CELEBRATION OF THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE LUTHERAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC JOINT DECLARATION ON THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION

Wartburg Theological Seminary
Archdiocese of Dubuque
Loras College
12-13 February 2015

Edited by
Janine Marie Idziak
Winston D. Persaud

Celebration of the 15th Anniversary of the Signing of the Lutheran – Roman Catholic *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*

31 October 1999

On the occasion of the Observance of the

500th Anniversary of the Reformation

1517

50th Anniversary of the Second Vatican Council

1962-65

Wartburg Theological Seminary – Archdiocese of Dubuque – Loras College

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Janine Marie Idziak, Ph.D.

Rev. Winston D. Persaud, Ph.D.

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Acknowledgments

The Celebration of the 15th Anniversary of the Signing of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, co-sponsored by Wartburg Theological Seminary, the Archdiocese of Dubuque, and Loras College, provided Lutherans and Roman Catholics with the opportunity to worship together, engage in theological reflection, and share fellowship.

This symposium was funded by grants from Humanities Iowa, the Center for Global Theologies at Wartburg Theological Seminary, and the Archbishop Kucera Center for Catholic Intellectual and Spiritual life at Loras College.

In the preparation of this Celebration, Rev. Dr. Winston D. Persaud served as the representative from Wartburg Theological Seminary and Dr. Janine Marie Idziak represented the Archdiocese of Dubuque and Loras College.

We are indebted to liturgists Rev. Thomas Schattauer, Ph.D. (Wartburg Theological Seminary) and David Pitt, Ph.D. (Loras College) for preparation of our worship services and occasional prayers. We likewise wish to thank those who assisted in conducting Evening Prayer and Morning Prayer: Amanda Osheim, Ph.D. (Loras College); Amy M. Heinz and Gus Barnes, Jr. (Master of Divinity students at Wartburg Theological Seminary), Angela Konitski (Loras College alumna), and Roy W. Carroll, Ph.D. (Loras College and Wartburg Theological Seminary). We are grateful to Rev. Amy L. Current (Dean for Vocation, Wartburg Theological Seminary) who served as moderator of the closing panel conversation.

We appreciate the supporting services afforded us by Rev. Samuel D. Giere, Ph.D., Director pro tem of the Center for Global Theologies, and Karen L. Ressel, Student Assistant for that Center.

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We hope that others will use the *Proceedings* of our symposium as a springboard for further dialogue and sharing between Lutherans and Roman Catholics.

Rev. Winston D. Persaud, Ph.D.

Janine Marie Idziak, Ph.D.

Dubuque, Iowa

April 2105

Schedule of Events

Thursday, 12 February 2015
at Loras College

Opening Prayer and Buffet Dinner for invited guests	5:15 p.m.
Evening Prayer	6:05 p.m.
Public Lecture	6:30 p.m.

Welcoming Remarks

Times of Change: 1515-2015 Wittenberg, Rome, Dubuque
Fr. Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P.

Concluding Prayer

Friday, 13 February 2015
at Wartburg Theological Seminary

Opening Prayer	8:15 a.m.
Presentation on the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*	8:20 a.m.

Rev. Winston D. Persaud, Ph.D.
Wartburg Theological Seminary

Janine Marie Idziak, Ph.D.
Loras College

Morning Prayer	9:30 a.m.
Small Group Discussions	10:30 a.m.
Concluding Panel Conversation with Participants	11:40 a.m.

Fr. Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P.
Rev. Winston D. Persaud, Ph.D.
Janine Marie Idziak, Ph.D.

Closing Prayer and Lunch	12:30 p.m.

Opening Prayer before Dinner

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
we come together in prayer and praise,
as people who believe in the one Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,
and share in one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We also acknowledge
that our unity in faith
needs to be nourished and deepened.
Through our prayer, work and study together
may unity among Christians become ever more perfect.

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer.

Lord Jesus Christ,
our brother and savior,
you have prayed that we will be one as you and your Father are one.

Send your Holy Spirit to preside over this meal
and over this gathering:
help us to work together
for your honor and glory
and for the salvation of the world.

Lord Jesus, hear our prayer,
for you are our Lord for ever and ever.

by Rev. Winston D. Persaud, Ph.D.

Wartburg Theological Seminary

Evening Prayer

Thursday 12 February 2015

Loras College

The service follows the Ordinary for Evening Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours according to the Roman Rite, with elements from the principal worship book of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

God, come to my assistance.
Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.
Alleluia. *Liturgy of the Hours*

HYMN *Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory*

Text: *Phos hilaron*, para. Marty Haugen, b. 1950
Music: JOYOUS LIGHT, Marty Haugen

PSALMODY

Psalm 141: *Let my prayer rise like incense*

Music: David Schack

Psalm Prayer: *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

Psalm 46: *God is our refuge and strength*

Translation: Revised Standard Version

Psalm Prayer: *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

READING 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 *One body, one Spirit*

RESPONSORY

The Lord has given us food, bread of the finest wheat.
The Lord has given us food, bread of the finest wheat.

Honey from the rock to our heart's content,
Bread of the finest wheat.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Lord has given us food, bread of the finest wheat. *Liturgy of the Hours*

GOSPEL CANTICLE *Canticle of Mary*

My Heart Sings Out
Text: Luke 1:46-55; Ruth Duck, b. 1947
Music: *ELLACOMBE, Gesangbuch der Herzogl. Wirtemberg, 1784*

INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray that Christians everywhere heed God's call to become one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church, as we say, **Lord make us one.**

Lord, bless our brothers and sisters in the Church of Rome; may their preservation of the catholic substance of the faith, their commitment to the historical continuity of the church, and their love for the Eucharist enrich and challenge all Christians.

Lord, bless our brothers and sisters in the Churches of the East; may they continue to enrich your church by their faith in the Holy Spirit, their love for the Divine Liturgy, and their respect for ecclesiastical tradition.

Look especially on our brothers and sisters in the Armenian Apostolic Church; may their suffering bear witness to the forgiving love which you have shown us in Christ Jesus.

Bless our brothers and sisters of the Anglican Communion; may their respect for diversity and individual conscience challenge the whole church, and their treasures of language and music never cease to magnify your holy Name.

Bless our Lutheran brothers and sisters; may their love for the Scriptures and their faith in your all-sufficient grace help us all to receive your salvation as purest gift.

Bless our brothers and sisters of the Reformed Tradition; may they continue to edify the church with their preaching and inspire us all by their dedicated work for your kingdom.

Bless our brothers and sisters of the Free Church Tradition; may their warmth and enthusiasm bring new life to the work and prayer of your church.

Bless us and all Christians; may we come to that perfect oneness which you have with your Son in the unifying love of the Holy Spirit.

Benedictine Daily Prayer

The Benedictine Community at St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, regularly prays these intercessions during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, from the Confession of Peter (Jan. 18) to the Conversion of Paul (Jan. 25).

Most high and holy God, pour out upon us your one and unifying Spirit, and awaken in every confession of the whole church a holy hunger and thirst for unity in you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen. *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

The prayer comes from the hand of Johann Konrad Wilhelm Loehe (1808-1872), the German pastor and founder of Wartburg Theological Seminary.

LORD'S PRAYER *English Language Liturgical Consultation*

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Father, you illumine the night
and bring the dawn to scatter darkness.
Let us pass this night in safety,
free from Satan's power,
and rise when morning comes
to give you thanks and praise.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen. *Liturgy of the Hours*

DISMISSAL

May the Lord bless us,
protect us from all evil
and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen. *Liturgy of the Hours*

The greeting of peace may be shared by all.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Welcoming Remarks

Rev. Stanley N. Olson, Ph.D.
President, Wartburg Theological Seminary

We are grateful for the privilege of sponsoring this event in partnership with Loras College and the Archdiocese of Dubuque.

The gathering here tonight and tomorrow on Wartburg's campus, and planned events in the next two years, are in celebration and observance of three particular markers in the long history of the people and institutions that God graciously calls into being and uses for God's own mission. We mark the 15th anniversary of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* between the Vatican and the Lutheran World Federation, a declaration also signed later by the United Methodist Church. We mark the 50th anniversary of the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council. And we anticipate the 500th anniversary of the events that launched what became known as the Reformation.

The history of Christ's Church always reveals not only partnership and agreement but also disagreement and tension. The marker events we commemorate in these gatherings shared in that dual reality and the response to them still shows both tension and commonality. Yet, we remember and consider them with the conviction that they were well used by God, for God's purposes, and that they can and will still be salutary as we reflect upon those events and their impact.

All three historic events were marked by serious and persistent conversation among the people of God who intended to serve God faithfully and who, we believe, left a deep, positive impact on the Church of Jesus Christ. I welcome you to another chapter in this long conversation and invite you to confidence that God is still at work in and through the reflections of God's people.

Most Rev. Michael O. Jackels
Archbishop of Dubuque

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Please excuse my absence from this important celebration; I was scheduled to be elsewhere, and I am not holy enough to bi-locate, yet.

My prayer will have to suffice as a sort of presence at the event:

- My prayer of adoration for Jesus, Son of God, Savior of the world and mine too, poor sinner that I am;

- My prayer of contrition for any way I or my Catholic brethren have weakened the unity of Christians, or failed to contribute in any significant way to its increase;

- My prayer of thanks for those who labor for the unity of Christians, especially those who met, studied, prayed, and discussed in the dialogue on justification;

- My prayer of supplication that the followers of Jesus, both individual believers and communities of faith, may continually strive to make real his desire for unity.

With kind regards and prayerful best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Michael O. Jackels

Archbishop of Dubuque

Rev. William M. Joensen, Ph.D.
Dean of Campus Spiritual Life, Loras College
on behalf of Jim Collins, President of Loras College

Loras President Jim Collins, who knows not only what it means to exercise authority but to be under authority, this evening is hosting the College's Regents as they gather in one of their quarterly meetings, and so regrets that he cannot personally welcome you. He wishes to convey his enthusiastic greetings and the sense that it is both an honor and delight to join with Wartburg Seminary and the Archdiocese of Dubuque in hosting this Lutheran-Catholic Symposium on the 15th anniversary of the Joint Declaration on Justification. He prays that the next 18 hours or so are a time of friendly engagement and faith-filled fellowship. I would add in my role as dean that if this evening's meal, conversation, prayer, and talk by Fr. O'Meara still leave you with room in your soul and an appetite to praise God as brothers and sisters in Christ that you cannot wait to come together again tomorrow at Wartburg, you might want to stop in Christ the King Chapel tonight on your way back to the Keane parking lot to partake in a little ecumenical praise and worship beginning at 8 PM, with some spirited music as a post-dessert course to tide you over until morning.

We know that the ecclesial events and mutual condemnations of the 16th century did not easily thaw. Even in the 19th century, here in the Upper Mississippi River Valley, there were still frozen floes in the course of ecumenical relations that made things more than a bit chilly, even if there was an undercurrent of cooperation and goodwill. Thomas E. Auge recounts in *Man of Deeds*, his

biography of Bishop Mathias Loras, the founding bishop of the Diocese of Dubuque and of the College that now bears his name, that his chief collaborator, Fr. Samuel Mazzuchelli, OP, was chiefly responsible for the building of St. Raphael's Cathedral in the years 1836-39, including the task of fundraising. He encouraged "not only Catholics but all residents of Dubuque to contribute to the building fund, offering it for public use," such as the city's Fourth of July celebration (Thomas Auge, *Man of Deeds: Bishop Loras and the Upper Mississippi River Valley Frontier* [*MD*], ed. Amy Lorenz, with a preface by Andrew J. Auge; Dubuque, IA: Loras College Press, 2008, p. 109). His temerity in asking Protestants and others to assist this project was an instance of the comity he cultivated with citizens other than his co-religionists, and Bishop Loras customarily adopted this same cordial attitude.

Yet true dialogue among Catholics, Lutherans, and other Christians was rare, and both Mazzuchelli and Loras could be partially implicated for keeping relations cool. Auge notes that Loras made a journey downriver to St. Louis in 1840 with Mazzuchelli, and at periodic stops in river cities, the two delivered a series of lectures that were more polemical than ecumenical in tone. Bishop Loras would begin by presenting the strongest objections that non-Catholics raised against matters of Catholic doctrine and practice, and "Father Mazzuchelli would then respond to these criticisms, and not surprisingly, was always able to refute them" (*MD* p. 110). No wonder that some Protestant Christians viewed Loras' evangelical ministry with suspicion--a suspicion that became most conspicuously jaundiced in *The Home Missionary*, a Presbyterian missionary society journal, who railed against the "Lord Bishop of Dubuque" with his shallow arguments, and even criticized his installation of an organ in the Cathedral as a not-so-stealthy attempt at proselytization of Protestants through fine music (*MD* pp. 110-12).

