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THE EVOLUTION OF *CHRISTUS DOMINUS* AND OF ITS TEACHING ON THE CATECHETICAL DUTY OF BISHOPS

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Vatican II does not have a full document on catechesis. Nevertheless, the Council succeeded in changing the direction of the Church's catechesis based on the catechetical provisions in *Christus Dominus, Ad Gentes, Gravissimum Educationis* and *Inter Mirifica*, all utilized as sources[1] of *CIC*/83 cann. 773 and 779 that provide legislation concerning the object and means of catechesis. These documents, especially *Christus Dominus* and *Ad Gentes*, provide clear and sufficient conciliar catechetical orientations, even proposing concrete provisions for the restoration of the catechumenate. *Gravissimum Educationis*, apart from its treatment of the nature of catechesis, also highlights the use of instruments of social communications for Christian education and catechesis, which *CD* 13 also mentions and which *Inter Mirifica* explores in depth. This essay, however, will treat only the first of the documents, investigating its redaction history

[1]Cf. Pontificia Commissio Codici Iuris Canonici Authentice Interpretando, *Codex Iuris Canonici*. Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus. *Fontium annotatione et indice analytico-alphabetico auctus*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana 1989, 215; 217.

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and its teachings on the object and means of catechesis, as well as its method, tools and agents.[2]

The Redaction of *Christus Dominus*

The decree *Christus Dominus*, On the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, consists of three chapters. Chapter I discusses the role of bishops in the Universal Church. Chapter II treats their place within their particular churches or dioceses. Chapter III concerns the cooperative work of bishops for the common good of the particular churches and the whole Universal Church. *CD* 12a–14 on the teaching of Christian doctrine and catechetical instruction, found in Chapter II concerning the duties of diocesan bishops in their particular churches, evolved through the following stages before and during the Council: the 1962 and 1963 redactions of the schemata during the preparatory phase of the Council, and the development of the text at the Council itself as *textus prior*, *textus emendatus* and *textus recognitus*, respectively.

1.1 The 1962 Schema De cura animarum

Led by Cardinal P. Marella as its president, the Preparatory Commission on Bishops and the Governance of Dioceses met in two general sessions held in Rome from 27 September to 7 October 1961, and from 5 to 13 February 1962. These meetings resulted in the preparation of ten schemata which can be classified into two groups.

The first dealt with general matters concerning bishops themselves and the governance of the Universal Church and the dioceses: (1)

[2]The term "object" of catechesis pertains to the end, goal or purpose of the Church in her long-standing activity of catechizing. Moreover, in our essay, we distinguish the term "means" from "methods"; the latter term refers to the more specific procedures, processes or techniques utilized in carrying out the means of catechesis. The "tools" of catechesis refer to the material resources like catechisms, instruments of social communications, etc. that are used in accomplishing the tasks of catechesis. The "agents" of catechesis are those who undertake the task of educating participants in the faith through catechesis.

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the relationship between bishops and the Congregations of the Roman Curia; (2) the division of dioceses; (3) episcopal assemblies or conferences; (4) the relationship between bishops and parish priests; (5) coadjutor and auxiliary bishops and the cessation of the pastoral duties of bishops; (6) the relationship between bishops and religious, especially concerning the exercise of apostolic works. The schemata that involved particular matters concerning the care of souls were the following: (7) care of souls in general; (8) care for migrants; (9) care for seafarers, airline personnel, nomads and pilgrims; and (10) care for Christians influenced by communism.[3] None of these schemata contained a section on catechetical instruction.

Msgr. Marella presented these schemata to the Central Preparatory Commission during its plenary meetings between February and June 1962. Meanwhile, this same Commission, realizing the need for better coordination, established the Subcommission for Mixed Matters.[4] It happened, therefore, that the said sub-commission decided to consolidate these ten schemata to form only two texts. The first, *De episcopis ac De dioeceseon regimine,* included much of the material from schemata one to six. Schemata seven to ten concerning the pastoral care of souls formed the second text entitled *De cura animarum.*[5] Added to this latter schema

[3]For a more detailed description of these schemata and a general assessment of them, see J. Komonchak, "The Struggle for the Council During the Preparation of Vatican II (1960–1962)," in G. Alberigo and J. Komonchak, eds., *History of Vatican II* I (Maryknoll-Leuven 1995), 180–183.

[4]The establishment of the subcommission was important in sorting out the volume of materials that tended to overlap. Seventy-three preparatory schemata were printed on the eve of the opening of Vatican II. Cf. J. Grootaers, "The Drama Continues Between the Acts: The 'Second Preparation' and its Opponents," in G. Alberigo and J. Komonchak, eds., *History of Vatican II* II (Maryknoll-Leuven 1997), 447.

[5]These two schemata were printed in the collection: Sacrosanctum Oecumenicum Concilium Vaticanum II, *Schemata constitutionum et decretorum de quibus disceptabitur in Concilii sessionibus*, Series III, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis 1962. Cf. Komonchak, I, "The Struggle," 183–184.

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were numerous points on pastoral care prepared by the Preparatory Commission for the Discipline of the Clergy and the Christian People. Among these were the provisions for catechetical instruction.[6]

The schema *De cura animarum* has two parts: I. The pastoral office of bishops, and II. Special matters concerning the care of souls. Part II included the topic on catechetical instruction in Chapter I entitled *De catechetica populi christiani institutione*. Its sections included: I. The catechism and catechetical books; II. Coordination of catechetical instruction; and III. The method of catechetical instruction. Albeit only a schema of an official document of Vatican II, this chapter on catechetical instruction provides a whole, new fresh insight into the object and means of catechesis never found before altogether in any of the official documents on catechesis between the promulgation of the 1917 *Codex Iuris Canonici* and the celebration of Vatican II. The schema presents a wide range of ideas and proposals that seem to have been influenced in a positive way by the developments in the catechetical movement prior to and at the time of the convocation of Vatican II. But since the 1962 schema *De cura animarum* was still a very raw schema, it

