

NOTES

OCCULT HERESY AND MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH

The question of occult heresy and membership in the Church seems at first sight one of those otiose problems that have in the past exercised the acumen of Scholastic theologians, but are today of no real moment. Nearly all modern manuals at least touch upon the question; and at times, though more infrequently, the cognate problem of putative baptism and membership in the Church is treated in the same context. In paging the manuals one becomes aware of a repetitious sameness in the arguments employed and in the methodology adopted to defend one or another side of the case. One meets at times, cited with approval, Billuart's dictum: "there appears to be controversy among theologians about the expression of the matter rather than about the matter itself."¹ It is generally agreed that the affirmative side of the case is the more common.² Then too there can be but few occult heretics, so that practically the question is of little value. Yet the matter is of some speculative significance, for it can serve to illustrate the relation obtaining between the visible juridical Church and the Mystical Body of Christ—a question that is today of profound importance, what with the publication of the encyclical on the Mystical Body and with the effort of ecumenical-minded theologians to assess the ecclesiological status of non-Catholics, both as individuals and as religious groups.

The opposing sides of the question are at times not inconveniently linked with the names of Bellarmine and Suarez. Hence it will be useful to review their teaching in the matter.

St. Robert Bellarmine in the very beginning of his polemic work *De Ecclesia Militante* states that: "...there is dispute on three main points. The first is the name and definition of the Church; the second, its quality or visibility; the third, the notes by which it can be known for certain."³ This division of matter, in which the definition of the Church is brought into close association with its visibility and with the allied question of the notes of the Church as criteria of that visibility—and that too with a polemic bias against the aberrations of the then current protestant dissolution of the visible Church—is not without its significance. Bellarmine's definition of the Church, which is the postulate of his treatise on membership, is too well known to be cited. In Bellarmine's mind the definition emphasizes the "foris" and not the "intus" aspect of the Church; the elements of the definition are

¹ *De Regulis Fidei*, diss. III, a.2, §4. ² Cf. E. Dublanchy, "Eglise," *DTC*, VII, 2162.

³ *De Controversiis*, Tomus II, Liber 3, cap. 1.

all juridical, based on the fact that the Church is in the juridical order the authentic prolongation in time and space of Christ's mission as Prophet, King and Priest. He then concludes, "From this definition it can easily be determined who belong to the Church, and who do not."⁴ The winnowing of non-members from members is easily made on this basis, for the criteria are all completely within the visible, juridical order. Bellarmine clearly distinguishes his own concept of the Church from that of the Reformers, for the latter:

. . . require internal virtues to establish a person within the Church, and on that account they make the true Church invisible. . . . Nevertheless, that a person may in some way be called a part of the true Church, of which the Scriptures speak, we do not think that any internal virtue is required, but merely an external profession of faith, and a participation in the sacraments that is apparent to our very senses. For the Church is a human aggregate, as visible and as tangible as the aggregate of the Roman people, or the kingdom of France, or the Venetian Republic.⁵

The last flourish has been the occasion for Harnack to make an invidious remark in his *Essence of Christianity*.⁶ A union with the Church that is purely juridical and purely external ". . . is the minimum requirement that a person may be said to be a part of the visible Church."⁷ The citations given manifest Bellarmine's intense concern to defend the visibility of the Church against the angelism of the Reformers; indeed, he will have it that every single member of the Church must be certainly visible in the technical theological sense. The price one must pay to defend this position is the elimination of all invisible and pneumatic elements from the definition of minimal membership. A more dubious consequence is a dissociation, at least partial, between the visible Church and the Mystical Body of Christ. It is, of course, to be noted that the dissociation is operated on the level of individual members and their relation to the visible Church and the Mystical Body, and not on the level of the relation between the Church as a juridical society and the Church as a mystical communion. This fact comes out plainly, when Bellarmine proposes and solves the objection, "If the Church is the body of Christ, they in whom Christ does not work cannot be parts and members of that body. . . ."⁸ If one holds the identity of the Church and the Mystical Body in such wise that every member of the visible Church must be at the same time a member of the Mystical Body, then one would be constrained to show how and in what measure Christ the Head through

⁴ *Ibid.*, cap. 2.

