

# The role of the Holy Spirit in the trinitarian ecclesiology of the first two chapters of Lumen Gentium

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**THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE TRINITARIAN ECCLESIOLOGY OF THE  
FIRST TWO CHAPTERS OF LUMEN GENTIUM**

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the S.T.L. Degree  
from the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry

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*Dedicated to*  
*all those who do not feel at home in the Church*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Catholic Church in the twenty-first century is struggling, and will continue to struggle, with increasing diversity, clamor for participation and challenges to unity. She is facing problems living as one united and plural community. The truth that it is one Church formed from many individuals is becoming more of a challenge to live out fully. As globalization spreads and human society progresses, most Catholics find themselves living in a world highly networked with modern communications and instantly informed. This has better informed them about themselves, the Church and the world. Hence, they demand greater participation in the Church. Diversity and pluralism have become values in the post-modern world and these inform the faithful with particular experiences and ideas from where they deal with the Church's structures and hierarchy.

Nowadays the concerns of this situation demand a profound reflection on the Church's life in order to move her forward while remaining faithful to the Gospel and the Holy Spirit. Fifty years ago, at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), bishops and theologians, already challenged by the same concerns, reflected on the nature and role of the Catholic Church. This Council has been rightly called the Council on the Church, since ecclesiology was its primary focus. Therefore return to Vatican II and comprehend its meaning in order to face the challenges of today's Church could be very useful.

The Mystery of the Church, explained from a Trinitarian perspective in the first chapter of the Council Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, together with the second chapter, focused on the People of God, constituted the basic fonts for the ecclesiology of the Council. *Lumen Gentium* expresses the complex reality of the Church as both visible and spiritual, in which the

three Trinitarian Persons have distinctive roles. We will argue that according to the Council is from these foundational roles the Trinity played that the Church is created and renewed.

The conciliar theology on the mystery of the Church is part of a broader discussion on the intimate relation between christology, pneumatology and ecclesiology. We certainly know, firstly from Scripture, that Christ and the Spirit are always in an inseparable relationship. Therefore, it is pertinent to ask ourselves about a proper synthesis between christology and pneumatology in the context of ecclesiology. In the salvific plan of the Father, the role of Christ is undeniable: it is from his action in history that we are saved, and thus constituted as the redeemed community: the Church. Consequently, ecclesiology depends on what we can say in christology. But, the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church's creation is also central for ecclesiology. In reality, the Spirit is related in an indispensable way to the Church since the Spirit's action, together with that of Christ, enables the Church to exist.

The main objective of this thesis is to explain and appreciate the pneumatology offered in *Lumen Gentium*'s first two chapters in order to understand how the Church was created and is renewed by the Holy Spirit. Our argument will lead us to prove that the Holy Spirit has a unique and important role in the Church's creation, together with the Father and the Son, as is articulated in Vatican II. The Spirit performs its role primarily by bestowing on the Church a variety of charisms and ministries, which give a distinctive shape and life to the Body established in Christ according to the Father's plan. We shall argue that to reflect on the role of the Spirit in the creation of the Church could lead us to live our ecclesial life more faithfully with the Church's Mystery; and dealing better with some current challenges such as diversity and participation.

The first chapter of our thesis will focus on some general aspects of pre-Vatican II ecclesiology. We do this in order to understand how the ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium* constitutes to a large degree a renewed idea on the self-understanding that the Catholic Church has. Generally speaking, the newness of the ecclesiology of Vatican II is rooted in its Trinitarian perspective of the Church's Mystery and its idea of the Church as Sacrament. In the second chapter of our text we will focus our attention more specifically on the pneumatology developed within the Council's ecclesiology. We shall prove that Vatican II also made advances in thinking about this idea from the Church's previous ecclesiology. In particular, the Council focused on the role of the Spirit as decisive for the Church's origin and life. In the final chapter, we will reflect on some characteristics that a Church built by the Spirit's charismatic gifts should have in order to live more faithfully in accordance to her origin and nature.

We begin this journey of theological reflection with hope. Our hope is that our humble contribution will highlight some aspects of Vatican II's ecclesiology in the frequently forgotten area of pneumatology. We wish that this reflection on the Council's doctrine on the Holy Spirit can help Catholics to recognize the presence and the role of the Spirit in the creation of the Church. In this way, then, these reflections can help the pilgrim Church to live more faithfully to Vatican II's definition that she is a sacrament of the Trinity's salvific plan for humanity.



## CHAPTER 1. Leaving an old ecclesiology behind

### 1.1. The main subject of Vatican II: the Church

“Nobody, we believe, will doubt that the constitution of Vatican II ‘On the Church’ should be considered as the cornerstone of all decrees issued”<sup>1</sup>. With these words Gerard Philips, who was the general drafter of *Lumen Gentium*, begins his book about the history and meaning of this Constitution. The Church was the most important issue of the Council and a doctrinal constitution on ecclesiology was part of the discussion from the very beginning of the sessions. On 26 November 1962, the Council Fathers began their discussions on the long-awaited schema on the Church’s nature. The impulse of the bishops’ work on ecclesiology could be summed up in this question: Church: what do you want to say of yourself?

We can mention, as examples of this centrality of the question about the Church’s essence, organization and mission in the Council, the words of two of the main participants of the assembly. Cardinal Montini (from Milan), before being elected Pope, expressed his conviction that the Church should be the central theme: “Holy Church: this should be the one and all-embracing theme of this Council; and the vast body of material prepared should be organized around what is obviously its sublime centre”<sup>2</sup>. And when Cardinal Joseph Suenens (from Malines-Brussels), one of the four moderators and one of the most influential figures of the Council, proposed his plan for the work of the Council, he divided it in two main fields: 1) The

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<sup>1</sup> Gerard Philips, *La Iglesia y su Misterio en el Concilio Vaticano II: Historia, Texto y Comentario de la Constitución Lumen Gentium* (2 tomos; trans. by F.M. Alba; Barcelona: Herder, 1969), 1: 11 (All English translations of this book are mine)

<sup>2</sup> These words are part of a letter from Cardinal Montini to Cardinal Cicognani. See Leon Josef Suenens, “A Plan for the Whole Council”, in *Vatican II by Those Who Were There*. (ed. Alberic Stacpoole; London: Casell, 1986), 102-104.

Church *ad intra*, and 2) The Church *ad extra*. In the end, this plan proved to be crucial in the work done in the aula and for the documents that the Bishops produced: as one can note, it is very easy to see the influence of the plan in *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*.<sup>3</sup> Here, again, the Church is the main subject, either in its internal relationships or in its relations with the world.<sup>4</sup>

The bishops of the Second Vatican Council produced a very distinctive and renewed ecclesiology; one that is based primarily on the trinitarian mystery of the Church as can be found in Scriptures and in the works of the Fathers of the Church. This new perspective in ecclesiology is not exclusive to the Council. Rather, it is part of a major shift in Catholic theology that transpired over the first half of the twentieth century. It is that shift that is reflected in the documents of Vatican II. Many scholars have treated this topic showing the importance of some theological movements in the Council's work such as the *nouvelle théologie*, the historical-critical method of exegesis, and a new inductive methodology in theology.<sup>5</sup> John O'Malley has noticed a distinctive language on the Council and explained how new styles and forms in its documents reflect those major theological shifts, creating a unique Vatican II's style.<sup>6</sup> How and why the bishops of Vatican II wanted to make this huge change is the main focus of this chapter of our thesis. Consequently we have to start answering the question: what ecclesiology did the bishops want to leave behind?

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<sup>3</sup> The plan and various other very illustrative documents from the months previous of the first session can be read in Suenens, "A Plan for the Whole Council", 88-105

<sup>4</sup> Along with these examples we can notice that the 'three issues under the issues' of Vatican II according to O'Malley belong to the field of ecclesiology. See John O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 8

<sup>5</sup> A good resume of these big paradigms shifts can be found in Maureen Sullivan, O.P., *The Road to Vatican II. Key Changes in Theology* (New York: Paulist Press, 2007). Also, a short but profound article that presents some foundations of these changes is Joseph Komonchak, "Returning from Exile, Catholic Theology from the 1930's" in *The Twentieth Century, A Theological Overview*, (ed. Gregory Baum; Maryknoll, NY : Orbis Books, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> John O'Malley, "Trent and Vatican II: Two Styles of Church", in *From Trent to Vatican II. Historical and Theological Investigations* (ed. Raymond Bulman and Frederick Parrella; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006)

## 1.2 Ecclesiology before Vatican II

The first draft on the Church that the Preparatory Commission produced, the *De Ecclesia* schema, can be read as a good presentation of the ecclesiological ideas that were present in the neo-scholastic theology of the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth. This theology sustained a vision of the Catholic Church that has been characterized as *Eurocentric* and of *Christendom*<sup>7</sup> and as *Ultramontane* and *Papalist*.<sup>8</sup> Also, that schema is a perfect example of what the curia and the “Roman” theologians expected from the Council. Cardinals led by Alfredo Ottaviani and Giuseppe Siri, and theologians such as Sebastian Tromp, among others, imagined that the Council would last a few months, and the Fathers would simply sign the documents that the Curia would produce before the opening day. The drafts of every important issues (Liturgy, Church, Revelation, etc.) were prepared and ready to be signed by the Bishops.

This presumption of having a short Council was not an alien idea for most of the members of the Vatican curia; in fact it matched very well with the ‘official’ ecclesiology of the time. A Romanist, juridical, and institutional Church had emerged as a response to the challenges of the modern world that was industrial, urban, and anti-clerical. In the final decades of the eighteenth century, the revolutionary ideas in France quickly spread throughout Europe having an enormous impact on the Church at that time and in the following period. The revolution gave rise, among others movements, to liberalism and modernism. These new movements challenged the existing world views of Catholics, who, anxious for guidance, looked to Rome and found there the security that the world couldn’t give them anymore. And thus the Church generally

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<sup>7</sup> Bradford Hinze, “Releasing the Power of the Spirit in a Trinitarian Ecclesiology” in *Advents of the Spirit*. (ed. Bradford Hinze and D.Lyle Dabney; Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2001), 369

<sup>8</sup> Nicholas Atkin & Frank Tallet, *Priests, Prelates & People. A History of European Catholicism since 1750*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 129-141

speaking adopted some *ultramontanist* ways of proceedings. A neo-scholastic theology provided the Church with a framework that ensured that the fundamentals for the security longing for Catholics in such context would prevail. John O'Malley has called those years the "papalization" of Catholicism.<sup>9</sup> The Pope became the champion of the Church and the visible image of its unity, and an important task of their role was to sustain the orthodoxy of faith. The Pope also had the responsibility to protect them from the threats of modernity. Therefore, every Pope must have something to say and to teach to Catholics. Encyclicals and all kinds of documents came out from Rome to Catholics throughout the world. And as a result, the Curia became bigger and more important. The old saying, "*Roma locuta, causa finita est*," received no opposition.

To a large extent these theological viewpoints and those forms of procedures shaped the Church until the mid-twentieth century. The ecclesiology present in the preparatory documents of Vatican II was fruit of a long theological development started at the first part of the nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup> During that process ecclesiology was shaped as a separate area of theology and, by the time of the Council, it has in the incarnation of Christ and his foundation of the Church's institution its central ideas.

### **1.2.1. The Church as the *ongoing incarnation of Christ***

Most scholars would agree that the German theologian, Johan Adam Möhler, is "the father of modern ecclesiology". Möhler had a very short life (1796-1838), but his few years of

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<sup>9</sup> John O'Malley, "The Millennium and the Papalization of Catholicism", *America* 182, no. 12, (April 2000)

<sup>10</sup> For the Italian Church historian Antonio Acerbi, the main ecclesiological turning point of *Lumen Gentium* was to replace an old "juridical ecclesiology" for a new "communion ecclesiology" with a strong basis on a Trinitarian perspective. See Antonio Acerbi, *Due ecclesiologie. Ecclesiologia guiridica ed ecclesiologia di comunione nella Lumen Gentium* (Bologna: Edizione Dehoniane, 1975)

theological work marked the history of ecclesiology very deeply.<sup>11</sup> We can divide his ecclesiological ideas into two main categories: one, “that is historical-pneumatological-organic and another that is mystical-christological-aesthetic”<sup>12</sup>. The first is connected with the early works of Möhler (*Unity in the Church* and *Athanasius the Great and the Church of his time especially in the struggle with Arianism*) while the second with its late work (*Symbolism*).

For the early Möhler, “the Church exists through a life directly and continually moved by the divine Spirit, and is maintained and continued by the loving mutual exchange of believers”<sup>13</sup>. This first notion of a more pneumatological approach to the Church’s existence is the result of the influences that Möhler had in his early days as theologian. Among them: the theology of Johann Sebastian Drey, the German romantic movement, and his research on the early Fathers of the Church. In these early ecclesiological ideas, Möhler focused on the invisible ecclesial reality and presents the Church as a living organism with diffuse borders, mainly because of the activity of the Holy Spirit. Probably his most important point in this presentation is that the Church is diverse in its nature because its origin is more directly related to the Spirit than Christ. He explains this writing: “The constant law for the common organism is the image for the Church body: an unconstrained unfolding of the characteristics of single individuals that is enlivened by the Spirit so that, although there are different gifts, there is only one Spirit”<sup>14</sup>.

In the second part of his work as theologian, Möhler produced his more influential ecclesiology that was widely received by groups of neo-scholastics theologians and in the

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<sup>11</sup> The theology of J.A. Möhler has been treated by many authors. Probably the more complete is Michael Himes, *Ongoing Incarnation: J.A. Möhler and the Beginning of Modern Ecclesiology* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997). A very good study of the influence of Möhler’s ideas is in Hinze, “Releasing the Power of the Spirit”, 347-349

<sup>12</sup> Dennis Doyle, *Communion ecclesiology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 8

<sup>13</sup> Johan Adam Möhler, *Unity in the Church* (trans. Peter C. Erb; Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 93

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 166

Church's official doctrine. In this second period his ecclesiology becomes more christocentric and institutional. Probably he made this change trying to avoid a pneumatocentrism that may have appeared from the first part of his theological work. Trying to highlight the congruence of the activity of the Holy Spirit with the acts of Christ, Möhler emphasized the incarnation of Christ as the primary theological principle in ecclesiology.<sup>15</sup> Especially in his book *Symbolism*, he argued in favor of seeing the Church as an "ongoing incarnation of Christ". The Church is one reality, both human and divine, and has been produced following the same pattern of the incarnation of the Son in Jesus.

Möhler believed that with this incarnational model the divine and human elements in the Church could be better balanced. Probably against Möhler's own intentions this approach held the danger of a certain christomonistic ecclesiology since it strongly stresses the institutional forms of the Church. He does so with the intention of insisting on the continuing presence of Christ in history.<sup>16</sup> This incarnational ecclesiology was received and developed by theologians such as Scheeben, Mersch, Journet and Tromp.<sup>17</sup> And over the years had become the central notion in the ecclesiology of the Vatican official doctrine, as it was presented, for instance in the First Vatican Council (1869-1870) and in the encyclicals *Satis Cognitum* (1896) and *Mystici Corporis* (1943).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Hinze, "Releasing the Power of the Spirit in a Trinitarian Ecclesiology", 348. Also see Doyle, *Communion ecclesiology*, 35-37

<sup>16</sup> Michael Himes, "The development of Ecclesiology: Modernity to the Twentieth century" in *The gift of the Church*, (ed. Peter Phan; Collegeville: The liturgical Press, 2000).

<sup>17</sup> Matthias Scheeben, *The mysteries of Christianity*, (trans. Cyril Vollert; London: Herder Co., 1947); Emile Mersch, *The Theology of the Mystical Body* (trans. Cyril Vollert; London: Herder Co., 1952); Charles Journet, *The Theology of the Church* (trans. Victor Szcurek; San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004); Sebastian Tromp, *The Spiritu Sancto anima Corporis mystici* (Roma: Universitas Gregoriana, 1960), 4 volumes.

<sup>18</sup> Antonio Bandera "Analogía de la Iglesia con el misterio de la Encarnación", *Teología Espiritual* 8 (1964). This is a very fine study, published at the beginning of 1964, which presents well the incarnational paradigm in the nineteenth and twentieth century's Theology and Magisterium.

In the following section we shall present this christocentric model of the Church. Our aim is to better understand what kind of ecclesiology the Bishops of the Council rejected so as to be able to see the clear distinction between those ideas and the focus of *Lumen Gentium*: Mystery, Trinity, and Sacramentality. To do this, we will focus on the encyclical, *Mystici Corporis*. We have two reasons to focus on this document: first, it is the summit of this christocentric ecclesiology, and second, its ideas are reproduced almost unchanged in the first schema presented in the aula at Vatican II by the Preparatory Commission. We do this reflection sure that if we can understand the main points of the encyclical we will have a better comprehension of the schema that the bishops rejected at Vatican II and a clearer insight into the new theological ideas they had.

### **1.3.1. *Mystici Corporis*' ecclesiology**

The encyclical *Mystici Corporis* appeared in June 1943. The theologian who wrote the draft for the Pope was the Jesuit priest Sebastian Tromp. He also wrote the first schema presented by Ottaviani at the council. This Dutch professor was a *peritus* in the Council and one of the most important scholars in the neo-scholastic theology that Rome supported before Vatican II. We will present here only three main points of *Mystici Corporis* that also are key ideas in the preparatory schema.

First of all, underneath all the theological ideas presented in the encyclical there is one central notion: the identity between the 'invisible' and the 'visible' Church. This idea follows basically a tridentine theology which was in turn a response to the Reformation and its accent on the unseen aspect of the Church. This identity is expressed in the assumption that the visible

Church is the image of the invisible. In order to make this connection, the Pope uses the notion of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ. The point here is the equivalence between the invisible reality and the ecclesial society here on earth. Maintaining the same incarnational ecclesiology that had been present until that time the encyclical made some decisive statements. One of these is: “If we would define and describe this true Church of Jesus Christ- which is the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Roman Church- we shall find nothing more noble, more sublime, or more divine than the expression ‘the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ’”<sup>19</sup>. The Church is mystical therefore it has an invisible aspect; and also is a body, which is visible as every organism on earth. For the Pope the equivalence is clear: the “true” church is the Roman Catholic Church, which has an invisible mystical component as in Jesus Christ and a visible-institutional part consisting of different members organized in a hierarchical form. Though the different roles and charisms of Catholics are expressed in the encyclical as part of the Mystical Body, the membership of the variety of Catholics is subordinated to the action and decisions of Bishops and the Pope.

