacon has its roots in the New Testament understanding of ministry. It fulfils permanent functions given by Christ to his Church and is based on the ministry of *diakonos*, already known in apostolic times (e.g. Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8).
337. *We agree* that deacons share in Christ's mission in a special way. In the Catholic Church deacons, among other tasks, assist the bishop and priests in



the celebration of the Eucharist, in assisting at and blessing marriages, in the proclamation of the Gospel, in presiding at funerals, and in various ministries of charity. In the Lutheran tradition the ministry of deacons is likewise rooted in the Church's eucharistic life. Yet the concrete ministry and education of Lutheran deacons is mainly oriented towards various social and charitable works, action for the poor and most vulnerable, and witnessing to Christ in the world in faith and love. Deacons also proclaim the Gospel, teach, and exercise liturgical functions in assisting the bishop or priest in the administration of the Eucharist, as readers, or in leading the intercessory prayers. They can bring the sacrament to the elderly and sick who are unable to attend the Mass.

338. *We agree* that the ecclesial and spiritual identity of deacons in the diaconal ministry in liturgical and pastoral life or in social and charitable works is strengthened by the imposition of hands, which has come down from the apostles. This binds them more closely to the altar, and their ministry is made more fruitful through the gift of the Holy Spirit, charism, and the sacramental grace of the diaconate.

## The Episcopal Ministry

339. *We agree* (cf. 220–259) that the episcopal office is essential in the Church through fidelity to the divine apostolic mission under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The apostolicity of the Church has its source in the living and present Lord (the sacramental perspective) and is made concrete through its historical continuity in the lasting structures of the apostolic Church (the historical perspective).
340. *We agree* that the authority of the bishop is founded on the authority of the word of God. When bishops proclaim the Gospel, they act in the name of Christ and with his authority. Bishops bear a special responsibility for the Church's apostolic mission by providing spiritual leadership in their dioceses, a leadership that is exercised in community with the entire people of God (*sensus fidelium*). In this task the bishops are the successors of the apostles, who were gathered and sent out by Christ. Congregations and ministers are bound by divine law to listen to the bishops out of respect for their commission to proclaim the Gospel and administer the sacraments, forgive sins, and condemn doctrine contrary to the Gospel.
341. *We agree* that, by virtue of episcopal ordination, the bishop's authority is *proper* because it is exercised in his (her) own name; *ordinary* because it is based on episcopal ordination; and *immediate* because it can be exercised directly without the obligation to use any intermediaries. However, the bishop's authority is personal, collegial, and communal. A bishop exercises his (her) office, even within his (her) own local Church, only in relation to the permanent body of

bishops and in serving the apostolicity of the whole Church. Catholic bishops are not vicars of the pope; nor are Lutheran bishops vicars of the archbishop. Each bishop is an authorised bishop in his (her) diocese, sent to serve the Church of Christ. The bishop does not have absolute power, but is regulated by the Gospel and the law of the Church.

342. *We agree* that, as far as their teaching authority and pastoral government are concerned, all bishops are united in a college. They exercise this office individually in reference to that part of the people of God assigned to them. In exercising their office bishops should stand in the midst of their people as those who serve as good shepherds who know their sheep and whose sheep know them. They ought to exercise their authority of oversight not as masters, but as servants and as members of the college of bishops.
343. *We agree* that among the principal duties of bishops the preaching of the Gospel occupies a pre-eminent place. Bishops are preachers of the faith who lead new disciples to Christ, and they are authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ, who preach to the people committed to them the faith they must believe and put into practice, and by the light of the Holy Spirit illustrate that faith.
344. *We agree* that the ministry of the bishop seeks to serve the apostolic mission of the whole Church. The task of the bishops is to be teachers, shepherds, and priests. They guide with the word of God, they lead the Church in prayer and mission, and they administer the sacraments. Within this framework they have the specific task of the oversight of their respective dioceses and of ordaining new officeholders to the ministry of the Church through the apostolic succession.
345. *We agree* that the foundation for apostolic continuity is the Church's sustained focus on the redemptive death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and on the apostolic witness to this Gospel. Apostolicity is continuity in faith in the life of the Church and in her structures and ministry. The ordination of a bishop in the historic and apostolic succession through the laying on of hands is a constituent part and an expression of the apostolicity of the Church. This apostolic tradition contains many elements in which the sacramental and the historical perspectives complement one another.
346. *We agree* that a new bishop does not become first a bishop and later a member of the college, but he is a bishop by virtue of having been sacramentally incorporated in the college of bishops in apostolic succession.
347. *We agree* that the other Church in our dialogue has kept many inward and outward elements of apostolicity, and that this applies to the succession in faith and life and to the apostolic structure of the Church. We also recognise that the ministry of our Churches has fulfilled its mission to preserve faithfulness to the apostolic Gospel in the central matters of faith as they are considered in the JD.