⁵ *Loc. cit.*

⁶ *What is Christianity?*, (New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1901), p. 293.

⁷ Bellarmine, *loc. cit.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, cap. 9.

the pneumatic mission of the Holy Spirit exercises an influx in each member of the visible Church. But Bellarmine feels no such constraint, for he does not defend this position; he answers simply, "I answer that it is not necessary that Christ work in all His members. For there are certain dead members. . . which are merely attached to the others by an external bond."⁹

When Bellarmine addresses himself formally to the problem, whether or no occult heretics are members of the Church, he solves the question in the way one would expect, given his principles and his definition of the Church. He concedes that real faith is required in order to effect an interior union with Christ the Head and with his Body which is the Church, but denies that such union is needed to make one, minimally, a member of the body of the Church. His arguments in support of this view may be found in the tenth chapter of the *De Ecclesia Militante*. There is no point in rehearsing them here; it may be remarked that nearly all the subsequent authors who have defended Bellarmine's opinion have receded from one or more of the arguments which he found in some measure cogent. For St. Robert, however, the decisive argument lay in the fact that, if one insisted on the need of the internal virtue of faith for membership, Catholics would be seriously embarrassed to defend the visibility of the Church of Christ against the Reformers' negations. "Who, then, does not see that we would obviously agree with them if we should exclude from the Church all who do not have true faith in their hearts? . . . Therefore, to belong in some way to the Church, a person is not required to have faith or anything else that is invisible and secret."¹⁰ The degree to which Bellarmine was obsessed by the idea of the visibility of the Church, is evinced by some of the extreme hypotheses to which he allows verisimilitude. Thus he argues that it would not be improbable that there could be more occult heretics in the Church than true believers; in such an hypothesis, how would the Church itself be visible? He goes even further in this extravagant line, when he writes: ". . . it could also happen that an entire general council would be outside the Church; for what would be remarkable if among so many thousands professing the faith of Christ, three or four hundred who gathered for the council were without true faith?"¹¹ The sad times in which Bellarmine lived may explain in part these black thoughts, but they do not advance the argument. One is indeed led to surmise that his definition of the Church is all too largely the product of his will to defend the visible Church, the Christian Republic, against the heresies of his time.

Bellarmino's position is one that is difficult to defend with consistency; and he makes only a half-hearted attempt to do so. To the obvious retort that the intention of the minister conferring baptism, and the baptismal

⁹ *Loc. cit.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, cap. 10.

¹¹ *Loc. cit.*

character itself, are equally as invisible as the infused virtue of faith, Bellarmine proffers two different answers: (1) that putative baptism is sufficient for real membership; (2) that putative baptism is not sufficient. He prefers the latter answer as the better, although the former is the only one coherent with his whole position. Suarez presses this point with vigor.¹² There are other difficulties against his theory, in the solution of which Bellarmine exhibits a greater or less degree of embarrassment and inconsistency.

Suarez' ecclesiology emphasizes in a unilateral way the "intus" aspect of the Church, just as Bellarmine did its "foris" aspect. For all its deficiencies it affords a useful critique of Bellarmine's doctrine on membership.

. . . the Church is the body of Christ, which ought to be united with Him as with a head; it is united, moreover, by faith through which He dwells in our hearts. This is also the teaching of D. Thomas II-II, q.1, a. 9, ad 3. . . . The reason can be given in brief: since many men compose the Church, it is fitting that they be joined by some one form, and since a union of this kind is not natural, but results from grace, it is fitting that this form be supernatural, and belong to the order of grace; the first form, however, among the supernatural virtues is faith; therefore, etc.¹³

