

CHAPTER IV

CONGAR IN THE 1960'S AND EARLY 1970'S

Ecclesiology and Ministries

We have come to a juncture in Congar's ecclesiology¹ where the laity, the ministerial priesthood and all ministries in the Church, are interrelated in such a way that it would be difficult for us to keep on following our previous division; namely, that of the ecclesiological aspect, on the one hand, and of the laity and ministries, on the other. Consequently in this chapter, we shall forego our earlier division. Nonetheless, we shall attempt to focus in on both issues of ecclesiology and ministries, as Congar approaches them within the framework of his *ecclésiologie totale*.²

In the *Avertissement to Ministères et communion ecclésiale*, Congar explains that his purpose is precisely to bring out the interrelationship between ecclesiology as communion and ministries as service within the communion. He writes: "Ces ministères sont vus dans leur référence organique et vivante dans l'Eglise considérée comme communauté ou communion."³ Congar refers to his own evolution in the matter. With regard to the above mentioned interrelation between ministries and ecclesiology, he admits:

Pour l'auteur elle a été l'objet d'une découverte progressive, qu'il n'a pas encore achevée: il l'avoue simplement et sans honte. Ce fut pour autant une redécouverte de données profondément traditionnelles, dont on trouvera ici la documentation essentielle. Ce fut aussi, dans l'austérité du labeur, l'occasion de grandes joies.⁴

¹ We note here that Congar wrote a book on the Church entitled *L'Eglise une, sainte, catholique et apostolique, Dogmatique de l'histoire du Salut*, *Mysterium Salutis* 15, (Paris: Cerf, 1970), henceforth cited as *EU*. However, Congar himself explains that his treatise on the Church is a witness to the pre-Vatican II tradition. He writes "Tout compte fait, d'ailleurs, n'y a-t-il pas quelque intérêt, au milieu de tant de révisions qui marquent l'après-Concile, à entendre une voix qui transmet aussi les acquisitions d'avant? Ne s'agit-il pas, aujourd'hui et demain, de l'Eglise de toujours?"

² *Supra*, p. 3. **** See also Congar, *MCE*, p. 93.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 7. ****

⁴ *Ibid.* ****

While still working within the sacramental structure,⁵ Congar at this point emphasizes the communion aspect of the Church as the all encompassing model: the Church is an apostolic, yet structured, communion.

Incontestablement, notre théologie courante avait trop séparé et privilégié l'élément juridique, le traitant presque comme suffisant pour définir l'ontologie des choses. Il nous faut, non certes l'éliminer, mais poursuivre la critique du *juridisme* caractéristique de Vatican II, pour tendre à une théologie plus intégrale. Le concile d'un bout à l'autre, a cherché à retrouver, au delà du juridique, la pleine ontologie surnaturelle des choses. La théologie doit suivre et achever cette démarche: au point de vue ecclésiologique, par une pleine théologie de l'Eglise comme communion....⁶ Ce que Dieu veut, c'est un peuple un, saint, catholique et apostolique selon les structures de l'alliance de grâce. On ne peut donc séparer ni la communauté de ses pasteurs, ni les pasteurs de la communauté (Cyprien: "l'évêque est dans l'Eglise et l'Eglise est dans

⁵ In "L'Église de Hans Küng", *RSPT*, pp. 701-702, Congar writes: "Il n'existe en effet aucune *substance* 'Eglise' qui aurait une existence concrète en dehors des membres de cette Église. Même quand on distingue dans l'Eglise un aspect de *congregans*, ou encore une Maternité d'un côté, des fils et des frères de l'autre, le premier de ces aspects existe, tout comme le second, *dans les fidèles*. Aussi bien Küng ne pense pas l'Eglise dans une ligne associationniste: on le voit, par exemple, par ce qu'il dit de la priorité absolue et créatrice de l'*appel*, de Dieu ou quand il parle de l'Eglise comme objet de la foi (croyance). Mais tout n'est pas dit avec cela, même si le Nouveau Testament, S. Paul en particulier, réserve le nom d'*ekklesia* à la communauté des fidèles et ne voit au-dessus d'elle que le Christ-Rédempteur et son Saint Esprit. Quand Vatican II (à la suite d'O. Semmelroth, K. Rahner et d'autres) parle de l'Eglise comme sacrement du salut, c'est-à-dire comme une forme historique et publique prise par le propos de grâce et de salut de Dieu à la suite de Jésus-Christ, il entend bien que cette valeur sacramentelle est portée par le Peuple de Dieu—Corps du Christ, mais aussi que les éléments constitutifs de l'alliance ont une consistance fondée dans le Propos de Dieu, antérieurement et indépendamment de l'usage qui en est fait par les hommes. Cela rentre dans le *Wesen* de l'Eglise: *existant* seulement dans les hommes, celui-ci a un fondement au-dessus d'eux, comme terme du Dessein efficace de Dieu. Ce Dessein ou Propos engage deux choses: la *totalité comme telle* des *saints*, et l'ensemble des moyens de grâce qui constituent l'institution. Ce sont ceux que nous énumérons sous le vocable de *structure*: le dépôt de la Révélation, celui des sacrements, l'institution de la mission et les ministères. Tout cela rentre dans ce que nous appelons *Eglise*: le mystère de l'Eglise. Mais cette vision sacramentelle, affaiblie à la fin du moyen âge et à l'époque de la Réforme, n'a guère de place dans le livre de Küng." This last point (regarding the Middle Ages' sacramental view of the Church) is developed further in *L'ecclésiologie du haut Moyen-Age* (Paris: Cerf, 1968), pp.319-393, henceforth cited as *EHMA*. In *MCE*, p. 91, Congar defines his understanding of the Church as Sacrament: "Il faut... percevoir la profondeur de la nature sacramentelle de l'Eglise... Nous prenons *sacrement* ici, au sens large selon lequel une grace invisible est liée à une forme visible." Then, he explains that this invisible grace can be with the sign and vice-versa. However, in the new disposition where grace is linked to the sign, God does so through the dialectical process between God's faithfulness and man's freedom. "Mais comme la grâce établit une relation d'ordre spirituel-moral entre les personnes, elle n'admet jamais d'automatisme: l'*ex opera operato* ne peut avoir le sens d'un automatisme de la grâce. Le lien par lequel Dieu s'est (librement) lié aux structures ecclésiales et, entre autres, aux sacrements, n'est pas du type des lois naturelles, comme dans l'alliance noachique (Gn 8, 21-22; 9, 11): il relève de l'alliance de grâce, qui implique un rapport de fidélité. Dieu, lui, est toujours fidèle, mais, pour l'homme, la fidélité est un devoir et un don."

⁶ Congar, *MCE*, p. 93.

l'évêque"). Les pasteurs reçoivent, par la grâce du Saint-Esprit, le service de la communauté selon les structures issues de l'apostolat. Ce service est charge, mission, fonction, avec la grâce et les *pouvoirs* afférents. Tout cela est cohérent avec différents thèmes développés dans le présent recueil: avec celui de la collégialité, avec celui de la consécration épiscopale qui y fait entrer et qui est elle-même inséparable du processus de choix d'un ministre doué de charismes convenables, enfin avec le thème des critères d'unité et de la nécessaire union du critère d'autorité du critère de témoignage inspiré et du critère du sens de la foi communautairement vécue. Oui, vraiment, l'Église est communion.⁷

In *Ministères et communion ecclésiale*,⁸ a work which reflects his recent position on the Church and ministries, Congar states clearly the reasons that lead to a *re-position*⁹ of the questions of ministries today. There are four reasons:

1) the recent research done with regard to the New Testament, referring to successive organizational moments or stages, related to various geographical areas; for example, the Pauline Church, the Judean Church, the Pastoral Church, thus indicating a basic principle of pluralism in terms of Church life and structure. This research leads Congar to conclude that the Church gives to itself the ministries which it deems necessary situationally; these are then recognized by the faithful as gifts brought about under the guidance of the Holy Spirit;¹⁰

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁸ Also in "L'Eglise de Hans Küng", *RSPT*, p. 693.

⁹ Congar, *MCE*, p. 31.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32. Also "L'Eglise de Hans Küng", *RSPT*, pp. 693 and 701. Congar qualifies both the pneumatological and communal influences with regard to ministries. For example, *supra* pp. 55, 78, 101. ****Also "L'Eglise de Hans Küng" *RSPT*, pp. 701-702, (*supra* p 143, note 5). ****Also "Après Infaillible? de Hans Küng: bilans et discussions", *RSPT*, 58 (1974): pp. 243-252. Here, Congar, refers to G. Hasenhüttl's thesis on charism as the organizational principle of the Church in *RSPT* 55 (1971): pp. 341-342. Hasenhüttl defines the Church as "un produit durable, modifiable, de comportements fonctionnels sociaux tendant à une fin qui oblige l'individu, s'adresse à lui avec une autorité formelle et connaît des sanctions juridiques". Congar criticizes this position by first recognizing that it admits for a certain institutionalization in the Church. However, the latter is the result of the freedom and of the criterion of the Divine Love. He concludes that Hasenhüttl sees no need for a definitive hierarchy and adds: "C'est vraiment faire trop bon marché de l'institution des Douze (au sens fort de Mc 3, 14). In "Ordinations invitatus et coactus", *RSPT* 50 (1956): p. 194 with regard to communal influences on ministries, (after describing historically the *invitatus et coactus* ordination in the *early* centuries of the Church and having attempted at justifying their validity), Congar explains: "Les ordinations *coacte* sont la conséquence et le signe du caractère fonctionnel du sacerdoce ministériel ou hiérarchique, à une époque où la communauté avait souci de se procurer les ministres dont ils[i.e., l'Eglise de cette époque] avaient besoin." Congar makes clear that "La communauté ne fait pas les prêtres: c'est l'office de l'évêque, instrument du Seigneur; mais la communauté veille à se procurer les prêtres dont elle a besoin" (p. 194). In "Un essai de théologie — Long-Hasselmanns" (p. 278), we find an original way of expressing the role of the community in relationship to the ministerial Priesthood: "Faire un prêtre, c'est une opération vitale de

2) the direction given by Vatican II which gives primacy to supernatural ontology or Christian existence over the institutional and juridical structures. For example, ministries a) are seen as including charisms and b) are related more to the function than to the person.¹¹

3) the ecumenical dialogue, which has led the Catholic tradition to recognize the sacerdotal quality of all Christians, the functional character of the ministerial priesthood, and the relation of the latter to *the* community. Due to the ecumenical dialogue, the community is seen as more integrated with, rather than in opposition to, the ministerial priesthood. In this respect, Congar writes:

Le dialogue nous a aidé nous-mêmes à pousser plus loin la révision commencée des excès de cléricisme et de juridisme accumulés au cours de plusieurs siècles de laïcité sans autonomie culturelle, de systématisation sacramentaire cléricale, enfin d'insistance antiprotestante sur le sacrement, le prêtre et le principe hiérarchique.¹²

tout le corps mystique. Comme toutes les opérations vitales, celle-ci est à la fois 1° *complexe* et 2° *une*:

1° *complexe*: (I). *Rôle du corps*. La totalité de l'Eglise y intervient par: mentalité favorable, estime de la fonction, sentiment de solidarité, esprit de dévouement au corps, esprit de sacrifice. (II) *Rôle des chefs*. Faire l'examen des sujets proposés en fonction de la situation générale. Les appeler (*vocari a Deo dicuntur qui a legitimis Ecclesiae ministris vocantur*), les ordonner. (III). *Rôle des membres*: aptitude naturelle et surnaturelle; volonté générale de servir; acceptation de la charge.

2° *une*: ces opérations diverses sont unifiées par l'Esprit-Saint. Comme le principe vital des plantes ou de l'animal, comme l'âme de l'homme harmonise les actes les plus divers et les fait conspirer à une fin commune. Cet Esprit, âme divine de l'Eglise, *meut* le corps entier à vouloir les prêtres et à les susciter; les chefs à les appeler et à les investir; le membre élu à accepter la fonction et à s'y bien disposer.

C'est lui [le Saint-Esprit] enfin qui, toutes ces opérations préliminaires accomplies, *rend* le membre capable (physiquement par le caractère, et moralement par la grâce) de remplir la fonction sacerdotale.

Ainsi une vocation est la résultante d'un grand nombre d'actes surnaturels où intervient toute l'Eglise et que produit le Saint-Esprit, âme de l'Eglise, parce que le sacerdoce n'est pas multiple, mais un; pas personnel, mais radicalement collectif."

¹¹ Congar, *MCE*, pp. 32-33 and pp. 91-94. Congar, here, refers his reader to the Vatican II document, *Lumen gentium*, Chapter II, articles 9, 13, 16, 17, and 28 (which were written by Congar) and to *Presbyterorum ordinis*, of which Congar is one of the principal *rédacteur*. (Information obtained in a *personal letter* from Congar, dated October 17, 1971). Also included in the *personal letter* is the following: "Au concile, je n'ai travaillé ni dans le décret sur l'apostolat des laïcs, ni dans le Chap. IV de *Lumen gentium*, mais c'est un fait que ces textes traduisent ma pensée. Est-ce que les rédacteurs, un Mgr. De Semet par exemple, ont reçu une influence de mes livres? MOI, j'ai travaillé dans le Chap. II de *Lumen gentium* (les nos 9, 13, 16 et 17 sont de moi, et aussi quelque chose dans le no. 28 et dans le Chap. I), dans *Presbyterorum ordinis* (je suis un des principaux rédacteurs avec le P. Lécuyer), dans *Ad gentes* (le Chap. I est entièrement de moi), dans les divers textes de Secrétariat pour l'unité."