From these disharmonious notes of the 19th century, thank God that the warmer winds of the Spirit resulted in the thaw of ecumenical dialogue that followed upon the Fourth Assembly of the World Lutheran Federation in Helsinki, Finland in 1963, as well as the Second Vatican Council in Rome, concluding in 1965. This was a pivotal year: it is the year I learned to ride a bike! Though as a boy I was oblivious to the sustained theological dialogue between Lutherans and Roman Catholics that commenced in July 1965 and eventually carried over to the 1999 Declaration on Justification, even I was aware that our normally decent relations with our Christian friends was taking a turn, as we were invited into their churches for ecumenical worship.

Concomitantly, the whole sense of what it meant to be part of the Church of Christ was growing—as was the acute recognition that one could not take for granted that the wounds and dissociation within Christ's Body would simply heal themselves or be tolerated as an intractable *status quo*; we must actively seek to engage, pray, and cooperate in bringing God's promise of salvation realized solely in Jesus Christ to bear upon our communities at the local level, if the true small "c" catholicity of the Church was to radiate around the world.

Beyond the official representatives of Lutheran-Catholic dialogue who fashioned the Declaration, it has been the grassroots ecumenical collaboration within this Dubuque community over the past

decades that is part and parcel of our Symposium's cause for celebration. The periodic past seminars and gatherings of Wartburg, Aquinas, and Loras faculty—joined by members of the University of Dubuque seminary and Clarke College (now University) communities, the common study and worship, the mutual solicitude for the lowly and those longing to find a place in our Dubuque and Tri-State region: all reveal the desire to announce the Gospel in every time and place. We amplify the Word in all the syllables and sentences, sacraments and acts of service that compose an ongoing multilingual engagement among Christians. The world is listening for any hint of discord, or for anyone who wants to press the mute button on his so-called brother and sister in Christ. We who come together tonight and tomorrow, whose Lord's Prayer for daily bread is kneaded into His prayer that all may be one, seek above all to listen—to one another and to the Spirit.

We may affirm Paul Tillich's regard for justification as a criterion that one should not trust anything "except God's unconditional promises in Jesus Christ." We might also acknowledge with Tillich the need for what he called the "Catholic substance"—the prayer life, preaching, witness, and teaching of the church as the embodiment of God's presence by which God's Spirit is mediated (Carl J. Peter, "The Need of Another Principle," in *Justification by Faith: Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue VII*, ed. H. George Anderson, T. Austin Murphy, and Joseph A. Burgess, Minneapolis: Augsburg P., pp. 304-15 at 306-8). Yet we also hear Pope Francis' counsel that as we humbly implore God's grace and trust the possibilities God's love holds out to us, we need to "resist the diabolical temptation of thinking that by our own efforts we can save the world and ourselves" (Lenten Message 2015).

For our young people whom we teach and serve, and for all of us here gathered, whether we are preparing for or already exercise ordained ministry in the Church, or are being formed to take up our vocations as lay persons at work in the world, our presence here testifies to our desire to "humbly welcome the word that has been planted in [us], and is able to save our souls" (James 1:21). Whether Bishop Loras would have envisioned this Symposium among the fruits of his evangelical labors or not, I think that with the benefit of a more navigable current of Spirit unfettered by frozen attitudes of the past, even he would welcome this word, this event, and celebrate with us. And so may you find the fruit of all genuine ecumenical dialogue to be our grace tonight and tomorrow: friendship in Christ.

Times of Change: 1515-2015
Wittenberg, Rome, Dubuque

Fr. Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P.

Professor Emeritus of Theology

University of Notre Dame

I

Tonight and tomorrow we are recalling two moments in time: the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's call for reformation in years after 1515, and the fiftieth anniversary of the conclusion in December, 1965 of the reforming Council, Vatican II. The first lies centuries in the past; the second only a few decades. We recall these past events, however, for us who are thinking about today and planning for the future.

Is it not *Time*, time itself and history that have brought us together? Time is a mystery – as so many philosophers and writers observe. Time, the philosopher Martin Heidegger wrote, has a "mutual calling back and forth between the past and future." [i] Time fashions cultures, ages, civilizations. And so to think together about time is here to reflect on the past and the future.

II

Fifty years ago, when I was here in Dubuque as a student at Loras College and at Aquinas Institute of Theology, time seemed to most to have little importance or presence. Time for me at nineteen in the 1950s was simply the day of a month posted on a calendar or the movement of the two hands on a clock. Time was static, and periods of time seemed all the same. It was said that in the 1950s President Eisenhower read the Sunday newspaper on Monday. Nothing happened in America. In the Midwest everything seemed slow. Life just led up to that happy minute and second when I could leave whatever I was reluctantly doing.

Today we are ceaselessly aware of time and times. Social media gives more and more new generations, although often the last a brief time, even as we are writing up -- on an i-pad or a smart-phone -- things to be done at once or in the future.

III

Fifty years ago, in the autumn of 1961, a seminarian at Wartburg Lutheran Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa walked over to Aquinas Institute, a Catholic seminary in Dubuque run by the Roman Catholic Dominican Friars. [ii] Although this was a journey of less than a mile, Jerry Folk passed that afternoon through four centuries. He introduced himself to us Dominican students raking leaves and announced that he wanted to take a course at that Catholic school. Jerry's request was impossible. First, a few courses were in a simple Latin. Moreover, too many courses held only metaphysics and church law from past centuries now being given to future priests for memorization. It was unthinkable that a Protestant would take a class in a Roman Catholic seminary, unthinkable in the USA, in the Western hemisphere, in the world. That afternoon in 1961, the young seminarian also mentioned to us Dominicans a strange term that we had never heard: something called "ecumenism."

IV

At the end of the 1950s, some said that Dubuque was a particularly prejudiced city. Growing up elsewhere in Iowa, in Des Moines in the 1940s, I took for granted Catholic and Protestant tensions. Catholics had their own schools and hospitals, and they were forbidden even to open the door of Protestant churches much less to attend weddings and funerals within them. Walking home after school at St. Augustin's, I sometimes saw signs at a Protestant church for a lecture by an ex-priest, an evening's exposé of the dubious secrets of Rome. This tension between Christians seemed destined to last forever.

Staying with the past, we need to observe that at first Roman Catholic authorities forcefully and totally condemned ecumenism. In 1929, Pope Pius XI condemned "pan Christians." In 1948, Pope Pius XII, rejected "false irenicism" and did not permit any theologians to be present at the initial meeting of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam. In 1954, Catholics working as reporters were forbidden to attend the important gathering in Evanston, Illinois.

Suddenly, change in the form of "the ecumenical movement" arrived.

V

In that same October of 1961, an important visitor came to Wartburg Seminary: the distinguished Danish Lutheran theologian Kristen Skydsgaard. He asked to have lunch, along with the faculty of Wartburg Seminary, with the faculties of the Catholic Aquinas Institute and the Presbyterian and Methodist seminary at the University of Dubuque. After lunch he pointed out to the professors of the three schools what an opportunity there was in Dubuque for ecumenism: three seminaries

from the Lutheran, Roman Catholic, and Calvinist traditions. A year later, Skydsgaard was in Rome as an official observer at Vatican II.

VI

Shortly after Skydsgaard's visit, the faculties of the three Dubuque seminaries began to hold ecumenical discussions in theology. Meanwhile, the students in the Dubuque seminaries were working for more cooperation. Particularly the Wartburg seminarians were always pushing for more ecumenical events. For instance, they wanted their fine choir to sing in the auditorium of the Dominican priory. This seemed dangerous to the Dominican superiors but badgered by the Catholic and Lutheran seminarians they agreed and fixed the date. As the day for the concert approached, some of the Catholic priests noticed in horror that the day chosen for the concert -- was March 17th. It was risky enough to have Lutheran singers performing in a Catholic institution, singing phrases about justification by faith to melodies by Bach – but on St. Patrick's Day! There had to be a show of Catholic identity. The Dominican superiors decided that at the reception afterwards soft drinks would be served – but no cookies!

In Dubuque, the months from 1962 to 1964 witnessed how fast attitudes could change and prejudices fade. Ecumenism led not to indifference or conversion but to seeing Christianity more broadly and to understanding that within Christianity there could be different emphases to the Gospel of Christ. Learning about different traditions enriched each church. Warren Quanbeck, a member of the central committee of the World Lutheran Federation and also an observer at Vatican II, has written: "The twentieth century will be known in future church history books as the beginning of the great effort to bring the Christian churches together again, one that begins with the search for understanding." [iii]

In the summer of 1964, a first prominent marker of change was reached – and after only a few years. The three seminaries in Dubuque and the School of Religion at the University of Iowa formed the *Association of Theological Faculties in Iowa.* Courses were shared by students and new ecumenical programs were offered. Clusters of seminaries in Berkeley and Boston were beginning to educate together -- but Dubuque was among the first in North America, among the first in the world. In December, 1962, after the first session of Vatican II, Archbishop James Byrne of Dubuque was the first Roman Catholic bishop ever to speak in a Lutheran seminary in North America.

Stimulated by ecumenism, the three Dubuque seminaries – Presbyterian and Methodist, Roman Catholic, Lutheran -- developed new programs in theological education. Ecumenism was for each school a creative liberation; ecumenism showed how to be a more effective seminary, a school for theology and ministry in the contemporary world. [iv]

VII

The Vatican Council, aided by the Protestant observers, in those years from 1962 to 1965 helped the Catholic Church enter the ecumenical movement. The Catholic Church admitted that

ecclesiastical sin existed and that reform as well as a fuller unity was needed. [v] Its documents stated that the being of the church "subsists" in that Church (and not "is" that Church). There is a legitimate variety for churches and "ecclesial communities" drawn from varied cultures. There is a hierarchy of truths – for instance, justification by God is more important than the primacy of the bishop of Rome. [vi] Yves Congar, ecumenical pioneer and author of first books on the idea of reform and the theology of church unity, summed up Vatican II in this way: "The vision of the Council has been resolutely that of a history of salvation completed by eschatology. And this occurred first because the Council assumed the best of studies in the bible, patristics, and theology [after 1930], but also because it has been a pastoral council." [vii]

VIII

In 1963, at age 26, finished with studies in Dubuque and ordained, I was sent to Germany for doctoral studies -- because of Wartburg and ecumenism in Dubuque. Some Dominican needed to know something about theology after 1400, and specifically about Luther and the Reformation. I went to Munich to study. Heinrich Fries, a pioneer of ecumenism in Germany, and Karl Rahner were on the faculty. However, in America in 1963, I did not know their work.

In 1967 when I returned to teach in Dubuque, I was often invited to go to Lutheran parishes in Northeastern Iowa to talk on Vatican II. The theme of my talks was: Did Vatican II fulfill Luther's desires? In many ways it did: the liturgy in the vernacular with participation and variety, better and frequent sermons, a primacy of the Scripture, Bible study groups, and the church seen not as the hierarchy alone but as a vital organic community with lay ecclesial ministries.

IX

Early ecumenism brought a change by Roman Catholics in evaluating Martin Luther and the Reformation.

The years around 1900 were the height of a long hostility towards Luther and his Reformation. At that time, two scholars -- one an Austrian Dominican, the other a German Jesuit -- wrote multi-volume studies on Luther, the first detailed studies by Catholics. The Dominican Henry Suso Denifle in 1905 explained Luther in this way: everything in his thought and actions came from his being completely immoral. A Jesuit, Hartmann Grisar in 1926 used Freudian psychology to assess *Luther. He* concluded that he was not so much immoral as a pathological manic-depressive personality. Newer studies by Catholics after World War II, based on Joseph Lortz, *The Reformation in Germany,* [viii] took a quite different direction, showing how the Reformation came out of widespread religious needs and social changes, and Luther's recovery of Christian principles. Yves Congar wrote in 1950: "Luther's preaching was a thunderous success first of all because at last people heard in it words like Gospel, grace, Christian freedom -- indeed, Jesus Christ…. This is what justification by faith (alone) meant at the beginning for a vast number of people... In place of a political church, in place of a huge juridical organization, they found communities where they could hear the word of God and sing his praises with simplicity. " [ix]

Similarly, in 1967, the German Catholic theologian Otto Pesch published a definitive, lengthy study on Martin Luther and Thomas Aquinas to show that the two theologians agreed on justification as God's basic initiative and sovereignty.[x]

X

In 1965, right after the Council ended, official dialogues were set up by the Christian churches. There were international dialogues – Lutheran and Anglican, Roman Catholic and Lutheran, Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox, etc – and there were national dialogues. The Lutheran-Roman Catholic bilateral discussion in the USA was commissioned by the Catholic Bishop's Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and by Lutheran World Ministries (an American committee of the Lutheran World Federation). This dialogue first took place in 1965 and soon became significant. The Jesuit theologian Avery Dulles and the Lutheran George Lindbeck, professor at Yale, concluded: "These statements of the U. S. dialogue have been hailed in many countries as solid, productive, and potentially fruitful. They manifest greater convergence on central theological issues than has emerged in any other discussions between Catholic and Protestant churches." [xi] The topics ranged from the Nicene Creed as dogma in 1965 to those in the late 1970s on teaching authority and infallibility. The value of the North American Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue was again singled out when Otto Pesch stated ten years ago at Marquette University that the signing by the representatives of the Roman Curia and the Lutheran World Federation of the "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification" at Augsburg, October 31, 1999 was in fact "a German-American joint venture:" that is, it was based on the statements of the German dialogue group and the work of the American dialogues. [xii] So, the result of fifty years of dialogue has been considerable. John Radano, recently head of the Western Section of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, has published a detailed book on that period of "a new relationship between Lutherans and Catholics, 1961-1999." [xiii]

Ecumenism, positive relations between Christian Churches, changes at the Council of Vatican II – these are old events and their change-making influence is long absorbed. Prejudices have faded; insights into the teaching of Jesus have been shared. Ecumenism has been a success. There have been complaints for twenty-five years that the ecumenical movement has faded away. If it has slowed down, that is understandable because it has been a success. If there is less ministry to ecumenism, that is so because all our ministries can be ecumenical.