[6]Two other preparatory commissions drafted schemata that dealt with catechesis, but they were not incorporated into *De cura animarum*. The schema *De ecclesiis orientalibus*, prepared by the Preparatory Commission for the Eastern Churches, contained a chapter entitled *De magisterio ecclesiastico. De catechismo et catechetica institutione*. It basically insisted on uniformity in the teaching of Christian doctrine. It also urged the preparation of a kind of compendium of Christian doctrine for the Universal Church. Cf. Concilium Vaticanum II, Schema Decretum *De ecclesiis orientalibus*, in *Schemata*, IV, 25–26. The other commission, the Preparatory Commission for the Sacraments, drafted the schema *De matrimonii sacramento*. It pointed out the Church's insistence on marriage preparation, which should include the formation of Christian conscience and catechetical instruction especially on the sacrament of marriage. Cf. Concilium Vaticanum II, Schema Decreti *De matrimonii sacramento*, in *Schemata*, IV, 177–207. Cf. B. Marthaler, *Catechetics in Context* (Huntington 1973), XVII–XVIII. Cf. V. Carbone, "Gli schemi preparatori del Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano Secondo," *Monitor Ecclesiasticus* 96 (1971): 51–86.

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remains to be seen whether or not its proposals would find their way into the final text of *Christus Dominus*.

1.2 The 1963 Schema De cura animarum

Pope John XXIII solemnly inaugurated Vatican Council II on 11 October 1962 and soon thereafter formed the new Commission on Bishops and the Governance of Dioceses (CB) with Cardinal P. Marella as president. On 31 January 1963, the Central Coordinating Commission (CC) wrote to the CB that while it approved the basic themes of the two schemata, the CB needed to improve the texts further and this had to be done by 10 March 1963. Due to time constraints, Msgr. Marella convoked only a subcommission of members and experts, and not the whole CB.[7] This sub-commission was able to submit, within the deadline given, the redactions of the two schemata to the CC, which then approved them. Copies of the texts, dated 22 April 1963, were distributed to the conciliar Fathers.[8]

The text of *De cura animarum* underwent important changes. The whole chapter on the care for people influenced by communism was removed, and much of the rest of the material was now classified into seven appendices,[9] not to be discussed anymore in the aula. These appendices now served as initial input for the revision of the Code of

[7]J. Grootaers writes that this commission, managed by Msgr. Carli, represented the voice of the minority in the Council that opposed a renewal of ecclesiology and the theology of the episcopate. As a result, many of the Fathers were very disappointed at their exclusion from the work of the CB. Cf. Grootaers, "The Drama Continues," 449.

[8]Cf. Schema Decreti *De episcopis ac de dioecesium regimine*, in *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani* (*ASSCOV*) II, II/IV, 364–392. Cf. G. Caprile, "Decreto sull'ufficio pastorale dei vescovi nella Chiesa. Formazione del decreto" in S. Garofalo and T. Federici, eds., *Dizionario del Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano Secondo* (Roma 1969), 239.

[9]Cf. Schema Decreti *De cura animarum. Appendix*, in *ASSCOV* II, II/IV, 751–826.

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Canon Law and for the general directories to be prepared concerning various fields. A section on catechetical instruction, nevertheless, remained in the text of *De cura animarum*. Previously situated in chapter one of the previous 1962 redaction, it now formed chapter five.[10] Entitled "On the catechetical instruction of the Christian people," it contained eight articles: the prologue (art. 53); the necessity of catechetical instruction for the Christian people (art. 54); the goal of catechetical instruction (art. 55); the method to be used in catechesis (art. 56); preparation of catechists (art. 57); the ordering of catechetical instruction (art. 58); catechetical books (art. 59); and the mandate concerning catechetical directories (art. 60).

1.3 The 1964 Textus Prior

During the second conciliar period, beginning on the 60th general congregation held on 5 November 1963, the Fathers began their discussions on the first schema *De episcopis ac De dioecesium regimine*. Many suggested the revision of the text in the light of the teaching on episcopal collegiality already discussed and approved by the Fathers in the schema on the Church. Moreover, they pushed for highlighting the pastoral nature of the bishop's ministry instead of its merely juridical, disciplinary and administrative aspects.[11] Meanwhile, on 21 November 1963, Pope Paul VI decided to expand the various conciliar commissions to 30

[10]Though not discussed nor submitted for voting in the hall, *De cura animarum* had a great influence in making *Christus Dominus* a truly pastoral decree, faithful to the spirit of the Council. Grootaers writes: "Although no longer in the agenda of Vatican II, the schema was not therefore lost. Important parts were later 'retrieved' by the Commission on Bishops and Dioceses. When the plan of the schema was entirely revised in January 1964, many themes of the schema on the care of souls fitted into it quite naturally." Grootaers, "The Drama Continues," 482.

[11]Cf. *Oratio* of Msgr. P. Correa León (Cucuta, Colombia) on behalf of sixty Latin American bishops, in *ASSCOV* II, II/IV, 462–464. See also the oral interventions, all along the same line, of Msgr. A. Liénart (Lille, France) in *ASSCOV* II, II/IV, 445–446. Cf. Msgr. J. McIntyre (Los Angeles, USA) in

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members. Moreover, a new group with a mandate from an enlarged CB was formed as a sub-commission and was led by Msgrs. P. Veuillot (Paris, France) and W. Onclin (Louvain, Belgium).[12]

In response to the input provided in the aula regarding the text, the CC decided on 29 November 1963 that the CB should once again rework the material in the light of the pastoral orientation of the Council. Moreover, matters of a predominantly juridical nature should be passed on to the commission working on the revision of canon law.

On 18 December 1963, Msgr. Marella wrote to the CC asking for a decision on the suitability of combining the two schemata, *De episcopis ac De dioecesium regimine* and *De cura animarum*. In its response on behalf of the CC, Msgr. Cicognani communicated the Commission's positive decision regarding the consolidation. Thus, those matters concerning the pastoral ministry of bishops contained in *De cura animarum* which were not yet discussed in the aula should be incorporated into the other schema *De episcopis ac De dioecesium regimine*. With this development, the *textus prior* of what would later be known as *Christus Dominus* was born as *De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia*,[13] largely prepared by the sub-commission led by Msgrs. Onclin and Veuillot. The CB then met in Rome on 3–13 March 1964, approved the text dated 13 March and sent it to the conciliar Fathers on 22 May 1964 for their study.[14]

ASSCOV II, II/IV, 446–447. Cf. Msgr. P. Richaud (Bordeaux, France) in *ASSCOV* II, II/IV, 450–452.