On the basis of this definition Suarez concludes, ". . . all who have faith, are members of the Church, but all who lack faith are established outside the Church. . . ." ¹⁴ In answer to the objection that grave sinners are not real members of the Church because they are spiritually dead, Suarez replies that they can be called spiritually dead in the sense in which the phrase is used in the seventh chapter of the decree on justification of the Council of Trent;¹⁵ ". . . nevertheless, they are members because they do not lack all impulse of spiritual life, since they retain faith by which they are in some way united to Christ."¹⁶ For Suarez the Church and the Mystical Body are altogether identical, and there is no toleration of any dissociation of the two even in the case of individual members. It is, of course, true that Suarez' ecclesiology presents more than ordinary difficulties unless one remembers that he considered the Church and the Mystical Body in what he called their essential and integral states. The former is the *Ecclesia inde ab Abel*; the latter is the visible Catholic Church. It is on the basis of this distinction that he postulates internal faith as the form of the essential Church which is numerically identical both before and after the coming of Christ. Bellarmine's view that occult heretics are members of the Church is explicitly rejected by Suarez; for ". . . such a heretic is not truly a member

¹² *De Fide Theologica*, disp. IX, sect. 1, no. 25.

¹³ *Ibid.*, no. 3

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 5.

¹⁵ *DB* 800.

¹⁶ Suarez, *op. cit.*, no. 12.

of Christ, since he is in no way united with Him through an act of spiritual life."¹⁷

Suarez postulates as an essential minimum for membership in the Church in its essential state an internal bond that permanently and vitally conjoins a member to Christ the Head; Bellarmine postulates as an essential minimum a purely external link with the visible Church, even though there is internally no permanent vital influx from Christ the Head. For Suarez the member must always be living with some measure of habitual supernatural life; for Bellarmine some members can be completely dead spiritually. Neither position is satisfactory.

It is not surprising to meet today allusions to the old controversy, evoked by the scrutinies brought to bear on the ecumenical movement by Catholic theologians, or situated in the context of the recent papal encyclical on the Mystical Body of Christ. Thus, for example, Richard Tremblay, O.P., defends a partial dissociation of the visible Church and the Mystical Body, comparing them to two circles whose peripheries are not perfectly coextensive but partly overlap one another. One of the arguments that he adduces to defend this view is that occult heretics are really members of the visible Church without at the same time being members of the Mystical Body of Christ.¹⁸ Tremblay judges his general doctrine to be in complete harmony with that of Pope Pius' encyclical.

The distinguished ecclesiologist, M.-J. Congar, O.P., in his essay on St. Thomas' idea of the Church, writes:

Saint Thomas was, indeed, not unaware that certain facts and certain problems call for a distinction between the case of the Mystical Body and that of the social structure of the Church. . . . He knew that it is possible to be within the visible unity of the Church and have lost sanctifying grace or even the faith, while, on the contrary, it is possible to be interiorly justified and in possession of a lively faith without being joined to the Church in a visible manner. In the first instance one is within it *numero tantum*, and *non merito*; in the second instance, *voto*. These distinctions or grades, however, pertain to individuals, not to the Church herself.¹⁹

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 24.

¹⁸ "Corps Mystique et Eglise visible," *Théologie*, Cahier IV (Études et Recherches publiées par le Collège Dominicain d'Ottawa; Ottawa: Editions du Lévrier, 1948), pp. 35, 37. Cf. also P. Galtier, S.J., *De Incarnatione et Redemptione*, (2d ed., Parisii, Beauchesne, 1947), §562.

¹⁹ *Esquisses du mystère de l'Eglise*, (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1941), pp. 81-2. St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, q. 4, a.5, ad 4m, writes, "Fides autem informis est communis omnibus membris Ecclesiae. . . ." Cf. also T. M. Käppeli, O. P., *Zur Lehre des hl. Thomas von Aquin vom Corpus Christi Mysticum* (Freiburg im Schweiz, Paulusdruckerei, 1931), p. 128.

One could conclude from this citation that an occult heretic is a real member of the Church without being a member of the Mystical Body; whether this is the correct interpretation is not clear. Moreover, Congar in his article on schism gives a guarded approval to the view that an occult schismatic is, "d'une certaine manière," a member of the visible Church—a view which regards "membership in the Church in so far as it is a social, visible body, and from a point of view that is rather sociological and juridical than interior and moral. . . ."²⁰