The second point is the centrality of Christ in the document. The text says: “the Lord is the Founder, the Head, the Support and the Savior of this Mystical Body”<sup>20</sup>. Christ is the Church’s founder by his life and preaching, by his death on the cross, and by the sending of his Spirit. Jesus is the Head in which everything has its origin. Since the theology of the papacy as the Vicar of Christ is also present in the encyclical therefore his visible head on the earth is emphasized as well. The Pope has jurisdiction and authority directly from Christ and communicates it to the bishops and the priests. Christ is also the support of the Church for He is

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<sup>19</sup> Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, article 13. Every quote from this encyclical is from the document downloaded as [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xii\\_enc\\_29061943\\_mystici-corporis-christi\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi_en.html) on 04 April 2012

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., article 25



the one who communicates his life at every moment. And finally, Christ is the Savior of his Church because He is the Head from where holiness and salvation are communicated.

As we can see, incarnationist and christocentric ecclesiology is the frame of the encyclical. The Catholic Church, by having Jesus as his Head and support, is the continuation of his incarnation and his permanent visible presence on earth. This ecclesiology is based on the existence of the visible Church and uses the hypostatic union as the theological idea to explain the strong relation between Christ and his Church. We read this in the Pope's words: "As Bellarmine notes with acumen and accuracy, this appellation of the Body of Christ is not to be explained solely by the fact that Christ must be called the Head of His Mystical Body, but also by the fact that He so sustains the Church, and so in a certain sense lives in the Church, that she is, as it were, another Christ"<sup>21</sup>.

Finally, the third main point of the encyclical is the prevalence of the sociological aspect of the Church whenever the Pope is dealing with the Pauline theology of the Body of Christ, even though he is trying to use a new ecclesiological perspective. In the predominant ecclesiological model before *Mystici Corporis*, theologians stressed what the Spanish theologian Angel Antón calls the horizontal dimension of the Church.<sup>22</sup> By focusing on this dimension, any explanation of the Church's nature must begin with its visible and institutional aspects, and from there, with an apologetic language, its divine foundation and the ecclesial life is developed. Hence, this perspective produces an ecclesiology "*from outside towards inside*" which has an ideal point of departure in the notion of *societas perfecta*. Pius XII's encyclical tried to change this ecclesiological approach and to replace it with the perspective "*from inside towards*

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., article 53

<sup>22</sup> Angel Anton, "Estructura teándrica de la Iglesia", *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 42 (1967).

*outside*". In other words, the idea of the Pope was to begin with the spiritual aspect and from there focus on the earthly aspect.

But, as Antón explains, *Mystici Corporis* is insufficient in this regard. This failure is mostly because it uses the Pauline notion of Body almost exclusively in its social reality (as in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12) whilst forgetting too quickly the transcendent aspect of the Body of Christ, which in Saint Paul is the goal and fulfillment of the former. Thus the encyclical points out the social reality of the Church, and in general subordinates the invisible aspect of the Body by placing it as a support and guarantee of the visible. As a result, *Mystici Corporis* is incapable of advancing from acknowledging the visible elements of the Church towards a profound assumption of the complex reality of the Body of Christ with its christological and visible aspects and the pneumatic and transcendent as well.<sup>23</sup> In fact in order to explain the Mystery of this Body, remaining faithful to Saint Paul, one has to find a balance between the visible and the invisible but always pointing to the preeminence of the invisible. Or in other words the mystery has to maintain its incommensurability. *Mystici Corporis* expresses that there is an invisible and divine aspect of the Church, and wanted to give importance to it, but ends by becoming a prisoner of its own limits because is still using an old ecclesiology with a perspective that focuses too promptly in the visible aspect of the Church.

As we have seen above, the idea of a Church that is the continuation of the Incarnation of Christ and an ecclesiology of the Mystical Body match perfectly. On this ecclesiology Christ is in his Church since she is not only an institution but much more: his Body. Certainly this point of

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<sup>23</sup> This facet of the theology of *Mystici Corporis* reminds us of the importance of the point of departure in ecclesiology. What kind of aspects of the Church one deal with first will mark his journey to the reflection of the Church's other important characteristics. In a sense, Pius XII's notion is close to *Lumen Gentium*, but the departing point of each of them makes the difference.

view offers a new perspective in ecclesiology; one that presents better the animated aspect of this living organism that is the Church. However this view of the Church lacks some important characteristics necessary for shaping a balanced ecclesiology. And, as we have seen, most of the deficiencies were in the understanding of the Pauline mystery of the Body of Christ, the lack of references to the Fathers of the Church, and its almost complete neglect of the historical and pneumatic character of the Church.

### **1.2.3. The Rejection of the Preparatory Schema**

The *De Ecclesia* schema was presented in the fall of 1962 by Ottaviani, the head of the Theological Commission of the Council. One can notice that this document tries to approach all the subjects that were, in some way, left out of the treatment of the church in the First Vatican Council and that it follows very closely the ecclesiology existing in *Mystici Corporis*.<sup>24</sup> The text, in the context of an ecclesiology of the Mystical Body, contains some themes such as: the bishops and priests, the authority in the Church, the relation between the Church and State, and Ecumenism.

The preparatory schema reflects the neo-scholastic approach to the Church's nature, its preoccupation with the visible structures of the Church, and the hierarchical-christocentric notion. The inclusion of juridical ideas in the draft, especially, some canonical notions of the Church, is highly illustrative. For our study, its first chapter is the most important because it focuses on the Church's origin and essence. This section has the expressive title of "The nature

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<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of the schema see Richard Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making. Lumen Gentium, Christus Dominus, Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, (New York: Paulist Press, 2006), 8-12.

of the Church militant”. As can be noticed easily this title highly differs from *Lumen Gentium*’s “The Mystery of the Church” or “The People of God”.

The preparatory schema of *De Ecclesia*’s has a first chapter divided into seven sections: 1) *Dei Patris consilium*, 2) *Consili Patris per Filium exsecutio*, 3) *Israel Dei indoles, voce Ecclesiae variisque figuris expressa*, 4) *Figura corporis Christi*, 5) *Enucleatio figurae corporis*, 6) *Ecclesia societas est mysticum Christi Corpus* and 7) *Ecclesia Catholica Romana est Mysticum Christi Corpus*.<sup>25</sup> The similarities with a previous neo-scholastic ecclesiology are notable. The centrality of Christ and his incarnation, the notion of Body of Christ, and the equivalence of the one Church of Christ with the Roman Catholic Church are among the things that we can easily point out as parallels to the previous ecclesiology.

Among the aspects that are missing in the draft, we can briefly highlight two. First, it is remarkable that the person of the Holy Spirit and its role in the origin and life of the Church is not even reflected in the titles. Even though the Spirit is mentioned in the draft, its position is completely secondary. This approach produces an ecclesiology that states that the Church has only been established from and through the missions of the Father and the Son. Hence, the proposed schema neglects the Church’s Trinitarian source and end. Second, we can notice an absence of a human-historical perspective. By emphasizing first its institutional and visual aspects the draft creates an idea of the Church that is monolithic and static. Without a human-historical perspective *De Ecclesia* missed some crucial themes that will appear in the further discussion on the aula: the notion of a pilgrim Church, the Church’s sinfulness, the common dignity of the members of the Church, and ecumenism. Indeed, the necessity of a pneumatology that completes the trinitarian foundation and the human-historical aspect of the Church were the

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<sup>25</sup> Antón, “Estructura teándrica de la Iglesia”: 61

main topics of a renewed ecclesiology that was present in the Council. These neglected theological notions are exactly what the bishops of the Council realized and tried to include in the first chapters of *Lumen Gentium*.

Immediately after its exposition the Conciliar Fathers confirmed Ottaviani's fears: "I believe that I and the speaker for the commission are wasting our words because the outcome has already been decided. Those whose constant cry is 'Take it away! Take it away! Give us a new schema' are now ready to open fire"<sup>26</sup>. Indeed they cried out, with a categorical opposition to the schema. The reasons for the contrary position of the bishops were various. Some argued against a certain tone that the draft had, for example that it was triumphalist, clericalist and juridical (Bishop de Smedt). For others, the theology was inappropriate, lacking biblical foundations (Archbishop Volk) or an adequate reference to the patristic tradition (Cardinal Frings). And for some others, it simply had some dogmatic errors, for instance the identification of the Roman Catholic Church with the Mystical Body (Cardinal Lienart). The summit was Cardinal Frings' speech, in which he dared to say that "the schema was not even Catholic". In summary, we can say that what the bishops rejected was an inadequate theology for the twentieth century. Surely, they were looking for something new.<sup>27</sup>

For most of the participants of Vatican II an apologetic, hierarchical and juridical ecclesiology was perhaps appropriate for the counter-reform of the nineteenth century but it was not for the 1960's. What the bishops wanted in Vatican II was to express the reality of the Church without triumphalism and clericalism. They were also wanted to show the Church's twofold origin and essence according to the Scriptures and the Fathers of the Church: the

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<sup>26</sup> Quoted by O'Malley, *What Happened*, 154

<sup>27</sup> For a relation of the different speeches see O'Malley, *What Happened*, 152-157 and Xavier Rynne, *Vatican Council II* (New York: Orbis Books. 1999), 109-118

Trinitarian mystery and its human-historical reality. After these speeches, the *De Ecclesia* schema was completely rejected. A totally different schema was drafted to meet the bishops' need.

### **1.3. The trinitarian mystery of the pilgrim Church: *Lumen Gentium*'s chapter 1 and 2.**

#### **1.3.1. The new schema on the Church: a trinitarian and historical ecclesiology.**

At the end of the first session the proposed schema was handed over to a commission of theologians and bishops to create a new draft. This Doctrinal Commission drafted the new schema in between the first and the second sessions. The Belgian priest from Louvain, Gerard Philips, coordinated this effort. This commission worked with the old schema and at least four different drafts sent to them after the first session. These four proposals were known by their origin: thus, they are the German, Chilean, Italian and French schemas. To create the new draft the commission used some points from each of them, even though the French proposal was its main source.

An important basis for this completely new draft was the plan proposed by the Belgian Cardinal Joseph Suenens. His speech on the final days of the first session was received with enthusiasm and general approval. He asked that the ecclesial reality be treated in two separate documents, one about the Church “ad intra” and the other about it “ad extra”. Prior to the Council, Suenens had been developing this division from March 1962 with proposals to John

XXIII, other Cardinals and Bishops, and theologians.<sup>28</sup> After this suggestion and other important speeches, the *De Ecclesia* was actually divided and the basic notions of *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes* appeared.

Trying to focus on the ‘ad intra’ Church, Suenens explained that the Church is first of all about a Mystery whose nature is characterized by a relationship between both the visible and the invisible part of its reality. One can say that this idea had been presented in *Mystici Corporis* as well. However, the novelty in Vatican II is its understanding that the starting point of the ecclesiology must be the Mystery of the Church, that is, on the Church’s transcendental aspect and not on its visible-institutional reality.<sup>29</sup> The central point Suenens made is that the Council must first discuss the Church’s nature which is transcendental and divine, and then discuss its form in actual institutions and their missions. The starting point of this ecclesiology must be the trinitarian mystery and the plan of salvation of the Triune God as it is presented in the Bible and is developed in history. This is indeed articulated in the first two chapters of *Lumen Gentium*; and it seeks to holistically understand and proclaim the Church’s inseparable and constitutive invisible and visible shape.

In order to achieve this challenge of dealing with a Trinitarian and historical ecclesiology the Council makes use of the notion of sacrament and its relation with the divine mystery. *Lumen Gentium* 1 opens the document with the statement that the Church is like a sacrament of the divine plan of salvation that wishes for a deep communion with God and among all men and women. This Trinitarian plan of salvation, presented in *Lumen Gentium* 1 to 4, is an expression

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<sup>28</sup> An exposition of every step of the Cardinal’s idea can be founded in his own words in: Suenens, “A Plan to the Whole Council”, 88-105

<sup>29</sup> This is precisely what Angel Anton presents as the major shift performed by *Lumen Gentium*, see: Anton, “Estructura teándrica de la Iglesia”: 58-59

of the mystery of God's self-communication. This is so since this divine gift is itself the theme and the goal of the plan: being in communion like Him and in Him. Thus, that communion might be seen in the Church in some persons, moments, relationships and institutions that can be truly earthly signs or instruments of that God's will.

In our opinion, this particular idea of Church as sacrament is the key element to appreciate the balanced Trinitarian and historical ecclesiology of Vatican II. In fact the Council, pointing out this analogy with the reality of the seven sacraments, finds a good balance between the invisible and the visible aspects of the Church. The Church's human and visible forms are called to be expressions of the invisible model and goal: the Trinitarian communion. But at the same time the transcendent aspect of the Church, which is her model and goal, is expressed on earth only through visible forms. In this way *Lumen Gentium* does not choose between stressing one aspect of the Church above the other, either the visible or the invisible; but tries to maintain a healthy tension between them without obscuring one or other element.<sup>30</sup> This theological tension is an aspect of the ecclesiology of the Council that through the course of this thesis we cannot forget.

*Lumen Gentium*'s first two chapters constitute the presentation of that tension which that essential notion of the Church as sacrament includes. Chapter One, *The Mystery of the Church*, is more focused in the Church's spiritual or transcendental Trinitarian shape. While in Chapter Two, *The People of God*, the reader is in front of the second part of the Church's sacramental reality: its historical aspect. Consequently, in order to better comprehend the ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium*, we need to maintain the integrity of these two chapters together. In fact, for theologians and bishops who wrote the Constitution, these sections should be seen as one; as part

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<sup>30</sup> Gallairdetz, *The Church*, 43-44



of a single exposition of the definition of the Church as mystery. Philips explains this synthesis thus: “The first two chapters talk about the mystery of the Church, first in its transcendental dimension, and then in its historic form. Throughout the exposition appear the fundamental figures of the Church as instrument of salvation”<sup>31</sup>. This viewpoint was presented as the right way to read the schema before the voting in the aula, and the bishops knew this. “In the report that accompanied the text, the Doctrinal Commission thought it advisable to provide an explanation, written by Philips, why the chapter was placed between the chapter on the mystery of the Church and the chapter on the hierarchy. After noting that ‘people of God’ here meant the whole body of the faithful, clergy and laity alike, it was explained that the new chapter continued the consideration of the intimate nature, or mystery, of the Church begun in the first chapter and that it had been made a separate chapter simply because a single chapter would be too large”<sup>32</sup>.

On this balanced presentation of the mystery of the Church *Lumen Gentium*’s first chapter introduces the transcendent face of the Church’s essence. It does this using a lot of biblical and patristic ideas in the explanation. This first chapter found almost no opposition during the discussions of the second session of the Council. Its Trinitarian perspective, the notion of sacrament, the relation between the Church and the Kingdom of God, and its uses of biblical images match perfectly with the spirit of *aggiornamento* and of dialogue of Vatican II. The aim of its eight articles is to present the plan of God performed by the three divine Persons and to show how, although not complete, is nowadays present in the pilgrim Church.

It is a well known fact that the council fathers decided during the second session to place the chapter on the People of God immediately after the first. This change was proposed in the

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<sup>31</sup> Philips, *La Iglesia y su misterio*, 1: 73

<sup>32</sup> Joseph Komonchak, “*Toward an Ecclesiology of Communion*”, in *History of Vatican II*, (ed. Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph Komonchak; 5 volumes; Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995), 4: 43

aula by Cardinal Suenens and Bishop Gargitter for the approval of the bishops<sup>33</sup>, even though the doctrinal commission had already approved it during the intersession period.<sup>34</sup> That support of the commission facilitated the positive reception in the aula, along with the fact that the theological notion of the People of God was fairly present in theology before Vatican II in the works of patristic and biblical scholars.<sup>35</sup> The idea was to recollect everything expressed about the notion of People of God in the first and third chapters of the first draft and use them to write a new second chapter.

Throughout its nine articles, the second chapter of *Lumen Gentium* explains the human-historical facet of the divine plan, in this sense Philips had suggested entitling this chapter “The Historical Catholicity of the Church”<sup>36</sup>. In the context of the constitution’s ecclesiology this section on the People of God works as the counterpart for the first chapter and completes the explanation of the Church as sacrament. Thus, *Lumen Gentium*’s second chapter includes such ecclesiological themes as the different ways to belong to the Church, the common priesthood of the faithful, the charisms and ministries, and the relation between the Church and other Christians and non Christians.

In the final two sections of this first chapter of our thesis, we will present the main points of this diptych on the mystery of the Church: first in its transcendental dimension with a trinitarian foundation and second as People of God on earthly pilgrimage that is its historical dimension. In this way we will be able to, following the Council, place the proper role of the

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<sup>33</sup> O’Malley, *What happened*, 177-178

<sup>34</sup> Philips, *La Iglesia y su Misterio*, 1: 29-30. This second draft which includes the new chapter has the following sections: 1.The mystery of the Church, 2.The hierarchical constitution of the Church and the episcopate in particular, 3.The people of God and the laity in particular, 4.The call to holiness in the Church.

<sup>35</sup> For a presentation of the history of the notion of People of God and its relation with Body of Christ see Yves Congar, “The Church: The People of God”, in *The Church and Mankind*, Concilium 1, (trans. Kathryn Sullivan; New York: Paulist Press, 1965)

<sup>36</sup> Philips, *La Iglesia y su Misterio*, 1: 164

Holy Spirit in a trinitarian and historical ecclesiology. The Spirit neither chooses between the visible or the invisible in its role on the Church's creation and ongoing life; its role is related with the complete Mystery of the Church.

### **1.3.2. The trinitarian foundation of the Church**

The first chapter of *Lumen Gentium* is called "The Mystery of the Church". The notion of mystery aroused various objections by some bishops in the Council who were afraid that using it would devalue the visible aspect of the Church, so important throughout the centuries after the Reformation. The majority however tried to recover, in the spirit of *Ressourcement*, the patristic and biblical concept of *mysterium* as the ultimate source of the Church and the expression of the Church's nature.<sup>37</sup> And then to express the origin and nature of the Church the bishops state that that mystery is sacramentally expressed in its invisible and visible dimensions. One thing must be noticed here: the sacramentality of the Church is related to the main sacrament of God who is the Son incarnated.