[12]Cf. J. Famerée, "Bishops and Dioceses and the Communications Media," in G. Alberigo and J. Komonchak, eds., *History of Vatican II* III (Maryknoll-Leuven 2000), 156. Cf. E. Vilanova, "The Intersession," in G. Alberigo and J. Komonchak, eds., *History of Vatican II* III (Maryknoll-Leuven 2000), 383.

[13]Cf. Schema Decreti *De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia*, *ASSCOV* II, II/III, 22–44.

[14]Cf. Vilanova, "The Intersession," 383–384. Cf. J. Komonchak, "Toward an Ecclesiology of Communion," in G. Alberigo and J. Komonchak, eds., *History of Vatican II* IV (Maryknoll-Leuven 2003), 86. Cf. L. Carli, "*Christus Dominus*,"

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Though the schema *De cura animarum* was not discussed anymore in the conciliar hall as a full schema, sections of it were incorporated into the new unified schema. This new schema was discussed from the 83rd to the 86th general congregations held from 18 to 23 September 1964.[15] The debates were preceded by a presentation of Msgr. Marella, and by the official *relatio* of Msgr. Veuillot.[16]

In this new schema, the material on catechetical instruction appeared in Chapter II, entitled "Bishops and their particular churches or dioceses." The content was now much reduced compared to the preceding schema, leaving the rest for inclusion into the catechetical directory to be prepared after the Council. Articles 12a, 13 and 14, the core of the matter on catechetical instruction, were placed under Section I dedicated to the pastoral duties of diocesan bishops.

1.4 The 1964 Textus Emendatus

Based on the recommendations received, the CB accomplished its task of correcting the *textus prior.* The amended text[17] was presented on 30 October 1964 at the 113rd general congregation of the Council.

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in *Ufficio Pastorale dei Vescovi e Chiese Orientali cattoliche: genesi strico-dottrinale, testo latino e traduzione italiana, esposizione e commento, motu proprio Ecclesiae sanctae* (Torino 1967), 39–40.

[15]Komonchak provides a rather gripping account of behind-the-scene attempts to change the text approved by the CB and which received generally favorable comments in the aula. Cf. Komonchak, IV, "Toward an Ecclesiology," 86–93.

[16]Cf. *Relatio super Schema Decreti De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia.* Exc. mus P.D. Petrus Veuillot, Archiepiscopus tit. Constantiensis in Thracia, coad. Parisiensis. Relatio, in *ASSCOV* II, II/III, 60–66.

[17]Cf. Schema Decreti *De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia* (1964). *Textus emendatus et relationes*, in *ASSCOV* II, III/VI, 112–207.

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After a brief introduction by Msgr. Marella, Msgr. Veuillot delivered his *relatio generalis*.[18] In explaining the guidelines that the CB followed in preparing the text, he noted that they included the general principles governing the pastoral duties of bishops. They considered these pastoral duties based on the theological teaching on the episcopacy contained in the *De ecclesia*.[19] Then followed the reporters' presentation of the sections of the document. Msgr. A. Carli (Segni, Italy) discussed sections 1 and 2 of the second chapter on bishops and their particular churches or dioceses, which contained the sections on catechetical instruction.[20]

From 4 to 6 November 1964, during the 114th to the 116th general congregations, the Fathers voted on the different sections of the *textus emendatus*. Results of the voting on chapter II, which contained the provisions on catechesis, were as follows: out of 2,129 Fathers, 1,219 voted *placet*, 19 *non placet*, 889 *placet iuxta modum* and 2 null. Chapter II did not get the required majority votes.[21] Consequently, the CB had to rework the text according to the numerous *modi* given by the Fathers. The Fathers did not vote on the whole schema because the CB wanted to wait until the final voting on *De ecclesia*, the principal point of reference of the schema especially concerning the theology of episcopal collegiality and its many practical ramifications.[22]

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[18]Cf. *Relatio generalis super Schema Decreti De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia*. Exc. mus P.D. Petrus Veuillot, Archiepiscopus tit. Constantiensis in Thracia, coad. Parisiensis. Relatio, in *ASSCOV* II, III/VI, 114–119.

[19]Cf. *Relatio generalis* of Msgr. Petrus Veuillot, in *ASSCOV* II, III/VI, 115. Cf. *Animadversiones scripto* of Msgr. F. Spellman, in *ASSCOV* II, III/II, 388.

[20]Cf. Schema Decreti *De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia* (1964). *Textus emendatus et relationes. Relatio prior de capite II, art. I et II*, in *ASSCOV* II, III/VI, 157, 162–166.

[21]Cf. Congregatio Generalis CXVI, 6 Novembris 1964, Exitum suffragationis super integrum cap. II, in *ASSCOV* II, III/VI, 356.

[22]Routhier explains: "After all, in a sense this decree [*De episcopis*] had for

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1.5 The 1965 Textus Recognitus

After correcting the text and preparing its report on the schema and the *expensio modorum*, the CB submitted its work to the judgment of the CC, hoping that no one would take advantage of the intersession to modify it in contravention of the will of the majority.[23] Later in March 1965, Msgr. Marella, after discussion in the CC, sent back to Msgr. Veuillot the new version of the schema and the *expensio modorum*. Allaying the fears of Msgr. Veuillot, Msgr. Marella noted the relatively few changes in the text, which pertained basically to form and the use of Latin.[24]

On 16 September 1965, the updated version of the decree *De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia*, together with the rationale for the revisions, was given to the conciliar Fathers.[25] From 29 September to

its purpose to apply the principles of the Constitution on the Church. These principles were in danger of remaining simply declarations if they were not applied […]. The theology of the local Church and collegiality was in danger of being nipped in the bud without its more 'practical' complement as developed in this decree on the pastoral office of the bishops." Cf. Routhier, "Finishing the Work Begun: The Trying Experience of the Fourth Period," in G. Alberigo and J. Komonchak, eds., *History of Vatican II* V (Maryknoll-Leuven 2006), 177–178. The Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, was promulgated by Pope Paul VI on 21 November 1964.