Karl Rahner, S.J., in a long article on the teaching of the Encyclical *Mystici Corporis* relative to membership in the Church, touches on our question.²¹ He holds that Bellarmine's opinion is "on internal grounds unquestionably preferable," and adduces, among others, the following reasons for his preference: *a*) There is no more reason why an occult heretic should be excluded from the Church than any other sinner. Franzelin's contention that an occult heretic is not a member because the Church is a kingdom of truth is unfounded; otherwise, one should logically exclude all grave sinners because the Church is a kingdom of love. *b*) The non-Bellarminian opinion is guilty of a confusion between two levels or dimensions of reality that must be most carefully distinguished,—“the order of interior personal determination and interior grace, on one hand, and the order of external, juridical organization, and the visible sacramental sign, on the other.”²² Just as a sacrament can be valid without being fruitful, so too membership in the Church, which is in a certain sense “das Ursakrament,” can be valid without being fruitful. In other words, the external, juridical, constitutive elements of membership can be present and produce their effect, without the internal pneumatic elements, among which belongs the internal virtue of faith, being simultaneously present and operative. One logically concludes to a complete divorce, at least on the level of individuals, between the juridical and pneumatic missions of the Church.²³

²⁰ “Schisme,” *DTC*, XIV, 1307.

²¹ “Die Zugehörigkeit zur Kirche nach der Lehre der Enzyklika Pius XII *Mystici Corporis Christi*,” *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, 69 Band (1947), 137–8.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 137.

²³ The argument drawn from an analogy between valid and fruitful reception of the sacraments, and membership in the Church on the minimal basis of the mere presence of the external juridical signs of social incorporation, and membership that supposes the infused virtue of faith, is not accurate. If one wishes a sacramental analogy in these matters, it would be more exact to appeal to the old dispute about the sufficiency of an “external” intention in order validly to receive or administer a sacrament. If the intention is external, i.e., terminated in the mere external rite, the sacrament is invalid. In order validly to receive or administer a sacrament there is required an element situated within

There are other modern authors who hold that occult heresy deprives one of membership in the Church. P.-André Liégé, O.P., rightly insisting that the identity of the visible Church and the Mystical Body on earth is the primary teaching of the encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, concludes that membership in the Church always supposes "the presence of pneumatic elements."²⁴ For him the minimal pneumatic elements are the theological virtues of faith and hope. So too Johannes Brinktrine holds that the visible Church and the Mystical Body are coextensive, and that internal faith is required for membership in the Church.²⁵

If, in the light of the foregoing, we address ourselves to the task of exploring the doctrine of Pius the XII's recent encyclical on the need of internal faith for real membership in the Church of Christ, we find that, though the question of occult heresy is not formally treated, there is nevertheless solid evidence that the encyclical demands such faith as an essential requirement for real membership in the visible Church.

We find in the encyclical²⁶ a definition of real (*reapse*) membership that is *prima facie* equivalent to that of St. Robert Bellarmine; and it is thus that Rahner understands it.²⁷ Yet Bellarmine, who is cited later in the course of the encyclical, is not mentioned here, though one might have expected otherwise, were the definition of the encyclical identical with his. The omission, if indeed it is one, was deliberate; for a closer examination of the paragraph shows that its teaching on the minimal requirements of real membership differs essentially from that of Bellarmine. The difference is that the Pope requires some measure of internal supernatural life, or the presence of a pneumatic element, in order to have real membership. He begins by enumerating the visible elements which mark out real membership; these are formulated in a positive and negative way: (a) the reception of baptism, (b) the profession of the true faith, (c) freedom from schism

what Rahner calls the internal dimension, i.e., at a minimum, the intention to administer or receive a sacred rite. On the basis of this analogy the mere external profession of faith, coupled with internal heresy, has no efficacy in realizing membership.

²⁴ "L'Appartenance à l'Eglise et l'Encyclique *Mystici Corporis Christi*," *Rev. des Sc. Ph. et Théol.*, XXXII (1948), 352.

²⁵ "Was lehrt die Enzyklika Pius XII *Mystici Corporis* über die Zugehörigkeit zur Kirche?" *Theologie und Glaube*, IV Heft (1948), 290, text and note 2. Cf. also V. Morel, O.F.M. Cap., "Le Corps Mystique du Christ et l'Eglise Catholique Romaine," *Nouvelle Revue Théologique*, LXX (1948), 719-20.