The Church's mystery is expressed in being the sacrament of the mystery of the Triune God who is involved in human history to lead it to its eschaton. In the first article of *Lumen Gentium*, the word "like" is very important: the Church is "like" a sacrament because the only true sacrament is Jesus, through whom God establishes his Reign in the world.<sup>38</sup> For their part,

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<sup>37</sup> Aloys Grillmeier, "The Mystery of the Church" in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*. (ed. Herbert Vorgrimler; 5 volumes; New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), 1: 138

<sup>38</sup> It is amazing that the 1995's version of the Flannery translation of the Vatican II documents miss the key word in the latin text: "*veluti*"= like. The original Flannery's says: "Since the Church, in Christ, is in the nature of sacrament..." This one follows Walter Abbot's translation of 1966 which says: "By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind". One can ask why Flannery did this important mistake in the 1995 translation.

the seven sacraments of the Church also find in Christ, the definitive sacrament of salvation, their source and model. Thus, for the Council, the Church is not the Kingdom of God, nor the complete Body of Christ, because it is not the Sacrament but rather it is *like* a sacrament. Or to put it in other way, the Church's nature is in the way of sacrament, since it is called to be in history the presence and the sign of the Kingdom of God that will be finally fulfilled only in the eschaton where the Body of Christ will be perfectly shaped.<sup>39</sup>

One fundamental biblical and patristic idea that the Council recovered is the salvific plan of God “who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim 2:4). The Church is in service of God's plan of salvation which is a mystery in itself. Hence, the Church's main reason to exist is to serve the plan of God by being a presence of his Reign on earth. The Reign's goal is the communion between God and the entire human race. And it is a communion that mirrors that of the Trinity. In God's plan, as the Gospels and the Fathers of the Church explained, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit act together although each has their own roles. *Ecclesia de Trinitate* was an important notion for the bishops and theologians of Vatican II. The three Persons of the Trinity are involved in the plan of salvation: the Trinity is the author and the model in the Church's prefiguration, preparation, institution, manifestation, and completion.<sup>40</sup>

Articles two, three, and four of *Lumen Gentium* develop this fundamental relation between the Church and the Trinity. The final clause of Article 4 of the Constitution summarizes this relation using Cyprian's words: “The universal Church is seen to be ‘a people made one by

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<sup>39</sup> See the footnote to *Lumen Gentium*, article 1 in William Abbott (ed.), *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), 15

<sup>40</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 2. All the quotes of *Lumen Gentium* are from *Documents of Vatican II* (ed. Austin P. Flannery; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984).

the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit’.” Therefore, the ecclesiology of Vatican II is dynamic since it is at the same time pneumatological, christocentric, theocentric, and eschatological.<sup>41</sup> This reminds us that the Church’s life is trinitarian and is called to express that trinitarian life in all ecclesial realities. Hence, even though we can focus on any one of the trinitarian Persons to better understand the Church’s essence and mission, we will always need to fight the temptation to isolate the divine roles.<sup>42</sup>

After this trinitarian exposition that discusses the Church as a reality that is visible but not revealed entirely in history, the Constitution proposes images of the Church to help us better understand its essence. Hence, *Lumen Gentium* presents biblical ideas that express the plan of God and the Church’s nature. Kingdom of God, Family of God, and Bride of Christ are some of the biblical analogies used for the Vatican II in *Lumen Gentium*’s articles five and six. Among the many things that we can say about the use of these images, I wish to highlight that using biblical images has to be done maintaining the analogical language and to avoid choosing one image over the others.<sup>43</sup>

Dealing with the notion of Body of Christ is the intention of article seven of the chapter. We have seen in previous pages that the Mystical Body was until Vatican II the main definition for the Church’s nature. The Council didn’t want to dismiss this long beloved Pauline idea but to ponder it in the context of other images and a different definition of the Church. As an advance from *Mystici Corporis*, *Lumen Gentium* 7 offers a more balanced perspective between the visible and the invisible part of the Body.<sup>44</sup> This is so mostly because of the presence of both aspects of

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<sup>41</sup> Grillmeier, “The Mystery of the Church”, 1: 142

<sup>42</sup> That is exactly one of the temptations that we must avoid in our research on the Holy Spirit’s role.

<sup>43</sup> Philips, *El Misterio de la Iglesia*, 1: 126-132

<sup>44</sup> Gaillardetz, *The Church*, 45

Saint Paul's idea: on one hand, the value of the different members of the Body and their own relationships while on the other the presence of Christ as head of the Body.<sup>45</sup> This balanced view is also accomplished because the idea of the Mystical Body is not the central idea to indicate what the Church is. In *Lumen Gentium* this Pauline doctrine is developed in only one article after the biblical images of *Lumen Gentium* 6. However the idea of the Body of Christ maintains certain preeminence in the Constitution; certainly it is much more than an image or a metaphor of the Church: the Church is the Mystical Body of Christ. The difference in the ecclesiology of Vatican II is that the ideas about the formation and nature of the Body of Christ are discussed in the context of a different ecclesiology which is Trinitarian and sacramental. And for that ecclesiology of the Council the principal notion to define the Church is *People of God*.

In his commentary Philips asks why the idea of People of God is not discussed in this first chapter, which he answers thus: "In fact, the term 'People of God' does not apply to the Church as a comparison, but as the expression of its being. One cannot say: The Church is like a people of God, but the Church is the People of God in the new and eternal covenant"<sup>46</sup>. These words of Philips explain why the Constitution uses People of God and not the images presented in its article 6 as the central definition of the Church. But we affirm that this is not the reason to prefer as a definition the concept of People of God instead of Body of Christ. To have that preference the bishops should have noticed that the idea of People of God matches better with the twofold reality that the sacramentality of the Church's mystery has. In fact, the balance between human and divine, and historical and transcendental, so important to the Council's fathers, is best accomplished by the definition of the Church as the People of God since with it the historical aspect of God's salvation is put in a central place.

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<sup>45</sup> Philips, *El Misterio de la Iglesia*, 1: 134-135

<sup>46</sup> Philips, *La Iglesia y su Misterio*, 1: 132

The first chapter of *Lumen Gentium* ends by meaningfully developing the sacramentality of the Church in article eight. Here the central point is to explain the relation between the visible and the invisible aspects of the Church, since the Church is “one complex reality which comes together from a human and a divine element”<sup>47</sup>. It is clear for the Council that when one is dealing with the Church’s nature the two aspects cannot be opposed. Since the Council is using the basics of sacramental theology, the visible must reflect and perform, in and through historical reality, the invisible truth.

Though this paper does not explore all the different elements presented in LG 8, let us briefly list a few general ideas that are helpful and should be kept in mind as the first chapter of the constitution comes to a close. In order to explain the mystery of the Church maintaining its sacramentality adequately, *Lumen Gentium* uses the analogy of the incarnate Word<sup>48</sup>: “As the assumed nature, inseparably united to him, serves the divine Word as a living organ of salvation, so, in a somewhat similar way, does the social structure of the Church serve the Spirit of Christ who vivifies it, in the building up of the body”. And later in the same article the Council affirms that “This Church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church”, highlighting that the Church of Christ can be found in the Catholic Church but that she is not the complete expression of that complex reality.<sup>49</sup> And finally the incomplete and pilgrim character of the Church is expressed when article 8 states that “The Church, however, clasping sinners to her bosom, at once holy and always in need of purification, follows constantly the path of penance and renewal”. Here Vatican II underscores the reality of the

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<sup>47</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 8.

<sup>48</sup> Not the “prolongation of the Incarnation of Christ” as in the neo-scholastic theology.

<sup>49</sup> Not that it is the Catholic Church and even less the Roman. For a brief commentary on the *subsistit* from the text itself see: Grillmeier, “The Mystery of the Church”, 1: 149-150. For the state of the discussion, see: Massimo Faggioli, *Vatican II. The Battle for Meaning* (New York: Paulist Press, 2012), 100-102 and Francis A. Sullivan, “Quaestio Disputata. Further Thoughts on the Meaning of Subsistit”, *Theological Studies* 71, (2010), 133-147.

Church as a community made up of sinners and the poor.<sup>50</sup> These ideas provide an appropriate conclusion to the chapter since they illustrate the key point of *Lumen Gentium*'s ecclesiology, one that stresses that the Church is in the nature of a sacrament, a human and divine reality that has its source and its goal in the Mystery of God.

In summary, the Church is like a Sacrament of the mystery of the Trinity's will of salvation as we witness in the Incarnation, wherein both aspects of visible and invisible are present at the same time. We also witness this in the historical reality that is the Church, with her successes and failures; since she is a group of faithful pilgrims on this earth, journeying towards the fulfillment of God's promises in the eschaton. As we look ahead in this thesis, it would be wise to keep these ideas in mind for we will focus on the Trinitarian perspective of the Council's ecclesiology, and apply what we discussed in this section to consider it in terms of pneumatology.

### **1.3.3. The Church as People of God in pilgrimage**

As we have seen the bishops decided to put the chapter on the People of God before the theology of the hierarchy, or rather before the different types of being a member of the Church. In the first draft, this concept of People of God was placed after the discussion of the hierarchical order. The bishops however decided to give it a central value in the document by placing it

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<sup>50</sup> Not in its nature, which is divine, but in its members. For a discussion on this topic, see: Karl Rahner, "The sinful Church in the Decrees of Vatican II" in *Theological Investigations VI* (trans. Karl-H and Boniface Kruger; New York: Crossroads. 1969), 270-294 and Gustavo Gutierrez, "La recepción del Vaticano II en Latinoamérica. El lugar teológico 'La Iglesia y los Pobres'" in *La recepción del Vaticano II* (G. Alberigo and J.P. Jossua, eds.; Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad, 1985), 213-237



between the Church as Mystery (Chapter 1) and the Church as a hierarchal body (Chapter 3). This shift has had a huge importance in the life of the Church during and after the Council.

The Council Fathers knew very well the importance of this change. They were certainly conscious of the implications that this would have in the future. Gerard Philips explains: “The ‘people of God’ as a whole, including bishops and laity, was obviously given its normal place when put into the general part of the Constitution, so that ‘the laity’ could be discussed after the hierarchy as the corresponding group. Only a few fathers, such as Cardinal Siri and Bishop Compagnone, were against this very logical division”<sup>51</sup>. By placing the concept of People of God before the hierarchical distinctions in the Church, the Council wanted to present the status of being baptized shared by all Christians as a kind of “lens” to look at all the ministries and different lives in the Church. As Alberto Melloni notes, to “locate the chapter between that on the mystery and that on the hierarchy, so as to make of it not simply an ‘image’ provided a framework for the subsequent treatment of clergy, laity, and religious”<sup>52</sup>.

We have seen already how this Chapter Two is the complement of Chapter One in a trinitarian and sacramental ecclesiology. The idea of the Church as People of God offers the necessary counterpart to the transcendent aspect expresses in Chapter One; together they express better what the Mystery of the Church is. What the notion of People of God basically provides to this sacramental approach of the Church is the assertion of its historical dimension. Accordingly this section of *Lumen Gentium* talks about historical aspects of the Church; the universality and the catholicity or the ministries and charisms to name just two of them.

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<sup>51</sup> Gerard Philips, “History of the Constitution” in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*. (ed. Herbert Vorgrimler; 5 volumes; New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), 1: 119.

<sup>52</sup> Alberto Melloni, “The beginning of the Second Period: The great debate on the Church” In Alberigo and Komonchak (ed.), *History of Vatican II*, 3: 80.

Article nine opens the chapter with the presentation of the concept of People of God as it is presented in the Old and the New Testament. Since the mystery of the Church has been carried out by God from the beginning of time, from the old to the new Israel, the universal character of the Church is highlighted in this introductory article. In this way we acknowledge the nature of the pilgrim Church that exceeds the limits of the Catholic Church; God who congregated his people in Israel continually gathers new members from all nations until the end of time. This universal character of the pilgrim Church on earth calls for a reflection on the different modes through which people exercise their membership in the Church. Thus this is the topic of *Lumen Gentium* 10, 11, and 12.

Articles ten, eleven and twelve are of crucial importance: they are the heart of the chapter and their ideas are part of the most controversial and inspiring themes in the post-conciliar Church. The central theology that *Lumen Gentium* presents in those articles is that the People of God is a congregation of priests who perform their consecration by seeking holiness and celebrating the sacraments.<sup>53</sup> Certainly, this is not the place to deal with the significant issue of the common priesthood, but it does suffice to say that the document presents it in the context of the kingly, priestly and prophetic aspects of Christ's office, it means in the context of the same dignity that every Christian receives from Christ in his baptism.

It is necessary to highlight one point at this moment, as it is especially important for our topic on the Holy Spirit, and it is the document's attention on the religious experience of every individual human person. Dealing with the question about the visible-historical dimension of the Church the Constitution focuses on the human individual and his status as Christian. This centrality of the individual person in his relationship with God is presented mostly in the topic of

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<sup>53</sup> Philips, *El misterio de la Iglesia*, 1: 162

charisms and services that are present in everyone. This viewpoint is obviously very different from the idea of the Church as a *societas perfecta*, which was so influential in Catholic ecclesiology since Bellarmine. On that theology the Church was presented first as an institution with certain characteristics, explained in a legalistic style, and only in a second moment introduces the individual reality in the Church as a community of different people. What *Lumen Gentium* wants to highlight first is the person with all his dignity, and the way the Triune God in order to build the Church relates first to every human being in particular bestowing her or him with certain charismas. As a result, the notion of People of God challenges the Church to begin every ecclesiology with the characteristics shared by everyone in the Church and in this sense the initial individual relationship between God and any human person is central. As we shall see in the next chapter of this thesis, *Lumen Gentium* reflects on the role of the Spirit as the source of that original individuality of every person as part of the Church.

Finally, this second section of *Lumen Gentium* ends by reflecting on the universal character of this People and its relation to humankind. There are for Vatican II different ways to belong to the Church. Since the Church is expression of a mystery, its limits are not totally clear. The Church does not exhaust the plan of God precisely because it is the sacrament of the divine mystery. Consequently, the Constitution deals with the catholicity of the Church in a very dynamic and dialogical way. In articles thirteen through seventeen the text avoids the expression *members*; it prefers instead the more inclusive language of *incorporated* or *linked*.<sup>54</sup> This perspective offers to the reader a kind of lively and dynamic ecclesiology, which was the perspective that the ecclesiology of Body of Christ wanted to have. But what the latter failed to

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<sup>54</sup> Aloys Grillmeier, "The People of God" in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, (ed. Herbert Vorgrimler; 5 volumes; New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), 1: 174

express, because of its institutional and juridical language, the former communicated much better since is grounded in historical and sacramental ecclesiology.

The People of God is an historical reality; thus, it is complex. One cannot put it into a box, and try to avoid its inconsistencies. The bishops of Vatican II aware of that complexity offered an image of the Church in a constant attitude of dialogue with the whole of humanity. In this sense, the Church is always related with the rest of humankind and is not in a fortress facing the world. The bishops knew that presenting the Church with diffuse borders, as is done in *Lumen Gentium* 15, 16, and 17, can bring difficulties to some Catholics but at the same time give openness to have a dialogue with the world and a more clear sense of the Church's historicity.

And from that dialogical point of view the eschatological aspect of the Church is very important to be highlighted.<sup>55</sup> The Church is on its way to the full realization of its nature, and at the present moment is working on it with the particularities of the earthly reality. The Church is a reality of the world and as a human reality is difficult to define in a final and complete definition. That is why Chapter Two of *Lumen Gentium* ends with a reference to the missionary character of the Church, so that the Church is always in a process of creation. The eschatological reality is the motor of the Church's nature since it moves it to its primary goal, which is not its own growth but the realization of the Kingdom of God where every creature is in communion like the trinitarian Persons.

A final point can be proposed on this part of our thesis. We have to be aware, as we deal with Vatican II, that it has a theology with a fundamental perspective of *both/and*, rather than *either/or*. One of the fundaments of this dynamic perspective is its vision of a sacramentality that

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<sup>55</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, article 17

deals with a Church that is historical and transcendental at the same time. In order to comprehend better the meaning of that profound nature of the Church's mystery, as is presented in the first and second chapters of *Lumen Gentium*, we now turn to explore the role of the Holy Spirit. This exploration constitute a challenge but also a key to understand the complex ecclesiology of the Council. The Holy Spirit is the divine source of communion from and in difference and then his role is strongly related with both aspects of the Church as sacrament. In the next sections of our thesis, we will try to explore the role of the Spirit in these two first chapters of *Lumen Gentium*'s, convinced as we are that pneumatology is one of the decisive keys for understanding the Trinitarian Mystery of the pilgrim Church.

## CHAPTER 2. The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Church's creation

### 2.1. Pneumatology before Vatican II: the Spirit as the animating principle of the Church.

The Holy Spirit as the soul of the Church was the main pneumatological idea in Catholic's ecclesiology before Vatican II. Since this was expressed in the context of the preeminence of the Body of Christ ecclesiology, the majority of Catholic theologians before Vatican II gave to the Holy Spirit the role of the animating principle of the Church. On this view, the Church was historically created by Christ himself and the Spirit's role remained that of animating what was already formed, as the soul does for the body. Leo XIII had proclaimed in his encyclical *Divinum Illud Munus* in the year 1897: "Let it suffice to say that, as Christ is the Head of the Church, so is the Holy Spirit her soul."<sup>56</sup>

It cannot be said that Catholic theology in the nineteenth and in the first half of twentieth century had forgotten the Holy Spirit in its ecclesiological reflection. However, in that period, the theology of canonists and apologists was shaped by an impoverished view about the Spirit's distinctive role in the Church. As Congar and Antón have demonstrated, theologians and hierarchy after the Reformation produced an image of the Church as a *societas perfecta* ruled by Bishops and the Pope, and in which the Spirit was simply a guarantee of their teachings and norms.<sup>57</sup> As a result, in the everyday life of the Church, the Magisterium simply took the place of

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<sup>56</sup> Leo XIII, *Divinum Illud Munus*, Article 6. The quotes from this encyclical are from the document downloaded as [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/leo\\_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_l-xiii\\_enc\\_09051897\\_divinum-illud-munus\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_09051897_divinum-illud-munus_en.html) on 04 April 2012.

<sup>57</sup> Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* (trans. David Smith; 3 volumes; New York: Crossroads, 1997), 1: 151-157 and Ángel Antón, *El Misterio de la Iglesia. Evolución histórica de las ideas eclesiológicas II* (2 volumes. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1986), 2: 287-317

the Holy Spirit's role and presence.<sup>58</sup> In this context, and from what might be named a sociological vision of the Church, because of its focus on the Church's institutional dimension, the image of the Holy Spirit as the soul of the Body of Christ was very suitable.

Kevin McNamara explains how the growth of the ecclesiology of the Mystical Body offered a balance to the institutional and hierarchical approach of understanding the Church.<sup>59</sup> For McNamara, the application of the term "Body" to explain the Church's nature opened the door to a reflection on some aspects that were forgotten in previous ecclesiologies. The Church as the Mystical Body of Christ includes such important ecclesial aspects as its interior life, the supernatural and vital element, and its spiritual shape. We have said in the first chapter of this paper that the idea of the Mystical Body arose from Möhler's influence on what will be called later the Roman school of Theology. For Möhler, the Church is a living organism that continues the incarnation of Christ. Accordingly, for theologians such as Carlos Passaglia and Mathias Scheeben, for the encyclicals as *Divinum Illud Munus* and *Mystici Corporis*, and in the First Vatican Council, the Mystical Body of Christ best expresses the Church's incarnational character.