[23]Burigana and Turbanti relate the fears of Msgrs. Veuillot and Onclin on possible back-door, last-minute alterations before the final vote during the fourth period that would weaken the import of the text. The following points were particularly at risk: episcopal collegiality and the authority of the bishop in his diocese; the reform of the Roman Curia; episcopal conferences; and the establishment of the Synod of Bishops to help the Pope in the governance of the Universal Church. Cf. R. Burigana and G. Turbanti, "The Intersession: Preparing the Conclusion of the Council," in G. Alberigo and J. Komonchak, eds., *History of Vatican II* IV (Maryknoll-Leuven 2003), 598–601.

[24]Cf. Burigana and Turbanti, "The Intersession," 601.

[25]Cf. *Schema Decreti De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia. Textus recognitus*

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1 October 1965, votes were taken on various articles and sections. On 6 October, the Fathers voted on the full schema. After admitting a few minor changes in the text, the Fathers approved the definitive text during the 7th public session on 28 October 1965. They voted as follows: out of 2,322 Fathers, 2,319 voted *placet*, 2 *non placet*, 1 null vote.[26] The approved *CD* 12a, 13 and 14, found in Chapter II concerning the duties of diocesan bishops in their particular churches, read as follows:

> 12a. [The teaching office of bishops]. In exercising their duty of teaching—which [is] a preeminent duty of bishops—they should announce the Gospel of Christ to all, calling them to faith in the power of the Spirit or confirming them in a living faith. They should expound the whole mystery of Christ to them, namely, those truths the ignorance of which is ignorance of Christ. At the same time, they should point out the divinely revealed way to give glory to God and thereby to attain eternal happiness.
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> 13a. [The manner of presenting Christian doctrine]. Bishops should present Christian doctrine in a manner adapted to the needs of the times, that is to say, in a manner that will respond to the difficulties and questions by which people are especially burdened and troubled. They should also guard that doctrine, teaching the faithful to defend it. In propounding this doctrine, they should manifest the maternal solicitude of the Church toward all whether they be believers or not. With special affection, they should attend to the poor and the lower classes to whom the Lord has sent them to preach the Gospel.
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> 13b. Since it is the mission of the Church to converse with the human society in which it lives, it is especially the duty of bishops to seek out men and women and both request and promote dialogue with them. These conversations ought to be noted for clarity of speech as well as humility and mildness in order that at all times truth may be joined to charity and understanding with love. Likewise, they should be noted

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et modi, in *ASSCOV* II, IV/II, 510–555. Cf. *Relatio de singulis numeris capitis II*, *ASSCOV* II, IV/II, 562–592.

[26]Cf. Sessio Publica VII, 28 Octobris 1965, Approbatio et proclamatio decretorum Concilii, in *ASSCOV* II, IV/V, 673.

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for due prudence joined with trust which fosters friendship and thus is capable of bringing about a union of minds.

13c. They should also strive to make use of the various media at hand nowadays for proclaiming Christian doctrine, namely, first of all, preaching and catechetical instruction which always hold the first place, then the presentation of this doctrine in schools, academies, conferences and meetings of every kind, and finally its dissemination through public statements at times of outstanding events as well as the press and various instruments of social communications, which by all means ought to be used in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ.

14a. [Catechetical Instruction]. Bishops should take pains that catechetical instruction—which is intended to make the faith, as illumined by teaching, a living, manifest and active force in the lives of men and women—is given with sedulous care to both children and adolescents, youths and adults. In this instruction, a suitable arrangement should be observed, as well as a method suited not only to the matter that is being treated but also to the character, ability, age, and circumstances of the life of the participants. Finally, bishops should see to it that this instruction is based on Sacred Scripture, Tradition, the Liturgy, Magisterium and life of the Church.

14b. Moreover, they should take care that catechists are properly trained for their function so that they will be thoroughly acquainted with the doctrine of the Church and will have both a theoretical and a practical knowledge of the laws of psychology and of pedagogical methods.

14c. Bishops should also strive to restore or adapt in a better way the instruction of adult catechumens.

Catechesis in the 1962–1964 Schemata

2.1 The 1962 Schema *De cura animarum*

The *object* of catechetical instruction according to the schema is to help men and women live their faith-lives in a vital and manifest

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way, i.e., daily lives and decisions in harmony with the doctrines of the faith that they learn. According to art. 150,[27]

> the proper object of catechetical instruction is to make the faith, through the light of instruction, living and manifest in men and women. Catechetical instruction also hopes to stir them up to live a life in harmony with their Christian faith, consistently eager in accomplishing good works.

A living and manifest faith is one that more fully participates in the life of the Church, never separating the faith from daily life, as expressed in art. 152. Article 156 explains that one sign of a living and manifest faith that catechetical instruction aims for is the Christian's growing capacity to evaluate the realities of life on the basis of one's Christian beliefs, and so live morally according to one's faith. In other words, the object of catechetical instruction is the formation of true Christian witnesses in the world and for the world, in the domestic, professional and social sphere as stated in art. 158.

The schema provides two *means* of imparting Christian doctrine through catechetical instruction: the traditional presentation, explanation and memorization of the catechism, and the integration of doctrine with the other sources of catechesis. Regarding doctrinal instruction, art. 137 prescribes that the explanation should be simple and uncomplicated, avoiding controversial matters. Article 151 states that in such an explanation, the truths of the faith found in Scriptures and Church Tradition should all find their connection and center in the salvific message and person of Jesus Christ.

The other means that should be employed within the same process of catechetical instruction, apart from the mere teaching

[27]Sacrosanctum Oecumenicum Concilium Vaticanum II, Schema decreti *De cura animarum*, in *Schemata*, Vol. III, 156. All our English translations of primitive Vatican II documents in Latin, i.e., prior to their final approval at the Council, are based on the English translation of definitive texts in Walter M. Abbott, ed., *The Documents of Vatican II: All Sixteen Official Texts Promulgated by the Ecumenical Council 1963–1965* (New York: America Press, 1966).