In *Après Infaillible de Hans Küng, RSPT*, pp. 251-252, Congar writes: "La Pneumatologie et l'Évangile ne sont pas isolables de l'oeuvre du Verbe incarné."

¹² Congar, *MCE*, p. 33.

4) Congar's own personal reflections. Concerning the latter, he writes:

Nous nous sommes aussi beaucoup interrogés sur l'autorité, sur son statut chrétien, sur sa relation à la communauté, sur son exercice en relation avec une communauté de personnes dont les principes d'existence et de détermination débordent largement toute condition de dépendance et de subordination.¹³

With regard to the priesthood, however, Congar cannot accept the following views: 1) a common priesthood that would do away with the ministerial priesthood as a particular participation in the priesthood of Jesus Christ, *une participation propre*,¹⁴ 2) a Church which globally and without qualification would be the recipient of the mission, the powers and organization of ministries which the Holy Spirit brings forth into it.¹⁵ *For Congar, the Spirit is the source of his ecclesiology.* For Congar explains that the Spirit himself gives to some the gift of apostleship, to others that of teaching, and yet to others, that of prophecy, thus organizing the

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 34. In a personal letter from Congar dated October 17, 1971, we read: "Je n'ai pas osé jusqu'ici aller jusqu'au bout de ce que j'ai compris grâce, soit, par exemple, aux notes de l'abbé Long-Hasselmanns (*RSP* 25, 1951), pp. 187-199; pp. 228-304, soit surtout à partir de l'étude des Ecritures."

¹⁴ Congar, *MCE*, p. 33. In a personal letter from Congar, dated January 11, 1973, regarding the ministerial priesthood, we read: "Je continue à penser et à tenir que cela suppose une participation nouvelle et originale au sacerdoce du Christ. Mais on aurait tort d'isoler ce sacerdoce des autres fonctions du Christ, comme on le fait trop souvent. Les prêtres sont ordonnés pour le service qualifié, dans la continuité des apôtres, de tout le service messianique du Christ prophète, prêtre et roi. Dès lors, je dirais moins *sacerdoce ministériel* que *ministère sacerdotal*, et même plutôt: ministère ordonné du peuple sacerdotal dont le Christ est le sanctificateur. Tout cela est lié avec *le passage d'une primauté donnée à la Personne* du ministre qualifié en soi de façon inamissible par une *potesta (conficiendi) à la primauté donnée à sa fonction, à son service.*" (Italics are mine.)

¹⁵ Congar, *MCE*, pp. 33-34. In "L'Église de Hans Küng," *RSPT*, p. 701, Congar criticizes Küng for his alleged understanding of the apostolic succession as collective. He describes Küng's position in the following way: "...l'Église collectivement prise hérite de la mission des apôtres, de sorte que les ministères, en elle, ne sont pas à proprement parler constitutifs (cause efficiente instrumentale), mais de simples services dans une communauté constituée par l'action de l'Esprit. Le problème de fond ainsi posé est celui des rapports entre l'Église et le Verbe *incarné*, entre l'aspect pneumatologique et l'aspect christologique dans l'ecclésiologie." Interestingly in "L'Église selon l'évangile, réponse à Yves Congar", *RSPT*, pp. 216-217, Küng replies that Congar has misunderstood his position as described in *Die Kirche*, pp. 606-607. Küng explains that in no way he reduces the totality of the apostolic succession to the apostolicity of the Church. In his response to Congar he writes: "De fait, la succession apostolique de toute l'Église et de chacun de ses membres me semble titre principale: l'Église en son ensemble, se tient dans l'obéissance aux apôtres en tant qu'ils sont les premiers témoins et les premiers envoyés. De ce fait, la succession apostolique se trouve d'abord dans la foi et la confession apostolique, dans le service et la vie apostolique. Mais dans le long développement E II, 2 sur la structure diaconale, j'ai accepté et prouvé la succession apostolique particulière des pasteurs.... J'ai défendu la légitimité de cette évolution vers la constitution presbytériale-épiscopale de l'Église, aujourd'hui tout à fait *normale*."

Church for the work of various services within the Church, in order to build the Body of Christ.¹⁶ It is in this sense that the ministries are given for a special task or function, and not in view of self aggrandizement of a person;¹⁷ namely, that of the ministerial priest.

Congar then explains that the apostolic succession must not be defined exclusively in terms of juridical continuity:

Il ne suffit donc pas de *définir* la succession apostolique par une continuité purement juridique, encore que celle-ci atteigne déjà l'essentiel puisqu'elle implique l'identité d'office demeurant dans la succession des personnes, et que cette identité d'office est celle du témoignage et de l'enseignement apostoliques; mais on ferait, des éléments éthiques, simplement l'objet de *l'esprit* dans lequel la fonction devrait être exercée. Il faut introduire ces éléments éthiques dans l'ontologie même de la charge reçue. C'est ce que nous avons essayé de faire pour l'aspect de service.¹⁸

Congar discusses two models¹⁹ of the Church: 1) *the structure model*, (i.e., *societas inaequalis hierarchica*) or the clerical approach to the Church, wherein the ministerial priesthood is seen as an indelible character and a power which is possessed personally in a definitive and absolute way; and 2) *the community model* wherein the ministerial priesthood is seen as a ministry within the frame-work of the following biblical theological principles: God calls the Church (Rm. 1, 6, I Cor., 2, 2 Cor. 1, 1); God *makes* the Church grow (I Cor., 3:6); i.e., from

¹⁶ Congar, *MCE*, pp. 33-34.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 90-93. Here, Congar explains that according to the Protestant view, mission, celebration and power are given to the entire Church, not to specific members within the Church (as in the Roman Church). Thus, in Protestantism, ministries come forth from the community which, primarily, has the responsibility of assuring the objective continuity between the ministries of the *apostolic Church* and the ministries of today. Congar then explains what he understands by *apostolicity*. The latter is part of the structuration within the Church. It includes 1) the apostolic succession, that is, the entire transmission of what the Church is all about in terms of mission, 2) unity, 3) holiness and 3) catholicity as linked to the Church community. Two activities are connected with apostolicity, namely, 1) *receptivity* within the entire community, and 2) a *qualified control* of the community. Between these two activities (*receptivity* and *control*), there must exist a relationship of *reciprocity*, which includes *dialogue within the Church*. (p. 90) and *with the Spirit of God* (p. 91). For Congar, *apostolicity* (as just explained) includes both 1) doctrine and 2) ministries. Notice that the dialogical aspect of the Church is very much part of the structuration itself of the Church; that is, it is an essential element of its structure. One must remember here a most important Congarian premise (at this point in his *cheminement*); namely, 1) all ministries are to be inserted within the total reality of the Church, the mystery of which is to be found in each authentic particular Church and 2) such Church structuration has been instituted by the Lord himself; it is a structuration that comes about through the mediation of a history which is providentially guided and directed, a structuration which finds its basis in the economy of redemption and grace itself.

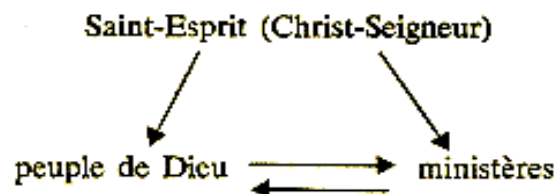
¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

Christ, the body of the Church receives its harmony, cohesion and growth (Eph. 4, 16); God *establishes* the ministries of apostleship, prophecy and teaching (I Cor. 12, 28). These ministries, however, are exercised *by* dispensable men (I Cor. 3, 5) *for* the community. In this sense the ministerial priesthood is conditioned by both God and the community: its existence is established by God for the community.

On ne peut donc pas dire...que les ministères émanent de la communauté: du moins ne peut-on pas le dire purement et simplement, mais il est un sens dans lequel non seulement les ministres viennent de l'Eglise, mais dans lequel les ministères sont constitués par l'Eglise, représentent et personnifient la communauté.²⁰

In fact, one becomes a ministerial priest not personally, but in relation to the Christian community.²¹ It is important to notice here, that Congar further clarifies his sacramental model with reference to the community-structure aspects of the Church. He explains that the ministries in the Church are a *structuration*²² within the community. They do not create the community from outside and over it²³ but from within. They make it come forth (susciter) to construct and build it. It is in this sense. that, on the one hand, ministries do not emerge from the community, and on the other, they are constituted by the community in a representative and personifying capacity. In this context, Congar offers the following schema of the Church, taken from the World Council of Churches commission:²⁴



However, Congar qualifies the above schema in this way. He sees here a *rapprochement* between Protestants and Catholics with this difference, on the one hand, that the former see the ministry as being of Divine origin in general, not in particular. On the other, the Catholic

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Supra*, pp. 42 ff.****

²³ *Infra*, pp. 169ff.****

²⁴ In *MCE*, p. 38, note 12, Congar refers B. Gavalda, *Le mouvement œcuménique* (Paris: – 1959), pp. 62-63.

tradition sees some of the ministries at least as 1) derived from Christ, who came in the flesh, and 2) as participation to his powers and authority as the one sent by God to be a servant to his people.²⁵

According to Congar, ministries are set within the Church-Community as the Church-Community, in turn, is set within the world-community. The Church, defined in its service to the world (as ascertained in *Jalons*) is more specifically so defined by the Congar of the 1960's.²⁶ Having grounded the mission of the Church for the World in the Old and New Testaments,²⁷ Congar explains the meaning of the Vatican II Constitution, *Gaudium et Spes* as follows²⁸: since Christianity has to do with mankind, with people, it has the same matter and the same purpose that the world has: the realization of the human adventure (*faire aboutir l'aventure humaine*).²⁹ However, mankind has within itself something which is beyond that which is purely terrestrial; namely, what *Gaudium et Spes* calls the integral vocation of man.³⁰

There is no question here of subordinating the temporal to the spiritual;³¹ It is rather a question of referring both the spiritual and the temporal to eschatology. Congar explains:

... il ne s'agit plus de subordonner le domaine temporel à l'Eglise, il s'agit de le référer à l'eschatologie. Cela ne le détériore pas dans sa nature terrestre propre parce que 1°

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-41.

²⁶ Y. Congar, *Vatican II, L'Église dans le monde de ce temps*, II, Commentaires, Unam Sanctam 65b (Paris: Cerf, 1967): "Le rôle de l'Eglise dans le monde de ce temps," 2^e partie, "L'Église et la vocation humaine".

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 307.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 307.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 309-310. In note 5, Congar quotes Rahner: "[L]a totalité de l'humanité est religieuse et la totalité de la religion est humaine." I believe that there is an analogy here between Congar's understanding of *vocation intégrale* and Rahner's *supernatural existential*. For the latter, man's nature has the orientation of a hearer for a possible supernatural revelation, a positive *ontological alert*, an ontological determination toward God. If God gives creation and man above all a supernatural end, then, man, by the very fact, is inwardly other, in structure, than he would be if he did not have this end. It is on this open structure of man toward revelation that his vocation toward the world is based. In *L'Église dans le monde de ce temps* (pp. 309-310), Congar comments on number 40. of *Gaudium et Spes* (the Vatican II Document on the *Church in the World*): "C'est parce que le Christianisme concerne l'homme qu'il a, en somme, la même matière et le même but que le monde: faire aboutir l'aventure humaine. Mais l'homme a en lui quelque chose qui dépasse le purement terrestre; c'est ce que *Gaudium et Spes* entend par sa *vocation intégrale*, et ce quelque chose se manifeste au plan même des faits contestables. Ainsi l'humanité se montre religieuse en même temps que la religion se montre humaine."

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 311-314.

l'eschatologie est transcen-dante: c'est pourquoi elle peut donner leur sens à des cultures et des activités si diverses, à travers l'espace et le temps; 2° l'eschatologie est le sens même des choses terrestres et des activités de l'Histoire. Aussi, bien qu'elle doive venir d'en haut et comme un don, elle ne sera pas un coup de force pour les choses ou les vies qu'elle viendra, précisément, achever. L'eschatologie ou le salut (c'est tout un) est englobante par rapport à la nature ou à l'Histoire, elle est achèvement, transfiguration. Elle n'est pas une étrangère. C'est pourquoi en ordonnant leur activité et leur vie à l'eschatologie, les chrétiens n'ont pas à renoncer à l'oeuvre terrestre, encore moins à la trahir: ils lui assurent son intégrité finale et réalisent leur vocation intégrale d'hommes.³²

In this context, the whole Church is the messianic people in the midst of the world (*au creux du monde*).³³ The world is no more referred to as the power of the state but as humanity itself at work. "Il est en capacité et en appel de l'Eglise si l'Eglise est entendue comme ce qui lui révèle son propre sens final."³⁴

The Church as messianic people is the universal sacrament of salvation.³⁵ Now, in order to better situate the ministerial priesthood itself within the Christian community, as a special ministry and apostolic succession, Congar makes the distinction between the Jesus of History and the Christ of Glory. In the Jesus of History, we find two aspects³⁶: a life of service and a life

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 314-315.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 315. See also: *L'Apostolat des laïcs*, Unam Sanctam 75 (Paris: Cerf 1970), "Apports, richesses et limites du Décret", pp. 175-181. Also, *Cette Eglise que j'aime* (Paris: Cerf, 1968), pp. 65-85.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, *L'Eglise dans le monde de ce temps*, pp. 315-316.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 326. Congar explains: "L'Eglise est la forme historique sociale, visible et publique, que prend la volonté divine de salut total."