²⁶ AAS, XXXV (1943), 202, par. 21. The references to the encyclical will be to the AAS edition by page. The paragraph number will also be given for convenience. The italics are always the author's.

²⁷ Rahner, *op. cit.*, 145-7.

and excommunication. In support of this teaching he appeals to two places from St. Paul (I Cor. 12:13, and Eph. 4:5), which are taken from a context wherein are found exhortations to unity grounded on the truth that we are one Body vivified by the one Spirit.²⁸ It seems clear, then, that he supposes the co-presence of pneumatic elements as symbolized or effected by the juridical and sacramental elements. In the last sentence of the same paragraph Pius XII proposes a summary in a negative form of his doctrine on real membership in the Church. "It follows that those who are divided in faith or government cannot be living in one Body such as this, and cannot be *living the life of its one Divine Spirit*." It is supposed then that real members must live with the life of the one divine Spirit which vivifies the one Body. That occult heretics do not live with the life of this Spirit is clear, for faith is the beginning and root of that divine life, and without a permanent vivifying bond *in uno credito* the Spirit is not present. The efforts made by authors who defend the membership of occult heretics, to show that such heretics do possess some measure of pneumatic life and are in some sort of contact with the Spirit that vivifies the Body, are not satisfactory; at best their arguments conclude only to some sort of material juxtaposition or contiguity between the material heretic who remains in the visible Church, and the soul of the Church itself, but not to a vital union.²⁹

The same conclusion can be drawn even more clearly from the following paragraph of the encyclical,³⁰ wherein the Pope affirms that owing to the endless mercy of our Saviour sinners have a place "in His mystical body," for not all grave sins are such as by their very nature to cut a man off "from the Body of the Church." To the implied difficulty that sinners, as spiritually dead, can have no place in the Mystical Body of Christ, the Pope replies: "Men may lose charity and Divine grace through sin . . . and yet not be deprived of all life, if they hold on to faith and Christian hope. . . ." The Pope, unlike Bellarmine, admits the supposition of the difficulty, *viz.*, that a real member must be living with the life of the Spirit; and he places that life primarily in the infused virtues of faith and hope, which remain even after charity has been lost. Again it is obvious that an occult heretic cannot meet this test of real membership in the Body of the Church.³¹

²⁸ Thus I Cor. 12:11, "Haec autem omnia operatur unus atque idem Spiritus dividens singulis prout vult"; and Eph. 4:3, "Solliciti servare unitatem Spiritus in vinculo pacis."

²⁹ Cf. Lercher-Schlagenhaufen, *De Ecclesia Christi*, (Barcelona: Herder, 1945), §437; and A. Straub, *De Ecclesia Christi*, (Oeniponte: Rauch, 1912), §1296.

³⁰ *Mystici Corporis*, 213, par. 22.

³¹ The Pope speaks of "peccatum quo mystica maculantur Redemptoris membra" and "infirmum Iesu Christi membrum"; with Augustine he urges that sinners "in Ecclesiae

The inner pneumatic life of the whole visible Church and of its single members is brought out with more detail and with an even greater pertinency to our question in that section of the Encyclical³² which sets forth the third reason “. . . why *the social Body of the Church* should be honored by the name of Christ: that reason lies in the fact that our Saviour Himself sustains in a Divine manner the *society* which He founded.” It is to be noted carefully that here, just as in the two previous considerations on the requirements for real membership and the membership of sinners, the Pope predicates either implicitly or explicitly pneumatic life of the visible juridical Church, not merely in its totality but in each of its several members. Adopting a development of Bellarmine, the Pope teaches that Christ “. . . so sustains the Church, and so, in a certain sense, *lives* in the Church that it is, as it were, another Christ.”³³ The social Body of the Church exists, “another Christ, as it were,” because “. . . our Saviour shares His most personal prerogatives with the Church in such a way that she may portray *in her whole life, both external and interior*, a most faithful image of Christ.”³⁴ That the visible Church in the totality of its life, both external and internal, is an image of Christ, is due to the twofold mission, juridical and pneumatic, by which our Lord has formed His Church. It is in virtue of this latter mission that “Christ our Lord brings the Church to *live His own supernatural life*, by His divine power permeates His whole Body and nourishes and sustains *each of the members* . . . very much as the vine nourishes and makes fruitful the branches which are joined to it.”³⁵ It is to be noted that not merely the whole body but also the single members live with the life of Christ, as the branches of the vine; the plain allusion to the fifteenth chapter of St. John brings out clearly that the union between Christ and the single members of his social Body is a permanent vital union in the supernatural order.