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of doctrines, is the integration of these doctrines contained in the catechism with other sources of catechesis. Article 138 highlights the need to connect intellectual truths with aspects of Christian life that are more experiential: the liturgy and the apostolate. Corollary to the integration of the different sources of catechesis is the broadening of the Church's understanding of the process of Christian education and maturity. With the aid of developments in the science of pedagogy, catechesis should, henceforth, embrace much more than just a person's capacity to understand and memorize the catechism textbook but should consider all the faculties of the person, including age, character and condition (cf. art. 153).

The schema identifies books as *tools* for catechesis: catechetical books (cf. art. 135), scriptural commentaries (cf. art. 141), and the National Catechism adapted to local circumstances (cf. art. 136). The general *methodological principle* to be applied to all more specific methods in catechesis is the principle of adaptation and accommodation to the needs of participants as required by their own personal, environmental and cultural circumstances (cf. art. 139–140). Specifically, art. 159 proposes the method of the catechumenate for the formation of those preparing for baptism or those already baptized who needed some form of re-initiation into the Church.[28] Finally, the schema expresses due concern for the formation of the agents of catechesis: priests and lay religion teachers and catechists (cf. art. 145–149).

2.2 The 1963 Schema *De cura animarum*

The *object* of catechetical instruction according to art. 55[29] of the present schema is the same as its precedent in the 1962 schema. With regard to the *means*, however, the clarity of the dual means of catechesis

[28]It will be observed that such a formation, as contained in the schema at this early stage of the proposal to restore this ancient institution, consists basically of teaching or instruction in the truths of the faith and morals.

[29]Schema Decreti *De cura animarum*, in *ASSCOV* II, II/IV, 770.

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expounded in the preceding schema seems to have been lost in the preparation of the present 1963 schema. The most that can be identified as the means of catechesis is found in the same art. 55, which states that the object of catechesis is achieved *per doctrinam illustrata* or through the teaching of Christian doctrine.

Though similar to its 1962 precedent, art. 56 on *method* weaves into the text the careful balance between fidelity to the sacred material being treated in instruction and consideration of the circumstances of those catechized. Something important, however, disappeared from the earlier version of the text *De cura animarum*: the reference to the institution of the catechumenate as a method for imparting catechesis to the people. The article was transferred to appendix seven[30] as art. 15, along with the other sections of *De cura animarum* now classified into seven appendices, not to be discussed anymore in the aula. Appendix seven was to serve as the most primitive text of the General Catechetical Directory to be prepared by a group of experts after the Council.

Unlike the 1962 schema, art. 59 of the 1963 schema clearly states that official catechisms and catechism textbooks are the primary *tools* for catechetical instruction. Other useful books may be used also, especially those with selected chapters from the Scriptures. With regard to *agents*, after stating in art. 53 the serious obligation of local ordinaries and priests as the agents in handing on Christian doctrine, art. 57 repeats the provision of the preceding 1962 schema concerning the training of catechists both in the doctrines of the Church and in the principles of psychology and pedagogy. They should also be prepared spiritually, i.e., in faith and love. However, unlike the 1962 schema, this version is silent concerning the catechetical preparation of priests and religious during the period of their seminary or religious formation.

[30]Cf. Schema Decreti *De cura animarum*, in *ASSCOV* II, II/IV, 821.

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2.3 The 1964 *Textus Prior*

In comparison with the previous 1962 and 1963 versions of the schema *De cura animarum*, the *textus prior* presents the *object* of catechesis in a shorter way in art. 14a,[31] substituting the sentence on living a life congruent with the Christian faith with the word *operosa*:

> Catechetical training is intended to make people's faith become living, manifest and active [operosa] through the light of instruction. Bishops should see to it that such training be painstakingly given to children, adolescents, young adults and even grownups.

The *textus prior* confirms the statements of the previous 1962 and 1963 schemata that the *means* to be employed in order to have a living, manifest and active faith is teaching or instruction (*per doctrinam illustrata*) with the use of integrated sources: "[…] Bishops should see to it that this instruction is based on Sacred Scripture, tradition, the liturgy and life of the Church" (art. 14a). In particular, the experience of the liturgy and the life of the Church during the catechetical process should provide the more practical and lived aspect of catechetical formation.

A new dimension can be noticed in the *textus prior*'s presentation of the *method* of catechesis. Aside from using a method that is suited both to the Christian message being communicated and to the condition of participants (cf. art. 14a), catechesis should also be carried out in a relevant way, responsive to the difficulties and questions people face, with special attention to the needs of the poor and the marginalized (cf. art. 13a). With regard to catechetical *tools*, the content of art. 13b is new. The article encourages the use of various tools available in proclaiming Christian doctrine, including the printing press and the instruments of social communication. The article, nevertheless, does not mention the use of catechisms and other catechetical books, the treatment of which would, presumably, appear in the General Catechetical Directory to be prepared after the Council.

[31]Schema Decreti *De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia*, in *ASSCOV* II, III/II, 27.

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Concerning the *agents* of catechesis, the *textus prior* places the bishop at the head of the teaching ministry of the Church in the local setting (cf. art. 12a). As with the preceding 1963 schema, the present schema affirms the need to form catechists in both the doctrines of the Church and in the effective ways of imparting them with the aid of psychology and pedagogy (cf. art. 14b).

In summary, the *textus prior* follows the basic principles already enuntiated in the 1962 and 1963 versions of the schema *De cura animarum*, except for the fresh recommendation to use modern means of social communications in proclaiming Christian doctrine. Desirous in presenting the catechetical duties of bishops in a conciliar document on the pastoral office of bishops, the Council Fathers were also aware that much more should be put forward in a General Catechetical Directory about catechesis than what could be contained in a concilar schema on the multi-faceted ministry of bishops.

2.4 The 1964 *Textus Emendatus*

The catechetical texts under study are exactly the same as the *textus prior* except for some additional inputs that bring to clearer light the object, means and method of catechesis already contained in the *textus prior*.

The new material in art. 12a[32] on the teaching office of bishops confirms that the *object* of catechesis, already discussed in the *textus prior*, is a living faith:

> In exercising their duty of teaching, they should announce the gospel of Christ to people, a task which is eminent among the chief duties of bishops. They should, in the power of the Spirit, summon men and women to faith or confirm them in a faith already living.