The Church is not only a visible organization but a living organism. This organism is a Body, where every member is a part united with its Head and Founder who is Christ himself. This ecclesiology of the Body of Christ reminds us that the Church is divine and human at the same time, and thus, it has two aspects: one visible and other invisible. This more dynamic perspective of the Church drives theologians to reflect more on the Holy Spirit's role, since they

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<sup>58</sup> Congar goes further and, following an article of P. Pare, has noted that the Spirit's role in the Catholic Church was overshadowed by three others presences: The Eucharist, The Pope, and Virgin Mary. See Congar, *I believe*, 1: 160-164

<sup>59</sup> Kevin McNamara, *Sacrament of Salvation* (Chicago: Talbot Press, 1981), 81-84

acknowledge that the Church has an invisible aspect. This organism, like every human being, has a Soul which for this Mystical Body is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit animates this Body and so we can call it the *animating principle* of the Church. But, in what sense do they understand this role of the Spirit as the Soul of the Church, as its animating principle? This is what we will try to address in the next three sections.

### **2.1.1. The Holy Spirit dwells in the Body and gives life to it.**

The Holy Spirit is present in the Church in a very intimate way. It is dwelling in its innermost space. In this manner, the Spirit also inhabits each individual and the community of Christians. Each baptized person has the Spirit in his body and is spiritually directed by it. And the Church, as the Mystical Body of Christ composed of Christians, has the same Spirit dwelling in an intimate way as he does in a soul. I will present here this dual process of inhabitation following the presentation of Charles Journet in his work *Theology of the Church*. This book is, in the author's own words, and "abridgment of the first two volumes of my *L'Eglise du Verbe Incarné*"<sup>60</sup>, that appeared in 1941 and 1951 respectively.

Firstly, as Journet notes according to St. Thomas, when grace appears in an individual the presence of the Trinity is abiding in him. Journet begins supporting his idea by the Gospel when Jesus proclaims "If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."<sup>61</sup> The Trinity will abide in the person's soul as a natural association since that person is receiving divine grace by acting as God wants; "the

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<sup>60</sup> Charles Journet, *The Theology of the Church* (trans. Victor Szcurek; San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), xxxi

<sup>61</sup> John 14: 23



same God who was already present in the depths of the soul as Creator.”<sup>62</sup> And thus God who was in a *habitual* state ‘becomes *actual* by the exercise of faith and love.’<sup>63</sup> For Journet, that process of inhabitation is performed by the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the divine person who produces all charity and faith in God, and thus it is he who abides in the person intimately. The presence of the gift of grace and the indwelling of the Spirit are in the believer at the same moment. In Journet’s words, they are *correlatives*, and so the person can be directed by the Spirit in his life of faith. In his presentation, Journet quotes again and again Paul’s words: “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?”<sup>64</sup> But for Journet the concurrence of grace and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the person are both in order to become more like Christ. Every person, for his sanctification, is called to be more like Christ. Thus we can state from Journet’s ideas that the presence of the Spirit in the person has a clear goal: christification. This is the same idea that Pope Pius XII expresses in his encyclical: “His Spirit is communicated to the Church in an abundant outpouring, so that she, and her individual members, may become daily more and more like to our Savior.”<sup>65</sup>

Secondly, for Journet the Holy Spirit dwells intimately in the Mystical Body of Christ. Evidently the main reason for this postulation is the spiritual experience of the apostles with the resurrected Christ<sup>66</sup> and in the Pentecost event<sup>67</sup>. The Spirit was sent to abide in the apostles after Jesus’ death. From that moment the Holy Spirit became the Soul which animates the community of believers. That group of believers was already congregated by Him during his life, particularly

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<sup>62</sup> Journet, *The Theology of the Church*, 78

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 78

<sup>64</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:16

<sup>65</sup> *Mystici Corporis*, Article 56

<sup>66</sup> John 20:19-23

<sup>67</sup> Acts of the Apostles 2:1-13

created by the water and blood poured out from Jesus' side in the Cross. And from his part the Spirit dwells in them in order to sanctify that congregation previously created.<sup>68</sup> This Holy Spirit is sent by Jesus himself; hence, it is always the Spirit of Christ and is never disconnected from Him. Consequently, Journet claims that the purpose of the creation of the Church is the Holy Spirit's inhabitation. In a passage of profound meaning he expresses this dwelling mystery of the Spirit in the Church as His natural place to live in: "The whole Mystery of his (*the Spirit*) work is to make her (*the Church*) tend toward him as toward a Center, not one that is off in the distance, but, rather, one that is already present; not one that is absent, but already possessed; not unknown, but already tasted, as it were, in the night of faith."<sup>69</sup>

### **2.1.2. The Holy Spirit is the soul of the Body of Christ.**

This ecclesiology of the Mystical Body is first of all christocentric since it is dealing with the continuing incarnation of the Son. Certainly, given that in order to be incarnated, the Son needs the action of the Holy Spirit, the result is that in Christ himself, since his conception in Mary's womb, the Spirit has a crucial presence. And thus in any of Christ's activities the Holy Spirit is present. However, because the Magisterium since the mid-nineteenth century accentuated the institutional aspects of the Church, the role of Christ alone in its foundation and nature is overemphasized. The doctrine was clear: Christ founded his Church with words and deeds, appointed apostles under the leadership of Peter, and instituted the seven sacraments. The Church is the heiress of all of these institutional and visible gifts from Jesus, and its mission is to communicate to humanity the salvation of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>68</sup> Journet, *The Theology of the Church*, 84

<sup>69</sup> Idem.

This theological perspective is what Antón presented as an ecclesiological method that starts from the outside and then goes to the inside.<sup>70</sup> Under the influence of ultramontanist ideas, what come first in this ecclesiology, in argumentation and significance, is the institutional aspects of the Body of Christ; or following Anton's idea the Church's 'outside' is first: the Pope, the Magisterium, and the Sacraments. And only after those, the invisible side of the Church is presented with aspects such as charity, communion, charisms. Logically, this viewpoint gives more relevance to Christ's actions in creating and sustaining the institutional aspect of the Church, since the Spirit is more related with her spiritual and inner aspects.

A good example of this ecclesiological perspective is the process of writing the Constitution *Pastor Aeternus* by the First Vatican Council.<sup>71</sup> It is commonly known that the sessions of this council were suspended because of the Franco-Prussian War and the annexation of Rome by the King of Italy. For these reasons, the document on the constitution of the Church was left uncompleted, having only its first chapter on the papal primacy ready.<sup>72</sup> However, this primary focus of *Pastor Aeternus* on the Pope's ministry was in reality a very conscious decision by the bishops at that moment. In fact, at the beginning of their discussions they had a proposed draft for the Constitution on the Church that started from the inner and invisible aspects of the Mystical Body and then moved to the institutional.<sup>73</sup> But the bishops rejected that perspective of the theology of the Mystical Body and instead produced a new schema which begins by focusing on the Pope "upon which the strength and coherence of the whole church depends."<sup>74</sup> Although the theology of the Mystical Body is not mentioned explicitly in the text, from our point of view

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<sup>70</sup> Antón, *El misterio de la Iglesia*, 2: 408-410

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 2: 344-355

<sup>72</sup> This Chapter was supposed to be balanced latter with others chapters on the role of bishops and lay people.

<sup>73</sup> Antón, *El misterio de la Iglesia*, 2: 344-355

<sup>74</sup> *Dogmatic Constitution Pastor Aeternus, Introduction in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* (Ed. Norman Tanner; 2 Volumes; Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 812

it can be noticed as an idea in the background. As a result, what we have in *Pastor Aeternus* is a view of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ that gives preeminence to its visible aspects, created and instituted by Christ, of which the most important is the Pope. This will be the major or at least official approach to the theology of the Mystical Body until *Lumen Gentium*.<sup>75</sup>

In a doctrine of the Body of Christ that starts with the visible aspects of the Church founded by Jesus himself and maintained faithfully by the Magisterium, the Holy Spirit is seen simply as an animator of an organism that is already formed. Pius XII's encyclical *Mystici Corporis* can be seen as the summit of this viewpoint. In it, the Pope follows the same direction: the visible is presented first as produced by Christ and the invisible comes after and is related to the action of the Holy Spirit. It is true that the encyclical maintains that this Spirit is the same Spirit of Christ and so there is certainly a coincidence in the two divine persons. Nevertheless, the Spirit's role in the creation and support of the Church is, chronologically and essentially, secondary.

According to *Mystici Corporis*, the Holy Spirit comes after Christ had formed his Body with all its parts and functions. The head governs his body in conjunction with its Soul; and in the encyclical this means that Christ rules his body through his agent, the Holy Spirit. The soul of the Church, which is the Spirit, maintains the different parts of the Mystical Body together in coordination; but at the end all of them are influenced by the one who creates them: Christ. *Mystici Corporis* explains that the role of the Spirit is to be present and to assist the Church's members in their duties and offices.<sup>76</sup> Christ, during his life on earth, formed these functions and is still producing them in every new Christian. But is the Soul who maintains the visible

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<sup>75</sup> Himes, "The Development of Ecclesiology", 63-66. Although some theologians offered different approaches, for instance: Henri de Lubac, especially his *The Splendor of the Church*, and Yves Congar's *Divided Christendom*.

<sup>76</sup> *Mystici Corporis*, Article 57

institutions and ministries and connects them with an invisible bond. By doing this, He is giving life to this living organism. The Spirit dwells in the Church in its more intimate sphere, both in the individual and in the community, by acting as its principle of animation.

This ecclesiology of the Mystical Body can be accused of having a kind of subordinationism of the Spirit in relation with the Son that, in turn, can lead to an ecclesiological monophysitism. For the Mystical Body ecclesiology the assertion that in the Church the soul follows the head is used not only as a functional image to understand the Spirit's position in the entire Body but much more is presented with an ontological significance. A very illustrative example of this postulation is the use of an Augustinian passage in the encyclicals *Divinum Illud Munus* and *Mystici Corporis*: "Let it suffice to say that, as Christ is the Head of the Church, so is the Holy Spirit her soul."<sup>77</sup> Yves Congar has criticized the Popes in misusing this idea of St. Augustine as an ontological statement when it is for its author a functional affirmation.<sup>78</sup> In themselves, the Augustinian words do not constitute a subordination of the soul, but if we read them in the context they were placed in the encyclicals, they clearly envisioned a soul that has a secondary and dependent position in relation with the preeminence of the head. According to the encyclicals this soul of the Church is at every moment subject to Christ, since He as the head is the main conductor of the Church's life.

The danger of an ecclesiological monophysitism could easily appear from this subordinated status of the Spirit. It is true, that the Holy Spirit never acts in conflict with the Son, but is no less true that the Son neither acts only by himself in total independence from the Spirit. Yet in this explanation of the Spirit as the soul it seems that Christ rules the activity of the Spirit;

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<sup>77</sup> *Divinum Illud Munus*, Article 6 and *Mystici Corporis*, Article 57

<sup>78</sup> Congar, *I Believe*, 1: 154

and because of that the Church can be misunderstood as a reality with one ‘physis’, making an analogy with the Christological heresy of monophysitism. Following the dangerous path that can arise from this ecclesiology one can argue that the Church has been produced only by Christ; and is shaped in the way that just Christ alone decided to have for his Church. After Christ’s creation of the Church then the Holy Spirit is performing his role as soul in total dependence of what Christ has done. And at the end one can understand that the Church has only one nature: the one from Christ’s that has taken over the one of Spirit.

### **2.1.3. The Holy Spirit is the guarantee of the Church’s actions.**

The ecclesiology of the Mystical Body is grounded on a view of the Church as a living organism. Therefore, it has a visible and an invisible part, or, in other words, a body and a soul. We have said that the Holy Spirit is that soul, and by its actions, gives life to the Body. Our last point on the presentation of this ecclesiology is that the Spirit acts as the invisible and divine guarantor of the actions of the visible Church that Christ has founded.

In this ecclesiology, as it is presented in *Mystici Corporis*’ articles 56 and 57, the most pure acts of the visible Church are the teachings of the hierarchy. Bishops and priests have been constituted as rulers of the Church by Christ through the Holy Spirit. Thus, the hierarchy derives its power, inspiration and support directly from the Spirit of Christ. Although it is recognized that the Spirit is present in every member of the Church, the hierarchy has a greater degree of this gift of the Spirit because of its duties and the responsibility to also grant the Spirit to the rest of the Church. In fact an important point is made when the encyclical reads: “It is He who, while He is personally present and divinely active in all the members, nevertheless in the inferior

members acts also through the ministry of the higher members.”<sup>79</sup> Thus, it is clear that the Spirit is more fully present in the higher members of the Body than in its inferiors, since the hierarchy receives the Spirit directly from Christ while the other members should be open to receive his presence in both ways: directly or through the pastors.

As we can see from this relation between hierarchy and Spirit, there is a concurrence in the activities of the visible and the invisible parts of the Church. The soul of the Church, which is its invisible part, vivifies and sustains the life of the visible Church, especially via the *Ecclesia Docens*. And so, the pastors influenced by the Spirit, and in its name, guide the Church into the Truth. This congruence is very clear in *Mystici Corporis* which states: “As the Divine Redeemer sent the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, who in His name should govern the Church in an invisible way, so, in the same manner, He commissioned Peter and his successors to be His personal representatives on earth and to assume the visible government of the Christian community.”<sup>80</sup> In this ecclesiology, there cannot be an opposition between the invisible and the visible aspects of the Church. We must keep in mind that the Holy Spirit is bestowed first on the Apostles and their successors and from them onto others. Thus, this presence of the Spirit as the guarantor of the visible Church is more complete in the actions of the Bishops and the Pope.

Using this relationship with the visible Church, the Soul is capable of maintaining unity and of dispensing her gifts to the entire Church. Through the mission and presence of the visible Body of Christ on earth, especially with its sublime members, the Rulers and Teachers, the Spirit vivifies and unites the Body of Christ. Therefore, any pure act of this *societas perfecta* that Jesus had founded, beginning in the actions of the successors of Peter and the Apostles, is an

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<sup>79</sup> *Mystici Corporis*, Article 57

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 69

expression of the Spirit's activity and plans (which are always the same as Christ's plans). As Congar puts it: "At that time, the Spirit was seen, on the one hand, as the principle of holy living in the souls of individuals –this was the 'internal mission' –and, on the other, as guaranteeing acts of the institution, especially its infallible teaching."<sup>81</sup> However, we should maintain that that 'internal mission' has its source and support from the acts of the institution. The Apostles received the power to baptize and to forgive sins, thus their successors are a prime font from whom Christians receive the Spirit. And thus we can say that the Spirit works dually: in pastors to proclaim and to teach the Truth of the Gospel, and in every believer so they could be holy through the virtues of obedience and charity. The unity of the Church is sustained by the Spirit dwelling in every member. However, since the truth of the Gospel is founded perfectly in the teaching of the members of the hierarchy as successors of the Apostles, this unity is complete only when every believer conforms his ideas and opinions to the teaching office of the Church.

## **2.2. Pneumatology of Vatican II: The Holy Spirit in the trinitarian mystery of the Church.**

"It can certainly be regretted that traditional ecclesiology did not adequately stress the hypostasis of the Holy Spirit and, thus, the freedom of the Spirit, therefore running the risk of domesticating and monopolizing the Spirit of God in ecclesiological terms. In this regard the Second Vatican Council brought a new departure."<sup>82</sup> From these words of Walter Kasper one can have a sense of the place of pneumatology in Vatican II's documents and what implications this has had for the Church. As in many other areas of theology and the Church's life, Vatican II constituted a new departure and a foundation for a long list of reflections, research and dialogue

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<sup>81</sup> Congar, *I Believe*, 1: 156

<sup>82</sup> Walter Kasper, "The Renewal of Pneumatology in Contemporary Catholic Life and Theology" in *The Holy Spirit, The Church and Christian Unity* (Ed. Deneux Donnelly, A. Deneux, J. Fameree; Leuven: University Press, 2005), 13



about the role of the Holy Spirit in the post-council era. In this second section of this chapter we shall center on what *Lumen Gentium*, in its two first chapters, articulates about the Holy Spirit's activity in creating and renewing the Church.

The Holy Spirit is mentioned at least 258 times in the conciliar texts<sup>83</sup>; and more than 80 of these are in *Lumen Gentium*.<sup>84</sup> This high numbers of references to the Spirit in Vatican II's documents is itself testimony to the advance made from pre-conciliar ecclesiology. However, we will not center our attention on just quoting these words from the text and try to show them as a list of activities of the Spirit in the Church, for this is not what we want to achieve in this thesis. In fact, in order to build an accurate pneumatology for a discourse about the Church, one must make more than a simple list of the Spirit's activities. This is one of the main ideas that Yves Congar presents in his monumental work, *I believe in the Holy Spirit*.<sup>85</sup> According to him the ecclesiology before Vatican II was too narrow, stressing almost exclusively Christ's actions in the tasks of founding and sustaining the Church. He thinks that with an old ecclesiology that had easily fallen into the danger of christomonism, the need to highlight the more predominant role of the Spirit was urgent.

At the end of his presentation on the theology between the Counter-reformation and Vatican II, and acknowledging a serious lack of pneumatology in it, Congar writes: "By pneumatology, I mean something more than, and in this sense different from, a profound analysis of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in individual souls and his sanctifying activity here. Pneumatology should, I believe, describe the impact, in the context of a vision of the Church, of

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<sup>83</sup> Congar, *I believe*, 1: 167

<sup>84</sup> Mary Cecily Boulding, "The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the Documents of Vatican II" *Irish Theological Quarterly* 51, 4 (1985): 255

<sup>85</sup> Congar, *I believe*, 1: 151-157

the fact that the Spirit distributes his gifts as he wills and in this way builds up the Church. A study of this kind involves not simply a consideration of those gifts or charisms, but a theology of the Church”.<sup>86</sup> The Council, understanding this urgency for new approaches in a broader ecclesiology, thus gave a new impulse for pneumatology when reflecting on the Church’s nature.

A true pneumatology for Congar is made by including the role of the Spirit in the context of a systematic ecclesiology. In this way, pneumatology finds its fullness when it includes the Spirit’s activity and influence in both the visible and the invisible dimensions of the Church, and when that role is positioned as part of a broader exposition on what the Church is. That is what we will try to do in the following pages in presenting *Lumen Gentium*’s pneumatology. We shall place the pneumatology of the Council in the context of the ecclesiology of the first two chapters of the Constitution; an ecclesiology that is trinitarian and sacramental.