³⁶ Congar, *MCE*, pp. 39-41. A similar view is expressed in Yves Congar, *LD*, p. 129. Note here that the Church as related to the historical Jesus, and more specifically, to the stable and once and for all reality of the Incarnation, is very fundamental to Congar. (****, Chapters I and II). This shows especially when he compares his understanding of the Church to K. Barth's *Church-Event*, which Congar sees as being related exclusively to the glorious pneumatological Christ. He explains that for K. Barth, what constitutes the Church *as Church* is the fact that man listens because God has spoken and now speaks. It is God in Jesus Christ who builds the Church, and this is done in the now event. Jesus Christ is not the historical founder of the Church, only its actual foundation; Christ's activity with regard to the Church is exclusively vertical, with no horizontal dimensions. The relation of the Church to Christ is *événementielle*, that is, in the event of the spoken and listened Word.

In "L'Eglise de Hans Küng", *RSPT*, p. 701, Congar criticizes Küng: "Küng établit bien une *préparation* de l'Eglise dans les paroles et actions du Jésus pré-pascal, mais finalement, il rattache à l'Esprit, la réalisation de l'Eglise. A plus d'un égard il renouvelle ainsi, mais sur une base plus exégétique, une ecclésiologie de type pneumatique du Möhler de *Die Einheit* (1825). Ainsi, en suivant la séquence (trinitaire): "Peuple de Dieu, création du Saint-Esprit, Corps du Christ." Congar attributes what he sees in Küng as an exclusive pneumatological view of the Church, to a lack of Johannine exegetical use; for example, the com-

of mission, (i.e., Jesus' having been sent by the Father in the Spirit), or what Congar refers to respectively, the christological and pneumatological aspects. The entire Christian people or community shares in the Christological aspect of the historical Jesus; the Apostles, and eventually the ministers, share in the pneumatological aspect of the historical Jesus.

With regard to the level of the glorious Christ, again, we find a twofold aspect: a) Christ, the Head of the Body as Life and b) as Leader (Chef).³⁷ As Life, he animates the entire Body of the Church through the Holy Spirit, including Apostles and ministers (I Cor. 12, 12, Acts, 9,4); as Leader, Christ has authority and power *over* the community into which the Apostles and ministerial priests share. On the one hand, the category used by Congar to refer to the participation

munication of the Spirit to the body of Christ suspended on the cross (Jn 19 30 and 31), and to the Risen Lord appearing with the crucifixion wounds (Jn 22 ff.). (p. 700). In "L'Eglise selon l'Evangile, réponse à Yves Congar" *RSPT*, p. 212, Küng explains his understanding of the role of the Spirit: "Au cours de l'Histoire, l'Esprit ne fera donc pas de *nouvelles* révélations, mais il fera qu'apparaisse par la prédication de l'Eglise, dans une *lumière* toujours *nouvelle*, ce que Jésus a dit et fait, expérimenté et souffert,... La révélation de Dieu en Jésus demeure donc identique à elle-même. Mais c'est en tant qu'identique qu'elle devient, grâce à l'Esprit, de nouveau vivante, A chaque époque, pour celui qui croit et aime." In *LD*, p. 129, Congar clarifies his thought regarding the pneumatological aspect of the Church. He writes: "... le Seigneur n'agit pas aujourd'hui, par son Esprit, comme s'il n'avait pas, dans le temps de son Incarnation, posé certaines structures de son Alliance de grâce (erreur d'un pur verticalisme ou d'un pur pointillé d'événement de grâce, dans le sens de laquelle s'expriment certains auteurs protestants)." Yet, Congar does make concessions with regard to the Corinthian Church. In "L'Eglise de Hans Küng", *RSPT*, p. 703, he writes: "S'appuyant sur le cas de Corinthe à l'époque de S. Paul, Küng admet que, dans une situation où les ministères hiérarchiques auraient été détruits ou éteints dans une Eglise, la communauté pourrait reconnaître en elle les charismes correspondants et se rendre ces ministères. Nous admettons, nous aussi, cette possibilité dans une situation d'exception, sans qu'on puisse en faire la base d'une doctrine générale de la succession dans le ministère apostolique, encore que cela intéresse l'équilibre à donner à cette doctrine. Il nous semble cependant qu'elle n'engage pas seulement la vue charismatique et verticale de l'apostolicité, dont on a déjà dit un mot, mais une théologie de l'*économie* ou *dispensatio* et de suppléance. Nous avons, sur la base d'une documentation que nous souhaitons pouvoir présenter un jour, acquis la conviction que *les faits historiques* imposent d'admettre le principe de l'*économie* (dispense et suppléance). Mais il n'en existe que de très partielles amorces, au plan théorique ou théologique, dans la tradition latine. Du travail à faire!" In "L'Eglise selon l'Evangile, réponse à Yves Congar", *RSPT*, pp. 200-202, especially p. 201, Küng responds to Congar in this manner: "Congar considère cette vision de l'ecclésiologie paulinienne comme exégétiquement et historiquement possible – ce dont je prends soigneusement note. Il voit bien que je ne veux pas considérer comme définitive et seule possible la structure purement charismatique de l'église de Corinthe, mais que je plaide seulement, en y mettant certes de l'insistance, pour qu'aujourd'hui encore, conformément au témoignage normatif de Paul, la possibilité d'une église purement charismatique ne soit pas exclue, *apriori*, comme illégitime. Assurément cette constatation est d'une grande portée: a) au point de vue missionnaire (même sans presbytre, le cas échéant, une eucharistie valide est possible aujourd'hui, par exemple, en Chine), b) au point de vue œcuménique (reconnaissance de la validité des ministres et des sacrements dans les églises dont les ministres officiels ne se situent pas à l'intérieur de la succession apostolique").

³⁷ This distinction has already been made in *JPTL*, p. 149. *Supra*, p. 68, note 2.****

of the entire communion of the Church into the Life aspect of Christ as Head of the Church is that of *service*, a non mediatory category, which refers to the Christological activities of the Historical Jesus, a life for others. On the other hand, the category used for the participation of the Apostles and ministers to the Leadership aspect of Christ as Head of the Church is that of *representation* within the community, again, a non mediatory concept, and yet a certain type of *service*.³⁸ At this point, Congar deals with the relationship between ministries and the Christian community. The most ancient tradition, according to him, indicates that the ministries are seen as existing within the community, for the community, as services to it. There is one exception, however, namely, that of the apostle which is anterior and constituent of the community.³⁹ Also part of the ancient tradition – as found in Paul and in the Jerusalem Church – is the fact that there is but a vague distinction between the institutional and charismatic ministries,⁴⁰ a distinction which Congar believes has not been taken into account enough within the Catholic tradition. Within the context of the tradition, the ministerial priest would not be the only leader (*gérant*) of the Christian community.

Interestingly, Congar distinguishes three levels of ministries: 1) occasional, spontaneous and temporary ministries within and outside the Christian community, such as the ministry of a mother who catechizes little children; here, "le Seigneur et l'Esprit mènent le jeu". 2) there is a second level of ministries, analogous to the first, but more stable in view of their direct link with the habitual needs of the Church as community of faith, of cult, of loving service and of witness; here, permanent catechists, lectors would be examples of such ministries; 3) finally, there are the officially publically recognized ministries or offices *à base sacramentelle*; namely, the diaconate, the presbyterate and the episcopate. Distinctions elucidate this latter ministry, in

³⁸ *MCE*, pp. 40-41. In *Episcopat et l'Eglise universelle Unam Sanctam* 39 (Paris: Cerf, 1954), "La Hiérarchie comme service selon le Nouveau Testament et les Documents de la Tradition," pp. 67-99, henceforth cited as *EEU*, Congar defines the specific ministry of the hierarchy as diakonia. See also *Pour l'Eglise servante et pauvre* (Paris: Cerf, 1963), pp. 13-37, henceforth cited as *PESP*. In *LD*, p. 130, Congar refers to the ministerial priesthood as "une réalité organique insérée dans un corps tout entier vivant et qui sert la vie de ce corps."

³⁹ Congar, *MCE*, p. 41.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 91-93, where Congar makes some important observations with regard to the ordination and the presupposed charism. He explains that the sacramental grace is in need of the charism which, at times, may be non-existent. (P. 91). He adds that the apostolic body must operate in conjunction with the Spirit, that, in fact, the *ethical element* is part of the ontology of the grace which is received through ordination (p. 92).

comparison with the two former ones. First, one cannot separate the ordination (which can be by election or designation) from the charism, for the latter must be there in order to be recognized publicly and officially by the Church. The charism of the ordained minister must eventually through prayer and faithfulness be submitted to the law of development and growth. In fact says Congar "le laïc peut être *plus prêtre* que le prêtre ordonné."⁴¹

Secondly, what is new here with regard to the institutionalized ministries is the fact that such ministries are the result of a *special* act of God, that is, a *sacramental* act. Thirdly, consequently, the *stability* which comes about is of a different nature than that which comes about through Baptism and Confirmation. The latter are related to the order of the life of the Church, whereas the former is related to the order of the structuration of the Church.⁴²

⁴¹ Congar, *MCE*, pp. 43-46. See also *LD*, pp. 121-131. Here, Congar makes a distinction between ministry *ex officio* and *ex spiritu*. "C'est ainsi que se distinguent, dans l'Église, des ministères institués ou de fonction *ex officio*, qui doivent leur existence à la communication sacramentelle ou juridictionnelle originale, et des ministères liés à des dons personnels *ex Spiritu*, que suscite le Saint-Esprit. Evidemment celui-ci agit dans les ministères institués et par eux: le Christ actualise sa présence par son Esprit. Mais, dans le corps où l'action de cet Esprit rend le Christ vitalement immanent, les ministères institués représentent le Seigneur comme Chef et structurent le peuple, visiblement selon le type tête-corps, troupeau et pasteur. Tout est référé au Christ. On ne se trouve pas en présence d'un peuple passif et d'une hiérarchie posée d'abord en elle-même avec une valeur constituante. Tout est référé au Seigneur et à son Esprit, mais tout leur est référé de façon organique. Le Peuple de Dieu est tout entier et comme tel, signe de l'Évangile, sacrement du salut, médiateur de vie pour le monde, mais il est structuré organiquement" (p. 131).

⁴² *Supra*, Chapter II, p. 68 note ****2, where a similar distinction is formulated. In a *personal letter* dated October 17, 1971, Congar writes: "Je serais ferme aujourd'hui pour dire: en régime chrétien il n'y a qu'un prêtre souverain, le Christ. Tous les chrétiens sont prêtres en lui et ont accès directement à Dieu. (J'ai toujours récusé la définition du *sacerdoce* par médiation). Il n'y a pas de sacrement du sacerdoce (sauf le baptême), il y a un sacrement *de l'ordre*. Certains sont *ordonnés* dans la suite des apôtres et des ministres institués par eux pour servir le Sacerdoce du Christ auprès des hommes, et d'abord de la communauté chrétienne. Ils sont les présidents sacramentellement ordonnés de son Eucharistie, les serviteurs de sa *logikè latreia*." Similarly in 1930 Long-Hasselmanns had written (see "Essai de théologie - Long-Hasselmanns" *RSPT*, p. 286): "... le sacerdoce des *christiani* est aussi sacramentel que celui des *presbyteri*; c'est le même, que confère le baptême. Le sacrement propre aux *presbyteri* n'est pas le sacrement du *sacerdoce* (l'Église n'a jamais parlé ni pensé ainsi), mais le sacrement de l'ordre. Ce sacrement ne donne pas la dignité sacerdotale, qui se confond avec le titre de *christianus*, mais elle donne le *ministerium* (dans le sens large du mot, c'est-à-dire, la fonction publique). In a *personal letter* dated Jan. 11, 1973, Congar admits that in 1953 "je suis resté dans une vision cléricale de l'Église pour y revaloriser le laïcat; j'ai opéré avec le couple *sacerdoce-laïcat*... j'opérerais aujourd'hui avec le couple *communauté-ministères*." (Italics are mine.) Congar continues: "Les ministres ordonnés sont seulement un service institué de ce que le peuple de Dieu est et fait. Tout le peuple de Dieu est sacerdotal. Les 'prêtres' ne sont sacerdotaux de façon particulière que parce qu'ils sont *ordonnés* (ordo) pour présider et guider le service sacerdotal du peuple de Dieu. Je continue à penser et à tenir que cela suppose une participation nouvelle et originale au sacerdoce du Christ. Mais on aurait tort *d'isoler* ce sacerdoce des autres fonctions du Christ, comme on le fait trop souvent. Les prêtres sont ordonnés pour le service qualifié, dans la

A word must be said here in order to define what Congar understands by *structuration*. He distinguishes between his use of the word structure (in the singular) and Küng's understanding of structures (in the plural). For Congar, structure has to do with the *given* aspect of the Church, i.e., that by which the Church finds its own identity in the order of belief, sacraments and hierarchical functions. Consequently, the word structure has a stable meaning, whereas for Küng, structures refer to the exterior forms that the Church has taken through historical, cultural and geographical influences.⁴³

continuité des apôtres, de tout le service messianique du Christ prophète et roi."