The *means* involved in bringing Christians to a living faith is through doctrinal instruction: "They should expound the whole mystery of

[32]Schema Decreti *De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia* (1964). *Textus emendatus et relationes*, in *ASSCOV* II, III/VI, 134.

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Christ to them, namely, those truths the ignorance of which is ignorance of Christ."[33] However, catechesis should not just teach doctrine. According to the new text in art. 13a, "Bishops should also guard that doctrine, teaching the faithful to defend and spread it […]."[34]

Regarding the *method* of catechesis, the expression "life condition of the participants" has been added to art. 14a as one of the considerations for adaptation. Moreover, a whole paragraph on the Church's basic stance of conversation or dialogue with people was added to art. 13b, supporting the provision of an adapted catechetical method based on a deep knowledge and understanding of the circumstances of life of the catechetical participants. Still with regard to method, one crucial novelty of the *textus emendatus* was the re-appearance of the provision to restore the catechumenate as a method of catechesis. It should be recalled that reference to it had been suppressed both in the 1963 version and *textus prior*. Hence, art. 14c[35] of the *textus emendatus* now reads: "Bishops should also strive to re-establish or better adapt the instruction of adult catechumens."

A Commentary on *CD* 12a–14

This commentary on the catechetical provisions of *Christus Dominus* as they relate to the pastoral duties of bishops is organized according to the following headings: object, means, method, and tools and agents of catechesis.

3.1 The Object of Catechesis

According to *CD* 13c, catechetical instruction and preaching are two different forms of proclaiming the word of God. From this

[33] *Textus emendatus et relationes*, in *ASSCOV* II, III/VI, 134.

[34] *Textus emendatus et relationes*, in *ASSCOV* II, III/VI, 134.

[35] *Textus emendatus et relationes*, in *ASSCOV* II, III/VI, 136.

https://publications.lst.edu/

distinction emerges the special character of catechesis as determined by its object. Preaching is the proclamation of the salvific message of Christ to all men and women, carried out as part of the Church's ministry of the word. It has the specific purpose of "conquering for Christ those who are still distant from him, or confirming in the faith those who have already adhered themselves to Christ."[36] The preacher generally has no other fixed or programmed plan except to address the particular situation of his listeners at a given moment, in the light of the themes in the liturgical calendar of the Church and with the goal of leading his hearers to a deeper faith. On the other hand, catechetical instruction, also a form of the Church's ministry of the word, is the more systematic exposition of doctrine in the light of salvation history.[37] It seeks more than just addressing specific religious needs at a given moment or place. Rather, it is a true formation program, designed to deepen and strengthen the quality of one's Christian life.

More precisely, the object of catechesis in *Christus Dominus* is expressed in *CD* 14a. Catechesis aims to make the faith, as illumined by teaching, a living, explicit and effective force in the lives of Christians and prospective Christians. This process of coming to faith begins with the proclamation of the mystery of Christ, the working of the Spirit in the heart of the individual, and the person's belief and free conversion to the Lord. Conversion entails a deep awareness of having been "snatched away from sin and led into the mystery of the love of God" (*AG* 13b). One thus enters into a personal relationship with the Lord, accepting Him as Savior. Through post-baptismal catechesis, the new Christian progresses towards a more mature faith that is living, manifest and active.

A faith that is living, manifest and active does not merely remain on the spiritual, invisible level. Such kind of faith is experienced together with other members of the Christian community through

[36]Carli, "*Christus Dominus*," 266.

[37]Carli, "*Christus Dominus*," 266.

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one's fuller participation in the whole life of the Church. One's faith becomes alive through continual nourishment in the teachings of the Scriptures, Tradition and the Magisterium (doctrine). One's faith becomes manifest when shared together in prayer and worship with the other members of the Christian community (worship). One's faith becomes truly effective and active when it bears fruit in works of charity and the apostolate (morals). Taken altogether, the kind of faith that catechesis hopes to form is one that seeks always to conform one's life to one's Christian beliefs. It is precisely *operosa*, effective in giving concrete proofs in actions as a true Christian witness in the world and for the world. Duly instructed in an excellent manner concerning one's Christian duties, the Christian formed through catechesis proclaims the message of Christ in words and in deeds, in personal and domestic life, as well as in professional and social life.

3.2 The Means of Catechesis

In his presentation of chapter two, art. 12 of the *textus emendatus*, Msgr. A. Carli noted that not a few of the Fathers proposed some formulations concerning the bishop's teaching office. He mentioned that in consideration of these proposals, the Central Commission had recommended the following text:

> In exercising their duty of teaching—which is preeminent among the duties of bishops—they should announce the Gospel of Christ to all. They should expound the whole mystery of Christ to them, namely, those truths the ignorance of which is ignorance of Christ. At the same time, they should point out the divinely revealed way to give glory to God and thereby to attain to eternal happiness.[38]

The quoted text emphasizes the intellectual aspect of catechetical formation. The means involved in bringing Christians to a living faith is through doctrinal instruction: "Catechetical training is intended to make people's faith become living, manifest and active through

[38]Schema Decreti *De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia* (1964). *Textus emendatus et relationes. Relatio prior de capite II, art. I et II*, in *ASSCOV* II, III/VI, 157.

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the light of instruction" (*CD* 14a). Bishops are enjoined to expound the whole mystery of Christ to Christians, namely, "those truths the ignorance of which is ignorance of Christ" (*CD* 12a).

Instruction in doctrine should be in the manner of simple presentation and explanation of the truths contained in the teachings and life of Christ and safeguarded in the Church's deposit of faith. It should avoid complex questions and controversial matters. Moreover, the truths of the faith found in Scriptures and Church Tradition should all find their connection and center in the salvific message and person of Jesus Christ.[39]

Still regarding art. 14, one Father requested that the magisterium of the Church be included as one of the sources of catechesis since official Church teaching was the ordinary source of the instruction of the faithful. The Commission responded favorably to this recommendation.[40] It can be seen that the Fathers were keen on stressing that catechesis is indispensably connected with divine salvation which precisely would give meaning and direction to human existence.