## The Petrine Ministry

348. *We agree* (cf. 260–275) that among the disciples Peter has a special leading role. Jesus Christ directly gave to St Peter the mission to “feed my sheep” (John 21:15–17), “you must strengthen your brothers” (Luke 22:32), and to “bind and loose” (Matt. 16:18–19). At the same time Jesus gave the apostolic ministry to all the apostles (Matt. 18:18; 28:18–20). This ministry to proclaim the Gospel, baptise, and teach is divinely instituted (*iure divino*). However, the Petrine ministry has developed historically into its current form. Early in the history of the Church the Bishop of Rome had a certain primacy. Our joint ecumenical task is now better to understand the legacy of the undivided Church, the intentions of the Reformation, and the current reality for the benefit of the mission and ministry of the Church in regard also to the Petrine Ministry. These efforts jointly to promote unity, witness, and service can be seen as willed by God.
349. *We agree* that when a Lutheran-Catholic differentiated consensus on the theological and practical renewal of this ministry is achieved, the Petrine office of the bishop of Rome can function as a visible sign and instrument of the Church’s unity.
350. *We agree* that the Petrine Ministry should be seen in the context of the apostolicity of the whole Church, serving the communion of the Church personally, collegially, and communally. Concerning the universal Church (*communio ecclesiarum*) and the ecumenical aim of her visible unity, the embeddedness of the Petrine Ministry in collegial and synodal structures, which include the whole people of God, together with the principle of subsidiarity, is also a necessary precondition for ecumenical rapprochement. This includes the canonical decisions which support these structures following the direction given by the Second Vatican Council.
351. *We agree* that the Holy Scripture as *norma normans*, the source of sources, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the heart of the word of God are foundational for the apostolic mission of the Church and her teaching ministry. The Petrine Ministry and magisterium in the service of protecting and promoting this central message can benefit all of Christianity. We wish to support common efforts to interpret the ministry of the Bishop of Rome in the context of the apostolicity of the whole Church in the light of the ecumenical imperatives from *Conflict to Communion*: “Lutherans and Catholics should jointly rediscover the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ for our time. ... Catholics and Lutherans should witness together to the mercy of God in proclamation and service to the world.”
352. *We agree* that the pope, as Bishop of Rome, is responsible for episcopal duties: a power or commandment of God, to preach the Gospel, to remit and retain sins, and to administer the sacraments. The Petrine Ministry is understood

according to the sacramental nature of the Church as a sign and service to the wholeness and unity of the Church. The episcopal dimension of this service reveals the heart of its meaning which is to be a sign of the apostolic identity of the divine mission of the whole Church.