XI

What does the future hold for Lutherans and Roman Catholics? For their ecumenical dialogue? Evangelical Christians and Catholic Christians have distinct perspectives about the basic dynamic of Christianity. They spotlight in different ways the interplay between a sovereign, active God and a needy human person. Did not the tension between those two begin the Reformation?

Otto Pesch's studies on Luther and Aquinas conclude: "…The opposition between what is Lutheran and Catholic does not emerge from a comparison of individual topics but is seen initially and fundamentally in encounters between ways of thinking and between horizons of understanding." [xiv] Lutheranism and Catholicism differ in their perspectives on the personal dialogue between what is revealed as grace, and the changing reality of the human person. Lutheran theology concentrates on the question of personal salvation and Biblical salvation-history; it looks towards the past and the present; it is centered on Christ; it is *existential*. Catholic theology concentrates on objective realms within creation and human history; it ponders a world of grace as it looks towards the future: it is focused on the Holy Spirit; it is *sapiential*. Pesch concluded: "Grace is for Luther the essence of the forgiveness of God over against the guilt and nothingness of the human being. 'Grace' means a new relationship of the human person to God received in faith….For Thomas, however, 'grace' treats the destiny of the human person in its totality, in both creation and salvation, as an on-going history deeply touched by God." [xv] The two emphases and perspectives fashion differences, but are they not complementary? We are left not with disagreements over Greek dogmas or Baroque vestments but with religious thought- forms, with spiritualities in the widest sense. We need both.

XII

To be a dialogical Christian in today's complex society is not so much to focus on past externals but to seek how to make Christian words and realities attractive for today. Let us look at four areas.

Justification. That word and reality, God's accepting salvation, must address contemporary people within their human experiences. My life colors my understanding of the reality of God, the extent of sin, and the efforts of my personality. These reflections may not use the words or conceptualities of Aristotle or Paul or Luther.

Grace. We will continue to ponder the interplay of God's word and activity with an individual personality analyzed by so many psychologies. Divine grace and human person -- each has its proper place and dignity. Neither "works righteousness" nor "efficacious grace" solves all problems. Christian life does not initiate or replace God, and God does not envy the image of God, the human person fully alive (as St. Irenaeus said in the second century). Today's psychological analyses, therapies, medical care, social frameworks, and ethical problems bring questions for teaching about justification and sanctification.

Liturgy. How does the church present the biblical word and sacramental reality in preaching and worship in today's age of media?

Authority. How do authority and teaching from within the church reach people who are free and educated? How does that teaching take place in the cloud of media? The American Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue group asked that the principles of diversity, collegiality, and subsidiarity

should assist leadership in its teaching. The church as a whole and in its varied ministries contributes to authority. [xvi]

There are no quick responses to these profound themes present throughout the history of Christianity. The very process of thinking about these topics is theology and spirituality. They draw the influence of the Holy Spirit to us so that we might serve the on-going history of grace and word on Earth.

XIII

The moment has arrived to return to where we began, to return to *Time*.

As I said, the first Lutheran seminarian to cross Dubuque fifty years ago walked through centuries. Yves Congar said that at Vatican II Roman Catholicism again accepted and entered "history" and stopped trying to reproduce the Middle Ages. [xvii] Time never goes backwards (as the Christian revelation of an eschatological history of salvation affirms). Time is not evil, although every fundamentalism (Protestant and Catholic fundamentalisms) flees time and history as dangerous. Time holds promises of a better future. With a remarkably modern sounding phrase, Thomas Aquinas observed that time can be our assistant. "Time is," he said, "so to say, a discoverer, a kind of co-operator." [xviii]

We are called to be the servants of time as we serve God's kingdom in history. We live out our lives in the midst of the mystery of God's saving grace in Christ and we minister to the church by discovering new ways of preaching. In the time now arriving there is much for each of us to say and to do.

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1. Martin Heidegger, cited in Fred Dallmayr, *Mindfulness and Letting Be. On Engaged Thinking and Acting* (New York: Lexington Books, 2014) 95.

2. See Thomas O'Meara, "Ecumenical Beginnings in the Midwest," *Lutheran Partners* (January/February, 1993): 11-13.

3. Warren Quanbeck, *Search for Understanding. Lutheran Conversations with Reformed, Anglican, and Roman Catholic Churches* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972) 7. "Lutheran observers were among the most consistently present at the Council. Some published important studies aimed at the Council just before it began, and evaluations of the Council…even before the Council concluded. They evaluated the Council's achievement in a positive but constructively critical way" (John A. Radano, *Lutheran and Catholic Reconciliation on Justification. A Chronology of the Holy See's Contributions, 1961-1999, to a New Relationship between Lutherans and Catholics and to Steps Leading to the* Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009] 27); see Johannes Cardinal Willebrands, "The

Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Movement," *Mid-Stream* 27 [1988]: 13-34).

4. There is a word from the New Testament that I learned at Wartburg, as a student, a word popular with Paul Tillich and others after 1930: *Kairos*. This distinctive Greek word means time not as a this or that day but as a special moment, a special time in which something important is happening (Werner Schüßler, "Kairos. Dimensionen eines zentralen Begriffs im philosophisch-theologischen Werk Paul Tilllichs," *Trierer Theologische Zeitschrift* 123 [2014]: 110-122). A *Kairos* in North America, fifty years ago, brought decades of reflection and change in Christian structures and organizations and communities, a time of countless articles, books, addresses, and journals. That moment became a movement, an age, a time.

5. See the history and bibliographies in Otto Hermann Pesch, *The Ecumenical Potential of the Second Vatican Council* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2006) and in particular 31, 34-37. "The Council did not point to a particular path leading towards the unity of the Church; it did not even trace the larger area within which one should look for it" (Pesch, *The Ecumenical Potential*…32).

6. Pesch, *The Ecumenical Potential…* 49-51.

7. Congar, "Situation ecclésiologique au moment de 'Ecclesiam suam' et passage à une Église dans l'itinéraire des hommes," *Le Concile de Vatican II (*Paris: Beauchesne, 1984) 27. Hans Küng writes in his latest book about taking Luther's demands for reform seriously – something that would be a therapy for saving the church today (*Can We Save the Catholic Church?* [London: William Collins, 2013] 136-39).

8. Lortz, *Die Reformation in Deutschland* (Freiburg im Br.; Herder, 1935), 2 vols., English translation published in 1968. Pope Pius XII asked that this study not be translated into other languages; see Robert Krieg, *Catholic Theologians in Nazi Germany* (New York: Continuum, 2004) 76; Lortz, *How the Reformation Came* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1964). "One can hardly imagine the sensation when in 1965 a "Catholic Academy," the one in Munich in Bavaria, held a conference about the Catholic image of Martin Luther and for the first time invited *Protestant* speakers" (Pesch, *The Ecumenical Potential…* 55); see Pesch, "Twenty Years of Catholic Luther Research," *Lutheran World* 13 (1966): 303-16). Patrick Carey, "Luther in an American Catholic Context," in T. Maschke, et al, eds. *Ad Fontes Lutheri: Towards the Recovery of the Real Luther: Essays in Honor of Kenneth Hagen's Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2001*);* Pesch, "'Nun fühlte ich mich neugeboren.' Luther's Weg zur Reformation; Rückblick und ein Urteil aus katholischer Sicht," Josef Freitag, ed., *Luther in Erfurt und die katholische Theologie* (Leipzig: Benno, 2001) 29-58.

9. Congar, *True and False Reform* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2011) 139 (*Vrai et fausse réforme dans l'Église* (Paris: Cerf, 1950).

10. Pesch, *Theologie der Rechtfertigung bei Martin Luther und Thomas von Aquin. Versuch eines systematisch-theologischen Dialogs* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald, 1967/1985).

11. Avery Dulles, George Lindbeck, "Foreword," Glenn C. Stone, Charles LaFontaine, eds.,

Exploring the Faith We Share (New York: Paulist Press, 1980) xf.; see H. George Anderson, James R. Crumley, Jr., *Promoting Unity. Themes in Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989); Karen L. Bloomquist, Wolfgang Greive, eds.,*The Doctrine of Justification: Its Reception and Meaning Today* (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 2003).

12. Pesch, *The Ecumenical Potential*…54. That ecumenical progress, Lindbeck said, was due to the retention by both Catholicism and Lutheranism of a medieval heritage, a creedal stability, and liturgical sources.

13. John A. Radano, *Lutheran and Catholic Reconciliation on Justification* ; see *Celebrating a Century of Ecumenism. Exploring the Achievements of International Dialogue* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012). Msgr. Radano did his doctorate at the consortium of Dubuque seminaries in its first years, in 1970.

14. Ulrich Kühn and Otto H. Pesch, *Rechtfertigung im Gespräch zwischenThomas und Luther* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1967) 78.

15. Pesch, *Theologie der Rechtfertigung bei Martin Luther und Thomas von Aquin* 940f. Martin Heidegger in a seminar with Rudolf Bultmann in 1924 observed: "The object of theology is God. The theme of theology is man in the how of his being-placed before God. But the being of man is at the same time also a being in the world…On the other hand, he must be so created that the Fall and the being of sin are possible and are not a burden falling on God" (Heidegger, "The Problem of Sin in Luther (1924)," *Supplements. From the Earliest Essays to* Being and Time *and Beyond* [Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002] 105). Pesch concludes, "The sapiential theology of Aquinas does not replace the existential realization and does not want to do that (Pesch, "Justification and the Question of God," *The Doctrine of Justification: Its Reception and Meaning Today* [Geneva: The World Lutheran Foundation, 2003] 107).

16. Lutheran-Roman Catholic Coordinating Committee, *The Lutheran-Catholic Quest for Visible Unity: Harvesting Thirty Years of Dialogue* (Washington D. C.: USCC, 1998) 11.

17. "Everything is absolutely historical including the person of Jesus Christ. The Gospel is historical. Thomas Aquinas is historical, Paul VI is historical. Note that historical does not mean just that Jesus came at a certain point in time but that one must draw the consequences of the fact that he thought and spoke through the time in which he lived even as he is conditioned by it" (Jean Puyo, *Jean Puyo interroge le Père Congar: une vie pour la verité* [Paris: Centurion, 1975] 43).

18. Aquinas, *Commentary on the Ethics of Aristotle* 2, 4.

Concluding Prayer after Lecture

Let us pray.
Pause for silent prayer

Eternal Father,
we praise you for sending your Son
to be one of us and to save us.

Look upon your people with mercy,
for we are divided in so many ways,
and give us the Spirit of Jesus
to make us one in love.

We ask this gift
loving Father,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Explication of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*

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I

Human beings are created in the image and likeness of God (*Genesis* 1:26) but they have turned away from trusting in God for life, for healing, and for forgiveness. All human beings have sinned, that is, turned to created things. So the question arises: *How are we made right with God,* even as we turn away again and again, trusting in created things for life and wholeness rather than trusting in God alone? In others words, how are we *justified?*

For Luther and the Lutheran Reformation, the Article on Justification is "the article on which the Church stands or falls." [1] Justification has been a decisive, indeed we would say, *the* decisive dividing point between Lutherans and Roman Catholics. In the sixteenth century there were mutual condemnations of their respective views on justification, by the Roman Catholic Council of Trent in 1547 [2] and by the Lutheran Formula of Concord in 1577 [3].

In Roman Catholicism, the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s opened the way for ecumenical dialogue and a document such as the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (hereafter referred to as the JDDJ) [4] . The JDDJ is the culmination of a number of dialogues and documents over a period of several decades.