### **2.2.1. The Holy Spirit in a trinitarian ecclesiology**

Probably one of the most distinctive aspects of *Lumen Gentium*’s ecclesiology is the centrality of the persons and missions of the Trinity in creating the Church. After article one, the next three articles of the constitution present the three divine persons involved in the Church’s nature since its creation. Although the persons of the Trinity are presented separately, the final words of article four remind us about their eternal inseparability, and consequently their shared involvement in the Church’s birth: “Hence the universal Church is seen to be: ‘a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit’.”<sup>87</sup> By using this quote from Saint Cyprian the document unifies in a single divine plan everything that had been said in the

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 1: 156

<sup>87</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 4

previous articles about the three divine persons' role. The inclusion of this quote is consonant with the emphasis on patristic theology that the bishops wanted to have in the documents. In fact, one of the distinctive features of patristic theology is its focus on the Trinity.

During the first centuries of Christianity the Fathers of the Church not only wanted to defend the divinity of the Holy Spirit but also to place it with that of the Father and the Son. We do not understand the Fathers correctly if we say that they wanted a pneumatology separate from a trinitarian doctrine. Their goal is to reflect and to present the truth that the Church received from Jesus himself: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."<sup>88</sup> For the Fathers of the Church, these trinitarian words of Jesus were a rule of faith to be maintained in theology. For instance Saint Irenaeus uses the image of the two hands of God the Father (the Son and the Spirit) active in the creation of the world. Irenaeus acknowledges that these two hands act together but maintain their distinctiveness between them and with the Father. And this is also what the bishops wanted to stress in *Lumen Gentium*. The Fathers of the Church succeed in maintaining the unity of the three persons without rejecting their differences; in the Trinity there is unity inclusive of differences. Therefore, we must keep in mind this trinitarian unity that allows distinctiveness while we read what *Lumen Gentium* has to say about the pneumatological aspect of ecclesiology.<sup>89</sup>

*Lumen Gentium* presents the Church's birth by putting together the missions of the Son and the Spirit. The idea is not to create a contradiction in the Church's nature between Christ and the Spirit, but to integrate the two Persons with their particular missions. In fact in *Lumen Gentium*'s articles three and four, the Council presents the permanent foundation of the Church

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<sup>88</sup> Mathew 28:19

<sup>89</sup> Acerbi, *Due ecclesiology*, 194-203. Regardless the different origins of this Trinitarian view (LG 2-3 come from the French schema while LG 4 from the Chilean schema), the final document was written purposely in this way.

by two missions in the context of the Father's plan of salvation. Aloys Grillmeier expresses this with clarity "The ecclesiology of Vatican II is pneumatological, just as it is Christocentric and ultimately theocentric. The three aspects are inseparable and their logical sequence invariable; but each one of them brings the whole Church into view."<sup>90</sup> And as Congar clarifies: "The pneumatology of the council is not pneumatocentric. It stresses that the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ."<sup>91</sup> Hence, the particular mission of the Spirit is placed within the unity of the Trinitarian life. It can be said that the Holy Spirit is dependent on the other two divine persons since the Trinity is inseparable. At the same time, however, some distinctiveness must be granted to the Spirit since without any difference from the Father and the Son there would be no Trinitarian reality.

This trinitarian exposition of the Church's creation at the beginning of *Lumen Gentium* institutes a point of view for the rest of the document. The complete constitution must be seen from this trinitarian perspective since these first four articles set the ground for what will be argued in the next articles of the Constitution. Therefore, the challenge throughout *Lumen Gentium* is to be able of distinguish the different roles of the divine Persons but not to separate their unity. For instance, we must recognize that the unity of the Church comes from a diversity of acts: the plan of the Father that is accomplished in the two missions of the Son and the Spirit; or that the Church's diversity has its model in the intra-trinitarian life of communion in difference. Consequently, in order to be faithful to Vatican II, everything that we will say about the Spirit's role in the creation of the Church in the following paragraphs must remain within this Trinitarian tension between unity and distinctiveness.

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<sup>90</sup> Grillmeier, "The Mystery of the Church", 1: 142.

<sup>91</sup> Congar, *I believe*, 1: 167.

### 2.2.2. The Holy Spirit constitutes the Church in Pentecost

Having said that the trinitarian view of the Council must always be preserved, we shall present now what is distinctive of the Holy Spirit in this triune plan of creating the Church. The first specific role of the Holy Spirit in the creation of the Church that the Council acknowledges is the Spirit's capacity to grant access to the Father through Christ. This pneumatological action has been done primarily in the Pentecost event after Jesus' resurrection and ascension into heaven. This character of the Spirit is presented formally in article four of *Lumen Gentium*. Two things can be discussed from this first point about the pneumatology of the constitution. First, we can notice from *Lumen Gentium* 4 that the role of the Spirit in the Church's creation is unique but at the same time related to that of the Father and of the Son. Second, we recognize from this article the importance of the Spirit in the *reception* of the plan of God the Father. Let us express briefly what we mean by both of them.

*Lumen Gentium's* articles two, three, and four acknowledge that the divine plan of salvation for humanity is the foundation of the Church. The Church was born out of that activity that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit performed in perfect communion of will. The Council expresses this divine plan in a narrative style that presents the different actions of the three persons of the Trinity constituting the Church's nature in her institutions and spirit. Article Two discusses the Father's will for salvation and how He, wishing that every creature be saved, prepared the foundation of the Church in the world. The preparation that was performed during Israel's history and expressed in the Old Covenant was realized in Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Therefore, Article Three, focusing on the Son's mission, states that the Church, as a means of redemption and the image of the Kingdom of God, has its origin in the Paschal Mystery, and is carried out again and again in the Eucharist. In his life, Jesus performs the will of

the Father and institutes the Church with his words and activities: He “inaugurated the kingdom of heaven on earth and revealed to us his mystery; by his obedience he brought about redemption.”<sup>92</sup> If redemption and the reign of God are what the Father wishes for his Church, then Jesus’ role institutes these. Hence, we can say that the Church has been established in and by Jesus’ role on earth.

But the Council does not stop its narration at that point since Article Four spells out the mission of the Holy Spirit: “When the work which the Father gave the Son to do on earth (cf. Jn. 17:4) was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in order that he might continually sanctify the Church, and that, consequently those who believe might have access through Christ in one Spirit to the Father (cf. Eph. 2: 18).”<sup>93</sup> Here the mission of the Spirit is summarized as an introduction of what more will be articulated next in the same article and in others of the first two chapters of *Lumen Gentium*.<sup>94</sup> In these first lines, the Holy Spirit is presented as someone sent to the world in order to sanctify and to maintain the relationship between men and women and God. It is not shown clearly in these words who sent the Spirit: the Father, the Son, or both. But implicitly we can say that is the Father who sent him because the Father figures as the source and planner of divine salvation in all these three articles. In fact, *Lumen Gentium* 4 begins stating the work that the Father gave to the Son and then expounds on what the Spirit’s mission is. With this detail, which cannot be quickly passed over, *Lumen Gentium* affirms that the missions of the Spirit and the Son are different. This basic difference brings to the rest of the document a certain space wherein pneumatology can be expressed on its own terms and distinctiveness.

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<sup>92</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 3

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 4.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 8 and 12

But along with this certain uniqueness, we can argue together with the Council that the role of the Holy Spirit comes after the Church has been created by the Son, as it is expressed in a narrative style of article three and four of *Lumen Gentium*. Pentecost is when the Spirit is poured out onto the Church already established by Christ's mission and his role will be to sanctify the Church with holy gifts. We can claim that with this chronological way to present the plan of salvation, including the Pentecost event and what the Spirit does for the Church, *Lumen Gentium* presents a pneumatology that is secondary in respect to Christology. Here, the Spirit animates something that is already created. This has been one of the criticisms from the Orthodox Christians on the ecclesiology of Vatican II.<sup>95</sup> In our opinion, this criticism has some validity but at the same time overstates this aspect of the pneumatology of the Council. The Orthodox author Nikos Nissiotis, for example, tends to disregard the fact that the person and role of the Holy Spirit in *Lumen Gentium* has multiple aspects and is developed in other places of the Constitution. The pneumatology of the Council is certainly in a secondary position in comparison to christology, but it gives much more importance to the Holy Spirit than the neo-scholastic ecclesiology used to give.<sup>96</sup>

The second aspect of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church as it is presented in *Lumen Gentium* 4 is that He is the only intermediary through whom someone can receive Christ's salvation in history. Ormond Rush in his book, *The Eyes of Faith*<sup>97</sup>, puts forth the thesis that the

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<sup>95</sup> Nikos Nissiotis, "The Main Ecclesiological Problem of the Second Vatican Council, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 2 (1965): 31-62

<sup>96</sup> See Yves Congar's response for those criticisms. They can be found in several of his articles. For an historical research on pneumatology in catholic theology, see: "Pneumatologie ou 'christmonisme' dans la tradition latine?" in *Ecclesia a Spiritu Sancto edocta*, *Lumen Gentium* Series 53 (Louvain: Duculot, 1970), 41-63. And for his comments on the pneumatology of Vatican II's documents, see: "Les implications christologiques et pneumatologiques de l'ecclesiology de Vatican II" in *Les Eglises après Vatican II* (ed. Giuseppe Alberigo; Paris: Beauchesne, 1981), 117-130

<sup>97</sup> Ormond Rush, *The Eyes of Faith: The Sense of the Faithful and the Church's Reception of Revelation* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2009).

Spirit is the principle of *reception* in the ad extra and ad intra Trinitarian life. The early Christian communities, as the New Testament presents them, saw themselves as being guided by the Spirit to understand and announce the Gospel.<sup>98</sup> For Rush, that appropriation or reception of the Truth comes through the role of the Spirit. This reception that the Spirit allows Christians is not only a cognitive process. Much more than this is an experience of being *deified* or to live the Trinitarian life.

Consequently, if the Spirit is capable of doing this *deification* according to the salvific plan, He must also be the principle of reception inside the Trinity. The Holy Spirit, as the third person of the Trinity, has therefore the same role of recognition and revelation in the intra-trinitarian life.<sup>99</sup> The relationship of the Father and the Son is only possible with the Spirit. This is because as the third divine person, the Spirit perfectly knows both and can be seen as the mirror image of the divine love between them.<sup>100</sup> The Greek Fathers expressed this affirmation with the formula: “from the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit”, and this has been maintained by theologians for centuries. The Holy Spirit is the one in whom the Father and the Son are united, and by this union they recognize themselves with their own personalities.

Allowing believers access to the Trinitarian life is what the Spirit has been doing in the Church since Pentecost. This is expressed by *Lumen Gentium* 4 when it says that in the heart of the faithful “[the Spirit] prays and bears witness to their adoptive sonship”. That reception of Christ’s salvation is attained every time that the goal of communion becomes a reality in the Church’s life. Again in this profound meaning of reception the Spirit plays a decisive role because He constantly “renews her (*the Church*) and leads her to perfect union with her

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<sup>98</sup> John 20:22-23 and Acts of the Apostles 1: 8; 9:31

<sup>99</sup> Rush, *The Eyes of Faith*, 26-31

<sup>100</sup> Congar, *I believe*, 3: 147-151



Spouse.”<sup>101</sup> What Christ achieved during his lifetime and made manifest in history can be seen as part of the activity of the Spirit regarding the creation of the Church since the Spirit has always been present in Jesus’ life. Without Christ’s role, the Spirit would have nothing to make visible in history, and without the Spirit’s role, Christ’s creative activities would have no presence after his resurrection.<sup>102</sup> Hence, following the Trinitarian foundation of the Church that *Lumen Gentium* expresses, we can affirm that the missions of Christ and the Spirit are distinct but strongly related.

### **2.2.3. The Holy Spirit acts in the Church like a soul**

Our preceding discussion, in the first section of this chapter, reminds us that the Holy Spirit as a Soul is an important part of the ecclesiology of the Mystical Body and can be traced back to the work of Saint Augustine.<sup>103</sup> It is undeniable that the Spirit has an intimate function in the inner life of the Body that is the Church. As we saw in the first chapter of this thesis, Vatican II does not want to dismiss the entire theological concept of the Church as Body of Christ but to place it within a larger Trinitarian and sacramental context. Consequently, the role and relationship of the Spirit with the Body of Christ is explained in a new way that emphasizes different aspects of them.

There are two particular articles in *Lumen Gentium*’s first Chapter where the Spirit is compared with a soul that vivifies the Body of Christ which is the Church. In the paragraphs

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<sup>101</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 4

<sup>102</sup> The Holy Spirit as the one who place Christ beyond history and allow Him to be present through history is one of the characteristic that the Orthodox professor John Zizioulas highlights of the Holy Spirit. John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (New York: Saint Vladimir’s Seminary Press. 1985), 130

<sup>103</sup> Saint Augustine, *Sermon 267*, Article 4

below, we wish to consider two aspects of the role of the Spirit as a Soul: first, how the Council's understanding of this pneumatological point is unlike pre-Vatican II ecclesiology, and second, how Vatican II relates the role of the Spirit to the concept of the Body of Christ within its main ecclesiological idea of the Church as Sacrament.

In *Lumen Gentium* 7 we read: "In order that we might be unceasingly renewed in him, [Jesus] has shared with us his Spirit who, being one and the same in head and members, gives life to, unifies and moves the whole body. Consequently, his work could be compared by the Fathers to the function that the principle of life, the soul, fulfils in the human body". As we have seen elsewhere in this thesis, this article constitutes the view of Vatican II on the ecclesiology of the Body of Christ. The desire of the Bishops in the Council was to situate this ecclesiology within the context of a healthy balance between the visible and the invisible dimensions of the Church. Therefore, *Lumen Gentium* tries to keep the idea of the Church as the Body of Christ not as a materialistic view of the Church that uses the Pauline idea to define her but as an allegory to grasp her mystery.<sup>104</sup>

This determination by the bishops to confine Saint Paul's idea within its limits as a metaphor and not as a definition can also be seen in the opening words of *Lumen Gentium* 7: "For by communicating his Spirit, Christ mystically constitutes as his body those brothers of his who are called together from every nation". The text does not say that Christ constitutes a mystical body, but that the power of the Spirit 'mystically' constitutes his brothers as his body. This union as a body of Christ is a mystical union, which means it is not a simple human association. This definition of the Church as more than a social structure has already been noted in pre-Vatican II ecclesiology. But what is new here is that Vatican II uses the word 'mystical' as

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<sup>104</sup> Phillips, *La Iglesia y su Misterio*, 1: 141

an adverb and not as a definition of the Church. This detail protects the Council from two dangers: first from seeing the Church as an ongoing incarnation of Christ and second from equating the ecclesial institution with Christ himself. Here “mystical” is a way to be united with all the members of the Church who in receiving the Spirit would be “other Christs” in the world. This usage of the word *mystical* can be claimed, once more, as an effort to maintain the spirit of Saint Paul’s idea of the mystical body: it is a metaphor of what the Church is.<sup>105</sup>

It is in this theological context that the Spirit is presented like a soul in the Church. In the ecclesiology before Vatican II this has been seen differently; from a material and institutional perspective, without maintaining the analogical language of Saint Augustine who said that the Spirit is in the Church in the way that the soul is in a body. In that ecclesiology, there is too much emphasis on the visible dimension of the Church. The Council has a different take on this idea of Spirit as soul in the Church. It maintains the image of the Spirit as the soul exactly as it is for Saint Augustine, and in this way allows comparison between the relation between Spirit and Church and Spirit and the human body. In this way this image does not easily run the risk that pre-Vatican II ecclesiologies faced. As we had seen in the previous section about pneumatology in pre-Vatican II ecclesiology this danger is to fall into an *ecclesiological monophysitism*.<sup>106</sup>

The Council avoids and corrects this pre-Vatican II danger by appreciating that the Holy Spirit is *like* the soul of the Church and that the Spirit has a similar function like the soul in every human body has: to give life, to unify and to move the whole body. In this way the soul is neither restricted by the body and its head nor does it assume the role of divine guarantor of the visible structures. Hence, Christ and the Holy Spirit are separate even as they constitute the Church

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<sup>105</sup> Phillips, *La Iglesia y su misterio*, 1: 134-135

<sup>106</sup> Congar, *I believe*, 1: 154

together by their presence and actions. Making an analogy with the dogma of Christ in two natures (human and divine), from *Lumen Gentium* 7 one can argue in favor of a notion of the Church *in* two natures and not *of* or *from* two natures.<sup>107</sup> For *Lumen Gentium* the Holy Spirit is in this Body as in any body. He is the agent that gives life as he wills, and maintains a distinction from the physical body.<sup>108</sup> The important point here is that the metaphorical language is maintained by *Lumen Gentium* in order to keep its central notion of the Church like a sacrament, as we had explained in the first chapter of this thesis. This balances the visible and the invisible, as it also reminds us that the Church's nature is much more than what we see in its actual forms and institutions. In this context, then, the Holy Spirit's role in the Church's formation preserves its balanced relation with Christ's role.

In this same spirit of articulating ecclesiology and pneumatology in a sacramental and metaphoric language, *Lumen Gentium* 8, in a very well known phrase, affirms: "As the assumed nature, inseparably united to him, serves the divine Word as a living organ of salvation, so, in a somewhat similar way, does the social structure of the Church serve the Spirit of Christ who vivifies it, in the building up of the body". Again we are in front of an analogy that illustrates what the Spirit does in shaping the Church's nature. In this case the comparison is made to a christological concept from the Council of Chalcedon (451). The Chalcedonian formulation affirms that in Christ the assumed human nature serves the Word incarnate in order to redeem, and that this is realized without any confusion, change, division or separation of them. There is one person of Jesus Christ with two natures.