353. *We agree* that the purpose of the doctrines of infallibility and the primacy of jurisdiction can be understood as 1) to help to ensure that the unity of the Church is secured in the fundamental questions of Christian faith whenever they are threatened, and 2) to protect the freedom of the proclamation of the Gospel. Where Catholics speak of infallibility, Lutherans speak of a *status confessionis* as an expression of the firm commitment to reject new unchristian doctrines which are opposed to Scripture and the apostolic and Catholic faith according to the intention expressed in the Conclusion of the Augsburg Confession. In all his duties the Roman Pontiff is also bound to be absolutely loyal to the apostolic faith and revelation of the Triune God in Christ.
354. *We agree* that the responsibility for the unity of the Church and its maintenance in the truth in Christian faith and in love is exercised both in the local Church and also in the regional and universal communion of local Churches in personal, collegial, and communal responsibility. The primacy of the Bishop of Rome has a special place and task in maintaining and promoting this universal communion. LG 13 states: "... [W]ithin the Church particular Churches hold a rightful place; these Churches retain their own traditions, without in any way opposing the primacy of the Chair of Peter, which presides over the whole assembly of charity (11\*) and protects legitimate differences, while at the same time assuring that such differences do not hinder unity but rather contribute toward it." Our already emerging consensus suggests that the doctrine of the primacy of the pope does not need to be a church-dividing difference if the pope is not thereby dissociated from the structure of communion.
355. We see today that the Bishop of Rome is *de facto* a pastor/shepherd not only for Catholics but also for the leaders and members of other Churches. *We recommend* that Lutherans and Catholics continue to reflect together on the meaning of the Petrine Ministry for the Church today in response to the invitation of Pope John Paul II presented in his encyclical *Ut unum sint* to consider with him how the Bishop of Rome can exercise his ministry in communion with other Churches.<sup>357</sup>

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357 UUS 96: "Could not the real but imperfect communion existing between us persuade Church leaders and their theologians to engage with me in a patient and fraternal dialogue on this subject, a dialogue in which, leaving useless controversies behind, we could listen to one another, keeping before us only the will of Christ for his Church and allowing ourselves to be deeply moved by his plea 'that they may all be one ... so that the world may believe that you have sent me' (John 17-21)?"

## Concluding Remarks

356. Consensus on the basic truths of faith has been established here concerning the understanding of the Church as a sacramental sign and instrument of the *missio Dei* in the world (cf. 25–49).
357. As stated in the earlier dialogues Lutherans and Catholics share a broad common understanding of the Eucharist. The consensus on the basic truths of the Eucharist has been fundamentally articulated (cf. 2.2.1.–2.2.8.): 1) in the centrality of the Eucharist in the life of the Church; 2) in the true, real, and substantial presence of Christ; 3) in the Eucharist as memorial and sacrifice; 4) in the role of the epicletic prayer; 5) in the Eucharist and ordained ministry; 6) and in the communion under both kinds. In conclusion, a consensus on the basic truths of the doctrine of the Eucharist exists between us. In light of this agreement the remaining differences of language, theological elaboration, and emphasis in the understanding of the Eucharist described in the explications to the common understanding are acceptable. Therefore, the Lutheran and Catholic explications of the Eucharist are in their difference open to one another and do not destroy the consensus regarding the basic truths.
358. The doctrinal condemnations of the sixteenth century, insofar as they relate to the doctrine of the Eucharist, appear in a new light: the Lutheran teaching presented in this Declaration does not fall under the condemnations of the Council of Trent. The condemnations of the Lutheran Confessions do not apply to the teaching of the Catholic Church presented in this Declaration.
359. The gravity of the condemnations related to the doctrine of the Eucharist is not to be ignored, however. Some were not simply pointless: they remain salutary warnings to us, to which we must attend in our teaching and practice.
360. A consensus has also been established concerning the basic truths of the ministry, including the common priesthood and the ordained ministry (cf. 194–197), the ordained ministry as an integral element within the sacramentality of the Church (200–204), and the ministry of deacon (cf. 212–216). The differentiated consensus on the episcopal ministry (cf. 220–259) includes: 1) sacramental episcopal ordination through word, prayer, and the laying on of hands; 2) episcopal ministry in apostolic succession as a sign of fidelity to the divine mission; 3) the authority of bishops; 4) episcopal ministry in service of the apostolic mission of the Church; and 5) the apostolic dimension of the ordination of a bishop.
361. There is a growing common understanding on the Petrine Ministry (cf. 260–275). It refers to the following themes: 1) its biblical background; 2) the divine mission of St Peter and the Petrine Ministry today; 3) the ministry of unity; 4) the Petrine Ministry within the apostolicity of the whole Church; 5) the episcopal ministry of the Bishop of Rome; 6) his role in protecting

the freedom of the Gospel's proclamation and safeguarding the fundamental truths of the Christian faith.