The divine principle of life given by Christ in the pneumatic mission is

compagne sanari, quam ex illius corpore veluti insanabilia membra resecari” (*Mystici Corporis*, 213-4, par. 23). He teaches that Our Lord has permitted a proneness to sin to be found “in altioribus etiam mystici sui Corporis membris”; and he warns that “si igitur nonnulla membra spiritualibus morbis laborant, non est cur erga Ecclesiam nostrum miniamus amorem” (p. 225, par. 64). Mother Church bravely strives to bring back to spiritual health “membra vel infirma vel saucia” (p. 225, par. 65). Nowhere, however, does the Pope refer to sinners as ‘dead’ members.

³² *Mystici Corporis*, 217-20, pars. 51-6.

³³ *Ibid.*, 217-8, par. 52. On this point cf. S. Tromp, “Litterae Encyclicae *Mystici Corporis*. Annotationes,” *Periodica*, XXXII (1943), 393-5; and *Corpus Christi Quod Est Ecclesia*, (2d ed., Romae, apud Aedes Universitatis Gregorianae, 1946), pp. 24-5, 52-3, 83-5.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 218, par. 53.

³⁵ *Loc. cit.*

the Paraclete, the Spirit of Christ, merited for us on the cross by the shedding of His blood and communicated to the Church in an abundant outpouring, “. . . so that she, and her *single members*, may become daily more and more like to Our Saviour.”³⁶ It is the function of the Holy Spirit, as an invisible principle of life and power, “. . . that all the parts of the Body are joined one with the other and with their exalted Head; for He is entire in the Head, entire in the Body and *entire in each of the members*. To the members He is *present and assists* them in proportion . . . to the greater or less grade of *spiritual health* which they enjoy.³⁷ The Spirit of Christ, therefore, as a vivifying and unifying principle, conjoins all the parts of the Body with one another and with their exalted Head. The reason for this vital union is that the Holy Spirit, like the soul in the human body, is entire in the Head, entire in the Body, and entire in each of its members. It is, of course, true that there is a diversity of the Spirit’s vital presence in the several members by reason of the greater or less spiritual health which they possess. Here again, however, the argument supposes that each member without exception possesses interior supernatural life, a life that is not transient but permanent, for it is the result of an active presence of the Spirit of Christ. That this presence is habitual is clear: 1) from the use of the word “*prae-sens*”³⁸; 2) from the implied comparison to the activity of the human soul in the body; 3) from the words of Leo XIII cited at the close of this paragraph: “This presence and activity of the Spirit of Jesus Christ is tersely and vigorously described by Our Predecessor of immortal memory Leo XIII in his Encyclical Letter *Divinum Illud* in these words: ‘Let it suffice to say that, as Christ is the Head of the Church, so is the Holy Spirit her soul.’”³⁹ An occult heretic cannot meet the test of membership in the social body of the Church that is implied in this development of Pius XII on Christ as the sustainer of the society which He founded. The reason is that a heretic does not possess any habitual vivifying presence of the Spirit of Christ which effects a vital interior union with the Head and the other members. The created effects which are the ground of this vital presence of the Holy Spirit consist, so the Pope tells us, “. . . in those heavenly gifts which our Redeemer together with His Spirit . . . *from whom come supernatural light* and holiness, make operative in the Church.”⁴⁰ The phrase “*supernae lucis dator*” together with the cognate development in paragraph

³⁶ *Mystici Corporis*, 219, par. 54.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 219, par. 55.

³⁸ For a discussion of what is meant by “presence” in its plenary sense, cf. *Mystici Corporis*, 231–32, par. 80.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 220, par. 55.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 220, par. 56.

49⁴¹ is a manifest allusion to the gift of faith which is the beginning and root of all supernatural life and union with Christ.