3.3 The Method of Catechesis

CD 14a presents the fundamental *methodological principle* that should characterize the catechesis of the Church. The mystery of Christ in its integrity should not only be imparted but also adapted to the situation of those catechized. All groups of Christians must be catechized, but not necessarily in the same way.[41] The doctrine of the faith should

[39]Cf. Sacrosanctum Oecumenicum Concilium Vaticanum II, Schema decreti *De cura animarum*, in *Schemata*, Vol. III, 154; 156, art. 137; 151.

[40]"Quaeritur ut dicatur: '*et Magisterio Ecclesiae*,' cum magisterium sit fons ordinarius institutionis christifidelium (1 Pater). R.: Admittitur, ita ut textus sit: *Magisterio vitaque Ecclesiae*." *Schema Decreti De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia. Relatio de singulis numeris capitis II. Modus ad num.* 13, n. 20, in *ASSCOV* II, IV/II, 564.

[41]Cf. J. Perarnau, *Decreto sobre el ministerio pastoral de los Obispos en la Iglesia*

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be taken up to its core, without distortions nor exaggerations, and then presented in a way that is comprehensible and interesting, considering the character, ability, age, and circumstances of life of those catechized.

Article 55 of the early text *De cura animarum* (1963), part of which later found its way into *CD* 14, states that the goal of catechetical instruction is "[…] to make the faith, as illumined by teaching, a living, manifest and active force in the lives of men and women […] to stir them up to live a life consistent with their Christian faith, always accomplishing good works."[42] For the Fathers, the mystery of Christ in its integrity should not only be imparted *per se*, but also imparted in a way that is relevant to—and therefore touches and potentially transforms—the lives of men and women. The addition of the completely new text of art. 13b clearly illustrates the seriousness of the Council regarding this point. The Central Commission judged that a full paragraph should be added, one that would clearly affirm the need for the Church, through the bishops, to converse with the human society in which it lives and to seek out men and women and enter into dialogue with them.[43] On this account, the French bishops, in their proposed amendments, precisely highlighted the fact that the catechesis of the Church should constantly engage in dialogue and conversation with people. They proposed that to the words "the capacities and age of the participants" of article 14a should be added "the circumstances of their lives." They stressed that it was important for the life context of the participants to serve also as an indispensable source of catechesis.[44]

(Castellón de la Plana 1966), 67.

[42] *Schema Decreti De cura animarum*, in *ASSCOV* II, II/IV, 770.

[43] Schema Decreti *De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia* (1964). *Textus emendatus et relationes. Relatio prior de capite II, art. I et II*, in *ASSCOV* II, III/VI, 157.

[44] Cf. *Animadversiones* of the French Bishops, in *ASSCOV* II, III/II, 459.

https://publications.lst.edu/

Such option of the Council for a conversational stance towards the world should involve a change not just in the language of catechesis but also in the leadership style of bishops. In his comment on the *textus prior*, Msgr. P. E. Léger (Montréal, Canada) explained:

> It is known to all that the so-called ecclesiastical language is antiquated, artificial, abstract, distant from life […]. This is the reason why we preach, as it were, in the desert. We must teach the integral and authentic mystery of Christ and not only a list of prohibitions […]. Many of the faithful come to us and we see how ignorant we are about their condition of life. They find it difficult to enter into dialogue with us. On the other hand, our opinions as bishops are often ignored because we do not utilize suitable and effective means to reach people.[45]

According to Msgr. L. Proaño Villalba (Riobamba, Ecuador), the text of *Christus Dominus* should mention the duty of bishops to know the people entrusted to their care and their needs because some priests and lay people have often complained that their bishop is isolated from them. Thus, it is necessary for bishops to enter into a spirit of true dialogue with people, offering them the possibility of sharing with him their problems, difficulties, aspirations and opinions.[46] But such pastoral knowledge that bishops should have of those entrusted to their care does not only entail a personal knowledge of individual persons. For Msgr. S. Ruiz Garcia (Chiapas, Mexico), bishops should also have a sufficient knowledge of contemporary society and its socio-political and economic dynamics as they affect, positively or negatively, the lives of people under their care.[47]

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[45]*Oratio* of Msgr. P. E. Léger, in *ASSCOV* II, III/II, 219–220.

[46]Cf. *Oratio* of Msgr. L. Proaño Villalba, in *ASSCOV* II, III/II, 269–270. See also the *oratio* of Msgr. A.M. Guerry (Cambrai, France), in *ASSCOV* II, III/II, 250.

[47]Cf. *Oratio* of Msgr. S. Ruiz Garcia, in *ASSCOV* II, III/II, 271–272. See also the *oratio* of Msgr. C. Himmer (Tournay, Belgium), in *ASSCOV* II, III/II, 279–280.

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These interventions point to the fact that by its very nature, catechesis indispensably delves into the lives of people in order to lead them, with the help of the saving truths of Christ's mystery, to a Christian life filled with and moved by faith. For the catechetical process to touch and transform people, the Christian message should be handed on to them in such a way that they will realize its relevance to their lives, thus becoming eager also both to defend it and to share it with others (cf. *CD* 13a). Thus, Christians would be confirmed in their faith, and their supernatural end attained, if the bishops were to strive to do two things: expound on human problems in the light of faith, especially those things that greatly burden and trouble them, and utilize a language, method and leadership stance that are adapted to personal circumstances and the needs of the times.