362. Before the Second Vatican Council there were no magisterial statements concerning the validity or invalidity of the ordained ministry in the Lutheran Church, although it was traditionally assumed that they were invalid. UR 22 states: "Though the ecclesial Communities which are separated from us lack the fullness of unity with us flowing from Baptism, and though we believe they have not retained the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Orders [*sacramenti Ordinis defectum*], nevertheless when they commemorate His death and resurrection in the Lord's Supper, they profess that it signifies life in communion with Christ and look forward to His coming in glory." After fifty years of Lutheran-Catholic theological dialogue it is widely accepted that the expression *defectus ordinis* does not mean a total lack, but a defect in the full form of the ministry. In the contemporary Catholic theology the term "defect" is commonly used in this context.
363. In this report we have presented a Lutheran-Catholic growing consensus on the Church, Eucharist, and Ministry within the context of sacramental communion ecclesiology. On this basis it seems justified to say that we are on the path towards growing communion. Through this process and its results we have been able to take a further step forward. The method and the results of this Catholic-Lutheran differentiated consensus on the basic truths of the faith regarding the Church, Eucharist, and Ministry gather and formulate afresh results from the previous dialogues, and thus say more about our joint understanding regarding these core issues than has been said before. We hope this method and the results it has achieved can function as a model for the future work of the Catholic-Lutheran Unity Commission towards The Joint Declaration on the Church, Eucharist, and Ministry. This would entail a crucial step forward in the growth of our communion. On the basis of the existing work it seems possible, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to work further through divergences in understanding to the point where they lose their church-dividing character. The remaining differences as expressed here are based on a fundamental consensus in understanding the apostolic faith, and therefore appear legitimate. Although there are remaining issues to be discussed, we may be hopeful that eventually the Eucharist and ministry of the member Churches of the Lutheran communion can be recognised by the Catholic Church, and that Lutherans can likewise recognise the Eucharist and ministry of the Catholic Church.<sup>358</sup>

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358 Cf. *Facing Unity*, p. 21–22. *Ministry A* 4.2, para. 83: "Such a recognition can only come about gradually. The various stages lead from a mutual respect of ministries through practical cooperation to full recognition of ministry of the other church which is identical to the acceptance of Eucharistic fellowship. ... [I]t seems to us

364. It is likely that the healing process towards a *communio ecclesiarum* will take a long time. Ecclesial communion with the Catholic Church and with the Bishop of Rome would in the present circumstances mean that the Churches in the Lutheran Communion would continue to have a distinct liturgical and juridical structure and the member Churches would remain faithful to the ecumenical obligations which they have entered into with other Churches, but would stand in communion with the pope as the sign of the universal communion of local Churches.<sup>359</sup> At the same time the healing process should be continued towards full communion, forming a unity in diversity which belongs to the Catholic nature of the universal Christian Church, the body of Christ, the people of God, and the temple of the Holy Spirit.
365. In the report *Facing Unity* (1985) the Roman Catholic/Lutheran Joint Commission outlined the models, forms, and phases of Catholic-Lutheran Church fellowship which might assist in formulating a vision for a gradual rapprochement towards the visible unity of the Church. Concerning the future the report stated in an “Initial Act of Recognition”: “To it belong a binding confessional declaration and an appropriate liturgical celebration in which, if possible, the first joint ordination should be held, thus marking the beginning of the joint exercise of episcopé. Church fellowship begun in this manner opens possibilities of sacramental and particularly eucharistic fellowship, the modalities of which have to be clarified on the Catholic side according to the existing canon law.”<sup>360</sup> The Lutheran Churches would each also have to issue appropriate guidelines.
366. Our consensus on the basic truths of faith expressed here should influence the life and teachings of our Churches, presupposing the outcome is welcomed by our Churches. Here it must prove itself. In this respect questions of varying importance still need further clarification. These include the minor sacraments (*sacramenta minora*), the relationship of the word of God as expressed in Holy Scripture to the Church’s doctrinal teaching, the ordination of women, moral discernment, joint ordination and ministry in practice, and canonical questions.
367. *The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (1999), the milestone of Lutheran-Catholic ecumenism, harvested the fruits of local theological dialogues. The Declaration assured that “[t]he Lutheran churches and the Roman Catholic Church will continue to strive together to deepen this common understanding of justification”. Questions needing further clarification that were mentioned, among others, were ecclesiology, ministry, and sacraments. In the Swedish-Finnish Lutheran-Catholic dialogue report *Justification in the Life of the Church* (2010) and in this Finnish dialogue report on the Church, Eucharist, and Ministry we have deepened our common understand-

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that further steps in the direction of a full mutual recognition of ministries are now indicated.”