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<sup>107</sup> Certainly Chalcedon's formulations for Christology responding to Eutyches' thoughts can be very helpful in ecclesiology as well. For example the doctrine of "one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only –begotten, acknowledged in two natures which undergo no confusion, no change, no division, no separation", could lead to good distinctions in order to define the complexity of the Church visible and invisible at once. For the conciliar documents see: Tanner (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, Volume 1

<sup>108</sup> John 3:8

Vatican II therefore uses this christological dogma as an image to explain the character of the Spirit's relationship with the Church on earth. With this analogy, the bishops of Vatican II wanted to highlight two crucial ecclesiological and pneumatological ideas. First, the Spirit is related to the Church's social structure not because the Church is the prolongation of the incarnation of Christ; rather, the Church is connected to the Spirit since she is a complex reality "which comes together from a human and a divine element."<sup>109</sup> This first point is important because it places the Spirit in relation to all the Church, visible and invisible, and not only to her visible structures, institutions and ministers. The Spirit is related from the very beginning of the Church with all believers.<sup>110</sup> Second, the social structure is not an end in itself but serves the Spirit, or, in other words, is His instrument.<sup>111</sup> It is the visible and earthly Church that serves the invisible and spiritual dimension of the Church; in this way, the Spirit builds up the Body, and not the other way around. The relationship between the visible ecclesial society, which has been established by Christ, and the spiritual community is in a connection by the Spirit that vivifies, moves and unifies the multiple members of the Church. But we have to be careful; the Church does not constitute an hypostatic union between the Spirit and the baptized. Although this combination is very decisive for the Church; as Philips explains, this is just "a deep and profoundly efficient unity between the Holy Spirit and the believers that is shown in gestures of redemption."<sup>112</sup>

Finally, from *Lumen Gentium* 7 and 8 we can affirm that the Spirit's role in the Church's creation and life is not only related to its invisible and individual aspects (faith, charisms, communion, etc..) but also to the visible part as a social structure in its institutions, organs of

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<sup>109</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 8

<sup>110</sup> Grillmeier, "The Mystery of the Church", 1: 149

<sup>111</sup> Thomas Hughson, "Interpreting Vatican II: A New Pentecost" *Theological Studies* 69 (2008): 33.

<sup>112</sup> Philips, *La Iglesia y su Misterio*, 1: 147

government, and ministries. Also, we are able to affirm that the Holy Spirit is active in the Church since its birth in the same way that the soul is always present in the body: giving life and unifying its members in perfect communion.<sup>113</sup> This activity of the Spirit in the Church is like a soul in a body: it is in a very intimate connection with the rest of the living organism in which it abides. However, one thing is not mentioned clearly in this explanation of the Council: what exactly does ‘gives life’ or ‘vivifies’ mean? Are those ‘giving life’ actions a source of transformation for the social structure of the Church? Is the role of the Spirit really constitutive of the Church visible and invisible in the sense of shaping it, both visibly and invisibly, as He wills? These are questions that remain from our reading of the conciliar texts and will be addressed to some extent in the third chapter of this thesis.

What *Lumen Gentium* has said in its articles seven and eight can be declared to be at the heart of its pneumatology. This enabled the Council to open up perspectives for a renewed ecclesiological reflection on the Spirit as being much more than a simply addition to a Church already created. Consequently, from this starting point, one can articulate a more pneumatological ecclesiology, raising the challenge to acknowledge the aspects of the Spirit’s role in the Church’s creation. It is this aspect of pneumatology that the Council tries to address in some lines in its chapter on the People of God and their pilgrimage on earth. Nevertheless to be faithful to *Lumen Gentium*’s spirit, as Vatican II did in its own reflection, the theologian considering these questions must be careful to preserve the appropriate relation between the visible and the invisible dimensions of the Church, and to do this in the light of a sacramental and profoundly Trinitarian ecclesiology.

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<sup>113</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 4

#### **2.2.4. The Spirit is directing and building up the Church by bestowing hierarchical and charismatic gifts.**

Later on, especially in its second chapter, *Lumen Gentium* reflects on the ways that the Spirit constitutes and shapes the Church with His permanent activity. In this way the reader of the Constitution might have a clearer idea of what it means to say that the Spirit is the fountain of life of the Church. *Lumen Gentium* 4 affirms that by bestowing his gifts, the Holy Spirit directs, adorns, and renews the community of believers. What are those gifts? How does the Spirit bestow them? And to what extent is this a creative activity of the Spirit in shaping the Church visible and invisible? These are the questions that we shall respond to in this last section of this chapter of our thesis. We will do this by focusing on what *Lumen Gentium* 12 states.

Let us recall briefly what we have said in Chapter One about the second chapter of *Lumen Gentium* as this will be a useful context to the following discussion. We must keep in mind that in the Constitution the chapter *People of God* is the second part of a diptych that is preceded by the *Mystery of the Church*. These two chapters articulate a perspective of the Church as sacrament. They express an ecclesiology that tries to find the right balance between the transcendent and the immanent dimensions of the Church. In order to read adequately both chapters, and any of their articles, one must uphold the essential status of this part of *Lumen Gentium* as a twofold topic.

Thus, specifically in reference to our question on the charismatic activity of the Holy Spirit, we might say that what the Council explains in *Lumen Gentium* 12 is part of the historical dimension of the Church as a pilgrim on this earth. Yet, this has, at the same time, resonances with the transcendent and the immanent dimension of the Church that make up the Church's

essence. As a result, the charismatic role of the Spirit must be influenced by subjects such as the trinitarian foundation of the Church, the goal of communion in the divine plan, and the Church as a living organism with countless different members. At the same time, the theme of charisms and their scope in the Church is shaped by the eschatological character of the Church, the universality of the Church and the call for unity.

The importance the Council placed on the Spirit's gifts was highly influenced by the ideas of Cardinal Suenens<sup>114</sup>, who in his speech on 22 October 1963, during the second session, marked the way the Council would actually articulate this topic in *Lumen Gentium* 12.<sup>115</sup> There is a clear parallel between what Suenens proposed in his speech and this article in *Lumen Gentium*. The first important aspect to highlight is the common ground from which the Council wants to theologize about the gifts of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not only the source of charismatic gifts, which are often applied more to the laity and religious men and women, but He is also involved in the creation and support of the hierarchy and any kind of official ministry in the Church.

Following *Lumen Gentium* 4 that talks about the Holy Spirit as the Church's guide to the truth and to communion with God through his offer of "varied hierarchic and charismatic gifts", *Lumen Gentium* 12 affirms that "It is not only through sacraments and the ministration of the Church that the Holy Spirit makes holy the People, leads them and enriches them with his virtues. Allotting his gifts according as he wills (cf. Cor. 12:11), he also distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank". These passages show that the bishops in the Council did not want to oppose the Church's hierarchy with the 'charismatic Church'. Both of them have the

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<sup>114</sup> O'Malley, *What Happened*, 187

<sup>115</sup> Hans Kung, Yves Congar, and Daniel O'Hanlon (ed.), *Council Speeches of Vatican II* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1964), 29-34



Spirit involved in their creation, either as official offices of ministries and government or as charismatic roles and services.<sup>116</sup> By recognizing this idea the Bishops wanted to get over some fears that emphasizing the charismatic face of the Church would separate the Council's teaching from Catholic tradition, placing it closer to Protestant ideas. Therefore, the common pneumatological source and the permanent relationship between official ministries and charismatic roles must always be part of the Church's dialogue and be experienced by all. It is from this common ground that *Lumen Gentium* now moves towards focusing on the specific activity of the Holy Spirit bestowing charismatic gifts to renew and unify his Church.

Congar has said that this topic of the charisms is one of the most important ways in which the Council restored pneumatology inside ecclesiology<sup>117</sup>. We agree with him, especially because it is from this role of the Holy Spirit, as author and giver of charisms, that the Council is able to underline in a new way the distinctive role of the Spirit in creating the Church. Too much needed questions, about describing this Spirit's role arise at this point: what are these 'charismatic gifts'? and, for what reason do they exist?

Regarding the first of these questions, the bishops wrote that the Holy Spirit "distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank.... Whether these charisms be very remarkable or more simple and widely diffused, they are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation since they are fitting and useful for the needs of the Church"<sup>118</sup>. As we can see according to the *Lumen Gentium* the gifts from the Spirit have two characteristics: are for everyone and are diverse. However, the Council does not give examples of these charisms but only states that they

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<sup>116</sup> Richard Gaillardetz and Catherine E. Clifford, *Keys to the Council. Unlocking the Teaching of Vatican II* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012), 61-62

<sup>117</sup> Congar, *I Believe*, 1: 170

<sup>118</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 12

are special and of very various kinds. To understand what the bishops had in mind with charisms, we will do well to refer back to Saint Paul's letters, especially his letter to the Corinthians that *Lumen Gentium* 12 refers to.<sup>119</sup> According to Saint Paul, charisms are gifts of the Spirit in order that every human being can say "Jesus is Lord"<sup>120</sup>. They can take various forms such as apostleship, prophecy, teaching and healing.<sup>121</sup> We can also follow Cardinal Suenens' speech to figure out what specifically those charismatic gifts are: "What would our church be without the charism of teachers and theologians? And what would our Church be like without the charism of prophets? Do we not all know laymen and laywomen in each of our own dioceses who we might say are in a way called by the Lord and endowed with various charisms of the Spirit? Whether in catechetical work, in spreading the Gospel, in every area of Catholic activity in social and charitable works?"<sup>122</sup>

From these two sources we can have a clearer idea of what the Council means by 'charismatic gifts'. For sure they are gifts from the Spirit that help to bring salvation to the entire Church and they are as many and varied as the People of God are many and varied.<sup>123</sup> However, they constitute a diffuse variety of services, roles, and ministries which makes it difficult to specify their nature. If the list of possible charisms is in practice without limits, what is their more specific nature? Certainly not every activity or role that every person does in the world can be a charism from the Spirit. If it was so, the Holy Spirit's role would be lack any specificity.

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<sup>119</sup> For a presentation on the topic of charisms in St. Paul see Francis Sullivan, *Charisms and Charismatic Renewal*, (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Books, 1982), 17-46

<sup>120</sup> 1 Corinthians 12: 3

<sup>121</sup> 1 Corinthians 12: 28-30

<sup>122</sup> Hans Kung, Yves Congar, and Daniel O'Hanlon (ed), *Council speeches of Vatican II*, 32

<sup>123</sup> Hans Kung, "The charismatic structure of the Church" in *The Church and Ecumenism*, Concilium 4 (trans. Theodore L. Westow; New York: Paulist Press, 1965)

Let us turn now to our second question as it will bring light not only to the purpose of these gifts but also to their nature. The goal of the Spirit enriching the Church with his charisms is to permit her “to keep the freshness of youth”, since the Holy Spirit “constantly renews her and leads her to perfect union with her Spouse”<sup>124</sup> and to make the faithful “fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church.”<sup>125</sup> Therefore, the Spirit is giving these various charisms in order to accomplish two things: to renew the community of faith and to compose the Church. And what else can ‘to renew and to build’ the People of God mean but that it is constructing the Church as a sacrament of communion between men and women and between humankind and the Father?

Charisms are always offered to the Church in order to help the church be a means of salvation for all humanity. Accordingly, we can affirm from the letter and the spirit of *Lumen Gentium* that charisms are every kind of Christian life and vocation that moves the Church to its fulfillment as the perfect communion that trinitarian life offers and draws humankind to. The Holy Spirit is working in order to shape the Church, and He does that by giving her special graces or charisms. This renewal of the Church into all Truth will always point to that reality of redemption that the Son has realized. We can remember here that the Spirit’s role is to make manifest or historical what the Son has accomplished in the salvific plan of God.

Finally, from *Lumen Gentium* we can claim that the Spirit has a role in the Church’s creation even if it remains to some extent secondary in relation to the Son’s role. This is true if we notice that the Spirit’s charismatic gifts, the more original aspect of the pneumatology of the Council, are primarily to renew and to enrich the Church already created by Christ’s mission. It

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<sup>124</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 4

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 12

is true that by bestowing his gifts the Spirit is building up the Church, and that without his role the Church cannot exist at all. Yet, Vatican II's reflection on the Spirit at this point is not a complete pneumatology because it lacks a full description of the real capacity of the Spirit to change the course of the Church.<sup>126</sup> One example of this limit of the Council can be found in the final lines of *Lumen Gentium* 12. The article ends by saying that it is the responsibility of those who have authority in the Church to "judge the genuineness and proper use of these gifts". It seems that in everyday life the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit are subordinate to his hierarchical gifts. Of course this relationship between charisms and hierarchy has to be present in an adequate ecclesiology. However, one thing that Vatican II could be lacking in its pneumatology is a better reflection on relationship of the Spirit with these two kinds of gifts. This task proves to be necessary whenever, in the minds of the common faithful, the hierarchical gifts are more related with the Son and his activity rather than with the Holy Spirit. Even though for Vatican II the Spirit's role in the creation of the Church is strongly related to his different gifts, the Son's activity remains before or at least more influential than the one of the Spirit regarding the Church's creation.

### **2.2.5. The pneumatology of the Council as a point of departure**

We have seen in this second chapter that the Holy Spirit certainly has a central role in the creation and the life of the Church. Our three sections of this chapter can be seen as a journey through some of the important concepts of a pneumatology inside the ecclesiology during the twentieth century. And from this, we have argued that the Second Vatican Council in the first

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<sup>126</sup> Pedro Rodriguez, "Consideracion cristologica y pneumatológica del pueblo de Dios" in *Ecclesiologia 30 años después de "Lumen Gentium"* (ed. Pedro Rodriguez; Madrid: Ediciones Rialp, 1994)

chapters of its Constitution *Lumen Gentium* has presented a pneumatology that can be seen as an intermediate point between two ecclesiologies: one where the Holy Spirit is seen as an addition to the Church already settled by Christ and one where the same Holy Spirit is positioned as the co-institutive principle of the Church together with the Son.

The Council broke away from an ecclesiology that is presented in the theology of the Mystical Body, which was excessively juridical and institutional and placed the Spirit in a secondary role in the Church's creation and nature. As is illustrated above, the Council distanced itself from this restricted pneumatology in three ways: first, by approaching the Spirit's action as a constitutive part of the plan of salvation of the Triune God; second, by seeing it not as an animator in service of the social structure of the Church but as the center towards the Church's institution can model herself on; and third, by reflecting on the Spirit's as donor of special gifts to permanently renew the Church.

The initial point of discussion and criticism of pre-Vatican II ecclesiology allowed the Council to erect an ecclesiology that can be considered as a point of departure. Certainly, this departing point afforded theologians such as Yves Congar and Hans Kung the possibility of moving the reflection on the pneumatological nature of the Church into new perspectives. Looking again at the Council's concepts from the perspective of a viewpoint that concedes to the Spirit a chronologically and ontologically equal position with the Son in the Church's creation, Vatican II's approach proves to be one step that enabled that reflection. The Spirit's creative role especially by bestowing charisms, as it is shown in *Lumen Gentium*, is a good foundation but it does not answer all the questions. The pneumatology of Vatican II is a good basis to keep thinking of the distinctive role of the Spirit in re-creating the Church. What was needed after the Council, and is still now needed, is to theologize more 'ontologically' on the role of the Holy

Spirit in the Church's creation in a manner that can offer insight into the Spirit's more actual and significant influence in the Church's nature and her characteristics.

Therefore these questions invite further investigation into what the Council has articulated: to what extent can this creative power of the Holy Spirit actually move the Church in her visible institutions, ministries and missions? And, how strong is the influence of the Holy Spirit in order to recreate the Church in new ways? These are the questions that remain in our thoughts at the end of this chapter about the status of the pneumatology of *Lumen Gentium*. They will form the background of the final chapter in our thesis wherein we will enquire, from the perspective of the charismatic gifts of the Spirit, into the possibility of a favorable discourse about a Church that is a communion from and in diversity.

### CHAPTER 3. Aspects of a Church created by the Holy Spirit's charisms.

In the previous chapter we have presented the pneumatology that is articulated in the first two chapters of *Lumen Gentium*. The ideas in the second chapter arise from Vatican II's inquiry into the specific role of the Holy Spirit in the Church's creation and renewal. We can summarize that role in three main points. First, the Holy Spirit's role is a constitutive part of the plan of salvation of God the Father, and He fulfils this role especially by making present the Gospel of Christ at every moment of history. Second, the Holy Spirit's role is realized when the Church's social structure serves him in his role of building up the Church. And third, the Holy Spirit permanently creates the Church by being a donor of special gifts. Vatican II states that in the creation of the Church the Holy Spirit plays a role that is of renewal and up-building.<sup>127</sup> In this sense we acknowledge, together with the Council, that the Spirit's creation of the Church is twofold in meaning: renewal of the same Church that has been founded by Christ with the assistance of the Spirit, and the creation in history of new features of that same Church.<sup>128</sup> In this last point is where the most distinctive and influential pneumatology of *Lumen Gentium* is grounded.

If the most distinguishing part of the Council's pneumatology is its doctrine about the charisms in the Church, it becomes necessary at this stage of our reflection to ask, "What would be the Church's form today if we recognize that the Holy Spirit is involved in its creation, particularly, as He bestows various charismatic gifts to the People of God?" This shall be our main question for this last chapter. However before trying to respond we need to revisit the

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<sup>127</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Articles 4 and 12

<sup>128</sup> This character of continuity and newness is well presented by Yves Congar in his *The Word and the Spirit* (trans. David Smith; London: Cassell, 1986), 78-84

context that raises this question. Thus, we shall focus briefly on the assertion that the charismatic structure of the Church as it is presented in Vatican II is the more distinctive part of the Council's pneumatology.

### **3.1. The Holy Spirit bestowing charisms: Vatican II's more distinctive aspect on pneumatology.**

During the second session of the Second Vatican Council, the charismatic structure of the Church was not one of the significant issues demanding discussion by the bishops.<sup>129</sup> Indeed Cardinal Ernesto Ruffini, supported by others bishops, expressed his concern about the danger of stressing too much the role of charisms in the Church. It was Suenens' speech that encouraged them to maintain this issue of the charisms in the topics that *Lumen Gentium* deals with. Thus, the Council in effect had a discussion on the role of the Holy Spirit in renewing and giving life to the Church, and the result of that conversation is present in *Lumen Gentium*.<sup>130</sup> Vatican II did this by recovering the Pauline theology of the Spirit bestowing different charismatic gifts on the Church in a creative way to continue building up the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12-14 and Eph. 4:16).<sup>131</sup> With this new appropriation of Saint Paul, the Council brought into its ecclesiology an

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<sup>129</sup> Rynne, *Vatican Council II*, 197-198 and Leon Joseph Suenens, *A New Pentecost?* (trans. Francis Martin; New York: Crossroads, 1975), 30

<sup>130</sup> The paragraph on the charisms of the faithful, in its final version as it is in *Lumen Gentium* 12, could have basically two sources: Cardinal Suenens' speech and the input of a paragraph written by Francis Sullivan in the midst of the second session. See the narration of Fr. Sullivan in William Madges and Michael J. Daley, ed. *Vatican II. Forty Personal Stories* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2003), 94-97

<sup>131</sup> We are aware of difficulties arise from the translation of the very rich Greek term *charismata* to a modern language. Throughout our chapter we will use the English word 'charism' in the meaning that is most used by *Lumen Gentium*: a distinctive gift of grace bestow to every member of the community in order to serve and love with a unique role. For the exegetical discussion see: Albert Vanhoye, "The Biblical Question of 'charisms'" in Rene Latourelle, ed. *Vatican II. Assessment and Perspectives* (3 volumes; New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 1: 439-468



important topic to balance the emphasis of the previous theology of the Mystical Body of Christ on the institution and the hierarchy of the Church.<sup>132</sup>

A comprehensive view of the ecclesiology presented in *Lumen Gentium*'s two first chapters demonstrates the Council's understanding that charisms express the distinctive role that the Spirit has in the Church's nature of being like a sacrament of the trinitarian mystery. We have stated in our first chapter that the ecclesiology of Vatican II is rooted in the trinitarian mystery and the plan of salvation of the Triune God as these are presented in the Bible and developed in history. In consequence the Church's human and visible forms express the invisible source and goal of Church: the trinitarian communion. At the same time, however, the transcendent aspect of the Church is expressed on earth only through visible forms. Hence *Lumen Gentium* does not try to contrast the transcendent and the immanent dimensions of the Church.