In 1967 the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican created a study group, the Lutheran/Roman Catholic Joint Commission, which culminated in a document entitled *Church and Justification: Understanding the Church in the Light of the Doctrine of Justification* (1994). At the same time this international effort was taking place, there were Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogues occurring in particular countries. For example, in the United States the dialogue resulted in the document *Justification by Faith* (1983), while an ecumenical working group of Protestant and Catholic theologians in Germany produced the document *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era: Do They Still Divide?* (1986). [5]

In 1994 the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity decided to appoint a committee of theologians and church officials to draw up a consensus statement summarizing the results of these various dialogues on justification. This group produced the final text of the JDDJ in 1997. [6]

After seeking responses from its member churches, the Lutheran World Federation approved the JDDJ on 16 June 1998. An *Official Catholic Response* to the JDDJ was issued on the 25th of June of that year which expressed reservations about some parts of the JDDJ. There was fear that this response would derail the JDDJ project, but it was kept on track by the development of three additional documents, namely, the *Official Common Statement*, a clarifying *Annex*, and a *Note on the Annex.* [7]

Thus the JDDJ was signed by Lutheran and Roman Catholic representatives in Augsburg, Germany, on 31 October 1999, a day celebrated as "Reformation Day" by Lutherans. [8] The document affirms that "a consensus in basic truths of the doctrine of justification exists between Lutherans and Catholics" (JDDJ 40) [9]. Concomitantly, the mutual condemnations of the sixteenth century are abrogated:

> The teaching of the Lutheran churches presented in this Declaration does not fall under the condemnations from the Council of Trent. The condemnations in the Lutheran Confessions do not apply to the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church presented in this Declaration. (JDDJ 41)

II

At the time of the signing of the JDDJ, Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy was serving as President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and Reverend Dr. Ishmael Noko was the General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation. Both commented on the significance of the JDDJ project in a foreword to John Radano's book *Lutheran & Catholic Reconciliation on Justification.* [10]

Cardinal Cassidy recalls the encyclical letter *Ut Unum Sint* (On Commitment to Ecumenism) in which John Paul II proposes that the ecumenical movement is built on three pillars: prayer, cooperation and common witness, and theological dialogue. [11] Cassidy emphasizes that "it is in dialogue especially that the way is cleared for Christian communions to enter into full communion." [12] Cassidy observes that the dialogue which has occurred between the Catholic Church and the churches coming from the Reformation "has not only led the various partners involved to a new appreciation of each other's faith understanding, but in fact each partner readily admits to having been enriched in its own faith understanding as a result of the discussions." [13]

Cassidy notes that the JDDJ "was the fruit of dedicated dialogue between the L[utheran] W[orld] F[ederation] and the Catholic Church from almost immediately after the Second Vatican Council" and that it was "the first official dialogue between the Catholic Church and a church coming from the Reformation period." [14] Indeed, the JDDJ is unique in going to "the very heart of a division within the Roman Catholic Church at the time of the Reformation." [15]

Moreover, Cassidy makes note of larger implications of the signing of the JDDJ beyond the moment for the Catholic and Lutheran ecclesial communities. It "sent out a clear message to a divided Christianity that even such divergences can be resolved in sincere dialogue" and provided "a fine example of how such dialogue can be conducted in order to reach the desired goal." [16]

In his remarks Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko expresses gratitude for the work of the Lutheran and Catholic theologians who took part in the dialogue and "who sought patiently to listen to one another" and who "rediscovered new ways of talking to each other." [17] In particular, Lutherans and Catholics "learned that it is too simplistic to claim that the Roman Catholic Church teaches that human beings are saved by works alone and/or that Lutheran churches teach that works are irrelevant in the life of faith." [18] Noko affirms that "the *Joint Declaration*, supported by the Annex, makes it very clear that for Lutherans a life in faith is necessarily also a life with good works" and proposes that "Lutherans should see that the main concern of the Decree on Justification promulgated by the Council of Trent goes in the same direction." [19]

Rev. Dr. Noko notes that Martin Luther has often been characterized as a pessimist in his view of human nature. [20] In this regard, Noko offers a different interpretation of and perspective on Luther. He suggests that "when Martin Luther preached about human inability to contribute to salvation through works, the main thrust of his teaching was not negative in relation to the human being, but awesomely positive in relation to God and to our salvation in Christ" [21]. Since "even the noblest intentions and strivings are subject to sin," Luther's purpose was "to encourage believers in his own time by pointing to the sufficiency of God's grace." [22]

Rev. Dr. Noko recalls that the doctrinal controversies of the Reformation had ramifications for society at large, manifesting itself in wars and political and economic tensions. [23] Indeed, the divisions which arose in Europe during the Reformation spread to the rest of the world through colonization, immigration, and missionary activities. [24] Thus the signing of the JDDJ is significant in helping "to close a chapter of conflict and division in Europe and the world." [25]

In sum, "one of the most important messages of the *Joint Declaration* is that, wherever in the world they may live, Lutherans and Roman Catholics are not enemies anymore but sisters

and brothers in Christ." [26] The JDDJ demonstrates that "Lutherans and Catholics can now face remaining difficult questions with courage and mutual trust." [27]

III

The JDDJ document has the following structure:

- Preamble (paragraphs 1 -7)
- Presentation of the biblical message concerning justification (section 1, paragraphs 8 – 12)
- A brief discussion of the ecumenical significance of the doctrine of justification (section 2, paragraph 13)
- Statement of the principal affirmation of consensus (section 3, paragraphs 14 – 18)
- Explanation of the consensus through consideration of more particular theological questions regarding justification (section 4 with 7 subsections, paragraphs 19 – 39)
- Concluding remarks on the significance and scope of the consensus reached (paragraphs 40 – 44)

The Preamble begins by reviewing the centrality of the doctrine of justification in the Lutheran Reformation movement, and the contemporary Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogues which led up to the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*. (JDDJ 1-6). The final paragraph of the Preamble addresses what has made possible the contemporary accord:

> …this Joint Declaration rests on the conviction that in overcoming the earlier controversial questions and doctrinal condemnations the churches neither take the condemnations lightly nor do they disavow their own past. On the contrary, this Declaration is shaped by the conviction that in their respective histories our churches have come to new insights. Developments have taken place which not only make possible, but require the churches to examine the divisive questions and condemnations and see them in a new light. (JDDJ 7)

Very, very important is the idea of "coming to new insights" and of seeing the historical questions and condemnations "in a new light." Also noteworthy is the use of term "conviction," which is repeated in the JDDJ.

Section 1 of the JDDJ reviews biblical texts from both the Old and New Testaments related to human sinfulness, human disobedience, and the concepts of "righteousness" and "justification." References to Pauline letters are particularly prominent. (JDDJ 8-12)

One of the things that is fascinating in coming to Vatican II is that Lutheran and Roman Catholic biblical scholars were already aware of what the other was writing. When Lutheran and Roman Catholic scholars talked about biblical texts, the mutuality was there and so that was not a dividing factor. The JDDJ notes that it is "our common way of listening to the word of God in Scripture" that has led to the aforementioned "new insights." (JDDJ 8).

Section 2, *The Doctrine of Justification as Ecumenical Problem,* reiterates the importance of biblical studies for the JDDJ project: "By appropriating insights of recent biblical studies and drawing on modern investigations of the history of theology and dogma, the post-Vatican II ecumenical dialogue has led to a notable convergence concerning justification, with the result that the Joint Declaration is able to formulate a consensus on basic truths concerning the doctrine of justification." (JDDJ 13)

Section 3 of the JDDJ is entitled *The Common Understanding of Justification*, and paragraph 15 is central. The paragraph begins with (and thus emphasizes) the idea that justification is the work of God alone: the Father who sends the Son through the Spirit is the one who justifies the sinner. Then the principal affirmation of Lutheran-Roman Catholic consensus on justification is presented:

> Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works. (JDDJ 15)

Avery Dulles has noted that this consensus statement "dispels some false stereotypes inherited from the past." [28] Specifically, "Lutherans have often accused Catholics of holding that justification is a human achievement rather than a divine gift received in faith" and "Catholic have accused Lutherans of holding that justification by faith does not involve inner renewal or good works." [29] This consensus statement "strikes an even-handed balance" by "mentioning both faith and works, both acceptance by God and the gift of the Holy Spirit." [30]

IV

Section 4 of the JDDJ, following the principal statement of consensus, contains seven subsections which discuss more particular theological questions pertaining to justification. Each subsection has the same structure. There is a statement of agreement followed by commentaries from Lutheran and Catholic perspectives. These commentaries present and discuss the distinctive viewpoints and emphases of the respective churches, and give a response to the concern of the other church. It is a wonderful structure and a model for ecumenical dialogue.

This structure represents a methodology of *differentiated consensus.* A useful explanation of this methodology is offered by Andre Birmele:

> …the J[oint] D[eclaration] understands consensus as the relationship that exists between two statements which are not church-dividing because they are two different explanations of one basic truth. By definition consensus is intrinsically "differentiated" or "differentiating," i.e., it can recognize and accept diversity…

> Such a "differentiated consensus" requires distinction between the elements pertaining to basic truths and those arising from justifiably different ways of presenting them, between basic truths on the one hand and the ways of presenting these truths on the other hand. While basic truths require a common understanding and statement, they are explicated by means of words, ways of thinking and theological judgments which find expression in a legitimate diversity. [31]

Subsection 4.1 is entitled *Human Powerlessness and Sin in Relation to Justification.* In agreement, Lutherans and Roman Catholics "confess together that all persons depend completely on the saving grace of God for their salvation," that "justification takes place solely by God's grace." (JDDJ 19) A key phrase is "solely by God's grace." As sinners, human beings are incapable of turning by themselves to God or attaining salvation through their own abilities. (JDDJ 19). Together Lutherans and Catholics make a clear statement about the human condition and consequent missional call: before God, all human beings stand under God's judgment and the church catholic is called to bear witness to the good news of God's saving grace in Jesus Christ.

More particularly, subsection 4.1 addresses the question "Do the justified cooperate in the preparation for, and reception of, justification?" [32] This question goes back to the Catholic Council of Trent which took up the controversy concerning justification in its sixth session. The question is related to the issue of human free will.

In the very first chapter of its decree concerning justification, the Council of Trent took the position that, as a result of original sin, human free will is damaged in its powers but not destroyed:

> The holy council declares first, that for a correct and clear understanding of the doctrine of justification, it is necessary that each one recognize and confess that since all men had lost innocence in the prevarication of Adam…they were so far *the servants of sin*…though free will, weakened as it was in its powers and downward bent, was by no means extinguished in them. [33]

That free will remains in sinful human beings is reiterated in Canon 5: "If anyone says that after the sin of Adam man's free will was lost and destroyed or that it is a thing only in name, indeed a name without a reality, a fiction introduced into the Church by Satan, let him be anathema." [34]

If human free will is not completely destroyed, then room is left for a role for free will, and hence for human "cooperation," in the process of justification. This is the subject of Canon 4: "If anyone says that man's free will moved and aroused by God, by assenting to God's call and action, in no way cooperates toward disposing and preparing itself to obtain the grace of justification, that it cannot refuse its assent if it wishes, but that, as something inanimate, it does nothing whatever and is merely passive, let him be anathema." [35]

Responding to Lutheran concerns, the Catholic commentary in the contemporary JDDJ clarifies what is meant by *human cooperation*: "When Catholics say that persons 'cooperate' in preparing for and accepting justification by consenting to God's justifying action, *they see such personal consent as itself an effect of grace,* not as an action arising from innate human abilities." (JDDJ 20; italics added] Indeed, Canon 4 of the Council of Trent speaks of man's free will as "moved and aroused by God." [36] In sum, the human cooperation in question is ultimately dependent on God's grace. Thus, as Catholic theologian Avery Dulles explains, Catholics can concur with the Reformation principle of *sola gratia (by grace alone)*:

> Lonergan's thought on the process of conversion harmonizes with that of Rahner, who in various writings emphasizes that human freedom, although not destroyed by original sin, has been so wounded that it needs to be liberated by God's prevenient grace in order to be capable of accepting the help offered to it in Christ and the church. "Wherever a person attains his salvation in freedom, he will attribute to God both the capacity for and the act of his freedom, in praise and in thanks, for it is an act which God has given him in a grace for which there are no reasons." Not only the possibility of acceptance but the very act of acceptance, Rahner insists, is a pure grace. Thus Catholics can accept the Reformation principle of *sola gratia*. [37]

In contrast to the Catholic language of "human cooperation," the Lutheran commentary in the JDDJ states that "according to Lutheran teaching, human beings are incapable of cooperating in their salvation, because as sinners they actively oppose God and his saving action." (JDDJ 21). However, the commentary goes on to note, similar to Canon 4 of the Council of Trent (see above), that "Lutherans do not deny that a person can reject the working of grace" (JDDJ 21). On the other hand, in contrast to Canon 4, the Lutheran axiom is that the sinner is "passive" as s/he stands before God: justification is totally God's doing. Nevertheless, the Lutheran commentary adds a clarification: "When they emphasize that a person can only receive (merely passive) justification, they mean thereby to exclude any possibility of contributing to one's own justification, but do not deny that *believers are fully involved personally in their faith…*". (JDDJ 21; italics added) In the Lutheran tradition, faith is understood as participation. When Lutherans speak about faith as trust in God's promise in Jesus Christ which is effected by the Holy Spirit in hearing the word of promise, Lutherans understand that trusting is participation.