359 Concerning the healing process see the suggestions in *Facing Unity* and in CEC 6.4.

360 *Facing Unity*, part II, chap. 7, footnote 165.

ing concerning these issues. It seems that a joint declaration on the Church, Eucharist, and Ministry is needed as the next step, as Cardinal Kurt Koch's initiative indicates.

368. This document uses the method of differentiated consensus, formulating agreements and explications of them. This is an agreement on "communion in growth". The dialogue wishes to serve as encouragement, because it has been able to say more than previous dialogues. The outcome is intended as a gift and a possible model for future work towards growth in communion in and through international theological dialogue.
369. We give thanks to the Lord for this decisive step forward on the way to overcoming the division of the Church. We ask the Holy Spirit to lead us further towards that full visible unity which is Christ's will.<sup>361</sup>

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361 Cf. JD 40–44.



## Appendix 1: Catholic and Lutheran Eucharistic Prayers

### Eucharistic prayer 3 of the ELCF Mass order:

“Lord, our God, you are almighty and holy. You gave life to all creation and created us in your own image.

You did not forsake us to be ruled by sin and death; instead, through the prophets, you promised a day of salvation.

When the time had come, you sent your Son. He was born a human and redeemed us on the cross. In him you made peace with us.

We pray:

Send us your Holy Spirit and bless these gifts, this bread and wine, by which we take part in the body and blood of Christ,

as we celebrate the holy supper as he himself has commanded us to do.

*Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when he was betrayed,  
took bread, blessed (B), broke the bread  
and gave it to his disciples, saying,  
“Take, eat; this is my body  
which is given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me.”*

*In the same way he took the cup, thanked (B) and said,  
“Drink from it, all of you.  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
which is shed for you  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink from it,  
in remembrance of me.”*

We recall the suffering of your Son and its saving power; we recall his death, his joyous resurrection and his ascension to heaven. We wait for his return in glory.

Give us your Holy Spirit, that we will receive in faith the gift of communion. Make us one body in Christ, and lead us to deeds of love that you might receive honor and thanksgiving.

Through him, with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory belong to you, almighty Father, always and forever.”

## Roman Missale, Eucharist Prayer II:

You are indeed Holy, O Lord, the fount of all holiness.  
Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by sending down your Spirit upon them  
like the dewfall,  
so that they may become for us the Body and ✠ Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the time he was betrayed and entered willingly into his Passion, he took bread  
and, giving thanks, broke it,  
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

*Take this, all of you, and eat of it,  
for this is my Body,  
which will be given up for you.*

In a similar way, when supper was ended, he took the chalice and, once more giving  
thanks,  
he gave it to his disciples, saying:

*Take this, all of you, and drink from it,  
for this is the chalice of my Blood,  
the Blood of the new and eternal covenant,  
which will be poured out for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this in memory of me.*

The mystery of faith:

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

Therefore, as we celebrate the memorial of his Death and Resurrection, we offer you,  
Lord, the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation, giving thanks that you have held  
us worthy to be in your presence and minister to you.

Humbly we pray that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, we may be gathered  
into one by the Holy Spirit.

Remember, Lord, your Church, spread throughout the world, and bring her to the  
fullness of charity, together with N. our Pope and N. our Bishop and all the clergy.

Remember also our brothers and sisters who have fallen asleep in the hope of the  
resurrection,

and all who have died in your mercy: welcome them into the light of your face.  
Have mercy on us all, we pray, that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God,  
with blessed Joseph, her Spouse, the blessed Apostles, and all the Saints who have  
pleased you throughout the ages,  
we may merit to be coheirs to eternal life, and may praise and glorify you through  
your Son, Jesus Christ.

Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of  
the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, for ever and ever. Amen.

## Appendix 2: Structural Elements in Catholic and Lutheran Ordination Liturgies

**TABLE 1:  
GENERAL STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF THE MEDIEVAL FORMULAS<sup>1</sup>**

|        |             |                    |         |            |                                 |
|--------|-------------|--------------------|---------|------------|---------------------------------|
| PRAYER | WORD OF GOD | LAYING ON OF HANDS | VESTING | ANOINTMENT | TRANSMISSION OF THE INSTRUMENTS |
|--------|-------------|--------------------|---------|------------|---------------------------------|

**TABLE 2:  
GENERAL STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF THE REFORMATION FORMULAS**

|                |                            |                                     |   |                          |                       |
|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| PRAYER         | General prayer /<br>Litany | Spirit<br>epiclesis                 | Ordination<br>prayer (Prex<br>ordinationis) | (Ordination-<br>formula) | LAYING ON<br>OF HANDS |
| WORD OF<br>GOD | Reading                    | Explanation /<br>Speech /<br>Sermon | Exhortation                                 |                          |                       |

<sup>1</sup> Sander 2004, 241.

**TABLE 3:  
FUNCTION OF THE GENERAL STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS  
OF THE REFORMATION FORMULAS<sup>1</sup>**

| PRAYER                     | WORD OF GOD                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| anabatic-catabatic         | constitutive and brings into effect |
| (Ordination formula)       |                                     |
| verbal-concentrating       |                                     |
| LAYING ON OF HANDS         |                                     |
| performatory-concentrating |                                     |



|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| TRANSMISSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT |
| TRANSMISSION OF THE OFFICE      |

<sup>1</sup> Sander 2004, 242.

**TABLE 4:  
THE STRUCTURE OF THE ORDINATION LITURGY IN THE ROMAN  
RITE**

| <b>BISHOP'S ORDINATION</b>                           | <b>PRESBYTER'S ORDINATION</b>              | <b>DEACON'S ORDINATION</b>               |
|--|--|--|
| B=Bishop   |  |  |
| Presentation of candidates                           | Presentation of candidates                 | Presentation of candidates               |
| Reading of the papal text                            | Election by the bishop                     | Election by the bishop                   |
| Acclamation of the congregation                      | Acclamation of the congregation            | Acclamation of the congregation          |
| <i>LITURGY OF THE WORD</i>                           | <i>LITURGY OF THE WORD</i>                 | <i>LITURGY OF THE WORD</i>               |
| <i>ad libitum: Veni creator spiritus</i>             | <i>ad libitum: Veni creator spiritus</i>   | <i>ad libitum: Veni creator spiritus</i> |
| Promises of the candidates                           | Promises of the candidates                 | Promises of the candidates               |
|  | Promise of obedience                       | Promise of obedience                     |
| <b>Litany</b>  | <b>Litany</b>                              | <b>Litany</b>                            |
| <b>Laying on of hands:</b> all bishops               | <b>Laying on of hands:</b> (B and priests) | <b>Laying on of hands:</b> (B)           |
| Placing of the book of Gospels upon the bishop-elect | -  | -  |
| <b>Ordination prayer</b>                             | <b>Ordination prayer</b>                   | <b>Ordination prayer</b>                 |
| -  | Vesting with stole and chasuble            | Vesting with stole and dalmatic          |
| Anointing of the head                                | Anointing of the hands                     | -  |
| Handing over the book of the Gospels                 | Handing over the bread and wine            | Handing over the book of the Gospels     |
| (Investiture with Palladium)                         | -  | -  |
| Investiture with Ring                                | -  | -  |
| Investiture with Mitre                               | -  | -  |
| Investiture with Pastoral Staff                      | -  | -  |
| Leading to the Chair (Cathedra)                      | -  | -  |
| Ordination kiss (B)                                  | Ordination kiss (B)                        | Ordination kiss (B)                      |
| <b>CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST</b>                  | <i>CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST</i>        | <i>CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST</i>      |