In order to create this balanced relationship between both dimensions, the Council uses the notion of sacrament to describe the Church's nature. A key point for Vatican II to develop this notion of the Church as Sacrament is the essential role the Holy Spirit plays as the donor of countless gifts and graces to the Church. In this way, the Council significantly expands the role of the Spirit in the creation of the Church in three essential aspects. First, the Spirit allows everyone in his own manner to receive the salvation of God in his own history.<sup>133</sup> By bestowing charisms, the Spirit enables every Christian to experience, in his own way and in his personal history, the communion that the Trinity offers to humanity. Second, the Holy Spirit acts as the soul in the Body that is the Church.<sup>134</sup> By creating a charismatic structure, the Holy Spirit is

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<sup>132</sup> In his commentary of *Lumen Gentium* talking about the charismatic element of the Church and its presence in pre-Vatican II's theology, Gerard Philips writes this very illustrative comment: "Probably not a single manual of Theology devotes a chapter to this doctrine". See: Philips, *La Iglesia y su Misterio*, 1: 221

<sup>133</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 4

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 7

acting as a soul in this diverse Body since He is both the source of differences and the point of unity. As Saint Paul says: “there are varieties of gifts, but the Spirit is the same.”<sup>135</sup> Third, the Spirit vivifies and builds up the social structure of the Church.<sup>136</sup> The charismatic gifts allows the Council to truly maintain the tension between the transcendental and the immanent aspects of the Church since the Holy Spirit, who abides in the transcendental, always needs the visible to be effective and through which He is experienced.

Accordingly, we are able to claim that the role of the Holy Spirit in the creation of the Church, as it is presented in *Lumen Gentium*, can only be adequately grasped in the document’s presentation of the Spirit’s charisms. This centrality of the theology of charisms in the pneumatology of the Council has been highlighted in various ways by many theologians. Yves Congar, for example, that: “The Council recognized the place of the magisterium from which the faithful receive the objective determination of their faith, but one of its characteristic theological steps was to attribute again to God as to their subject operations that create the People of God and bring about salvation. This is emphasized by rather notable statements about the charisms or spiritual gifts parceled out by the Holy Spirit within the Church for the common good.”<sup>137</sup> Also, Gerard Philips, writing in his commentary on *Lumen Gentium*, notes that with its presentation of the charisms in the Church “the Council had contributed to make explicit the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and also to increase the flexibility and receptivity of the faithful to receive it.”<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:4

<sup>136</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 8

<sup>137</sup> Yves Congar, “The People of God” in *Vatican II an interfaith appraisal* (ed. John Miller, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966), 198-199

<sup>138</sup> Philips, *La Iglesia y su Misterio*, 1: 225

### **3.2. A Church re-shaped by the Holy Spirit's charismatic role.**

The presentation made above justifies the need to ask the question that we wish to attend to in this chapter. What characteristics might the Church have in our days if we consider it as re-shaped by the Holy Spirit's charismatic role? We will do this by focusing on these three aspects of that Church: (i) the Church as an *open system* and an *event*; (ii) the Church's deep communion of discipleship; and (iii) the Church's unity in and from diversity. We will do this in the same spirit of Vatican II that wanted to have a 'pastoral' character in all its discussions and documents. By adopting this particular approach, the bishops did not want to reject the need to present and define clear doctrine. Rather, Vatican II's doctrine is fundamentally trying to respond to the difficulties faced by ordinary men and women and is thus naturally opened to further reflections and contributions in the topics that its documents deal with.<sup>139</sup> Consequently, these three aspects of a Church filled by charisms, which we are going to present, are intended to reflect the Council's pastoral and all-embracing approach towards theology and the search for new ecclesiological ideas.<sup>140</sup>

#### **3.2.1. The Church is an open system and an event.**

The Holy Spirit is involved in the creation of the Church, especially in distributing his charismatic gifts. The first two ideas about a Church built up by the Spirit that we shall reflect on are: the Church as an *open system* and as an *event*. These are related to the very nature of the Church. They are not just aspects or characteristics of the Church but a kind of definition of her

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<sup>139</sup> Yves Congar, "A Last Look at the Council", in *Vatican II for Those Who Were There*, 345-348

<sup>140</sup> A good attempt to search for future ideas and practices in ecclesiology is the article of Angel Anton, "Post Conciliar Ecclesiology. Expectations, Results, and Prospects for the Future", in *Vatican II. Assessment and Perspectives*, 1: 407-438

very essence. Therefore, what we shall express in the following paragraphs can be seen as elements to compose a fundamental ecclesiology that comes from the perspective of a strong theology of the Church's charismatic structure.

In "Observations on the Factor of the Charismatic in the Church",<sup>141</sup> Karl Rahner offers a view of the Church as an 'open system'. This is in opposition to a more traditional apologetic of the Church as a 'closed system'. In the latter, the Church is seen as a system that is defined and directed from a point within itself. Within this closed system, the lives of individuals and the community find their validation and direction from the ecclesial center, which are the Pope and the institutional office. In contrast, Rahner proposes his idea of the Church as an 'open system' where "the definitive condition in which it actually stands and should stand neither can nor should be defined in any adequate sense in terms of any one point immanent within the system itself."<sup>142</sup> For Rahner, the point of validation and final definition in the Church is outside its visible and historical institutions. According to him, since the Church is an open system its charismatic character constitutes its essence. This is so because the variety of charisms received from the Holy Spirit imbues the Church with an openness to something that is outside of herself. Therefore, the point of reference for the Church must be more properly situated outside of its historical institutional dimension.

In this model of Church as an *open system*, the Holy Spirit, with his role of creating a charismatic dimension in the Church, acts as a 'vanishing point'. Allow me to briefly explain this idea and why I'm using it now. In art, a vanishing point in the theory of perspective is a point of convergence of innumerable parallel lines, visible or invisible, in a drawing. This point of

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<sup>141</sup> Karl Rahner, "Observations on the Factor of the Charismatic in the Church" in *Theological Investigations* 12 (trans. David Bourke; New York: Crossroad, 1974).

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 89

convergence diffuses itself into the infinite, usually in the horizon of the drawing. This technique is used in art with two intentions. First, this vanishing point maintains the illusion of depth and three-dimensional reality in a drawing. This allows the viewer to perceive the completeness of the image. Second, this point of convergence, though invisible, supports the entire picture. In the same way, the Holy Spirit is active in the Church as a vanishing point. The Spirit acts as a vanishing point that offers the entire Church the possibility of truly becoming an open system through the bestowing of his various charismatic gifts. The amount of charisms that He gives is incalculable; they are like the parallel lines in a drawing that always point to the infinite since their source is absolutely transcendental. Also, the Holy Spirit is like a vanishing point because with its gifts He supports the entire ecclesial system and allows whoever He wants to experience the fullness of salvation.

Acknowledging the role of the Holy Spirit, who according to Vatican II continuously sanctifies the Church by bestowing his gifts, is one of the keys to recognize and to build on the understanding of the Church as an open system. The recognition of the fact that the Spirit vivifies his Church, and creates it with a charismatic structure, constitutes the possibility of living in a Church that does not exhaust herself but always refers herself to something greater. The Council expresses this bigger reality in two ways: the Kingdom of God<sup>143</sup> and eschatology<sup>144</sup>. The Holy Spirit is indeed involved in bringing about both of them, and in relating them to the Church.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 5

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 8 and 48

<sup>145</sup> Kilian McDonnell, *The Other Hand of God*, 33-44; John Zizioulas, "The Holy Spirit and the Unity of the Church" in *The Holy Spirit and the Christian Unity*, 36-39.

First, the Church is not the Kingdom of God, but it is a sign of it in the world. In other words, the Church is like a sacrament of salvation, where “salvation” refers to the presence of the Kingdom wherein perfect communion between God and humankind and among all men and women comes to be. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that makes all this possible, since even the birth and the mission of Jesus as King and his reign are enabled by the mission of the Spirit.<sup>146</sup> The presence of the Kingdom of God deepens our appreciation of the Spirit’s action in renewing the Church with his gifts. Second, the Church is never complete in her mission, as she is more properly on a pilgrimage towards her fulfillment in the eschaton. Even though the Church is at this same time enjoying the first fruits of the eschaton to come. The Holy Spirit brings to the Church his eschatological character, which has always been expressed with the words, ‘already but not yet’. The Spirit distributes his charisms to the members of the Church, and in this way He brings to today’s Church the shape of the Church of the future.

By distributing different charismatic gifts to the Church, the Holy Spirit formed it as an open system with a transcendental character. That transcendental character of the Church, so ably articulated by Vatican II’s ecclesiology with its trinitarian foundation, can be complemented with the idea of the Church as an event. As we shall see, this idea of the Church as an event maintains a defined ecclesiology that balances the immanent and the transcendental dimensions of the Church, as the first chapters of *Lumen Gentium* describe. In this challenge of re-thinking the Church as an event, the Holy Spirit plays a decisive role, specifically, in his action of bestowing his charismatic gifts.

*Lumen Gentium* 4 begins its reflection on the mission of the Holy Spirit in the Church’s creation by focusing on the community’s reception of sanctification and access to the Trinitarian

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<sup>146</sup> Luke 1: 30-35; 4:18

life since Pentecost. This permanent sanctification and access would not be possible if it were not for the continued presence of the Spirit giving charisms. What happened at Pentecost has been repeated again and again at every moment and place in history; the Holy Spirit bestows gifts in each of these as He did on that day of Pentecost.<sup>147</sup> In this sense, the Church is an event always reenacted; it is the event of the Spirit giving charisms in order to build up the People of God at the same time that each person appropriates the Gospel of Christ.<sup>148</sup>

At the moment of Pentecost, as it is presented in the second chapter of Acts, the Spirit came to the group of disciples and they began to announce the Gospel in different languages.<sup>149</sup> This biblical image of various disciples speaking different languages allows us to think of the Spirit distributing different gifts and forming the Church from that diversity. In Pentecost, as narrated in the book of Acts, the Church was created first of all in and as an event. The Church is manifest as the action of announcing, receiving and living the divine communion which is the goal and the nature of the Church. With the continued and constant distribution of various charismatic gifts since then, the Spirit is making this event happen again and again.

The bond between the initial moment of Pentecost and the countless “pentecosts” during the entire history emphasizes two important ecclesiological points. First, that what happened at Pentecost in Jerusalem is not primarily the foundation of the Church as an institution but an event that introduces for the first time in history what the Church’s nature is: communion.

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<sup>147</sup> Patrick Joseph Mullins, *The Teaching of Lumen Gentium on the Holy Spirit* (Ann Arbor: MI, University Microfilms, 1991), 379

<sup>148</sup> This primary ‘serving’ character of the Holy Spirit in the actualization of the Gospel of Jesus distances us from an important point of a pneumatocentric ecclesiology that can be seen for instance in the work of Leonardo Boff. The Brazilian theologian goes too far in identifying the Holy Spirit with the risen Son and thus makes the Church a sacrament of the Spirit. See: Leonardo Boff, *Church: Charism and Power* (New York: Crossroad, 1988), 144-164

<sup>149</sup> It can be noticed here that it is not clear who is the group that receives the Spirit in Pentecost, the author of Acts just says “they were altogether in one place” (Acts 2:1). I would suggest that because the Spirit is coming to every Christian as is presented throughout the book of Acts, this “they” of Acts 2:1 means a bigger group than the twelve apostles.

Second, that the pilgrimage of the People of God is the ongoing recreation of the divine and human communion that happened for the first time at Pentecost in Jerusalem two thousand years ago. Perhaps, this is the same point that the author of Acts wants to make with the narration of other “Pentecost” moments in the early Church.<sup>150</sup> Even in a short period of time, as is narrated in Acts, “new pentecosts” reflect the Spirit continually creating the Church.<sup>151</sup>

The Church is a Pentecostal event that includes specific persons (the Holy Spirit and human beings) who perform specific activities (making present the plan of communion of the Triune God). The Church is a dynamic event, simultaneously the product of divine and human action; which is always receiving and passing on the plan of God in words and actions.<sup>152</sup> Thus, whenever someone expresses that Jesus is the Lord, whenever any woman or man receives and conforms his or her life to that divine gift of communion and whenever the Spirit is distributing his gifts, in some mysterious way the Church is being created anew. This pneumatological foundation of the Church offers her a broader perspective of her nature with a more rich and diverse character. This also makes her more humble in relating to the world and the Kingdom of God since she recognizes that has received everything as gift and that the Kingdom, where divine communion will be fulfilled, is her model and objective. Finally, this challenges the Church to find a profound and permanent relationship between her essence and final goal and her visible life and structures on earth.

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<sup>150</sup> Acts 4:23-31 ; 10: 44-48

<sup>151</sup> McDonell, *The Other Hand of God*, 55-61

<sup>152</sup> Ormond Rush, *Still interpreting Vatican II* (New York: Paulist Press, 2004), 69-85



### 3.2.2. The Church as a deep communion of discipleship

A charismatic gift one receives might bestow upon him many abilities. These gifts could be of a great variety: teaching the gospel and the faith of the Church; accompanying the lonely and the sick; denouncing injustices within and without the Church; leading groups and institutions and ministering and organizing parishes or schools. Indeed, the bishops express this broadness of charisms in *Lumen Gentium* thus: “whether these charisms be very remarkable or more simple and widely diffused, they are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation.”<sup>153</sup> The receiver of a charismatic gift could be anyone, regardless of gender, and include such variety as a lay minister or a bishop, a priest or a deacon, a teacher or a student, and someone close to the ecclesial center or someone that is on the borders of the Church. Nobody is excluded from the possibility of receiving a charismatic gift. Hence the charisms among the faithful will be very diverse according to what role and mission the Spirit wants to confer. This universality of the receivers is also expressed in this line from *Lumen Gentium*: the Holy Spirit “distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank.”<sup>154</sup>

Throughout the various texts in which *Lumen Gentium* offer its theology of charisms, one thing is constantly repeated: the Holy Spirit allots his different gifts to any kind of believer. One aspect of the distinctiveness of the Holy Spirit is that he ‘blows wherever he wills’,<sup>155</sup> and this intimates his being as the main source of the catholicity of the Church. Consequently, the broad variety of charismatic gifts and the universality of receivers are two of the main characteristics of the Spirit’s gifts that renew and vivify the Church. At the same time, Vatican II acknowledges that communion is the goal of the plan of God. As such, this too is the goal of the Church.

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<sup>153</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 12

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 12

<sup>155</sup> John 3:8

Therefore, we can say that the essential catholicity of the gifts and the universality of receivers challenge the Church to live out a fullness of communion as the sign of God's salvific plan for the world.

During the post-conciliar years, this theology of charisms has been mainly received by the Charismatic Renewal movement.<sup>156</sup> The proliferation of this movement, and the growing theological research about it, has resulted in the growing relevance of charismatic gifts in the Catholic Church. But, it is also true, to some extent, that this movement has restricted the reality of the Holy Spirit's charisms to certain kinds of gifts and to particular ways these are exercised in Catholicism. Generally speaking, Catholics would generally understand charism in these ways: speaking in tongues; a healing power; or, a certain kind of praising God. In practice, this has excluded a great amount of gifts that are also from the Holy Spirit and that constitute the charismatic structure of the Church.

If we follow closely Vatican II's doctrine on pneumatology then even the more simple way of following Jesus and his Gospel is a charismatic gift in the Church. When asked about the constitution of a charism in the Church, Karl Rahner compares it to the role of a devoted mother for whom caring for her child is everything. For him, even this narrow and specific love, though small, is an experience of eternity, and therefore a charism in the Church since it expresses a life of eternity on earth. He concludes thus: "It is in these that the life that most truly characterizes the Church is accomplished, not in culture, the solution of social questions, ecclesiastical

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<sup>156</sup> Sullivan, *Charisms and Charismatic Renewal*; and Suenens, *A new Pentecost?*, 71-78

politics, the learned treatises of theologians, but in faith, hope and love, in the longing for eternity, the patience of the Cross, heartfelt joy.”<sup>157</sup>

The universality of the Spirit’s gifts and their common intention, as expressed in *Lumen Gentium*, allow us to argue that a charismatic gift from the Holy Spirit can be seen as a mode by which the act of appropriating the salvation that Jesus brought to the world is accomplished. This condition of being saved is carried out by the person in the manner of being a disciple of Jesus Christ. According to the Father’s plan that salvation, and consequently the chief aspiration of the Church, is to have “communion with God and unity among all men.”<sup>158</sup> Distributing gifts of salvation is what the Holy Spirit does at every moment of history. Thus, the Church emerges renewed again and again whenever those gifts are lived. As a result, there is a strong inter-relationship between the deep communion of discipleship and the presence of charismatic gifts. By receiving the Spirit’s gifts and adapting his life to the likeness of Jesus’ life, the human person experiences in history a deep communion with the Trinity and with the rest of humanity. This discussion alerts us to the many challenges the Church faces with regard to creating enough room to allow the Spirit to truly be a builder of his Church, wherein everyone can live and participate as a disciple of Jesus, each with his own gift.

In order to have that ecclesial life of deep communion that the Spirit can realize, we as a Church must move towards adopting certain convictions and practices. These include: believing strongly that the Spirit is guiding the Church and that her end is not in herself but in the Kingdom of God; preserving always the common dignity of the faithful; engaging in positive and permanent intra-ecclesial dialogue; and acknowledging diversity as constitutive of the Church’s

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<sup>157</sup> Karl Rahner, “The Charismatic Element in the Church” in *The Spirit in the Church* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979), 57

<sup>158</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 1

nature. These practices can lead the Church to faithfully live as a communion of discipleship since as Walter Kasper writes: “The Catholic Church sees itself as a whole in which each Christian has his/her charism (1 Cor 7: 7) and, consequently, neither one nor another can be the whole.”<sup>159</sup> In the paragraphs below, I would like to focus on a further condition: participation and sharing of responsibility.