In sum, Lutherans and Catholics each have a special concern addressed in the particular way each church speaks about justification, but both recognize that the other is expressing the doctrine of justification "by grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work." (JDDJ 15).

Subsection 4.2, entitled *Justification as Forgiveness of Sins and Making Righteous,* addresses the question whether justification is a divine decree of forgiveness or interior renewal, or both. [38] In the Catholic tradition, *sanctification* (internal renewal) has been seen as an integral part of

justification. As the Council of Trent affirmed, justification "is not only a remission of sins but also the sanctification and renewal of the inward man…". [39]

In part, the statement of agreement reads:

> We confess together that God forgives sin by grace and at the same time frees human beings from sin's enslaving power and imparts the gift of new life in Christ. …God no longer imputes to them their sin and through the Holy Spirit effects in them an active love. These two aspects of God's gracious action are not to be separated… (JDDJ 22)

The Lutheran commentary begins with the statement that "the righteousness of Christ is our righteousness." (JDDJ 23) Luther himself spoke of the "happy exchange": Christ gives us his righteousness and takes our sin upon him. The commentary goes on to say that Lutherans, in stressing that God's grace is forgiving love, "do not thereby deny the renewal of the Christian's life." (JDDJ 23). The new life we have in Christ is the life that we live in daily confession and renewal. Rather, Lutherans "intend…to express that justification remains free from human cooperation and is not dependent on the life-renewing effects of grace in human beings." (JDDJ 23) Again, we return to the issue of "human cooperation" in justification, something which Lutherans deny but Catholics affirm. Thus the Catholic commentary contains a remark which prima facie seems surprising: "They [Catholics] do not thereby deny that God's gift of grace in justification remains independent of human cooperation." (JDDJ 24) However, the *Official Catholic Response* to the JDDJ, issued in 1998 before the signing of the document, clarifies that "this must be understood in the sense that the gifts of God's grace do not depend on the works of man, but not in the sense that justification can take place without human cooperation." [40]

Subsection 4.3, entitled *Justification by Faith and through Grace,* addresses the question whether justification is received by faith alone or by faith together with hope and charity, which bring one into communion with God. [41] Lutherans and Catholics "confess together that sinners are justified by faith in the saving action of God in Christ." (JDDJ 25) They further profess that "justifying faith…includes hope in God and love for him" and that "such a faith is active in love" so that "the Christian cannot and should not remain without works." (JDDJ 25)

Lutherans speak of God justifying sinners not just "in faith" but "in faith alone (*sola fide).*" (JDDJ 26) But faith "affects all dimensions of the person and *leads to a life in hope and love*." (JDDJ 26; italics added) The Lutheran commentary notes that "in the doctrine of 'justification by faith alone,' *a distinction but not a separation* is made between justification itself and the renewal of one's way of life that necessarily follows from justification and without which faith does not exist." (JDDJ 26; italics added)

In line with the Council of Trent [42], the Catholic commentary postulates "faith as fundamental in justification"; indeed, it states that "without faith, no justification can take place." (JDDJ 27).

However, in contrast to Lutherans, the Roman Catholic tradition does not speak of "faith alone." Rather, it is said that "in justification the righteous receive in Christ faith, hope, and love and are thereby taken into communion with him." (JDDJ 27) Again, this follows the Council of Trent:

> …whence man through Jesus Christ…receives in that justification …all these infused at the same time, namely, faith, hope, and charity. For faith, unless hope and charity be added to it, neither unites man perfectly with Christ nor makes him a living member of his body. [43]

In sum, both the Lutheran and Catholic traditions maintain that faith, hope, and love are present in those who are justified. The Catholic tradition emphasizes the simultaneity of these three characteristics. The Lutheran tradition gives a priority to faith and sees hope and love as following from faith.

Subsection 4.4, entitled *The Justified as Sinner,* addresses the question whether sin remains in those who have been justified. [44] In the statement of agreement Lutherans and Roman Catholics "confess together that in baptism the Holy Spirit unites one with Christ, justifies, and truly renews the person." (JDDJ 28) At the same time they affirm that the justified "also are continuously exposed to the power of sin" and "are not exempt from a lifelong struggle against the contradiction to God within the selfish desires of the old Adam (cf. *Gal* 5:16; *Rom* 7:7-10)." (JDDJ 28) Thus "the justified must also ask God daily for forgiveness as in the Lord's Prayer" and "are ever again called to conversion and penance." (JDDJ 28) However, the most significant parts of this subsection are found in the Lutheran and Catholic commentaries.

The Lutheran commentary presents a point of view that is very characteristic of the Lutheran tradition, namely, that Christians are "at the same time righteous and sinner." (JDDJ 29)

> Believers are totally righteous, in that God forgives their sins through Word and Sacrament and grants the righteousness of Christ which they appropriate in faith. …Looking at themselves through the law, however, they recognize that they remain also totally sinners. Sin still lives in them (I *Jn* 1:8; *Rom* 7:17, 20), for they repeatedly turn to false gods and do not love God with that undivided love which God requires as their Creator (*Deut* 6:5; *Mt* 22:36-40 pr.). This contradiction to God is as such truly sin. (JDDJ 29)

We also have here a reiteration of the Lutheran concept that sin is fundamentally idolatry. The Lutheran commentary goes on to say that, "despite this sin," justified persons "are not separated from God and that this sin is a 'ruled' sin." (JDDJ 29) Importantly, it is noted that "in these affirmations, they are in agreement with Roman Catholics, despite the difference in understanding sin in the justified." (JDDJ 29)

The Catholic commentary reiterates the teaching of the Council of Trent. [45]. The commentary affirms that "the grace of Jesus Christ imparted in baptism takes away all that is sin 'in the proper sense' and that is 'worthy of damnation.'" (JDDJ 30). It is acknowledged that "there does…remain in the person an inclination (concupiscence) which comes from sin and presses toward sin." (JDDJ 30) However, "since, according to Catholic conviction, human sins always involve a person element," that is, a human decision, "and since this element is lacking in this inclination, Catholics do not see this inclination as sin in an authentic sense." (JDDJ 30)

The *Official Catholic Response* to the JDDJ (1998) found this subsection to be problematic in terms of achieving consensus. Doctrinally it reiterates the position from the Council of Trent set out in the Catholic commentary to this subsection of the JDDJ, questions the acceptability of describing believers as simultaneously "totally righteous" and "totally sinners," and recalls the teaching of the Council of Trent on the renewal and sanctification of the interior man that is seen as part of justification. [46]

This response provoked additional comment on this issue in the *Annex to the Official Common Statement.* Artfully drawing together the Catholic and Lutheran traditions, the *Annex* delineates a sense in which the justified do not remain sinners while still recognizing the ongoing reality of our sinfulness, a recognition that is biblically and liturgically based:

> We confess together that God forgives sin by grace and at the same time frees human beings from sin's enslaving power (…) (*JD* 22). Justification is forgiveness of sins and being made righteous, through which God "imparts the gift of new life in Christ" (*JD* 22). …We are truly and inwardly renewed by the action of the Holy Spirit… "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 *Cor* 5:17). The justified do not remain sinners in this sense.
>
> Yet we would be wrong were we to say that we are without sin (1 *Jn* 1:8-10; cf. JD 28). "All of us make many mistakes" (*Jas* 3:2). "Who is aware of his unwitting sins? Cleanse me of many secret faults" (*Ps* 19:12). And when we pray, we can only say, like the tax collector, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner" (*Lk* 18:13). This is expressed in a variety of ways in our liturgies. Together we hear the exhortation "Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions" (*Rom* 6:12). This recalls to us the persisting danger which comes from the power of sin and its action in Christians. To this extent, Lutherans and Catholics can together understand the Christian as *simul justus et peccator…* [47]

From a common sense point of view, it seems undeniable that, existentially, Christians are both righteous and sinners.

Subsection 4.5 is entitled *Law and Gospel*, understanding these terms in the Pauline sense. In this case there are two parts to the statement of agreement. First, it is affirmed that "persons are justified by faith in the gospel 'apart from works prescribed by the law' (*Rom* 3:28). (JDDJ 31) Secondly, it is affirmed that "God's commandments retain their validity for the justified and that Christ has by his teaching and example expressed God's will which is a standard for the conduct of the justified also." (JDDJ 31) The underlying question of this subsection is whether God's law is given only in order to accuse sinners of their failures, bringing them to repentance, or also to provide them with a rule of life that they can and must observe. [48]

The first alternative reflects Lutheran thinking. The Lutheran commentary states:

> …the law is demand and accusation. Throughout their lives, all persons, Christians also, in that they are sinners, stand under this accusation which uncovers their sin so that, in faith in the gospel, they will turn unreservedly to the mercy of God in Christ, which alone justifies them. (JDDJ 32)

The second alternative was emphasized by the Catholic Council of Trent:

> But no one, however much justified, should consider himself exempt from the observance of the commandments; no one should use that rash statement…that the observance of the commandments of God is impossible for one that is justified. For God does not command impossibilities… they who love Him, keep His commandments…which, indeed, with the divine help they can do. [49]
>
> If anyone says that the commandments of God are, even for one that is justified and constituted in grace, impossible to observe, let him be anathema. [50]
>
> If anyone says that nothing besides faith is commanded in the Gospel…or that the ten commandments in no way pertain to Christians, let him be anathema. [51]
>
> If anyone says that a man who is justified and however perfect is not bound to observe the commandments of God and the Church, but only to believe, as if the Gospel were a bare and absolute promise of eternal life without the condition of observing the commandments, let him be anathema. [52]

However, the Catholic commentary in the JDDJ adds a clarification: "When Catholics emphasize that the righteous are bound to observe God's commandments, they do not thereby deny that through Jesus Christ God has mercifully promised to his children the grace of eternal life." (JDDJ 33)

Subsection 4.6, entitled *Assurance of Salvation*, deals with the question whether faith includes an assurance that one will in fact attain final salvation. [53] The Lutheran-Catholic statement of

agreement affirms that "the faithful can rely on the mercy and promises of God" and that "they can build on the effective promise of God's grace in Word and Sacrament and so be sure of this grace." (JDDJ 34)

Lutherans emphasize that, "in the midst of temptation, believers should not look to themselves but look solely to Christ and trust only in him." (JDDJ 27) For it is "in trust in God's promise [that] they are assured of their salvation, but are never secure in looking at themselves." (JDDJ 35) Here there is allusion to the Lutheran concept of sin as fundamentally idolatry, i.e., trusting in oneself. Rather, in the midst of doubt and despair, we need to hear again and again and again God's promise of forgiveness, life, and freedom in Jesus Christ. Here there is also a response to the question of this subsection, namely, that we can be *assured of our salvation.*

Repeating the views of the Council of Trent [54], the Catholic commentary affirms that we may not doubt God's mercy and Christ's merit but, given human weaknesses and shortcomings, "every person…may be concerned about his salvation." (JDDJ 36) Nevertheless, "the believer may yet be certain that God intends his salvation." (JDDJ 36)

In sum, there are nuances in this subsection concerning what believers can be assured of. The statement of agreement speaks of assurance of *God's grace.* (JDDJ 34) The Lutheran commentary speaks of believers being assured of their *salvation.* (JDDJ 35) The Catholic commentary, on the other hand, makes a weaker claim, maintaining that the believer has assurance that God *intends* his salvation. (JDDJ 36)

Subsection 4.7 deals with *The Good Works of the Justified.* Lutherans and Catholics "confess together that good works…follow justification and are its fruits." (JDDJ 37) The more specific question of this subsection is whether the heavenly rewards for which we hope are things that we also merit, or to be understood exclusively as undeserved gifts from God. [55]

The Catholic Council of Trent spoke of heavenly rewards in terms of both grace and merit for good works. Addressing "men justified," the Council stated: "Hence, to those who work well unto the end and trust in God, eternal life is to be offered, both as a grace mercifully promised to the sons of God through Christ Jesus, and as a reward promised by God himself, to be faithfully given to their good works and merits." [56] The Council further affirmed that "the justice received" is "increased before God through good works." [57]

The Catholic commentary in the contemporary JDDJ offers a clarification: "When Catholics affirm the 'meritorious' character of good works, they wish to say that, according to the biblical witness, a reward in heaven is promised to these works." (JDDJ 38) In Catholic circles question has been raised whether this statement represents an attenuation of the traditional Catholic position:

> This statement seems to fall short of…what Trent teaches under anathema. The fact that a reward is promised does not make it merited, since one can promise to

> bestow gifts that are completely undeserved. In the Catholic view, justification makes us capable of meriting in a true sense. [58]

However, in a careful reading of the above quoted text from the Council of Trent, we can note the phraseology "reward *promised by God himself*" (italics added). Catholic theologian Avery Dulles has commented that "when we do talk of merit, we would do well…to recall that it exists only within God's covenant and on the basis of his free covenant promises." [59]

While acknowledging that there can be growth in the effects of "righteousness" in Christian living (JDDJ 39), the Lutheran commentary again places the accent on justification of the sinner totally by God's grace without any merit: "they view the good works of Christians as the fruits and signs of justification and not as one's own 'merits'." (JDDJ 39). However, it is conceded that Lutherans "nevertheless also understand eternal life in accord with the New Testament as unmerited 'reward' in the sense of the fulfillment of God's promise to the believer." (JDDJ 39) Thus the concept of "God's promise" is a theme running through both the Catholic and Lutheran positions.