**TABLE 5:  
THE STRUCTURE OF THE ORDINATION LITURGY IN THE ELCF RITE**

| <b>BISHOP'S ORDINATION</b>  | <b>PRESBYTER'S ORDINATION</b>  | <b>DEACON'S ORDINATION</b>   |
|---|--|--|
| B=bishop, AB=archbishop,<br>P=priest, C=congregation  |  |  |
|   | <i>I Introduction</i>  |  |
| Opening hymn (Pentecostal hymn 111)   | Opening hymn (Pentecostal hymn 111)                                      | Opening hymn (Pentecostal hymn 111)  |
| Presentation of candidates  | Presentation of candidates   | Presentation of candidates   |
| Reading of the certificate of election  | Reading of the names and positions of those to be ordained               | Reading of the names and positions of those to be ordained                       |
| Confession, Kyrie, and Gloria & Laudamus  | Confession, Kyrie, and Gloria & Laudamus                                 | Confession, Kyrie, and Gloria & Laudamus   |
| <b>Prayer</b> of the day  | <b>Prayer</b> of the day   | <b>Prayer</b> of the day   |
|   | <i>II Liturgy of the Word</i>  |  |
| Readings and a response   | Readings and a response  | Readings and a response  |
| Hymn of the day (congregation/ordination/mission/unity)   | Hymn of the day (congregation/ordination/mission/unity)                  | Hymn of the day (congregation/ordination/mission/unity)                          |
| Gospel reading  | Gospel reading   | Gospel reading   |
| Hymn of the day   | Hymn of the day  | Hymn of the day  |
| Sermon  | Sermon   | Sermon   |
| (Pentecostal hymn 112)  | (Pentecostal hymn 112)   | (Pentecostal hymn 112)   |
|   | <i>III Ordination</i>  |  |
| Creed (Nicene creed)  | Creed (Nicene creed)   | Creed (Nicene creed)   |
| Promises and <b>Word of God</b>   | Promises and <b>Word of God</b>  | Promises and <b>Word of God</b>  |
| Ordination formula (AB) and Amen (C)  | <b>Ordination formula</b> (B) and Amen (C)                               | <b>Ordination formula</b> (B) and Amen (C)                                       |
| <i>(The assistants vest the new bishop in a cope. The AB presents the symbols of the episcopal office and the certificate of ordination.)</i> | <i>(The bishop vests those to be ordained with a stole.)</i>             | <i>(The bishop vests those to be ordained with a stole.)</i>                     |
| <b>Laying on of hands</b> (AB + Bs during blessing and ordination prayer)   | <b>Laying on of hands</b> (B + Ps during blessing and ordination prayer) | <b>Laying on of hands</b> (B + assistants during blessing and ordination prayer) |
| C: Hymn 111 (Spirit epiclesis or divine mission)  | C: Hymn 111 (Spirit epiclesis or divine mission)                         | C: Hymn 111 (Spirit epiclesis or divine mission)                                 |
| <b>Blessing</b>   | <b>Blessing</b>  | <b>Blessing</b>  |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Ordination prayer</b><br>(anamnetical and epicletical)<br>Amen: (C) | <b>Ordination prayer</b><br>(anamnetical and epicletical), Amen: (C) | <b>Ordination prayer</b><br>(anamnetical and epicletical)<br>Amen: (C) |
| Exhortation  | Exhortation  | Exhortation  |
| Commissioning  | Commissioning  | Commissioning  |
| Hymn   | Hymn   | Hymn   |
| Prayer of intercession   | Prayer of intercession   | Prayer of intercession   |
|  | <i>IV Eucharist</i>  |  |
|  | <i>V Conclusion</i>  |  |