With regard to specific catechetical methods, it was primarily due once again to the intervention of the French bishops during the discussions on the *textus prior* that the Council was able to steer itself into restoring the mention of the catechumenate in the text, including the role of the bishops in establishing the institution in their particular churches and adapting it to their local circumstances. The French lamented the fact that in a world where ancient Christendom was being afflicted by modern unbelief, the schema had no mention of the institution. Thus, they proposed the inclusion of the following text: "Since, however, the episcopal church is a sign raised to the nations and the Church desires new members to be born, through baptism, into the mystical body of Christ, it is necessary that the instruction of adult catechumens be restored or adapted in a better way."[48] Hence with *CD* 14c, Vatican II recommended the catechumenate for the non-baptized as a precise method for the catechetical formation of those already initially converted to Christ. According to Legrand, the bishop's role here as supervisor and overseer is needed in order to avoid the danger

[48] *Animadversiones* of the French Bishops, in *ASSCOV* II, III/II, 459. Cf. Schema Decreti *De pastorali episcoporum munere in ecclesia* (1964), *Relatio prior de capite II, art. I et II*, in *ASSCOV* II, III/VI, 157.

https://publications.lst.edu/

of "seeing the catechumenate as the business of specialists"[49] whereas this institution should actually be the fruit of the collaboration of the whole Christian community, led by its pastors.[50]

3.4 The Tools and Agents of Catechesis

Concerning *tools*, *CD* 13c encourages the use of various means available in proclaiming Christian doctrine but specifies two tools which are especially relevant to catechesis, the printing press and the instruments of social communication. Though *Christus Dominus* does not mention the use of catechisms and other catechetical books, they are surely products of the printing press. Guidelines for their use have been reserved to the General Catechetical Directory to be prepared after the Council.

With regard to the *agents* of catechesis, bishops occupy the most crucial catechetical role in the diocese. In fact, the most important of all their duties is the proclamation of the gospel to all. Legrand asserts that this is one of the clearest teachings of Vatican II, having its foundation in Scriptures. The primary mandate given by Christ to the Apostles was to teach the gospel to all creatures and to be His witnesses (cf. Mk 16:15; Mt 28:19). This duty is conferred upon bishops at the symbolic imposition of the Book of the Gospels on the head during their consecration.[51] Bishops are, therefore, true and authentic teachers of the faith who lead new disciples to Christ and

[49]H.M. Legrand, "Commentaire des numéros 11–24: Nature de l'Église particulière et rôle de l'évêque dans l'Église," in W. Onclin, *La charge pastorale des évêques. Décret "Christus Dominus."* Texte Latin et traducion Française (Paris 1969), 135.

[50]For brief accounts of the experiences of various local churches at the time of Vatican II regarding the catechumenate, cf. *Concilium* 22 (1967): 133–148 (Spain); 149–153 (Africa); 155–159 (Japan); 161–164 (Vietnam); 165–167 (Taiwan); 172–179 (Latin America).

[51]Cf. Legrand, "Commentaire des numéros 11–24," 126.

https://publications.lst.edu/

into the Christian community. They preach to people the faith that must be believed and put into practice. They also vigilantly protect the Christian community from errors that threaten their faith and morals (cf. *CD* 2b; *LG* 25a). Consequently, *Christus Dominus* assigns a central supervisory role to bishops with regard to catechesis in both the setting of established churches and in the missionary setting. They have the duty of coordinating the work among priests, religious and lay people.

A key catechetical duty of the bishop is to make sure that the diocese is supplied with good and sufficient resources for catechesis. Foremost among the diocese's human resources are its catechists, the prime collaborators of bishops and priests as agents of catechesis. Vatican II especially manifests the Church's special care for them, their role in the building up of the Church, and their own personal spiritual and professional preparation for their apostolate. Thus, in *CD* 14b, bishops are exhorted to take care that catechists are properly trained in their knowledge of the Church's teachings and in their ability to effectively transmit them through the help of both a theoretical and a practical knowledge of psychology and pedagogy.

Conclusion

The document *Christus Dominus* and its redactional history have shown that catechesis is a true formation program with the general *objective* of maturity in the faith. According to *CD* 14, a mature faith is one that is living, manifest and active. In the mind of Vatican II, catechesis is designed to deepen and strengthen the quality of one's Christian life, in which Christianity provides a positive influence on all other aspects of one's life as opposed to relegating the faith to a narrow corner of one's existence. *CD* 14 also highlights the teaching of doctrine as the *means* to arrive at a living, manifest and active faith, with the integrated use of the basic sources of catechesis: Sacred Scripture, Tradition, the Liturgy, Magisterium and the Life of the Church. Such teaching thus includes both doctrinal and experiential components.

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The pastoral spirit of the Council most clearly emerged in its orientations and provisions with regard to the general *methodological approach* it gave to catechesis through the document under study. Indeed one impressive point that could not escape notice concerning the whole evolution process of the document was the Fathers' insistence on a true *cura personalis* or personal care for Christians. More precisely, this means that the mechanics of catechesis should be adjusted to the conditions of those catechized. While always maintaining a non-negotiable fidelity to the deposit of faith, the Fathers stressed the requirement of adaptation of catechesis to people—their circumstances and capacities, their dreams and their hopes, and therefore, their needs. This approach should decide whatever tools and methods to use in catechesis.

The doctrine of Vatican II in *Christus Dominus* concerning the object and means, as well as the method, tools and agents of catechesis was the consequence of the renewal of a mindset that gradually matured before the Council and at the Council. Alberich writes that the Council marked "the official closing of the 'age of the catechism' and the beginning of an in-depth renewal of the essential coordinates of catechesis."[52] However, the Council did not simply discard the catechism and the catechetical means it represents: the teaching and learning of doctrine. Rather, it rediscovered the essential nature of catechesis and placed the use of the catechism—its learning, understanding and memorization—within the framework of a whole new process of Christian formation wherein doctrine is learned as an effective force through which the Christian spirit is infused into the realities of concrete life. The *tools* of catechesis—the catechism, other printed materials, and modern means of social communications—have the purpose of delivering the Christian message to those who would otherwise fail to fully comprehend it at their own level or would be unreachable without such tools. They are also meant to facilitate the

[52]E. Alberich, *La catechesi oggi. Manuale di catechetica fondamentale* (Leumann, 2001), 64.

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relevant integration of doctrine into the more concrete realities of peoples' lives.

Later developments in catechetical reflection would more clearly confirm that all catechesis in the Church should take its inspiration from the restored catechumenate program for adults, which exemplifies the very nature of the Church as a communion in a state of continual mission. While the 1971 General Catechetical Directory would take up this matter more comprehensively than what Vatican II was able to do, the Church would come to a deeper reflection on it at the Synods of 1974 and 1977. The continually maturing understanding of catechesis by the Church would find a fuller expression in Paul VI's apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and in John Paul II's *Catechesi Tradendae*.

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