Finally, we add our own voices to the sentiments expressed in the last paragraph of the JDDJ:

> We give thanks to the Lord for this decisive step forward on the way to overcoming the division of the church. We ask the Holy Spirit to lead us further toward that visible unity which is Christ's will. (JDDJ 44)

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1. Avery Dulles, S.J., "Justification: The Joint Declaration," *Josephinum Journal of Theology* 9/1 (Winter/Spring 2002): 108-119. Available at http://www.pcj.edu/journal/essays/dulles9-1.htm . Accessed December 2014.

2. H.J. Schroeder, O.P., *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent Original Text with English Translation* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1950), Sixth Session *Decree Concerning Justification.*

3. In *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, 2nd ed., edited by Robert Kolb, Timothy Wengert, and James Schaffer (Fortress Press, 2000).

4. See, for example, Dennis W. Jowers, "The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification: An Appreciation and Critique," *The WRS Journal* 13/1 (February 2006): 22-29:

> The *JDDJ* derives ultimately from the calls for ecumenical dialogue and reconciliation issued by the Roman Catholic Church's Second Vatican Council (1962-66), especially in its Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*). The following summons typifies the Council's attitude on these subjects.

> We must get to know the outlook of our separated brethren…. Most valuable for this purpose are meetings of the two sides—especially for discussion of theological problems where each can treat with the other on an equal footing—provided that those who take part in them are truly competent and have the approval of the bishops. From such dialogue will emerge still more clearly what the situation of the Catholic Church really is. In this way too the outlook of our separated brethren will be better understood, and our own belief more aptly explained. (*UR* par. 9)

5. *Ibid*.

6. Dulles, "Justification: The Joint Declaration."

7. *Ibid*.

8. *Ibid.*

9. Copies of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* are available at:

- https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-joint-declaration-doctrine-justification
- http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_31101999_cath-luth-joint-declaration_en.html

English translation © 2000 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge), The Lutheran World Federation, and The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

10. John A. Radano, *Lutheran & Catholic Reconciliation on Justification A Chronology of the Holy See's Contributions, 1961-1999, to a New Relationship between Lutherans & Catholics And to Steps Leading to the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), pp. xiii-xviii.

11. Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy, "Forward" in Radano, *Lutheran & Catholic Reconciliation on Justification*, p. xiii.

12. *Ibid*., p. xiii.

13. *Ibid.*, p. xiii.

14. *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

15. *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

16. *Ibid.*,p. xiv.

17. Reverend Dr. Ishmael Noko, "Forward" in Radano, *Lutheran & Catholic Reconciliation on Justification*, p. xvi.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. xvi-xvii.

19. *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

20. *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

21. *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

22. *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

23. *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

24. *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

25. *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

26. *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

27. *Ibid.*, p. xviii

28. Avery Dulles, "Two Languages of Salvation: The Lutheran-Catholic Joint Declaration," *First Things* 89 (Dec. 1999):25-30 at 26.

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

31. Andre Birmele, "Does the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JD) Have Any Relevance to the Discussion of the Papal Ministry?" Farfa (2004): 1-11. Available at http://www.strasbourginstitute,org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/ Forsch GEPapeFarfa-2004E.pdf Accessed December 2014.

32. Statement of question taken from Dulles, "Two Languages of Salvation," p. 27.

33. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, Sixth Session *Decree Concerning Justification*, Chapter 1, pp. 29-30.

34. *Ibid.*, Canon 5, p. 43.

35. *Ibid*., Canon 4, pp. 42-3.

36. *Ibid*., Canon 4, p. 42.

37. Avery Dulles, S.J., "Justification in Contemporary Catholic Theology" in H. George Anderson, T. Austin Murphy, and Joseph A. Burgess (eds.), *Justification by Faith Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue VII* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1985), p. 265.

38. Dulles, "Two Languages of Salvation," p. 27.

39. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, Sixth Session *Decree Concerning Justification*, Chapter VII, p. 33.

40. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Response of the Catholic Church to the Joint Declaration of the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation on the Doctrine of Justification*, Clarifications, no. 3. This document is available at

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/ documents /rc_pc_ chrstuni_doc_01081998_off-answer-catholic_en.html .

41. Dulles, "Two Languages of Salvation," p. 27.

42. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, Sixth Session *Decree Concerning Justification*, Chapter VIII, pp. 34-5 : "But when the Apostle says that man is justified by faith and freely, these words are to be understood in that sense…that we are therefore said to be justified by faith, because faith is the beginning of human salvation, the foundation and root of all justification, *without which it is impossible to please God* and to come to the fellowship of his sons…".

43. *Ibid*., Chapter VII, p. 33.

44. Dulles, "Two Languages of Salvation," p. 27, formulates the question in this way: ""Does concupiscence, that is to say, our innate tendency to be self-indulgent, make us sinners, even when we do not give in to it?"

45. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, Fifth Session *Decree Concerning Original Sin*, no. 5, p. 23.

46. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Response of the Catholic Church to the Joint Declaration of the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation on the Doctrine of Justification*, Clarifications, no. 1:

> The major difficulties preventing an affirmation of total consensus between the parties on the theme of justification arise in paragraph 4.4 *The Justified as Sinner* (nn. 28-1,0). Even taking into account the differences, legitimate in themselves, that come from different theological approaches to the content of faith, from a Catholic point of view the title is already a cause of perplexity. According, indeed, to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, in baptism everything that is really sin is taken away, and so, in those who are born anew there is nothing that is hateful to God (3). It follows that the concupiscence that remains in the baptized is not, properly speaking, sin. For Catholics, therefore, the formula *"at the same time righteous and sinner,"* as it is explained at the beginning of no. 29 (*"Believers are totally righteous, in that God forgives their sins through Word and Sacrament …Looking at themselves…however, they recognize that they remain also totally sinners. Sin still lives in them…"*), is not acceptable.
>
> This statement does not, in fact, seem compatible with the renewal and sanctification of the interior man of which the Council of Trent speaks.

This document is available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/ documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_01081998_off-answer-catholic_en.html .

47. The Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation, *Annex to the Official Common Statement*, no. 2A. Available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/ documents/rc_pr_chrstuni_doc_31101999_cath-luth-annex_en.html .

48. Dulles, “Two Languages of Salvation,” p. 27.

49. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, Sixth Session *Decree Concerning Justification,* Chapter XI, pp. 36-7.

50. *Ibid*., Canon 18, page 44.

51. *Ibid*., Canon 19, page 44.

52. *Ibid*., Canon 20, page 44.

53. Dulles, “Two Languages of Salvation,” p. 27.

54. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, Sixth Session *Decree Concerning Justification,* Chapter IX, p. 35.

55. Dulles, “Two Languages of Salvation,” p. 27.

56. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, Sixth Session *Decree Concerning Justification,* Chapter XVI, p. 41.

57. *Ibid*., Canon 24, p. 45.

58. Dulles, “Two Languages of Salvation,” p. 28.

59. Dulles, “Justification in Contemporary Catholic Theology,” p. 274.

Morning Prayer

Friday 13 February 2015

Wartburg Theological Seminary

The service follows the order for Morning Prayer in Evangelical Lutheran Worship, the principal worship book of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, with elements included from the Roman Catholic Tradition.

OPENING

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.
Alleluia.

Music: *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

PSALMODY

Psalm 63: *As Morning Breaks*

Music: Michael Joncas, b. 1951.

Psalm prayer: *Liturgy of the Hours*

Psalm 51: *Have mercy on me, O God*

Psalm prayer: *Liturgy of the Hours*

Song *Lord God, We Praise You*

Text: attr. Gregory I, 540-604; tr. composite
Music: *CHRISTE SANCTORUM*, Paris *Antiphoner*, 1681

WORD

Reading Romans 5:1-11 *Peace with God*

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets,

But in these last days God has spoken to us by the Son.

Music: *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

Gospel Canticle *Song of Zachariah*

Now Bless the God of Israel
Text: Luke 1:46-55; Ruth Duck, b. 1947
Music: *ELLACOMBE, Gesangbuch der Herzogl. Wirtemberg, 1784*

PRAYERS

Intercessions

Let us pray that Christians everywhere heed God's call to become one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church, as we say, **Lord make us one.**

Lord, bless our brothers and sisters in the Church of Rome; may their preservation of the catholic substance of the faith, their commitment to the historical continuity of the church, and their love for the Eucharist enrich and challenge all Christians.

Lord, bless our brothers and sisters in the Churches of the East; may they continue to enrich your church by their faith in the Holy Spirit, their love for the Divine Liturgy, and their respect for ecclesiastical tradition.

Look especially on our brothers and sisters in the Armenian Apostolic Church; may their suffering bear witness to the forgiving love which you have shown us in Christ Jesus.

Bless our brothers and sisters of the Anglican Communion; may their respect for diversity and individual conscience challenge the whole church, and their treasures of language and music never cease to magnify your holy Name.

Bless our Lutheran brothers and sisters; may their love for the Scriptures and their faith in your all-sufficient grace help us all to receive your salvation as purest gift.

Bless our brothers and sisters of the Reformed Tradition; may they continue to edify the church with their preaching and inspire us all by their dedicated work for your kingdom.

Bless our brothers and sisters of the Free Church Tradition; may their warmth and enthusiasm bring new life to the work and prayer of your church.

Bless us and all Christians; may we come to that perfect oneness which you have with your Son in the unifying love of the Holy Spirit.

Benedictine Daily Prayer

The Benedictine Community at St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, regularly prays these intercessions during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, from the Confession of Peter (Jan. 18) to the Conversion of Paul (Jan. 25).

Concluding Prayer

Most high and holy God, pour out upon us your one and unifying Spirit, and awaken in every confession of the whole church a holy hunger and thirst for unity in you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen. *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

The prayer comes from the hand of Johann Konrad Wilhelm Loehe (1808-1872), the German pastor and founder of Wartburg Theological Seminary.

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

Lord's Prayer *English Language Liturgical Consultation*

BLESSING

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Almighty God, the Father, + the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us.

Amen.

Music: *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

A greeting of peace may be shared by all.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Small Group Discussions

Questions for discussion:

- Given your grounding in the Lutheran or Roman Catholic tradition, what kind of **language** do you use to speak about your faith in Jesus Christ?

- In your own practice of faith and piety, how do you think about **good works?**

- Given the Lutheran-Roman Catholic agreement on the doctrine of justification, how might we work at its meaning and significance being lived out in our congregations, parishes, and society?

Discussion Facilitators:

- Jennifer H. Dahle
- David A. Efflandt
- Ronald E. Poe
- Anne Michelle L. Van Kley

All are students in the Master of Divinity program at Wartburg Theological Seminary.

Panel Conversation with Participants

Moderator:
Rev. Amy L. Current
Dean for Vocation Wartburg Theological Seminary

Panelists:
Fr. Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P.
Professor Emeritus, University of Notre Dame

Rev. Winston D. Persaud, Ph.D.
Wartburg Theological Seminary

Janine Marie Idziak, Ph.D.
Loras College

The following summarizes questions and comments made during this session.

Will the movement towards unity between Catholics and Protestants impede union between Catholics and Orthodox Christians in the East? Where is the ecumenical movement going?

Dr. Janine Marie Idziak:
I don't see a Catholic-Lutheran collaboration as in any way precluding Catholic collaboration with other denominations. For example, the Methodists have officially signed on to the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*. There are other Christian denominations which are discussing it in print. I think we can take, as an example, the prayer of intersessions we had this morning at the liturgy of the hours, which we also used yesterday evening, which was put together by the Benedictines at St. John's University in Collegeville. I saw in that prayer of intersession an acknowledgement of the different charisms that are found in the different Christian denominations in terms of particular insights and emphases that they have had, and that we can learn from each other in terms of our various charisms to enrich us all.