## Abbreviations

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| AAS        | <i>Acta Apostolicae Sedis</i>   |
| AC         | Apology of the Augsburg Confession (1530)   |
| AG         | Vatican II: Decree <i>Ad Gentes</i>   |
| ApC        | The Apostolicity of the Church: Study Document of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity (2006)  |
| ARCIC      | Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission  |
| AS         | Smalcald Articles (1537)  |
| BC         | The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church   |
| BEM        | Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry, Faith and Order Paper No. 111, World Council of Churches (Geneva, 1982). (Lima Document)  |
| BSLK       | Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche   |
| CA         | Augsburg Confession   |
| CCC        | Catechism of the Catholic Church  |
| CEC        | The Church and Ecclesial Communion. Report of the International Roman Catholic – Old Catholic Dialogue Commission (2009)  |
| CJ         | Church and Justification. Lutheran-Roman Catholic Joint Commission (1993)   |
| CKS        | The Church as Koinonia of Salvation. Its Structures and Ministries (2004), U.S. L-C dialogue  |
| CN         | <i>Communio in Notio</i> , Letter of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith on some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion (28 May 1992).  |
| CO of ELCF | Church Order of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (2016)   |
| CoCC       | Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (2005)   |
| CR         | <i>Corpus Reformatorum</i> , ed. C. G. Bretschneider and H.E. Bindseil (Halle, 1834-60)   |
| CRE        | The Condemnations of the Reformation Era. Do They Still Divide? Ed. by Karl Lehmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg. Translated by Margaret Kohl (1990)   |
| CT         | <i>Concilium Tridentium</i> (Freiburg 1901–1938)  |
| DS         | H. Denzinger and P. Hünermann (eds), <i>Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum</i> (Freiburg 2001)  |
| DV         | Vatican II: Dogmatic Constitution <i>Dei Verbum</i>   |
| DW         | Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist. Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (2015) |
| ELCF       | Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland  |
| Epit.      | <i>Epitome</i> (Formula of Concord)   |

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Eucharist | The Eucharist: Final Report of the Joint Roman Catholic-Lutheran Commission (1978)   |
| FC        | Formula of Concord (Solida declaratio 1577)  |
| FCC       | From Conflict to Communion. Lutheran-Roman Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017. Report of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity (2013)    |
| FU        | Facing Unity. Models, Forms and Phases of Catholic-Lutheran Church Fellowship. LWF 1985  |
| GIRM      | General Instruction of the Roman Missal.   |
| GKP       | Gemeinschaft der Kirchen und Petrusamt. Lutherish-katholische Annäherungen. Gruppe von Farfa Sabina (2011)   |
| GS        | Vatican II: Pastoral Constitution <i>Gaudium et Spes</i>   |
| HF        | W. Kasper, Harvesting the Fruits (2009)  |
| JDDJ (JD) | Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (1999)  |
| JLC       | Justification in the Life of the Church. A Report from the Roman Catholic – Lutheran Dialogue Group for Sweden and Finland (2010)  |
| LC        | M. Luther, Large Catechism (1529)  |
| LG        | Vatican II: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, <i>Lumen Gentium</i>  |
| Lund      | The LWF Lund Statement 2007  |
| LW        | Luther's Works, American Edition, ed. J. Pelikan and H. T. Lehmann, 54 vols (Philadelphia and St. Louis, 1955-1986)  |
| LWF       | The Lutheran World Federation  |
| Malta     | Report of the Joint Lutheran - Roman Catholic Study Commission on "The Gospel and the Church" 1972 ("Malta Report")  |
| Ministry  | Ministry in the Church, Lutheran-Roman Catholic Conversation, 1981   |
| PCS       | Porvoo Common Statement (1992)   |
| PO        | Vatican II: Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, <i>Presbyterorum Ordinis</i>   |
| SC        | Vatican II: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, <i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i>  |
| SD        | Formula of Concord: Solid Declaration  |
| StA       | Martin Luther. Studienausgabe. In Zusammenarbeit mit Helmar Jung-hans, Reinhold Pietz, Joachim Rogge und Günther Wartenberg, hrsg. von Hans-Ulrich Delius. Berlin 1979-. |
| UR        | Vatican II: Decree on Ecumenism, <i>Unitatis redintegratio</i>   |
| UUS       | John Paul II, Encyclical Letter Ut Unum Sint (1995)  |
| WA        | D. Martin Luthers Werke (Weimar, 1883ff.) (Weimarer Ausgabe)   |

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