An ecclesiology that appreciates the Church as the product of the coming together of the Holy Spirit’s charismatic and hierarchical gifts calls for participation and the sharing of responsibility. *Lumen Gentium* 12 states that the Spirit distributes gifts so that the receivers can be prepared to undertake tasks and responsibilities in the Church. It is also written in the same article that the portion of the Church who has charge over it must judge the genuineness of those gifts without extinguishing the Spirit. These two aspects together call attention to the need to maintain an ecclesial tension if we truly want to allow the Spirit to construct the Church.<sup>160</sup> This tension has two poles. On the one hand, there is a need expressed by a great number of Catholics who are not part of the hierarchy to participate in the exercise of power in the Church. And on the other, there is the need of the Bishops to fulfill their required role in guiding and ruling the Church; this is a hierarchical role that is also assisted by the same Spirit.

This necessary tension invites to do a reflection on the area of real participation in the Church. This participation should include a proper co-responsibility of lay men and women, religious, and pastors on the decisions about the Church’s mission and structures. Without co-responsibility, participation ends being just a decision made from the hierarchy which is offered

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<sup>159</sup> Kasper, “The Renewal of Pneumatology in Contemporary Catholic life and Theology”, 18

<sup>160</sup> Although written before Vatican II Congar’s book “False and True Reform in the Church” already reflect on these challenges in a Church seen as communion of a variety of roles and vocations. See: Yves Congar, *True and False Reform of the Church* (trans. P. Philibert; Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical, 2011), 229-264

to the faithful. Rather, participation should be an essential means to maintain that healthy and necessary tension among all Catholics and their roles in the Church.

This co-responsibility of lay, religious and pastors is not rooted in an ideology. Rather, it flows out of an ecclesiology that includes pneumatology.<sup>161</sup> A predominant way to allow the Spirit to really build the Church is for her to open herself up to real opportunities for these charismatic gifts to be exercised in the everyday life of the Church. However, at the same time, this must be done together with the hierarchy who exercises its role of oversight over various expressions of Christian life, and in this way judges if they lead to the fulfillment of the plan of salvation or deviate from it.<sup>162</sup> Both negotiating this tension and implementing some levels of democracy are needed in the Church if she wants to be what her very nature is: a deep communion of discipleship.<sup>163</sup> Without true participation and co-responsibility, the Church cannot fully participate in the deep and true trinitarian communion because she is not allowing the Holy Spirit to bring about the needed diversity from which this communion comes into being.

### **3.2.3. The Church's unity is in and from diversity.**

Our third and last aspect of a Church renewed by charismatic gifts from the Holy Spirit is her unity in diversity. We have stated in the previous paragraphs that if the Church wants to faithfully be the sacrament of the communion, imaged in the likeness of the Trinity, she must

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<sup>161</sup> McNamara, *Sacrament of Salvation*, 84-86

<sup>162</sup> Some good suggestions for the institutional Church to exercise this task of discernment are in Rahner, "The Charismatic Element in the Church", 68-73.

<sup>163</sup> John A. Coleman, "Not Democracy but Democratization" in *A Democratic Catholic Church: The Reconstruction of Roman Catholicism* (ed. Eugene Bianchi and Rosemary Radford Ruether; New York: Crossroads, 1992)

first recognize both the dignity of the different charisms and the countless ways to be a disciple of Jesus. She must appreciate that this diversity exists to form a united community of believers as Jesus himself hoped.<sup>164</sup> This same hope was certainly there in the early Christian communities as it is shown in the Acts of the Apostles where the author says that “All who believe were together and had all things in common.”<sup>165</sup> Obviously, this challenges the Church to maintain the tension between diversity and unity.<sup>166</sup>

Our preceding discussion on the role of the Spirit in creating the Church has led us to this point: we can argue that is from and because of diversity that the Church is called to be united, and able to do so. This is clearly a different point of view from an ecclesiology that focuses firstly on the unity of the Church as a hierarchical society with one head, and only secondarily on the way it becomes diverse in the multiple expressions of Christianity. Instead, the Church is more properly firstly diverse because of her pneumatological creation; and this diversity is what enables her be one like the Trinity. To put this more strongly, the Church remains united from the time of its creation, even as it is already diverse from this moment and is supposed to continue being that diverse body.<sup>167</sup>

Hans Kung reflects on this tension between unity and diversity in the Church in this way: “Therefore, a Church order based on the charisma does not mean enthusiasm that degenerates into arbitrariness and disorder, nor legalism that hardens into leveling and uniformity. Neither caprice nor uniformity, neither leveling nor disorder, but order in liberty marks the charismatic

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<sup>164</sup> John 17: 20-23

<sup>165</sup> Acts 2:44

<sup>166</sup> Francis A. Sullivan, *The Church we Believe in. One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 43-45

<sup>167</sup> Miroslav Volf and Maurice Lee, “The Spirit and the Church” in *Advents of the Spirit*, 392-394

Church.”<sup>168</sup> We have presented in this third chapter some thoughts that engage appropriate theological ideas to root the view that the Church, though diverse, is marked by order in liberty. Three more theological points might sustain this claim, and so better illustrate that the Church remains one, even if it is truly a society formed by a broad diversity of services and charisms.

First, whenever the Spirit is bestowing various charisms and people are receiving and putting them into action, the unity of the Church is safeguarded because there is only one source for this diversity: the person of the Holy Spirit.<sup>169</sup> The Spirit cannot oppose, nor contradict himself in his role of bestowing different gifts. He cannot oppose himself because He is one unify person with one aspiration: bring about the plan of the Father in union with the Son’s mission. The character of the Holy Spirit as a person is very important for us here.<sup>170</sup> One of the dangers of looking at the Spirit as a force, a power or some kind of indeterminate grace is that his personality can be diminished. This can be problematic in his relations with ecclesiology. A diffuse personality of the Spirit can result in an undefined character of his interventions on earth. Also, since He is the same person the gifts are always united in their source; these share in the same foundation. Therefore, in order to argue for a primordial unity of the different charisms of the Spirit, we have to preserve his status as a person. In addition, he cannot divide himself and his activity since these are also always one and the same. His activity is at any time Trinitarian, always dependent on the plan of the Father and consonant with the activity of the Son. In this sense, every charismatic gift bestowed by the Holy Spirit in the Church points to the same goal

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<sup>168</sup> Kung, “The Charismatic Structure of the Church”, 60-61

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 60

<sup>170</sup> For the crucial importance of the Personhood of the Spirit from the point of view of the discussions around the First Council of Constantinople, see: John Zizioulas “Pneumatology and the Importance of the Person” in *Communion and Otherness* (Ed. Paul McPartlan; New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 178-205

and is part of the same plan. The activity of the Spirit though producing different historical expressions is always one at all times in its source and purpose.

Taken together, this oneness and pluralism in building the Body of Christ is well expressed by Rahner: “Of course, it is true, as Paul says, that the various gifts of the one Spirit must work together harmonious in the unity of the one Body of Christ. But since the gifts are one in the one Spirit but do not form one gift, that unity of the Body of Christ itself is only fully one in the one Spirit. For the rest it is true that no one singly forms the whole. No one has every function. Whatever the breadth and the will to wholeness, to understanding, to assimilation, the plurality of special gifts cannot be abolished.”<sup>171</sup>

Second, the unity of a Church that is built up by the charismatic gifts is protected by the fact that they have the same objective: to serve in the renewal and the building up of the Church. Any charismatic gift that comes from the Holy Spirit ought to express itself in the realm of the visible dimension of the Church. Hence the goal of receiving the Spirit in his gifts includes the moment when the Church is in fact reshaped in her institutions, ministries, liturgies, and missions in order that these become better signs of the invisible dimension of the Church. Every Christian receives a different charism according to what the Spirit wishes for the Church to attain, but all of them, when lived fully, will construct the same Church.

The nature of the Church, as a unity in and from diversity, is the consequence of the actualization of the variety of gifts of the Spirit. The diversity of the Church is not a threat to her unity but a source of that union, given that is the Holy Spirit who creates that diversity through his gifts. This divine communion does not mean uniformity; inside the Trinity it is precisely

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<sup>171</sup> Rahner, “The Charismatic Element in the Church”, 65



unity in difference that allows the Three to be together without losing their distinctiveness. The trinitarian persons can interact only because they are different persons with distinctive characteristics. Hence, the diversity of the Church coming from the Holy Spirit's gifts is the possibility to have, from her origin, a true unity which is grounded and possible only in difference.<sup>172</sup>

The Holy Spirit bestows charisms in order to build up the one Church. Thus, charisms exist for the individual and communal sanctification of everyone, and in this way, they achieve the unity of the Church by keeping everyone in the communion of the one who is Holy. This idea of the Holy Spirit's gifts being distributed to the benefit of everyone to create one Church is based on the theology of charisms. We read this in Saint Paul when he states, "to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good"<sup>173</sup> (1 Cor. 12:7) and in Vatican II when it proclaims that "they (charisms) are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation since they are fitting and useful for the needs of the Church."<sup>174</sup> The ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium* that we have reflected on reminds us that the chief need of the Church is to create the possibilities for a deep communion, which we have described elsewhere in this thesis. This communion has its origin, model, and fulfillment in the Trinitarian life and missions. And the role of the Spirit in bestowing his charisms is to give each Christian his personal vocation to follow Jesus' Gospel and thus to live that communion of love with one another as the divine persons do inside the Trinity. Hence, we experience this divine communion when a man or a woman acknowledges and follows their respective vocations as received from the Holy Spirit within the community. As

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<sup>172</sup> Rodriguez, "Consideracion cristologica y pneumatológica del pueblo de Dios", 205-208

<sup>173</sup> 1 Corinthians 12: 7

<sup>174</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 12

much as each follows Jesus in a particular way, each is also serving in ‘re-creating’ the Church since their vocations point to their communion with the rest of the Church and God.

Finally, our third point of affirmation that diversity does not mean ecclesial disunity is the existence of a common and greater gift that balances every charism: love.<sup>175</sup> Saint Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians finished his reflection on the Spirit’s gifts in the Church by saying: “But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.”<sup>176</sup> Love is deeply divine and human: the capacity to love is in every human being as a God’s gift and sign of the Spirit in us, and certainly is much more in God himself since He is Love.<sup>177</sup> Every human person receives and is able to live out this most perfect gift from the Holy Spirit. This brings him into relationship with the rest of humanity and unquestionably with God. In this way, the Spirit is the source of Gift and Love at the same time.

This bond between love and gift in the person of the Holy Spirit has been well expressed in scholastic theology. Thomas Aquinas envisions the Spirit as Love and Gift: He is the Gift of Love that Father gives to the Son, who, in turn, repays this love by loving the Father back.<sup>178</sup> Gift and Love are connected in the very divine essence of the Holy Spirit; we can thus affirm that whenever the Spirit bestows a certain charism, it is also bestowing love (the more predominant of the charisms for Saint Paul). Hence, when a bishop or a priest, a lay or a religious, a married couple or a single person, is able to live out his vocation fully, in faithfulness to his received gift and in service of others, he or she truly unites himself to the one Love that unites everybody.

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<sup>175</sup> Kung, “The Charismatic Structure of the Church”, 60

<sup>176</sup> 1 Corinthians 12: 31-13:1

<sup>177</sup> 1 John 4:8

<sup>178</sup> Congar, *I believe*, 3: 116-124

And in this particular way, each one in his particular vocation is serving the creation of the Church's unity. Love is what will unite the Church in the eschatological communion; however that Love is already present in the Church since the Giver, the Gift and Love are already united in the presence of the Spirit.<sup>179</sup>

Throughout this third chapter we have tried to offer a portrait of the ongoing creation of the Church by the Holy Spirit in his role of bestowing charisms. The Second Vatican Council opened a discussion on pneumatology because of its understanding of the charismatic structure of the Church. The Council left behind certain rigidities of old ecclesiologies, and in this way highlighted what was not too present before in Catholic theology –the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit. This development enabled future Catholic theology to progress further. If the Holy Spirit really has a role in the creation of the Church it must have effects in the daily life of the Church as expressions of her constant renewal in the Spirit. From our perspective, as we have seen above, the Church that arises from the Holy Spirit's charismatic gifts might have some important distinctiveness: a Church that is an event and an open system, it is a communion of various types of discipleship, and it is united because of, and not despite, its original diversity. These are offerings from the Spirit to the Church but are also tasks for us as faithful People of God during our pilgrimage on earth towards the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God.

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<sup>179</sup> Ephesians 1:13-14

## CONCLUSION

In his opening speech at the second session of the Second Vatican Council, Paul VI said: “For this reason, the principal concern of this session of the Council will be to examine the intimate nature of the Church. It will be to express in human language –as far as possible- a definition which will explain the true and primary structure of the Church and clarify its multiple and salvific mission. This theological doctrine can receive many noteworthy developments which even may be carefully considered by our separated brothers.”<sup>180</sup> Indeed the aspiration of the Pope was achieved in that session and in the third as well since the dogmatic constitution on the Church was produced during them. Consequently, *Lumen Gentium* is Vatican II’s main effort to formulate a definition of the Church. This thesis has been our effort to do as Paul VI wished: to receive the doctrine of the Council on a particular topic and to consider some ideas to advance the life of the Church and her ecclesiology from that doctrinal ground.

We have seen throughout these pages that Vatican II produced a unique ecclesiology, one that distanced itself from previous theological conceptions about the Church’s nature. Two of these ideas in particular constitute the basis for the ecclesiology of Vatican II. First, the Church is seen as a product of the Trinitarian will for the salvation for all humanity. The Trinity is the author and the model of the Church. Second, the Church is like a Sacrament. Vatican II balances the visible and the invisible aspects of the Church by using sacramental theology. The Church is called to be an image of the Trinitarian communion that God wants to extend to humanity. Since

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<sup>180</sup> Hans Kung, Yves Congar, and Daniel O’Hanlon (ed.), *Council speeches of Vatican II* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1964), 27

the Council is using the basics of sacramental theology, the visible must reflect and perform the invisible truth, in and through historical reality.

We are able to conclude from the ecclesiology of Vatican II that the Church has two aspects that are simultaneously a gift and a task. The first of these characteristics is communion. Founded by the Trinity and in her nature of a sacrament, the Church is God's gift. Hence, she is called to practice communion with God and the unity among all men and women. Communion is the goal of the Triune plan of salvation and thus the aspiration of the Church. In realizing it, the Church reminds all that she exists and acts as a sign or instrument of this salvific reality. For Vatican II the Church is the People of God: united to be "a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."<sup>181</sup> This last quote leads us to the Church's second gift and task: her character of a pilgrim people. The Trinitarian unity and the fact of being a Sacrament have both an historical and an eschatological dimension. The People of God is on its way to the fullness of salvation; but in the present, is experiencing the first fruits of God's love and communion in history. This reality of being on pilgrimage gives to the Church an awareness of her incompleteness; humbled, she recognizes that she should always turn to her source and model, the Trinity.

From the ecclesiological context we have presented, we have understood better the role of the Holy Spirit in the creation and renewal of the Church, as articulated in the first two chapters of *Lumen Gentium*. The Council presents the permanent foundation of the Church by the missions of the Son and the Spirit in the context of the Father's plan of salvation. Therefore, to understand the Church's nature it is important to appreciate the Holy Spirit's role in the creation of the Church. And, as we have seen in this thesis, what the Spirit's actions give to the

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<sup>181</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Article 4

Church is something unique that could only be received from Him. From the first two chapters, Vatican II offers three points on this role of the Spirit in the Church's creation and renewal. First, the Spirit's action is a constitutive part of the plan of salvation of the Triune God, particularly, in actualizing the Gospel of Christ throughout history. Second, the Spirit is not as an animator in service of the social structure of the Church but as the center towards the Church's institution can model herself on. Third, the Spirit is a donor of special gifts to permanently create and renew the Church. And we had argued that it is this last characteristic that has been received by the Church in the post-Vatican II time as the more influential part of the pneumatology of the Council.

Hence, the pneumatology of *Lumen Gentium* has enabled us to offer some possible characteristics of a Church created anew with the Spirit's charismatic gifts. These ecclesial characteristics are three. The first is twofold and fundamentally defines the Church as both an event and as an open system. The Church is a Pentecostal event that includes specific persons, the Spirit and human beings, who perform specific activities to make present the plan of communion of the Triune God. And the recognition that it is the Spirit who vivifies his Church, and creates it with a charismatic structure, constitutes the possibility of living in a Church that does not exhaust herself but always refers herself to something greater. Hence, the Church is an open system, rather than a closed system that looks into itself to find answers and perspectives.

Second, we proposed that a Church created anew from the Spirit's gifts gives rise to a community of people with different ways to follow Jesus. By receiving the Spirit's gifts and adapting his life to the likeness of Jesus' life, the human person experiences in history a deep communion with the Trinity and with the rest of humanity. Thus, the ecclesial task is to create enough space of liberty in the Church so that anyone blessed with a special gift from the Spirit can live it fully as his/her way of receiving the salvation of Christ.

Third, we realized that the creational power of the charismatic gifts enables us to affirm that the Church is united in and from her diversity. The Church is properly first diverse because of her pneumatological creation. It is this diversity that enables her to be one like the Trinity. If the Church is an event that is recreated all over again in every Christian who receives the Spirit's gifts, is thus from her origin a diverse community. However, at the same time this diversity does not mean disunity. The Church is in a deep unity since is the same Holy Spirit who gives every gift and who directs them to the same goal: the Gospel of Christ, which is the expression of the plan of salvation. Hence, in a Church re-created by the Spirit diversity far from being a threat is the possibility of unity.

Of course, this is not supposed to be an exhaustive list of consequences of a Church recreated by charisms. We certainly hope that the reader by reading these few ideas will be encouraged to think of more insights into the pneumatology of the Church as presented by Vatican II, and will dare to put these into practice in time. The main purpose of these pages has been to reflect on the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church's creation and, to then acknowledge that this role is constitutive of the Church. We have also written these pages to ponder some theological and pastoral consequences for the Church's life. If we, together with Vatican II, realize that the Spirit has a distinctive role in the Church's creation, then, we must appreciate what He offers to the Church not as optional but as a need to be more faithful to the Church's identity. Lastly, the Church is the People of God on pilgrimage; she is thus always finding new ways to be more faithful to her own nature. Therefore, the rediscovery of the Spirit's role in the creation of the Church does offer essential contributions to help us understand and truly be what we are from our trinitarian foundation.

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