⁴³ Congar, *MCE*, , p. 47. In "L'Eglise de Hans Küng", *RSPT*, pp. 694-695, Congar clarifies Küng's position here. "Sa démarche est justifiée théologiquement, dès le début du livre (i.e., *Die Kirche*), par une distinction entre le *Wesen* et le *Unwesen*, son *essence* et sa *mal-essence*.... En fait, l'essence est ce qui ressort du Nouveau Testament; la mal-essence se trouve dans la vie historique de l'Église, car l'Église en sa vie historique concrète (et ceci dès l'époque apostolique!) a véhiculé son *Unwesen* autant et en même temps que son *Wesen*. C'est une constatation que nous pouvons admettre, sous le bénéfice des remarques que nous ferons plus loin, et compte tenu de ce que reconnaît Küng: l'essence *se réalise* dans le mal-essence, mélangée à celle-ci." For Congar's qualifications of the above distinction of *Wesen* and *Unwesen*, see *supra*, p. 148, note 3ff.***

In his book *The Church* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1967), p. 14 (English translation of *Die Kirche*, p. 26) Küng explains what he means by the essence (*Wesen*) of the Church: "God's salvific act in Jesus Christ is the origin of the Church; but it is more than the starting-point of the first phase of its history, it is something which at any given time determines the whole history of the Church and defines its essential nature. So the real Church can never simply leave its origins behind or ultimately distance itself from them. Those origins determine what is permanently true and constantly valid in the Church, despite all historical forms and changes and all individual contingencies. The nature of the Church is not just given to it, it is entrusted to it. Loyalty to its original nature is something the Church must preserve through all the changing history of that world for the sake of which the Church exists. But it can only do that through change (*aggiornamento*), not through immobility (*immobilismo*); it must commit itself to each new day (*giorno*) afresh, accept the changes and transformations of History and human life, and constantly be willing to reform, to renew, to rethink."

On p. 15 of *The Church* (German, p. 26), Küng explains with regard to the Church: "It stands or falls by its links with its origins in Jesus Christ and its message; it remains permanently dependent, for the ground of its existence, on God's saving act in Jesus Christ, which is valid for all time and so also in the present. It must never cease to reflect upon those origins. Specifically, it must meditate on the original testimony of faith, which remains a constant point of reference for the Church in any century. This original testimony is unique, incomparable and unrepeatable and as such it is actively obligatory, binding and normative for the Church in all ages. The original witness, the original message, is given to us in the writings of the Old and New Testaments."

On page 13, (German, p. 25), interestingly Küng defines ecclesiology as follows: "Ecclesiology is a response and a call to constantly changing historical situations. This requires repeated and determined attempts to mould, form and differentiate in freedom, unless ecclesiologists give up in despair at each new situation, close their eyes to them and simply drift. The Church's doctrine of the Church, like the Church itself, is necessarily subject to continual change and must constantly be undertaken anew."

Congar specifies his understanding of structure. Structuration refers to the People of God as having received from God a mission to realize God's plan, in order to be a sacrament, a visible infleshing of this plan before the nations. Structure also refers to the Church as institution, that is, the ministerial priesthood as the apostolic succession in the ministries and as episcopal college with Peter at its head.⁴⁴

Congar indicates that such a view refers to tradition⁴⁵ in its totality, including the Pastoral Epistles. Congar even refers to the ecclesial Pauline model, as reinforcing his point.⁴⁶ Structure therefore includes the following:

⁴⁴ Congar makes further important distinctions regarding the charism for apostleship and that of the hierarchy. In *EU*, pp. 195-198, he explains that even the Bishops, considered as the college with the successor of Peter at their head, do not have the charism of revelation which permitted the apostles to constitute a normative tradition, although they do have the charism of apostolic authority when they judge that a truth belongs to the deposit of faith and teach so formally (pp. 195-196). However, Congar clarifies what apostolic succession is not. "Elle n'est pas la simple interruption dans l'occupation d'un siège: telle serait tout au plus une succession matérielle ou historique.... La succession apostolique n'est pas un pur fait de validité sacramentelle..." (pp. 205-208). Then Congar explains what it is: "Certes, la succession apostolique s'opère par la consécration et l'imposition des mains.... Cependant, la succession apostolique est constituée, comme apostolicité formelle, par la conservation de la doctrine transmise depuis les apôtres" (pp. 208-212). Yet the whole Church succeeds to the apostles. Here, Congar quotes Pope Paul VI in a dialogue with Jean Guittou: "...le laïc est comme l'évêque un successeur des Apôtres" (p. 212). Congar also refers to Hans Küng who deals with apostolic succession in a similar manner. (p. 213). Congar adds however: "[I]l ne faut pas évidemment ni réduire les Apôtres au rôle de témoins primitifs uniques, en négligeant l'aspect de *pouvoir*, ni réduire la présence du témoignage apostolique aujourd'hui aux écrits du NT, en oubliant la tradition réelle" (p. 213). Congar concludes: "Ainsi apostolicité de doctrine et apostolicité de ministère doivent être tenues conjointes, dans la théologie de l'apostolicité.... Si le fidèle est baptisé dans sa profession de foi, de telle façon qu'il est consacré à la foi, le prêtre et l'évêque sont ordonnés dans leur consécration au ministère apostolique et en vue de ce ministère. Ce ministère consiste à structurer et à édifier l'Eglise par les moyens de grâce de la Nouvelle Alliance, dans l'exercice des trois offices dont il est aisé de trouver l'indication en Mt 28, 18-20: pas seulement l'office de la doctrine, comme dans la succession des rabbis, mais aussi celui du sacerdoce, des sacrements et du gouvernement pastoral" (p. 214).

⁴⁵ In *Tradition and Traditions* (N. Y.:Macmillan 1967), (trad. of *La Tradition et les traditions* (Paris: Fayard 1960 et 1963), the consistency of Congar comes forth in his dealing with the reality of Tradition, in its total objective sense, i.e., its content, or "everything that is delivered and transmitted to us in order what we may live according to the covenant" (p. 308). He makes the following distinction: there are two levels on which one may consider tradition: 1) in its perfection level, as it is found in the Gospel, and 2) in its transmission-reception level, as it is lived in the Church. The former consists of tradition as formed by the prophets, Jesus Christ and the Apostles; the latter is formed by the Church. Both levels reveal a human and a divine aspect: the latter, is ultimately the Holy Spirit, the ultimate principle of tradition (p. 308). The Church receives Tradition (which at its origin is identical with Revelation) from the Apostles, who received it. from Christ (pp. 308-414). The entire *ecclesia* is the subject of Tradition (pp. 314-321), but not without qualification. "We have to recognize certain differentiations within the *ecclesia* as the total subject of Tradition. They are *de facto* differentiations, to some degree historical (theologians, Fathers), and *de jure* differentiations: the hierarchy and the faithful are the subjects of Tradition in

S'il s'agit de ce qui est strictement nécessaire et suffisant pour que l'Eglise existe comme Eglise de Jesus-Christ, nous dirons: le sacerdoce selon la forme où l'on parle de succession apostolique dans le ministère, c'est-à-dire comme collège épiscopal, Pierre à sa tête. C'est lui qui structure l'Eglise. Mais on doit reconnaître que cette réponse est celle de la Tradition interprétant l'Ecriture prise dans sa totalité (donc incluant les Epîtres pastorales)... Le problème est aujourd'hui de savoir ce qui est nécessaire aux Eglises dans l'ordre du ministère *ut ecclesia fiant*, pour parler comme Tertullien. S'il s'agit de ce qu'il faut pour que l'Eglise réponde au Dessein de Dieu, soit en un lieu déterminé, soit au plan universel de l'espace et du temps, nous dirons que c'est l'affaire du Seigneur glorifié et de son Saint-Esprit, étant entendu que la fidélité des hommes doit répondre à leur appel et à leurs dons. Ce qui structure alors l'Eglise, ce sont tous ces services et ministères que Dieu suscite pour qu'elle remplisse, en un lieu ou dans le monde l'oeuvre de l'Envoyé et du Serviteur: annoncer la Bonne Nouvelle et procurer la libération aux pauvres; être la Diaconie du Dieu qui aime les hommes.⁴⁷

Congar adds: "Ces services et ministères eux-mêmes demandent à être structurés: il faut *équiper* les saints pour l'oeuvre de cette Diaconie (Eph 4, 12). C'est alors le lieu de se souvenir de

unequal and different ways, within the overall single subject, the *ecclesia*." (pp. 323-338). To explain this last distinction, Congar quotes the Orthodox theologian Evdokimov: "The general magisterium of the episcopate does not take its authority from the mass of the faithful: it comes from the common Head of the whole body and is transmitted by apostolic succession. Yet, it is only the authority to proclaim, identify, and recognize what has been entrusted to the Church as a whole" (p. 330). This last function of the hierarchy is a special charism that exists within the Church for the Church and it is related to the public, official and social nature of the Church. Congar, again explains: "that God communicates his revelation by the Church, through the preaching of a ministry with a divine commission which (?) the heir, at our level, of the apostolic mission (cf. Mt. 28, 19; Mk.16.15; Acts 1, 7-8) (pp. 337-338). Now this "is not to identify Church's authority with God's, as Protestants accuse us of doing. It is rather to situate the Church and the ordained ministry in the place assigned to them by the Word of God in the revelation of salvation. In turn we would address a caution to Protestantism, asking it to draw the implications of the fact, witnessed to in the whole saving economy, that revelation has not an individual and private, but rather a social and public, nature; and also, to take seriously the promise made to the Church of the presence and the assistance of the Holy Spirit" (p. 338). Then Congar explains that the Holy Spirit, the ultimate principle of tradition, is revealed sacramentally in all the above mentioned expressions of Tradition, namely, 1) that of the level of its foundation, (prophets, Jesus Christ and the apostles); 2) that of the level of its lived experience (Church life, in its transmission and receptive phase); 3) that of the level of special charism within the Church (of official proclamation, identification, and recognition of tradition).(pp. 338-347). See also, "L'Eglise de Hans Küng", *RSPT*, pp. 698-699, and "L'Eglise selon l'Evangile, réponse Yves Congar", *RSPT* (pp. 204-208).

⁴⁶ Congar, *MCE*, p. 48. See also "L'Eglise de Hans Küng", *RSPT*, p. 698, where Congar writes in reference to Küng's *Die Kirche*: "Küng ne fait pas la place qu'ils méritent, dans sa vision de l'Eglise et de ses structures apostoliques, ni au texte de Ga 2, 2, ni à la collecte, sorte de sacrement de la communion, ni à ce qu'elle révèle de l'importance décisive que Paul attachait à la communion avec le groupe apostolique et les saints de Jérusalem."

⁴⁷ Congar, *MCE*, pp. 47-49.

la leçon que donne le Nouveau Testament: dans le cadre de son apostolicité essentielle, l'Eglise s'est donné (ou a reçu) les ministères dont elle avait besoin."⁴⁸

At this point, in order to further understand Congar's view of the ministries within the communion of the Church, we must deal with his understanding of the historical development of the hierarchical ministry in the Church.⁴⁹ Before the middle of the Fourth Century, Congar explains that the *ecclesia* was the *Christian-WE* (*le Nous chrétien*) in the local Church ("Le pasteur dans le Nous et le Nous dans le pasteur" – Cyprian). Now, this *ecclesia*, (*le Nous chrétien*) was in quest for unity with the other *ecclesiae* (local Churches). This actualization or process of unification and communion was part of the episcopal role to the point that episcopal collegiality was the symbol of the communion process and quest....Consequently, the episcopate found its *raison d'être* on a twofold relationship or function: in relation 1) to his local Church-Community (this was the meaning of order, that is, ordered to, related to (*ordonné, à*) his local Church), and 2) to the universal Church, through his attempt at seeking communion with the *Corpus* of the Church, (his entrance into the Body of the universal Church). Thus for Tertullian, *order* referred not to some personal power, but to the situation of the bishop within his local community. Again, what is found to have priority is related to the community, and whatever structure that eventually emerged within the community was in view of holding together the community itself. In this context, one particular local Church with its bishop emerged as a kind of model for the other Churches. It came to be looked upon as a court of appeal and, inasmuch as it was considered as such, it intervened in the activities of the other local Church, especially, in regard to activities that were related to faith. The eventual preeminence of the Roman Church as expressed in dogmatic statements, is the result of a *de facto* recognition of its role among the other local Churches.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 95-122. The presentation that follows on pp. 173-176 of this dissertation follows closely Congar's thought in *MCE*. See also, *EHMA*, pp. 319-393.