The conviction that occult heretics cannot be members of the Church is fortified by a consideration of those parts of the Encyclical in which the Pope rejects any antinomy between a *Rechtskirche* and a *Liebeskirche*, between the juridical and the pneumatic missions of the Church. When the Pope is developing the reasons why the "social body of the church" is rightly called "mystical,"⁴² he grounds the appositeness of this term, in part at least, on the fact that it enables one to distinguish the social body of the Church from any natural moral body. In a natural moral body there is only a moral and juridical "principle of unity," viz., a common end and the common collaboration of all under social authority for the attainment of that end. In the Mystical Body of Christ, besides this moral and juridical principle of union,

. . . a distinct internal principle is added, which exists *effectively* in the whole and *in each of its parts*, and whose excellence is such, that of itself it is vastly superior to whatever bonds of union may be found in a physical or moral body. This is . . . the Spirit of God, Who, as the Angelic Doctor says, numerically one and the same, fills and unifies the whole Church.⁴³

The Holy Spirit is therefore really ("reapse") existing, and effectively so, in the whole body of the visible Church and in all its parts, so that the Church, though it is and remains a perfect society in the juridical order, is by no means wholly within this order. The Church, like its divine founder and model, is theandric, precisely because it is vivified in its totality and in all its parts by the Spirit of Christ. This sublime truth is pregnantly stated in the phrase "the visible society founded by Him and consecrated in His blood."⁴⁴ It is especially significant that the Holy Father, in describing the intimate union that exists between the juridical and pneumatic missions of the Church, brings out explicitly the basic place which the virtue of faith, both in its internal and external aspects, has in the life of the Church. "The Eternal Father wished it (i.e., the Church as a perfect juridical society) to be the 'kingdom of the Son of His predilection,' but it was to be a real kingdom, in which *all believers* would make the *full* obeisance of

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 216, par. 49. One might profitably refer here to the matter on forced conversions, 243-4, par. 102.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 221, par. 58. Note here how the predicate "mysticum" is attached to "sociale Ecclesiae Corpus."

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 222, par. 60.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 224, par. 62.

their intellect and will. . . ."⁴⁵ The explicit reference to the Vatican Council (*DB 1789*) shows that there is question here of the internal virtue of faith, by which all the faithful ("credentes omnes") render to God the full homage of intellect and will. Occult heresy cannot be said to be a plenary homage of the intellect, nor does it allow for that intimate and vital union of the juridical and pneumatic missions of the Church which the Pope urges not merely on the social but also on the individual level. Indeed, it is precisely on this matter of faith that the Pope teaches that there can be no opposition or conflict between the juridical and pneumatic aspects of the Church. "There can, then, be no real opposition or conflict between the invisible mission of the Holy Spirit and the juridical commission of Ruler and Teacher received from Christ. Like body and soul in us, they complement and perfect each other, and have their source in our one Redeemer. . . ."⁴⁶ The teaching office of the Church is attached to its juridical mission ("the juridical commission of Ruler and Teacher received from Christ"); to the internal mission of the Spirit of Christ is due the virtue of faith. An occult heretic may be said to be in some sort of mechanical way in union with the juridical mission of the Church, but certainly not with its pneumatic mission. There is then brought about a dissociation which the encyclical reprobates.

The same doctrine is brought out in that section of the encyclical wherein the Pope treats "of our union with Christ *in the body of the Church*";—a sublime union which the encyclical explicitly states is ecclesiological, and which is so intimate that our Divine Redeemer constitutes "*with the society that is His body* . . . but one mystical person, that is to say, to quote Augustine, the whole Christ."⁴⁷ Our union in and with Christ through the Church is, first of all, on the social and juridical level; and among the juridical bonds of union is instanced the external profession of faith by all the members of the social Body of Christ. "Now since this social Body of Christ has been designed by its Founder to be visible, this cooperation of all its members must also be externally manifest *through their profession of the same faith*, and their sharing the same sacred rites. . . ."⁴⁸ However, our union with Christ in the Church far surpasses the mere juridical order, for ". . . still another principle of union must be added to these juridical bonds in those three virtues which link us so closely to each other and to God: Christian faith, hope and charity."⁴⁹ As charity is not required for real

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 224, par. 63.