Rev. Dr. Winston D. Persaud:
In terms of the Doctrine of Justification, one of the movements over the last 20-25 years is the movement called the Finnish School of Lutheran Studies associated with the Finnish scholar, Tuomo Mannermaa, who talks about justification by faith in terms of *theosis*. As soon as you start using the language of *theosis*, not becoming divine but participating in the divine life, you are using language that is so replete in the Orthodox tradition. So that movement already opens the

way for speaking a common language. Secondly, when you think of the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Church coming closer and closer, each Church is far more diverse than meets the eye. And, so, the fact that we've come together required negotiating the diversity in which Lutherans also participate; for example, married priests, and that's not a stranger in the Orthodox tradition. Something I should mention is when Wartburg Seminary was the host in early 2000 of a Lutheran World Federation gathering on the Doctrine of Justification in terms of its global implications. There was a large number of Lutherans from around the world, there were Roman Catholic representatives, and there was one Orthodox representative, Metropolitan Gennadios. When we had Evening Prayer in the chapel we did use the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed but without the *filioque*, which both Lutherans and Roman Catholics say, "Yes, we can do that, too."

Please clarify, especially with respect to the idea of "trust," the statement in the Lutheran commentary in paragraph 35 of the JDDJ, "In trust in God's promise they are assured of their salvation…". Please also comment on the statement in the Catholic commentary in paragraph 36, "Recognizing his own failures, however, the believer may yet be certain that God intends his salvation." Is it correct to say that, in the Catholic tradition, baptism is considered the assurance of salvation, so that – as I heard one priest say -- even someone like Hitler is saved because he was baptized (although he may have to spend a long time in Purgatory)?

Rev. Dr. Winston D. Persaud

The assurance rests in God's promise, the word coming from outside of ourselves, not from within. And then there is the adversive "but are never secure looking at themselves". That is a marvelous statement that we do not gaze into ourselves to see how well we are doing in order to feel assured that we are moving along nicely into the kingdom. Because, as soon as we turn into ourselves, this is again a fundamental expression of idolatry. And notice the phraseology, "never secure." The security is not in how well I have progressed in living the faith. The assurance is always God's word of promise that comes from without. And that is so, so critical to hear, because of a number of things: one is you can be elevated in pride, that you're helping Jesus to make things work, or you could become so depressed because you're not measuring up. And so, in the Lutheran accent, at no point in our life's journey are we without a total need of hearing and being assured of the promise in Jesus Christ.

Fr. Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P.:

With regard to the Catholic teaching that "God intends his salvation," that is based on a presentation that Aquinas gets from John Damascene. In theology it's helpful to see two different wills, or intentions in God. There's the antecedent one, so the initial will of God, and then there's the will of God which comes after looking through all of the unfolding of human history, all of the complications that human history brings. So the issue is that God wills the salvation of all people. There's a scripture passage, "God wills all to be saved." And that's the fundamental basic will of

God. Then, how people in their lives affirm and accept God's salvation, that unfolds in all kinds of different ways. And a big factor in that is that they receive baptism. Or they, as adults, make an act of faith. But that comes from the playing out of the original will of God to offer higher life, the kingdom of God, salvation, resurrection to all people, not just to a few. The priest who made the comment about Hitler was confused. Hitler was saved in the sense that Hitler fell under the initial will of God to be saved. As far as we can tell, he screwed up later on in the consequent will of God. And then also, Catholicism holds that the cross saves everybody, but they then have to participate somehow in what the cross brings to the human race. They may choose not to do so. And that's these different activities which God is always trying to lead forward in the best possible way, but human beings can consistently also frustrate those consequent plans. But the original plan is that there is something called the Kingdom of God and not just a few, but everybody is called to it. That's the view.

Dr. Janine Marie Idziak:
And when it says the believer may yet be certain that God intends his salvation, could we also include under that, that we can also be assured that God's forgiveness is always available to us, no matter what we've done?

Fr. Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P.:
And he's the Good Shepherd, he's always seeking everybody out, but people are also free.

Ecumenically, are we making any progress in hospitality at "the supper of the Lord"?

Fr. Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P.:
I think the attitude towards welcoming each other to the Eucharist differs from church to church, but it also differs probably within the power structures of the church; so the official decisions of the central administration, the Vatican, which really tells the Bishops what to do. That decision is not to have inter-communion. It would be interesting to know what would be the decision of the teachers and theologians and the ministers and lay people in the Catholic Church. So it puts the problem in a different court.

Dr. Janine Marie Idziak:
We've seen examples where, on a purely individual level, people have engaged in inter-communion even though it's not officially approved.

Rev. Dr. Winston D. Persaud:
In the Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue in the United States, the agreed practice is that, whenever they meet, there's always a Catholic Mass on Saturday evening and Lutheran Holy Communion, the Eucharist, on Sunday. And the practice is that we would attend and on Saturday evening everybody is invited up – the Lutherans are invited up and to cross their hands and receive a blessing. And I think of the blessing that I have received over the years – it seemed I would be in the queue to the bishop who was co-chair and he would always say something to the effect

"Winston, the Lord bless you and we pray the unity which our Lord prayed will become a reality." And then the next day at the Lutheran Eucharist, the Catholics would go up and receive a blessing. Now that's the kind of following of the official understanding that we don't violate. There was, in keeping with the question, Round X, that was in the late 90s or 2000, when we met in Chicago at one of the Catholic centers and we went to Communion. And it was just our group. And it was so profoundly an experience of separation that I've never witnessed this before. We had to talk about it. Because, somehow, this practice did not carry the day. We, the Lutherans and the Roman Catholics, just felt – WOW – We're Here, We're Together, We're Learning to know each other as sisters and brothers and we're sharing so much. And we came away from it with a profound sense of the separation that we have. And we had to talk about it.

Ecumenical conversations are meant to be more than "in house" debating. We need to be concerned about more than just getting the doctrines right and looking for commonalities, but also about outreach to the world and the evangelical task of the church. Pastorally, how might the conversations in which we have been engaging help our outreach to the many people today who are essentially disinterested in religion?

Fr. Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P.:
I think that the challenge that faces the church is how to present the teaching and Gospel of Jesus and church life and worship and preaching in an interesting way to attract people. At least in the Catholic Church, there aren't a lot of mysteries about this. There's a huge number of people – a new phenomenon – who were Catholics and would still say they are Catholics, but who don't belong to a parish. So that I think our focus has shifted a little bit from worrying about bona fide agnostics and atheists to facing this group, which as far as I can tell, is something new. It's estimated at 9 million. We all have members of our families who fall into that category. It's not a doctrinal issue; it's because they don't find the parish interesting enough. And so, that's the challenge to liturgists and pastors and pastoral theologians to everybody.

Rev. Dr. Winston D. Persaud:
There are various dimensions to implications of the question you raised. One of the things that has been apparent is that, while we have had this marvelous history of dialogue, it was the practice for years -- up until probably the end of Round IX -- that every Lutheran pastor in the United States received a copy of the publication. Lutherans characteristically point out that doctrine is not equal to the gospel; doctrine serves the gospel. So that we don't just get the right doctrine and say we've arrived at the gospel – the gospel must be proclaimed. One of the amazing things is that there's something different as a result of the signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. First, it is a far more accessible text. Secondly, it's so steeped in the language of God's justifying unconditionally. And so one of the things that we need to do, whether Lutheran or Roman Catholic or Orthodox, is to find a way of speaking the gospel as God's justifying grace, unconditional *theosis* language that connects with the lives of the people. And that calls for a whole

kind of orientation in which we learn the language of the faith in such a way that we are willing to speak it in a way that connects with people's lives. So, for example, somebody comes and says to the deacon or to the pastor or in a mutual conversation of believers, "My life is a wreck. I just feel in bondage and I have no freedom." That is a profound cry for a word of freedom, of liberation. We have no better word than the word of promise in Jesus Christ. Thinking of Jonestown – I'm from Guyana – what did Jones offer? He said that, "I'm God and I can give you freedom," and he robbed people of freedom and their dignity and eventually their lives. I think of the profound consequences of not hearing the Word of promise and freedom in Jesus Christ, which is the only word to liberate.

Dr. Janine Marie Idziak:
I'd like to share with you a comment from Cardinal Walter Kasper: "Many Christians today no longer understand the formulations of the sixteenth century. Speaking about justification is not part of our normal catechetical language. …However, the real reason why many Catholics (and Protestants as well) no longer understand the term justification lies at a deeper level. We no longer feel the burden of guilt and sin as Luther did, we no longer live in fear of God's judgment; we have all become too deistic, seeing God as quite withdrawn from our world and our everyday existence." Then he goes on to say, "Thus we have to translate both the questions and the answers of the past into contemporary language and dialectic, so that our words will touch and make an impression on our deepest experiences, anxieties and hopes and stir us as much today as in the past. …It is ultimately a question of a new opening up and interpretation of our experience of hopelessness and our desire for meaning and mercy." (*That They May All Be One: The Call to Unity Today)*. And that really struck me: in making the doctrine of justification come alive for us, we need to connect it with the experiences we are going through today.

As a matter of fact, we experience both a unity in the faith and difference. How do we existentially put together the difference and the sameness?

Fr. Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P.:
I have really spent a great deal of my life, when I've been preaching, preaching Lutheran themes. So, for instance, preaching with the ordinary Sunday Mass, you preach about how, for instance it's God's kingdom and not ours. Everybody pays attention. You preach about how it's God who has begun his work of salvation and who initiates it and who helps us with it. I noticed in here the words TRUST – I hardly ever hear that in the Catholic Church – the word TRUST. To trust Jesus, or to trust God, and so there's a whole way in which preaching Lutheranism or preaching Lutherans' or Lutheran themes is very salutary. And, from my experience, as soon as (they don't know this has anything to do with Lutheranism), but as soon as you preach this, they all pay attention. Because in a way they have been worn out by the opposite. So to preach these great themes, which are great Christian biblical themes, which have been ignored or just been set aside by a different mindset, is a liberating enterprise and it is one which is by no means finished. Or

even, perhaps, all that much begun. But as soon as you touch on those themes in a Catholic church, people pay attention because it is a word of relaxation and liberation.

Dr. Janine Marie Idziak:
My own comments about similarity between Catholics and Lutherans on an existential level comes from my experience with working with Lutherans. I do a lot of work in health care ethics and at one point, I was invited to be the featured speaker about ethics at a weekend retreat for Lutheran Nursing Home administrators in the state of Iowa, held at the EWALU Retreat Center in Strawberry Point. It was a two-day program. In terms of our conversations about ethics, and what Catholics and Lutherans are both doing in terms of providing health care services to the elderly and the particular philosophy and perspective they bring to that care, I couldn't perceive any differences between us. Or again, Lutherans began the Barnabas Uplift Program here in Iowa. Catholic Charities in the Archdiocese of Dubuque has plugged into that. So again, there is that existential similarity in the way we, on a daily basis, live out what it means to be a Christian.

Rev. Dr. Winston D. Persaud:
Human beings are constituted by narratives. There are stories that make us who we are. The Joint Declaration has reminded us that our particular stories and understanding of the Christian faith are part of the normative narrative of God's unconditional justifying grace in Jesus Christ through the Spirit. One of the things that we are being pressed to think about here is the contributions of the different communities to the clear articulation of the one gospel. At the end of the day, no church has a monopoly on the distinctive way in which to speak the gospel. We have to be able to claim it as part of the tradition, and for Luther Reformation folks, we see the Christian tradition not as beginning in the 16th century but as bigger and going back to biblical times and moving on. And so, the distinctive but seemingly contradictory are held together because they serve the one gospel of Jesus Christ. I think it's helpful at times to preach in a way in which we are borrowing from other traditions and find people are excited and celebrate the fact that this is the Spirit's contribution to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church rather than some kind of Lutheran distinctive, that is so distinctive that it can't be part of the whole.

What significance does our conversation about justification have beyond the Church, for the human community, for our ministry of reconciliation in the world?

Dr. Janine Marie Idziak:
In this regard, I'd like to share a quote from Cardinal Walter Kasper, who was involved with the JDDJ process. He says, "…justification is not only good news for our individual life. While it enables us to live as individuals, at the same time it opens us to our fellow human beings. Just as we live by God's mercy, so we can and should be gracious and merciful towards our fellow men and women. Thus, justification enables and even compels us to work for justice and peace, the recognition of human dignity and human rights. Because we all live by God's mercy and love,

justification enables us to interact with our community and give ourselves to social concerns." (*That They May All Be One: The Call to Unity Today*)

Rev. Dr. Winston D. Persaud:
Sounds like a very good "Amen"

Fr. Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P.:
Yes, Amen.