⁵⁰ The above statement is not on the part of Congar a denigration of the Petrine primacy. The statement merely offers an explanation to the process of Romanization. In *MCE*, Congar has a chapter on "Le problème ecclésiologique de la papauté après Vatican II" (pp. 167-186), in which he writes: "Cependant, aucun catholique—romain ne conteste le principe de la primauté pétrinienne et papale. Il reste que cette primauté cherche, dans son exercice même de primauté, l'aide, l'appui, la coopération immédiate et effective de la collégialité, elle-même organisée selon le système des conférences épiscopales.... Cela ne soumet pas le pape à cet épiscopat: le pape demeure maître soit de sa décision, soit de faire décider par Synode." Congar, however, remains sensitive to the ecumenical situation and adds: "Ajoutons que

With the Council of Nicea and the Constantinian peace, the Church organizes its structures which, with time, became fixed: the ordination is related to the election, and the *collegium* of bishops is related to the structure of the Community of faith, sacraments and grace, of which the Spirit is looked upon as the inner principle. After the Council of Sardica (343), the local Church of Rome comes to describe itself as the *Caput* (Head) Church, as president in love, as a Church which is qualitatively different *from* the other Churches and as the source of the other Churches. The Bishop of the Roman Church becomes a sort of re-incarnation of Peter.

After the Ninth Century, the concept of collegiality ceases to exist, especially with the institution of the college of cardinals (Thirteenth Century) who were looked upon as the twelve apostles around the person of the bishop of Rome, who was the vicar of Christ. At this point the relationship of the bishop with the local Church gives way to the relationship of the bishop to the bishop of Rome, the latter as governor of the universal Church. The Church becomes one people under the unique Head, the bishop of Rome. The *order* in the Church becomes a personal power in relation to the Eucharist, instead of a degree of service in the Church, for the Church.

The above traditional considerations made by Congar are important since they clearly show that the universal Church does not pre-exist to the local Churches, although it is first in God's plan, as final goal. Yet, it is essential to the local Church, in order to be Church, to be in communion with the other Churches. The Bishop, in this respect, is the principle of unity in this sense that through his ordination (order) he brings together the members of his local Church and, through his mission, he introduces his local Church into the communion of the other Churches.

These historical considerations, once again support the basic ecclesio-logical thesis of Congar: namely, that which is primary in relation to the Church is its communion aspect; the ministerial priesthood (as exemplified above with regard to the role of the bishop), is first and foremost, a ministry of service in view of unifying the community.

l'histoire du concile [Vatican II] et de ce qui l'a suivi montre que, dans cette instruction [i.e., *Apostolica sollicitudo*, the instruction that defines the nature of the Synod of the Roman Catholic bishops] de l'Eglise, ne nouent pas seulement les recherches historiques ou théologiques ou encore les requêtes du temps. Dans ce climat d'ouverture et de dialogue œcuménique, l'apport des autres chrétiens qui ne sont pas en pleine communion avec nous, s'est avéré substantiel. Il le sera encore dans l'avenir" (pp. 184-185).

Evaluation and Ecumenical Perspectives

Our task now is to evaluate Congar's ecclesiological position, as well as his position in relation to laity and ministry. We shall do this from the perspective of their meaning with regard to the field of ecumenical endeavors as reflected in both recent Protestant studies⁵¹ and in Congar's works. The following points will be developed:

A) We shall bring out the points of ecumenical *rapprochement* between Catholic and Protestant Traditions as these are found in Congar, especially those related to the following issues:

1. the Church viewed as sacrament;
2. the dialogical nature of both hierarchy and laity along with the maternal or generating function of the whole Church;
3. the place of the ordained ministry within God's People;
4. the sacramental nature of the ordained ministry;
5. the role of the community with regard to the ordained ministry;
6. the ordained ministry as one among other ministries within the community; and finally,
7. the role of the ordained ministry itself.

B) Where there is still significant ecumenical *éloignement*, we shall show that, in spite of what appears to us as restricting Congarian conclusions, Congar's over-all ecclesiological context points to definite ecumenical openness. Here, we shall deal with:

1. the role of pneumatology in ecclesiology;
2. the global and/or specific mission(s) of the Church; and
3. the structuration of the Church itself with regard to ministry.

At the very outset of this evaluation, we wish to briefly explain the actual ecumenical situation.

⁵¹ See the Protestant studies referred to, pp. 7-9****; namely, *Groupe des Dombes* (cited as *Dombes*), *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue* (cited as *Lutheran*), *The Canterbury Statement* (cited as *Anglican*), *Faith and Order - Louvain, 1971* (cited as *Louvain*), *Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order, Montreal, 1963* (cited as *Montreal*), and *Planning for Mission* (cited as *Planning*).

In recent years, ecumenism has been questioned. Some now speak of our time as one of post-ecumenism; others want to restrain the ecumenical momentum. In this respect, we find most significant the following remarks of J. Robert Nelson:

Certainly there are many Christians today who are becoming nervous and afraid of the future implications of the present converging. They want to slow down the process, to withdraw support, to return if possible to the familiar, more comfortable ways which they and their parents have known.... We conclude optimistically with a testimony of hope for the future of the Church. The main issues on which Christians are coming to agree are essential for the people of God. It is not, however, for the Church's interior health only, but for the renewed sense of diaconal mission to mankind on behalf of Jesus Christ, that this unitive movement is to be furthered and prized.⁵²

In a similar way, in 1979, Congar wrote:

It is essential that we respect the Church as an entity in itself - in other words, that fact that it has a life of its own - but also recognize that it exists for the sake of man, and in that sense, for the world. A healthy life, for the Church, means carrying out its mission, and allowing the world to determinate how it must do it. Its future is to be present to the world's future. In that sense, a total ecumenism of common service will save theological ecumenism from turning into a sterile talk-shop among ivory-tower dwellers; it will also save institutional ecumenism from being merely a series of demonstrations leading nowhere; and spiritual ecumenism from becoming a slightly enlarged kind of closeness, an experience that warms those who share it, but radiates no heat to anyone else.⁵³

He then concludes:

If the Church is to remain the Church, I think that ecumenism is neither unnecessary, nor something we have got beyond. It is simply that we must pursue it to the full, every aspect of it being necessary if it is to attain to all truth. This does not mean that we should stop inventing, trying new initiatives, opening new possibilities. I would even agree that post-ecumenism, with its criticism, its demands and indeed its impatience, can have an extremely beneficial effect on ecumenism as a whole. It will certainly prevent its turning into any kind of sterile Church-centeredness.⁵⁴

⁵² J. Robert Nelson, "Toward an Ecumenical Ecclesiology", *Theological Studies*, Vol 21, # 4 (Dec. 1970); p. 673.

⁵³ Yves Congar, "Do the New Problems of Our Secular World Make Ecumenism Irrelevant?", *Post Ecumenical Christianity, The New Concilium* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1970), p. 15.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

1) With regard to Congar's ecclesiology and the ecumenical *rapprochement*, we begin with the following point: as it has been explained, the communal emphasis in the more recent Congar is still seen within the framework of the sacramental model⁵⁵ – a model, however, which is now highly differentiated in terms of a recognized dialectic of sin and grace, a mixed reality which together forms the mystery of the Church in its earthly phase. We have referred to Congar's understanding of the Church as the dialectic between God's faithful action and man's free response.

...le résultat de la synergie d'un don fait gratuitement et qui, étant de Dieu est parfaitement pur, et d'une activité de l'homme dans laquelle jouent sa liberté, ses limites, sa faillibilité naturelle.⁵⁶

The more recent Congar emphasizes the same point. He explains that in the new Disposition where grace is linked to the sign, God does so through the dialectical process between God's faithfulness and man's freedom.

Mais comme la grâce établit une relation d'ordre spirituel–moral entre les personnes, elle n'admet jamais d'automa-tisme: l'*ex opere operato* ne put avoir le sens d'un automa-tisme de la grâce. Le lien par lequel Dieu s'est (librement) lié aux structures ecclésiales et, entre autres, aux sacrements, n'est pas du type des lois naturelles, comme dans l'alliance noachique (Gn 8, 21-22; 9, 11): il relève de l'alliance de grâce, qui implique un rapport de fidélité. Dieu, lui, est toujours fidèle, mais, pour l'homme, la fidélité est un devoir et un don.⁵⁷

In a similar way, the *Montreal* document (1963) explains the way in which God binds himself to the institution of the Church as a process which consists in a dialectic between God's promise to do so and the obedient use of the institution under the guidance of the free action of the Spirit. The document describes the Church in terms similar to the Congarian synergy or dialectic. We read:

The question can be asked whether God is bound to the instruments [the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of Sacraments] that he had given and commanded as the means of his presence. We believe that God's command is accompanied by his promise and that he faith-fully fulfills that

⁵⁵ pp. 44 ff., 89ff.****

⁵⁶ Congar, *VFR*, p. 101, *supra*, pp.73-74.****

⁵⁷ Congar, *MCE*, p. 91, *supra*, p. 148, note 63.****

promise by accompanying the obedient use of these given instruments with the free action of the Spirit.⁵⁸

The same document refers specifically to the sacramental nature of the Church using the terminology of *event* and *institution*, thus paralleling Congar's model of *agi* and *donné*, the *task* and the *gift*. The document describes the event-institution model as one that points "to the way in which the Church's Lord is and be-comes ever anew, present to his people through the action of the Holy Spirit."

The way in which God's decisive action is constantly renewed has been described by the words *event* and *institution*. These terms can be criticized; they seem too abstract and impersonal to fittingly describe Christ's Person and his saving work in the Church. But they can also point to the way in which the Church's Lord is and becomes ever anew, present to his people through the action of the Holy Spirit... In considering the relationship between *gift* and *task*, what has been said above concerning event and institution is most relevant.⁵⁹

Similarly, as explained above,⁶⁰ in 1937, Congar approached the relationship between the ecclesiastical structure and the Christian community with the following ecclesiological model: the Church is both gift of life and task of life. The Church as *gift of life* is the Church making its members (*I'Eglise faisant*); the Church as *task of life* is the fellowship of the Church, or the Church made (*I'Eglise faite*): the former is the divine element; the latter, the human; the former is the *donné*, the given; the latter, the *agi*, the operating. Both aspects of the Church operate dialectically. Congar concluded: "[L'Eglise est] selon la dialectique du *donné* et de l'*agi*, à la fois don de Dieu venu d'en haut et collaboration des hommes, réalité acquise et réalisation active, Corps mystique et société."⁶¹

The *Montreal* statement reveals further resemblances with the early Congar, in reference to the sacramental model, where the task (institution) *sacramentalizes* the gift (event):

The reality that God has given in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit is confessed by the Church in terms of its unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity... So for

⁵⁸ *Montreal*, p. 45, # 21.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, # 20 and # 23.

⁶⁰ *Supra*, p. 34, note 1.****

⁶¹ Congar, *EME*, pp. 29-30, *supra*, p. 34, note 1.****

example, the Church which is one in Jesus Christ *becomes* one in him as it receives in faith the good news of its oneness and seeks to pattern its existence in accordance with its reality. Thus, these gifts (unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity) are also tasks.⁶²

We must restate parallel statements in Congar which date also from 1937.

... au total, l'unité de l'Eglise une, sainte, catholique et apostolique. est celle d'une réalité très spéciale faite d'hommes unis par une vie surnaturelle procédant de Dieu et du Christ, en une forme de vie sociétaire par laquelle est procurée et promue cette vie surnaturelle elle-même.... Il n'y a pas deux Églises:... mais l'unique Église qui est le Corps de Jésus-Christ, est à la fois céleste et humaine, substantiellement divine, mais en des hommes et par des moyens de forme humaine; elle est ensemble droit et amour, société et communauté de vie; elle est à la fois, et sans séparation, *Societas fidei et Spiritus Sancti in cordibus*, et *Societas externorum rerum ac rituum*: une unité à la fois incarnée et pneumatique.⁶³

Also in 1937, Congar specifically indicates how in the Church, the gift becomes task by referring to the dialectic of the *donné* and the *agi*:

Tout est déjà accompli dans le Christ: l'Eglise est seulement la manifestation de ce qui est en lui, la réalité animée par son Esprit. Et, cependant, il nous faut encore réaliser le Christ et construire son Corps: double vérité que nous appellerions volontiers *dialectique* du *donné* et de l'*agi*.⁶⁴

Both *Montreal* and *Planning* clearly describe the

Church as

sacramental. *Montreal* states:

The community of the Church was founded to proclaim God's saving act to the world through all ages, and to be continually used by the Spirit to make Christ present again and again through the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments. Through these means Christ is always at work afresh through his Spirit, bestowing his salvation on man and calling him to obedient service).⁶⁵

So does *Planning*:

⁶² *Montreal*, p. 45, # 23.

⁶³ Congar, *CD*, pp. 103, 108-109. *supra*, p. 36, note 1.****

⁶⁴ Congar, *EME*, p. 26, *supra*, p. 34, note 1.****

⁶⁵ *Montreal*, p. 45, # 19.

The structure of the congregation is as much an expression of the activity of the Holy Spirit as are the biblical writings. The Holy Spirit never becomes a timeless manifestation, neither through the letter of scripture nor through the order of the Church.⁶⁶

The recent Congar also emphasizes, as he has constantly done, the structured communion of the Church or as the Protestant studies put it: the Church as both community and means or structure.