⁴⁶ *Loc. cit.*

⁴⁷ *Mystici Corporis*, 225–26, par. 67. The whole development is to be found in pp. 225–33, pars. 67–84.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 227, par. 69.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 227, par. 70.

membership and as hope does not concern us here, we may fix our attention on what the Pope says of faith.

This Christian faith binds us no less closely with each other and with our Divine Head. For all we who believe, "having the same spirit of faith," are illumined by the same light of Christ, are nourished by the same food of Christ, live under the jurisdiction and teaching authority of Christ. If the same spirit of faith breathes in all, we all are living the same life "in the faith of the Son of God, . . ."⁵⁰

Here again it is clear that the Holy Father is teaching that our union with Christ the Head through the social Body of the Church is founded on the twofold juridical and pneumatic mission, and that among the pneumatic elements internal faith occupies in the genetic order the first place. A similar development is found in the second chapter of the thirteenth session of the Council of Trent (*DB* 875), wherein the Eucharist is described as ". . . the symbol of that one body of which He exists as the head, and to which He wished us to be joined as members by a most intimate bond of faith, hope and charity. . . ." However, the same Council in the seventh chapter of the sixth session (*DB* 800) states that the virtue of faith, even when not informed by charity, does unite us with Christ the Head. "For faith, unless hope and charity are added to it, neither unites one perfectly with Christ, nor makes one a living member of His Body." This imperfect, but habitual and vital union with Christ the Head through the virtue of faith is clearly demanded by the Pontiff of all who are within the social Body of the Church.

It is to be remarked that none of the foregoing arguments, by which we have endeavored to show that, according to the teaching of the encyclical, occult heresy is incompatible with membership in the visible Church of Christ, supposes as a postulate of its validity the complete identity of the visible, juridical Church and the Mystical Body of Christ. The encyclical does plainly affirm that complete identity; indeed, this affirmation may be said to be its main theme. Yet, this affirmation is not integral to our argument. We have reasoned uniquely from certain predicates which the Pope attributes to what he pleases to call the social Body of the Church; these predicates are applied to the visible Church not only in its totality but also in each of its several members. The conclusion has been drawn that the juridical and pneumatic missions of the Church are conjoined, at least in some measure, in every member of the visible Church, and, more specifically, that the pneumatic mission demands the presence of the infused

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 227-8, par. 71.

virtue of faith in all the Church's members. It follows therefrom that all members of the visible Church are necessarily members of the Mystical Body, but, as far as our argument is concerned, the converse is not necessarily true. The conclusion of our argument, however, can well be considered a confirmation of the fact that the encyclical does teach the complete identity of the Mystical Body and the visible, juridical Church.

As to the objection that, if the Church is a "kingdom of truth" founded on the virtue of faith, so too it must be by the same token a "kingdom of love" founded on the infused virtue of charity, one may answer that the Church is and remains, at least in an inchoative sense, a kingdom of love even in those sinners who have lost the theological virtue of charity. The reason is that each member must possess the abiding disposition, manifested in act, to live together with the rest of the Church, as a part of a greater whole, under the guidance of the hierarchy, in a spirit of mutual aid and social unity. In other words, the spirit of schism must be absent. This permanent attitude is either a disposition toward the fulness of ecclesiastical union which supposes the infused virtue of charity, or is a residue that continues after the loss of that theological virtue.⁵¹

One may conclude, then, that, while the question of occult heresy and membership in the Church may at times undeniably be a verbal rather than a real dispute, it is not necessarily nor always so. When the question is so proposed that it involves not merely a matter of suitable nomenclature but rather a partial dissociation between the visible Church and the Mystical Body of Christ, then it seems clear that in the light of the recent encyclical it is no longer safe doctrine.

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⁵¹ Cf. M.-J. Congar, O.P., "Schisme," *DTC*, XIV, 1299-1302; S. Tromp, S.J., *Corpus Christi Quod Est Ecclesia*, pp. 135-7; C. Passaglia, S.J., *De Ecclesia Christi*, (Ratisbonae: Manz, 1853), lib. III, cap. 35, §461-69, and cap. 40, §683 sqq.