Incontestablement, notre théologie courante avait trop séparé et privilégié l'élément juridique, le traitant presque comme suffisant pour définir l'ontologie des choses. Il nous faut, non certes l'éliminer, mais pour-suivre la critique du *juridisme* caractéristique de Vatican II, pour tendre à une théologie plus intégrale. Le concile d'un bout à l'autre, a cherché à retrouver au delà du juridique, la pleine ontologie surnaturelle des choses. La théologie doit suivre et achever cette démarche: au point de vue ecclésiologique, par une pleine théologie de l'Église comme communion....⁶⁷ Ce que Dieu veut, c'est un peuple un, saint, catholique et apostolique selon les structures de l'alliance de grâce.⁶⁸

And Congar concludes: "Oui, vraiment, l'Eglise est communion."⁶⁹

2) In Congar, the categories of hierarchy and laity reveal a significant openness with regard to one another – an openness of a dialogical nature which is not only passive (whereby the laity has a right to be listened to), but also functional (whereby the maternal aspect of the Church belongs to both the laity as sons and brothers, and to the hierarchy as fathers and brothers)⁷⁰ thus opening the way to recognition of authentic ministries within the midst of the laity. As early as 1948, Congar describes the laity's role in the Church as actively functional:

L'Eglise ne se construit pas seulement par l'exercice des fonctions hiérarchiques, encore que celui-ci soit fonda-mental et qu'il lui donne sa structure d'Eglise; mais aussi par les apports que tous ses membres se font les uns aux autres, chacun selon les dons et la vocation qu'il a reçus.... Par là, nous édifions l'Eglise: les laïcs aussi bien que les clers, les prêtres et les

⁶⁶ *Planning*, pp.134-135.

⁶⁷ Congar, MCE, p. 93.

⁶⁸ *Idem*.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 94, *supra* p. 149-150.****

⁷⁰ In *AL*, p. 154, while commenting on *The Vatican II Constitution on the Laity (Apostolicam actuositatem)*, Congar, in the spirit of the Council Document, offers some of his views on the Church as a fraternity, which makes even the *fathers* (the ordained ministers) the brothers of all.

clers aussi bien que les laïcs, car, pour tout ce qui n'est pas strictement exercice de leur pouvoir sacramentel ou hiérarchique (les actes qu'ils accomplissent in *persona Ecclesiae*), ils rentrent dans cet ordre des dons spirituels personnels à bénéfice communautaire et s'y trouvent sur le même pied que les laïcs: à cela près qu'il y a une convenance particulière à ce que ceux qui ont reçu les dons du ministère aient aussi des dons personnels correspondant à leur fonction... L'Eglise ne fait pas seulement ses membres, ceux-ci la font à leur tour.⁷¹

In the late 1950's, the lay persons' role is clearly formulated in terms of a generating function:

Chacun, pour le petit monde de son existence, et tous pour le vaste monde, nous sommes l'échelle de Jacob: c'est par nous que passe la représentation ascendante de l'ensemble des hommes vers Dieu, et la représentation descendante sacramentelle et missionnaire. Chaque chrétien l'est aussi pour sa part... [Le Christianisme] a une mission pour le Monde... mais il existe en lui-même comme institution venant de Jésus-Christ et comme peuple témoin de Jésus-Christ.⁷²

It is, however, through our understanding of Christian cult in Congar that we have discovered a greater *rapprochement* with Protestant studies, in regard to the active role of the laity. We have described above⁷³ the meaning of Christian cult in Congar. Christian cult consists 1) in letting oneself be grasped by God through Jesus Christ (i.e., the posture of humble reception from God in faith, sacramentally expressed and publicly recognized by the rite of Baptism, 2) in responding in loving faith which consists a) in living in the awareness that our entire life is one lived in Christ, b) in rendering thanks to God through Jesus especially sacramentally in the Eucharist, and c) in living out in faith and love a life of communion and service (*koinonia* and *diakonia*) in relation to others. Congar himself then relates cult and sacrifice to all of the Christian's life, including his life as service.

Une conclusion ressort de tout cela: le culte, les sacrifices des fidèles, et donc le sacerdoce qui y correspond en eux, sont essentiellement de ceux de la vie sainte, religieuse, priante, consacrée, charitable, miséricordieuse, apostolique.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Congar, "Pour une théologie du laïcat", *Etudes* (janv. 1948) pp. 52-52, *supra*, p. 87, note 3.****

⁷² Congar, *VMP*, pp. 31-33, *supra*, p. 109.****

⁷³ *Supra*, p. 129.****

⁷⁴ Congar, *JPTL*, p. 177, *supra*, p. 130.****

In a similar way. Protestant studies show great similarities with Congar's view on the maternal aspect of the whole Church, as related to the basic priestly quality of the Christian people. The *Canterbury Statement*, for example, deals with the relationship between the priesthood of all Christians and the realization of God's plan for the world.

The Christian community exists to give glory to God through the fulfillment of the Father's purpose. All Christians are called to serve this purpose by their life of prayer and surrender to divine grace, and by their careful attention to the needs of all human beings. They should witness to God's compassion for all mankind and his concern for justice in the affairs of men. They should offer themselves to God in praise and worship, and devote their energies to bringing men into the fellowship of Christ's people, and so under his rule of love.⁷⁵

The *Montreal* report also expresses well the relationship between cult and the ministry of the entire people of God:

The Church, the people chosen by God, is the community of those who have been gathered in faith by the apostolic preaching and by the power of the Spirit and have been plunged into the waters of Baptism. It belongs to Christ, as his own body confesses him, worships him and obeys him, as the redeemer of the world. Taken from the world and set in the world, it constitutes there the royal priesthood declaring the wonderful deeds of God, and offering to him as a sacrifice both worship and daily life.⁷⁶

The *Lutheran* statement also makes clear the ministering functions of the entire people of God.

We are agreed that in Jesus Christ God has provided his people with a high priest and sacrifice (cf. Hebrews 4:14ff.). All who are united with Jesus as Christ and Lord by baptism and faith are also united with, and share his priesthood. We recognize therefore that the whole Church has a priesthood in Christ, i.e., a ministry of service from God to men, that "they may see your good deed and glorify God on the day of visitation" (Peter 2:12). They are thus privileged and obliged to represent the concerns of God to men and those of men to God.⁷⁷

In the form of questions, the *Louvain* statement shows the urgency that exists in all Churches to reconsider the ministering function of the entire Church with regard to the world.

⁷⁵ *Anglican*, p. 403.

⁷⁶ *Montreal* p. 63, # 86.

⁷⁷ *Lutheran*, pp. 9-10, ## 10 and 11.

All Churches are being forced to ask "How is the whole ministry of Christ being carried out in our tradition, in our ministry to the world?" All are being challenged to look at their total ministry afresh in the light of the Gospel. As a result of such reappraisal the last two decades have witnessed a new sensitivity to the ministry of the whole People of God, and of the place of the ordained ministry within this People. As the Churches have opened themselves to the questions men are asking, as they are taking more seriously the problem of their task in the world, they are beginning to see the place and ministry of the ordained person in a new light also.⁷⁸

3) There is no doubt, at this point, that Congar situates the ministerial priesthood within the people of God as a ministry with regard to the priesthood of this same people. Congar's strongest statement on the matter is the following:

Les ministres ordonnés sont seulement un service institué de ce que le peuple de Dieu est fait. Tout le peuple de Dieu est sacerdotal. Les prêtres sont sacerdotaux de façon particulière que parce qu'ils sont *ordonnés (ordo)* pour présider et guider le service sacerdotal du peuple de Dieu.⁷⁹

Using Congar's expressions almost to the very word, the *Canterbury Statement* speaks of the ministerial priesthood as a ministry that serves the priesthood of all the faithful: "The goal of the ordained ministry is to serve this priesthood of all the faithful."⁸⁰

Further in his statement, Congar adds: "...je dirais moins 'sacerdoce ministériel' que 'ministère sacerdotal", et même plutôt: ministère ordonné du peuple sacerdotal dont le Christ est le sanctifi-cateur."⁸¹ In very similar terms, the *Dombes* document reads:

A l'intérieur du sacerdoce des baptisés le Christ structure son Eglise par le ministère pastoral. A travers ce ministère, le Christ conduit ses disciples au sacrifice spirituel, au témoignage et au service, sur de multiples chemins dont l'Eucharistie est comme le carrefour. C'est en ce sens que le ministère est dit sacerdotal.⁸²

4) An important point of *rapprochement* relates to the sacramental nature of the ministerial priesthood itself as explained by Congar and described in several Protestant studies. The ordination itself becomes the sacramental means by which ministry is seen as God's gift to

⁷⁸ *Louvain*, p. 78.

⁷⁹ *A personal letter*, dated Jan. 11, 1973.

⁸⁰ *Anglican*, p. 403, # 7.

⁸¹ *A personal letter* dated Jan. 11, 1973.

⁸² *Dombes*, p. 135, # 31.

his Church in such a way that, in these documents, there constantly is reference to a special grace of ministry. We have explained the sacramental nature of ordination in Congar. Its clearest and most recent expression articulates the distinction between ordained and non ordained ministries, in terms of the former as being a *special* act of God, a sacramental act, related to the *order of the structuration* of the Church)⁸³. The non ordained ministries are related to the universal priesthood, the order of life, and are, of course, sacramental, because of their relationship to Baptism. "Il n'y a pas de sacrement du sacerdoce (sauf le baptême), il y a un sacrement de l'Ordre",⁸⁴ Congar explains. In this sense, *Louvain* speaks of ordination as a special act of God inasmuch as through ordination a special grace is granted, that of ministry. It defines the ordained ministry as a sacramental reality-- for ordination refers to "an invocation to God that he bestow the power of the Holy Spirit upon the new minister... and to a sign of the granting of this prayer by the Lord who gives the gift of ministry."⁸⁵ *Dombes* speaks of the ordained ministry as the pastoral ministry through which God structures his Church: "A l'intérieur du sacerdoce des baptisés le Christ structure son Eglise par le ministère pastoral."⁸⁶ It speaks of ordination as consisting in a prayer that requests the gifts of the Holy Spirit and of the laying of the hands that signifies these gifts. The document explains that the laying on of hands "atteste que l'Eglise est liée aux actes de Jésus-Christ et des apôtres."⁸⁷ The *Lutheran* document indicates that there are objections to any meta-physical implication in relationship to the grace of ordination. However the document explains that "Lutherans too invoke the Holy Spirit for the gifts of ministry, and see ordination as the setting apart for a specific service in the Church and for the world, and regard the act as having a once-and-for-all significance."⁸⁸

⁸³ *Supra*, pp. 165-166.***

⁸⁴ *A personal letter*, dated Oct. 17, 1971.

⁸⁵ *Louvain*, pp. 83-84.

⁸⁶ *Dombes*, p. 135, # 31.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* p. 34.

⁸⁸ *Lutheran*, pp. 12-13 # 17.

We have to note, however, that in the consulted Protestant studies the precise sacramental nature of the ordained ministry is not formulated in the Congarian terminology of a "participation propre au sacerdoce du Christ".³

5) Congar also describes the role of the community with regard to the ministerial priesthood. He states:

On ne peut donc pas dire...que les ministères émanent de la communauté: du moins ne peut-on pas le dire purement et simplement, mais il est un sens dans lequel non seulement les ministres viennent de l'Eglise, mais dans lequel les ministères sont constitués par l'Eglise, représentent et personnifient la communauté.⁸⁹

We have already referred to the fact, that for Congar, one becomes a ministerial priest not personally, but in relation to the Christian community. It is important to notice here that Congar further clarifies his sacramental model with reference to the community–structure aspects of the Church. Congar explains that the ministries in the Church are a structuration⁹⁰ within the community. They do not create the community from outside and over it but from within. They make it come forth (*susciter*) to construct and build it. It is in this sense that, on the one hand, ministries do not emerge from the community and, on the other, they are constituted by the community in a representative and personifying capacity. The *Louvain* document beautifully describes the role of the community with regard to the ministerial priesthood by relating the ordination to the Eucharistic celebration:

A long and early Christian tradition placed ordination in the context of worship and especially of the eucharist. Such a place for the service of ordination reserves the understanding of ordination as an act of the whole community, and not of a certain order within it or of the individual ordained.⁹¹

The same document even takes into account the case where ordination is looked upon as a special order within the Church. It states:

Even if one believes that the act of ordaining belongs to a special order within the Church, it is always important to remember that the entire community is involved in the act. Ordination in association with the eucharist keeps before the Church the truth that it is an act which initiates a person to a service of the *koinoia*, a service both to God and to fellow man. It is this *koinoia* that

⁸⁹ Congar, *MCE*, p. 37, *supra*, p. 157.****

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Louvain*, p. 88.

the eucharist expresses *par excellence* and by continuing to relate ordination to the eucharist this dimension of ministry is called to mind.⁹²

It then follows clearly Congar's view by referring to the representative and personifying role of the ordained ministry with regard to the community:

Every ordination is within the Church and for the Church, intended to help the Church fulfill its mission in the world. The ordained minister is commissioned to serve some part of the Church, to act in its name, to dramatize and personify its being sent and presence. ...[T]he place and significance of the Christian community in regard to ordination are being more clearly recognized.⁹³

The *Montreal* report refers to the dialogical nature of the role of both the community and those who are given to it for the ordering of its mission:

The whole Church receives and supports those who have been given to it for the ordering of its mission, and they depend upon the spiritual gifts, the prayers and the generosity of the whole fellowship. Thus the whole body standing firm together is armed for its service.⁹⁴

Planning specifically mentions the special charisma of the ordained ministry – a charisma which is recognized as such by the community.

Nature of ministerial priesthood: The pastor is charged with the public proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments on the basis of an existing charisma, recognized and confirmed by the congregation or expected in prayer and the laying of the hands.⁹⁵

Dombes significantly describes the nature of the special ministry in relationship to the life of the community.

L'ordination, signe d'une différence de charismes entre le ministère pastoral et le sacerdoce des baptisés, loin de séparer les ministres du Peuple de Dieu et de constituer une caste cléricale, les insère plus profondément dans la vie de l'Eglise.⁹⁶

We have seen that Congar specifies the role of the community with regard to the ministerial priesthood: it is not the Church that makes its priests but the Church that recognizes in some of

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Montreal*, pp. 64-65, # 91.

⁹⁵ *Planning*, p. 175.

⁹⁶ *Dombes*, p. 135, # 36.

its members the grace of ministry as given to them through the action of the Spirit. It seems that the Protestant documents¹⁹⁵ accept the role of the community with regard to the ordained ministry very much as a recognition on its part that the Spirit is at work in a special way in some of its members. This can be substantiated by the fact that the ordained ministry is seen as a special ministry within the larger ministerial framework of the entire people of God, for which God, through his Spirit, grants a specific grace.⁹⁷

6) More and more in the recent Congar the ordained ministry appears to be one ministry among others.⁹⁸ In fact, he distinguishes three levels of ministries: a) occasional, spontaneous and temporary ministries within and outside the Christian community, such as the ministry of a mother who catechizes little children; here, "le Seigneur et l'Esprit mènent le jeu". b) There is a second level of ministries, analogous to the first, but more stable in view of their direct link with the habitual needs of the Church as community of faith, of cult, of loving service and of witness; here, permanent catechists, lectors would be examples of such ministries; c) finally, there are the officially publicly recognised ministries or offices *à base sacramentelle*; namely, the diaconate, the presbyterate and the episcopate. Distinctions elucidate this latter ministry, in comparison with the two former ones. First, one cannot separate the ordination (which can be by election or designation) from the charism, for the latter must be there in order to be recognized publicly and officially by the Church. The charism of the ordained minister must eventually through prayer and faithfulness be submitted to the law of development and growth. In fact says Congar "le laïc peut être *plus prêtre* que le prêtre ordonné."¹ Similarly, in the *Dombes* statement we read:

L'Evangélisation, le service du monde par l'Eglise, l'édi-fication, la communauté requièrent des activités très di-verses, permanentes ou momentanées, spontanées ou institutionnelles. L'Esprit-Saint suscite donc dans le Peu-ple de Dieu des hommes et des femmes pour assumer des ministères divers et complémentaires, qui tous témoignent de la fidélité du Christ à ses promesses et de la richesse de ses dons. Il ressort de là que le témoignage du Christ et le service de la mission ne sont pas le monopole de quelques-uns, mais la coresponsabilité de tous les chrétiens.²

The *Montreal* statement corroborates the same idea:

⁹⁷ *Infra*, p. 207, note 1 ****where the *Louvain* document describes a special apostolic succession. See also *supra*, pp. 189ff. ****dealing with the sacramental nature of ordinations and with the ministry as God's gift to the Church.

⁹⁸ Congar, *MCE*, pp. 43-46, *supra*, pp. 165-166.****

The Holy Spirit dwells in the Church. He comes to each member in his baptism for the quickening of faith. He also bestows differing gifts (charismata) on groups and individuals. All his activities are to enable men to serve and worship God. All members of the Church are thus gifted for the common good.³

The same document spells out further distinctions with regard to ministries within the Church.

The Spirit equips God's people in a threefold way: a) He enables them as children of their heavenly Father to live and work in the world without faithless anxiety. There they find their principal place of testimony and their principal sphere of service. There they live as first fruits of a new creation. b) the Spirit builds up the body of Christ in love, truth and holiness by equipping the members with the manifold and varied gifts which they need for the service of one another and for the mission of the Church. c) Among the differing gifts bestowed by the Spirit is the special ministry.⁹⁹

Planning for Mission describes ecclesiology in terms of the missionary character of the whole Church which must bring about worship with witness and service. There we find stated, "Ecclesiology must express the essential oneness of the ministry of Christ in the continuation of which every member of the Church shares."¹⁰⁰ Referring to Congar specifically, the document explains that "the traditional separation of *clergy* and *laity* has to be redefined as a difference of the *manner* of service."¹⁰¹ It further states that the difference must be seen "as a secondary merely 'functional' distinction or as a *pars pro toto* relationship by which some are set apart to serve the whole *laos*."¹⁰²

7) Finally Congar shows some ecumenical *rapprochement* in defining the role of the ministerial priesthood itself. For example, the ordained minister is seen as *representative* of Christ (*caput*) in the midst of the community, as servant of the *spiritual sacrifice*, as the sacramental ordained president of the Eucharist, as a minister of service in view of unifying the community, as a facilitating agent, as one who relates the Church to the plenitude of Easter, and as a servant who is a member of a body that must receive life from

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Planning*, pp. 169-171.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

Christ."¹⁰³ Similarly the *Anglican* document speaks of the ordained minister as "an authoritative representative of Christ, as a steward who may only provide for the household of God what belongs to Christ, as an example both in holiness and compassion."¹⁰⁴ *Dombes* describes the ministerial priesthood as a pastoral ministry that must assure and signify dependence of the Church with regard to Christ who is the source of its mission and the foundation of its unity.¹⁰⁵ *Louvain* shows that the ordained minister must "gather together, build up, and oversee the believers and insure that the community be present in the world."¹⁰⁶ It further states that the ordained minister must be "answerable for the yearnings, joys, and sufferings of men... that he must show forth by his life, the good use of the reconciliation."¹⁰⁷

The *Montreal* statement speaks of the special ministry as reflecting and serving the redemptive love of Christ.¹⁰⁸

In addition, the above mentioned Protestant documents as well as Congar's writings clearly specify the nature of the ministerial priesthood in more traditional terms; namely, the preaching of the Word of God, the celebration of the sacraments, and the gathering together of the community.¹⁰⁹

There remain in Congar's ecclesiology however, basic un-resolved problems – problems which affect both the ecumenical dialogue and historical veracity. These are: 1) the role of the Spirit (pneumatology) in ecclesiology, 2) the global and/or specific apostolic mission(s), 3) the exact nature of the structuration of the ecclesial communion with regard to the *Wesen* and the *Unwesen* of the Church – especially where the issues of the threefold order of episcopate, presbyterate and diaconate are concerned. (Throughout this dissertation, we have felt that wherever these issues are raised, Congar's conclusions suffer from a certain restricting dogmatism, despite his thorough knowledge and recognition of scriptural and traditional data.

¹⁰³ *Supra*, Chapters I-II-III.****

¹⁰⁴ *Anglican*, p. 404, # 8.

¹⁰⁵ *Dombes*, p. 144, # 20.

¹⁰⁶ *Louvain*, p. 84.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *Montreal*, p. 64, ## 88, 89.

¹⁰⁹ *Supra*, p. 70, including note 1,**** also *Dombes*, p. 134 # 25, *Louvain*, p. 84, *Montreal*, p. 64 and *Anglican*, p. 404.

Dogmatism¹¹⁰ itself is a theological disease which Congar is, nevertheless, constantly attempting to eliminate. He does however, at times, leave his reader with a certain feeling of ambivalence.¹¹¹

In the context of Congar's entire ecclesiology, we shall now deal successively with the three issues mentioned above: 1) Pneumatology as related to the Church; 2) The specific/global apostolic mission(s), and 3) The structuration of the Church. We shall attempt to show that Congar's ecclesiological context offers premises more potentially productive ecumenically than the conclusions that he draws.

1) With regard to the pneumatological question, we must bring out here Congar's constant emphasis on the role of the Spirit in the Church. From the beginning, he has acknowledged the Spirit's primary role of building the Church and keeping it alive.¹¹² His distinctions regarding the christological (the life for others aspect) and pneumatological (sent in the Spirit aspect) dimensions of the historical Jesus appear scripturally valid.¹¹³ The *logique de l'Incarnation*,¹¹⁴ nevertheless, appears at times to be a forced dogmatic principle when, on the one hand, the pneumatological dimension is interpreted as an attempt at relating to the historical Jesus the eventual emergence of the ministerial priesthood as a special ministry within the Church and, on the other, when the christological

¹¹⁰ We define *dogmatism* here as a theological approach which affirms as normative for today a later ecclesiastical interpretation not conclusively evidenced by Scripture. We are referring here, to the problematical issues referred to in the following note (# 4 below). Being aware, however, of Congar's aversion to what Rahner has labeled *Denziger-Theologie* (the justification of the ecclesiastical *statu quo* by using the New Testament unhistorically or a-historically). We perhaps should use here, in relation to Congar, the expression *anachronism* rather than *dogmatism*, a process which is brought about by Congar's attempts at being faithful to both Scripture and the propositional dogmatic statements of the Roman Church.

¹¹¹ For example, see statements *supra*, pp. 150-151 and those on page 155, note 2.**** See also Congar's misreading of Küng's position with regard to apostolic succession, *supra*, p: 154, note 2.****

¹¹² *Supra*, p. 60, note 1, pp. 103, 106. 162.****

¹¹³ *Supra*, p.161. ****For example, see also the work of James M Robinson, *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1970), where the author brings together the recent attempts of biblical scholarship to relate the New Testament witness to the historical Jesus. Also Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1963). In these works, both Jesus' mission in the Spirit and his life for others are being affirmed as having been recognized and preached by Jesus himself.

¹¹⁴ *Supra*, pp. 18, 24, 46-50, 62, 65-68, 84, 161. ****

dimension is seen as relating all the members of the Church to the same historical Jesus. The theological and problematical issue at stake here is the lack of specific criteria, other than the *logique de l'Incarnation*, that would justify such a demarcation between (a) the specific sharing in the pneumatological aspect of the historical Jesus attributed exclusively to the ministerial priesthood and (b) the global sharing in the christological aspect of the same historical Jesus, attributed to the universal priesthood. It seems to us that *Faith and Order* (Louvain 1971) also relates the ordained ministry to the historical Jesus without seemingly limiting it to the pneumatological dimension. There we read:

In choosing and sending men to act and speak on his behalf, Christ continued this personal ministry, setting a precedent for the Church. It was the preaching and teaching of the apostles, their understanding of Jesus' life and ministry which were the basis for *kerygma* and *didache* of the New Testament canon, and the later creeds. The witness and ministry of the apostles, unique as it was, is in a real sense normative in the Church for all time; it is foundational. Thus ministry in the Church in subsequent ages is only truly ministry insofar as it is faithful to and empowered by the apostolic message, insofar as it is congruent with the message and ministry of the apostles. The apostolic ministry continues as a bond of unity for the Church in all times and places.

That is to say, through the commissioning of Apostles, Jesus bound the Church to the revelation of himself which occurred during his ministry. It may be said that the Church, in ordaining new persons to ministry in Christ's name, is attempting to follow the mission of the apostles and remain faithful to their teaching; ordination as an act attests the binding of the Church to the historical Jesus and the historical Revelation, at the same time recalling that it is the Risen Lord who is the true Ordainer who bestows the gift. In ordaining, the Church attempts to provide for the faithful proclamation of the Gospel and humble service in Christ's name. The laying on of hands in ordination can be seen as the sign witnessing to the connection of the Church and its ministry with Christ, binding the ministry to a conscious awareness of its anchorage and roots in the revelation accomplished in Him, reminding it to look to Him as the source of its commission.¹¹⁵

With regard to Congar's distinction between the pneumatological and the christological dimensions in the historical Jesus, we would suggest the following revision: first, that the distinction itself be kept as a sound theological principle; secondly, that the sharing in the pneumatological dimension not be limited to the ordained ministers; thirdly, that the entire

¹¹⁵ *Louvain*, p. 82.

Church also share in the said dimension. In brief, that the fundamental Congarian principle, "that some within the Church are set aside to be at the service of the Church," be invoked and applied as follows: all are related to the Spirit of the historical Jesus and his mission; all have a maternal function,¹¹⁶ that is, a function of *gérance*, of *making* the Church;¹¹⁷ some, however, are set aside to minister in a canonical, sacramental, public and officially recognized way.¹¹⁸ This is based on the explicit intention of the historical Jesus as sent in the Spirit..."ce qui ne serait pas faire trop bon marché de l'institution des Douze (au sens fort de Marc 3, 14)".¹¹⁹

With regard to the distinction made in relation to the *leadership* and *life in the Spirit* aspect of the Risen Christ, we believe that such a distinction has scriptural validity.¹²⁰ However, the question arises as to what exactly is the nature of the ministerial priesthood's *gérance* which sacramentally or representatively reflects the leadership dimension of the Risen Christ's activity in the Church. This point, however, is related to the nature of the ecclesial structuration, and shall be dealt with later.¹²¹

2. We now come to a second problematical issue in Congar's ecclesiology: that of the global and/or specific apostolic mission(s) in relationship to ministries within the Church. It would be proper at this point to refer to the first chapter of Vatican II *Ad Gentes*¹²² because Congar himself is its author.¹²³

The chapter begins by stating that "the Pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature."¹²⁴ Relating the mission of the Church to the loving and reconciling mission of the Son and the Spirit for the World as the expression of God's plan, Congar shows how the whole Church shares in this task.

¹¹⁶ *Supra*, pp. 107-110, 148, note 3.****

¹¹⁷ *Supra*, pp. 161, 165. ****

¹¹⁸ *Supra*, pp. 155, 193-197, *****infra*, pp. 225-228. ****

¹¹⁹ *Infra*, p. 151, note 1.****

¹²⁰ *Supra*, pp. 163ff.****

¹²¹ *Infra*, pp. 208ff.****

¹²² Walter M. Abbot, Ed., *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1966), pp. 584-596, henceforth cited as *Ad Gentes*.

¹²³ *Supra*, p. 5, note 2.****

¹²⁴ *Ad Gentes*, p. 585, # 2.

The mission of the Church, therefore, is fulfilled by that activity which makes her fully present to all men and nations. She undertakes this activity in obedience to Christ's command and in response to the grace and love of the Holy Spirit.¹²⁵

This role of the Church is considered as a duty which exists "not only in virtue of the expressed command which was inherited from the apostles.... It exists also in virtue of that life which flows from Christ into His members...."¹²⁶ Then follows a significantly restricting statement: "This duty must be fulfilled by the order of bishops whose head is Peter's successor, and with the prayer and cooperation of the whole Church."¹²⁷ Yet the first chapter consistently restates the missionary quality of the whole Church. It seems, however, that in this first chapter, the relationship between a certain global mission and special mission is not clearly established and does not fully take into account Congar's more extensive view of the Church.

Again within the context of Congar's entire ecclesiology, we believe that the thoughts expressed in *Vaste monde, ma paroisse* and in *Ministères et communion ecclésiale*¹²⁸ must be taken seriously. Similarly, Congar's description of the Christian's quality as specifically priestly and cultic must equally be taken seriously.¹²⁹ Such an affirmation with regard to the universal priest-hood as the specific Christian reality which is related to the functions of *diakonia*, mission and apostolate (Chapter III). must be seen as primary in Congar's view of the Church. Therefore, the apostolic mission must be primarily a global mission: that is, one intended by the Risen Christ and realized through the Spirit for the entire Church. Congar has always affirmed that the goal has primacy over the means.¹³⁰ By the same token, he has seen structure and power as functions within the Church, which is essentially life and communion. The ordained ministry is a facilitating

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 589-590.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 590, # 6.

¹²⁷ *Idem.* (Mission in *Ad Gentes* refers primarily to evangelization of the nations and is defined in contradistinction with pastoral activities as exercised among the faithful and ecumenism as related to the restoration of Christianity. [p. 592, # 6.] Secondarily, mission also refers to Christian witness.)

¹²⁸ *Supra*, respectively pp. 107-110 and 147-150. ****

¹²⁹ *Supra*, pp. 111-146. ****

¹³⁰ *Supra*, pp. 28, 32, 68, 94-99. ****

function .¹³¹ Consequently, we firmly believe that Congar's position in relation to the apostolic mission (and succession) is closely related to that of Küng's¹³² and to that expressed in *Faith and Order (Louvain 1971)*,¹³³ despite what he has written concerning both Küng¹³⁴ and the Protestant position.¹³⁵

¹³¹ *Supra*, pp. 132-134.****

¹³² *Supra*, p. 154, note 2. ****The following is our summary of the understanding of apostolic mission and succession as presented in Hans Küng, "Thèses concernant la nature de la succession apostolique", *Concilium* 34, pp. 26-36 (For a more elaborate presentation, see Küng, *The Church*, pp.344, 389.)

The apostolic succession is related to the Church in its *totality* and to each of its members (*Credo Ecclesiam Catholicam*), i.e., all within the Church are in obedience to the apostles as the first witnesses and missionaries

The apostolic succession of the Church and of each faithful consists in a relation of *objective continuity* with the apostles, a relation which must constantly be revived. This continuity demands a constant conformity to the witness of the apostles (Holy Scripture), and the incessant taking over of the apostolic ministry (*reprise incessante*), consisting in the universal missionary expansion and the building of communities.

Within the apostolic succession as related to the Church, one distinguishes the *special* apostolic succession, related to the *pastoral ministries*. The pastors, without themselves being apostles, perpetuate the mission and tasks which were proper to the apostles: the foundation and direction of ecclesial communities.

Among the multitude of charismatic gifts of government, which permitted the continuity of the apostolic mission, an increasing importance was attached during the period following the apostles to the pastoral ministries issuing from a particular mission; namely, that of the pastors (*presbuteroi*), the bishops (*episcopoi*) and deacons (*diakonoi*). This is seen especially in the Pastoral Epistles.

The apostolic succession of pastors must be effectuated in the unity of a reciprocal collaboration in the service of the Church and the world. This means that there is an authority connected with the pastoral ministry itself, an authority which legitimizes and authorizes the pastoral minister in the eyes of the community. However, the community still has, as a duty, a power of control as to whether the pastor acts in conformity with his mission and with the Gospel. Therefore, obedience and subordination are not a one way street. The ministers of the Church are at the service of the community: the community does not exist for the ecclesial ministers.

In conformity with the Pauline tradition, the pastoral ministries and the apostolic succession of pastors must remain open to other possibilities (*orientations*)... i.e., the episcopal-presbyteral constitution of the Church – which, *de facto*, has *legitimately* prevailed in the Church – remains again today open in connection with all the possibilities which have existed in the New Testament Church.

¹³³ *Louvain*, pp. 81-82. The Document affirms a kind of special apostolic mission and succession of ministry: "The Spirit distributes particular gifts to particular persons by which the community is built up into the Body of Christ, and made relevant to particular historical situations.... And since the Holy Spirit is gracious to every member, there is a variety of gifts; each baptized person undertakes an appropriate ministry within the many services. But it

Again, we therefore suggest the following revision: first, that the twofold distinctions of *head-leader* and *life in the Spirit* dimensions with regard to the Risen Christ be kept as a sound theological principle; secondly, that the sharing in the *head-leader* dimension be not limited to the ordained ministers; thirdly, that the entire Church also shares in the said dimension. In brief, that the fundamental Congarian principle, referred to above (i.e., "That some within the Church are set aside to be of service to the Church,") be invoked and applied as follows: (1) all in the Church are related to Christ as Leader; (2) some, however, are set aside to lead in a canonical, sacramental, public, and officially recognized fashion; (3) that this be based on the explicit intention of the Risen Lord acting through his Spirit as it was understood principally in Acts and in the Pastoral Epistles. It is in this larger context that Congar's understanding of the apostolic mission, as related to all ministries in the Church, could be interpreted.

3. Finally, we arrive at the last problematical issue, that of the structuration of the Church,¹³⁶ or again *la structure de l'Alliance, le donné....*¹³⁷ As part of the ecclesial

does not appear that all the initiatives, all the charismata, or all the gifts from God should be subsumed under the name of ministry or claim ordination." The above described mission and kind of succession is based on the biblical concept of selectivity (or scandal of particularity). It is also qualified a 'two ways': first, the apostolic ministry itself is the once and for all ministry, a foundational ministry which has no succession (although it demonstrates the personal nature of all ministries in the Church) at the source of which is the Holy Spirit; secondly, the special ministry (or apostolic missions) are seen clearly within the framework of the larger context of the priesthood of all believers, which is the essential quality of the Christian people.

¹³⁴ *Supra*, p. 154, note 2.****

¹³⁵ *Supra*, p. 155, note 2, p. 158.****

¹³⁶ *Supra*, pp. 167-172.****

¹³⁷ For example: in *EME*, pp. 29-30, we read: "[L]'Eglise est selon la dialectique du *donné* et de l'*agi*, à la fois don de Dieu venu d'en haut et collaboration des hommes, réalité acquise et réalisation active....", *supra*, p. 34, note 1;**** in RSPT, pp. 701-702. Referring to the Church as described in Vatican II, Congar wrote: "L'Eglise comme sacrement du salut, c'est-à-dire comme une forme historique et publique prise par le propos de grâce et de salut de Dieu à la suite de Jésus-Christ [comprend] aussi... les éléments constitutifs de l'Alliance [comme ayant] une consistance fondée dans le Propos de Dieu, antérieurement et indépendamment de l'usage qui en est fait par les hommes", *supra*, pp. 148-149, note 3****; in *MCE.*, p. 91. The structure of the Church is related to the *alliance de grâce*: "Le lien par lequel Dieu s'est lié aux structures ecclésiales.... relève de l'alliance de grâce, qui implique un rapport de fidélité", *supra*, p.150****; in *LD*, p. 129. In reference to the pneumatological aspect of the Church, Congar

structuration, Congar includes: (a) the threefold order of diaconate, presbyterate, and episcopacy with Peter at its head; (b) the apostolic succession;¹³⁸ and (c), the means of sanctification (such as sacraments and dogmas).¹³⁹ Of course, the main question here, is: is the structuration, by divine right, laden with all the above mentioned items? Again, we believe that the principle of *la logique de l'Incarnation* is overly extended. By way of illustration, we shall deal with the threefold ministerial functions of the diaconate, presbyterate and episcopacy.¹⁴⁰ In this respect, we find Küng's position more plausible scripturally and traditionally.¹⁴¹ Although Küng sees the threefold ministerial order as part of an historical evolution and, therefore, as normal for today, he does not seem to see such function as necessarily normative for today. Küng's judgment on the matter appears

writes: "...le Seigneur n'agit pas aujourd'hui, par son Esprit, comme s'il n'avait pas, dans le temps de son Incarnation, posé certaines structures de son Alliance de grâce....", *supra*, p. 162.****: See also *supra*, pp.35, 73, 94-98.****

¹³⁸ *Supra*, pp.167-172.****

¹³⁹ *Supra*, pp. 65-68, especially p. 68, note 2, p. 86, p. 107.****

¹⁴⁰ With regard to dogma, especially in relationship to papal infallibility, Congar has recently clarified his position in "Après Infaillible? de Hans Küng"****

¹⁴¹ *Supra*, p. 206, note 3.**** See John McKenzie, "Ministerial Structures in the New Testament" *The Plurality of Ministries, The New Concilium* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1972), pp. 13-22. On page 13, we read: "The answer of the New Testament to the question of the plurality of ministerial structures is oracular in the sense that it is obscure and ambiguous. To begin with the Roman Catholic structure, no major Roman Catholic ministerial office in its modern form can be found in the New Testament – pope, bishop or priest. For pope and priest the New Testament does not even have the words. The efforts of the Reformers to restore New Testament ministerial offices were ultimately successful. A colleague of a church which shall not be named once remarked to me that it is no easier to find a State Clerk in the New Testament than it is to find a Roman Pontiff. If all the Christian Churches have evolved their ministerial structures and offices with almost serene indifference to the New Testament, one may ask why the New Testament should be pertinent now. One may further observe that the Christian Churches, in determining their structures and offices by the necessities which history and the evolution of culture impose, have been more faithful to the mandate of proclaiming the Gospel than they would have been by mummifying archaic structures. The student of the New Testament first notices that no structure or office is imposed for all times and all places."

See also Raymond E. Brown, *Priest and Bishop, Biblical Reflections* (New York: Paulist Press, 1970), p. 73, where the author writes: "Personally, I do not think that tracing the appearance of the episcopate more directly to the Holy Spirit than to the historical Jesus takes away any dignity from bishops; and I suggest that, upon reflection, these conclusions will be scandalous chiefly to those who have never understood the real import of our often repeated boast that Christianity is a historical religion."

to be justified scripturally, especially in view of his conclusions regarding the Corinthian Church.¹⁴² In this respect, we suggest that, to our estimation, Congar, through his scriptural and traditional research, has not arrived at a position which differs from Küng's.

We conclude with two memorable quotes from Congar, written in the 1930's which, in the context of ecumenical dialogue, become highly significant:

Chacun doit faire cette découverte (d'être vrai) pour son propre compte et envisager sérieusement une conversion quotidiennement recommencée et approfondie à un absolu de loyauté: ne plus rien dire que de vrai, se débarrasser de ces faussetés, de ces préjugés, de ces truquages, de ces mille gauchissements ou mensonges qui, devant le regard de Jésus-Christ, s'évanouiraient en commençant par les plus anciens, les plus invétérés, comme les accusateurs de la femme naguère surprise en son péché devant le Maître.

C'est banal à dire, mais ce n'est pas si banal à pratiquer. Qu'il s'agisse de protestants, d'orthodoxes ou, tout aussi bien, de communistes, bref de cette immense foule qui ne pense pas comme nous, quelle est le plus souvent notre attitude spontanée? C'est de nous enfermer dans la tour du dogme et dans la forteresse de nos "positions", tous ponts relevés et de n'envisager notre partenaire qu'à travers des catégories définies et cataloguées des erreurs de sa secte.... On peut à ce compte donner à tous les problèmes une solution irréprochable.... Apprenons à respecter en toute chose vivante la vie et ce qu'elle a d'infini, connaître dans tout homme le mystère d'une personne vivante fait non de principes seulement, mais de sang, de chair, de tout un passé, de tout un monde d'interférences et de connexions, et finalement d'un reflet du regard de Dieu et d'un vouloir particulier de son adorable Sagesse.¹⁴³

¹⁴² *Supra*, pp. 162-163.****

¹⁴³ *Supra*, pp. 40-41.****