Closing Prayer

Gracious God, we give you thanks for this blessed time together. For a glimpse of the unity that we have in you. Bless the work of all who have come together that we might witness together. That we might remain in Christ. Bless this food, that we are about to eat, that it might nourish us for the walks ahead. We give you thanks for all those who have come together to put this event on together as together we remember our sisters and brothers in Christ around the world. Again, we give you thanks. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

by Rev. Samuel D. Giere, Ph.D.
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Appendix

The Documents

Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification

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Official Common Statement

Available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_31101999_cath-luth-official-statement_en.html

Annex to the Official Common Statement

Available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pr_chrstuni_doc_31101999_cath-luth-annex_en.html .

JOINT DECLARATION ON THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION

by the Lutheran World Federation
and the Catholic Church

Preamble

1. The doctrine of justification was of central importance for the Lutheran Reformation of the sixteenth century. It was held to be the "first and chief article"[1] and at the same time the "ruler and judge over all other Christian doctrines."[2] The doctrine of justification was particularly asserted and defended in its Reformation shape and special valuation over against the Roman Catholic Church and theology of that time, which in turn asserted and defended a doctrine of justification of a different character. From the Reformation perspective, justification was the crux of all the disputes. Doctrinal condemnations were put forward both in the Lutheran Confessions' and by the Roman Catholic Church's Council of Trent. These condemnations are still valid today and thus have a church-dividing effect.

2. For the Lutheran tradition, the doctrine of justification has retained its special status. Consequently it has also from the beginning occupied an important place in the official Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue.

3. Special attention should be drawn to the following reports: "The Gospel and the Church" (1972)[4] and "Church and Justification" (1994)[5] by the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Joint Commission, "Justification by Faith" (1983)[6] of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue in the USA and "The Condemnations of the Reformation Era - Do They Still Divide?" (1986)[7] by the Ecumenical Working Group of Protestant and Catholic theologians in Germany. Some of these dialogue reports have been officially received by the churches. An important example of such reception is the binding response of the United Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Germany to the "Condemnations" study, made in 1994 at the highest possible level of ecclesiastical recognition together with the other churches of the Evangelical Church in Germany.[8]

4. In their discussion of the doctrine of justification, all the dialogue reports as well as the responses show a high degree of agreement in their approaches and conclusions. The time has therefore come to take stock and to summarize the results of the dialogues on justification so

[1]The Smalcald Articles, II,1; Book of Concord, 292.
[2] "Rector et judex super omnia genera doctrinarum" Weimar Edition of Luther's Works (WA), 39,I,205.
[3] ~~It should be noted that some Luthe~~ran churches include only the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism among their binding confessions. These texts contain no condemnations about justification in relation to the Roman Catholic Church.
[4] Report of the Joint Lutheran-Roman Catholic Study Commission, published in Growth in Agreement (New York; Geneva, 1984), pp. 168-189.
[5] Published by the Lutheran World Federation (Geneva, 1994).
[6]Lutheran and Catholics in Dialogue VII (Minneapolis, 1985)
[7]Minneapolis, 1990.
[8] "Gemeinsame Stellungnahme der Arnoldshainer Konferenz, der Vereinigten Kirche and des Deutschen Nationalkomitees des Lutherisehen Weltbundes zum Dokument Lehrverurteilungen - kirchentrennend?'," Okumenische Rundschau 44 (1995): 99-102; See also the position papers which underlie this resolution, in Lehrverurteilungen im Gcsprgch, Die ersten offiziellen Stellungnahmen aus den evangelischen Kirchen in Deutschland (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993).

that our churches may be informed about the overall results of this dialogue with the necessary accuracy and brevity, and thereby be enabled to make binding decisions.

5. The present Joint Declaration has this intention: namely, to show that on the basis of their dialogue the subscribing Lutheran churches and the Roman Catholic Church[9] are now able to articulate a common understanding of our justification by God's grace through faith in Christ. It does not cover all that either church teaches about justification; it does encompass a consensus on basic truths of the doctrine of justification and shows that the remaining differences in its explication are no longer the occasion for doctrinal condemnations.

6. Our Declaration is not a new, independent presentation alongside the dialogue reports and documents to date, let alone a replacement of them. Rather, as the appendix of sources shows, it makes repeated reference to them and their arguments.

7. Like the dialogues themselves, this Joint Declaration rests on the conviction that in overcoming the earlier controversial questions and doctrinal condemnations, the churches neither take the condemnations lightly nor do they disavow their own past. On the contrary, this Declaration is shaped by the conviction that in their respective histories our churches have come to new insights. Developments have taken place which not only make possible, but also require the churches to examine the divisive questions and condemnations and see them in a new light.

1. Biblical Message of Justification

8. Our common way of listening to the word of God in Scripture has led to such new insights. Together we hear the gospel that "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (Jn 3:16). This good news is set forth in Holy Scripture in various ways. In the Old Testament we listen to God's word about human sinfulness (Ps 51:1-5; Dan 9:5f; Eccl/Qo 8:9f; Ezra 9:6f) and human disobedience (Gen 3:1-19; Neh 9:16f,26) as well as of God's "righteousness" (Isa 46:13; 51:5-8; 56:1 [cf. 53:11]; Jer 9:24) and "judgment" (Ecc1/Qo 12:14; Ps 9:5f; 76:7-9).

9. In the New Testament diverse treatments of "righteousness" and 'justification" are found in the writings of Matthew (5:10; 6:33; 21:32), John (16:8-11), Hebrews (5:3; 10:37f), and James (2:14-26).[10] In Paul's letters also, the gift of salvation is described in various ways, among others: "for freedom Christ has set us free" (Gal 5:1-13; cf. Rom 6:7), "reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5:18-21; cf. Rom 5:11), "peace with God" (Rom 5:1), "new creation" (2 Cor 5:17), "alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Rom 6:11,23), or "sanctified in Christ Jesus" (cf. 1 Cor 1:2; 1:30; 2 Cor 1:1). Chief among these is the "justification" of sinful human beings by God's grace through faith (Rom 3:23-25), which came into particular prominence in the Reformation period.

l0. Paul sets forth the gospel as the power of God for salvation of the person who has fallen under the power of sin, as the message that proclaims that "the righteousness of God is

~~The word "church" is used in this~~ Declaration to reflect the self-understandings of the participating churches, without intending to resolve all the ecclesiological issues related to this term.

[10]Cf. "Malta Report," paras. 26-30; Justification by Faith, paras. 122-147. At the request of the US dialogue on justification, the non-Pauline New Testament texts were addressed in Righteousness in the New Testament, by John Reumann, with responses by Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Jerome D. Quinn (Philadelphia; New York:1982), pp. 124-180. The results of this study were summarized in the dialogue report Justification by Faith in paras. 139-142.

revealed through faith for faith" (Rom 1:16f) and that grants "justification" (Rom 3:21-31). He proclaims Christ as "our righteousness" (1 Cor 1:30), applying to the risen Lord what Jeremiah proclaimed about God himself (Jer 23:6). In Christ's death and resurrection all dimensions of his saving work have their roots for he is "our Lord, who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification" (Rom 4:25). All human beings are in need of God's righteousness, "since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23; cf. Rom 1:18-3:20; 11:32; Gal 3:22). In Galatians (3:6) and Romans (4:3-9), Paul understands Abraham's faith (Gen 15:6) as faith in the God who justifies the sinner (Rom 4:5) and calls upon the testimony of the Old Testament to undergird his gospel that this righteousness will be reckoned to all who, like Abraham, trust in God's promise. "For the righteous will live by faith (Hab 2:4; cf. Gal 3:11; Rom 1:17). In Paul's letters, God's righteousness is also God's power for those who have faith (Rom 1:16f; 2 Cor 5:21). In Christ he makes it our righteousness (2 Cor 5:21). Justification becomes ours through Christ Jesus "whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith" (Rom 3:25; see 3:21-28). "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works" (Eph 2:8f).

11. Justification is the forgiveness of sins (cf. Rom 3:23-25; Acts 13:39; Lk 18:14), liberation from the dominating power of sin and death (Rom 5:12-21) and from the curse of the law (Gal 3:10-14). It is acceptance into communion with God: already now, but then fully in God's coming kingdom (Rom 5:1f). It unites with Christ and with his death and resurrection (Rom 6:5). It occurs in the reception of the Holy Spirit in baptism and incorporation into the one body (Rom 8:1f, 9f; I Cor 12:12f). All this is from God alone, for Christ's sake, by grace, through faith in "the gospel of God's Son" (Rom 1:1-3).

12. The justified live by faith that comes from the Word of Christ (Rom 10:17) and is active through love (Gal 5:6), the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22f). But since the justified are assailed from within and without by powers and desires (Rom 8:35-39; Gal 5:16-21) and fall into sin (1 Jn 1:8,10), they must constantly hear God's promises anew, confess their sins (1 Jn 1:9), participate in Christ's body and blood, and be exhorted to live righteously in accord with the will of God. That is why the Apostle says to the justified: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil 2:12f). But the good news remains: "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:1), and in whom Christ lives (Gal 2:20). Christ's "act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all" (Rom 5:18).

2. The Doctrine of Justification as Ecumenical Problem

13. Opposing interpretations and applications of the biblical message of justification were in the sixteenth century a principal cause of the division of the Western church and led as well to doctrinal condemnations. A common understanding of justification is therefore fundamental and indispensable to overcoming that division. By appropriating insights of recent biblical studies and drawing on modem investigations of the history of theology and dogma, the post-Vatican II ecumenical dialogue has led to a notable convergence concerning justification, with the result that this Joint Declaration is able to formulate a consensus on basic truths concerning the doctrine of justification. In light of this consensus, the corresponding doctrinal condemnations of the sixteenth century do not apply to today's partner.

3. The Common Understanding of Justification

14. The Lutheran churches and the Roman Catholic Church have together listened to the good news proclaimed in Holy Scripture. This common listening, together with the theological conversations of recent years, has led to a shared understanding of justification. This encompasses a consensus in the basic truths; the differing explications in particular statements are compatible with it.

15. In faith we together hold the conviction that justification is the work of the triune God. The Father sent his Son into the world to save sinners. The foundation and presupposition of justification is the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ. Justification thus means that Christ himself is our righteousness, in which we share through the Holy Spirit in accord with the will of the Father. Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works.[11]

16. All people are called by God to salvation in Christ. Through Christ alone are we justified, when we receive this salvation in faith. Faith is itself God's gift through the Holy Spirit who works through word and sacrament in the community of believers and who, at the same time, leads believers into that renewal of life which God will bring to completion in eternal life.

17. We also share the conviction that the message of justification directs us in a special way towards the heart of the New Testament witness to God's saving action in Christ: it tells us that as sinners our new life is solely due to the forgiving and renewing mercy that God imparts as a gift and we receive in faith, and never can merit in any way.

18. Therefore the doctrine of justification, which takes up this message and explicates it, is more than just one part of Christian doctrine. It stands in an essential relation to all truths of faith, which are to be seen as internally related to each other. It is an indispensable criterion which constantly serves to orient all the teaching and practice of our churches to Christ. When Lutherans emphasize the unique significance of this criterion, they do not deny the interrelation and significance of all truths of faith. When Catholics see themselves as bound by several criteria, they do not deny the special function of the message of justification. Lutherans and Catholics share the goal of confessing Christ in all things, who alone is to be trusted above all things as the one Mediator (1 Tim 2:5f) through whom God in the Holy Spirit gives himself and pours out his renewing gifts. [cf. Sources for section 3].

4. Explicating the Common Understanding of Justification

4.1 Human Powerlessness and Sin in Relation to Justification

19. We confess together that all persons depend completely on the saving grace of God for their salvation. The freedom they possess in relation to persons and the things of this world is no freedom in relation to salvation, for as sinners they stand under God's judgment and are incapable of turning by themselves to God to seek deliverance, of meriting their justification before God, or of attaining salvation by their own abilities. Justification takes place solely by God's grace. Because Catholics and Lutherans confess this together, it is true to say:

20. When Catholics say that persons "cooperate" in preparing for and accepting justification by consenting to God's justifying action, they see such personal consent as itself an effect of grace, not as an action arising from innate human abilities.

[11] "All Under One Christ," para. 14, in Growth in Agreement, 241-247.

21. According to Lutheran teaching, human beings are incapable of cooperating in their salvation, because as sinners they actively oppose God and his saving action. Lutherans do not deny that a person can reject the working of grace. When they emphasize that a person can only receive (mere passive) justification, they mean thereby to exclude any possibility of contributing to one's own justification, but do not deny that believers are fully involved personally in their faith, which is effected by God's Word. [cf. Sources for 4.1].

4.2 Justification as Forgiveness of Sins and Making Righteous

22. We confess together that God forgives sin by grace and at the same time frees human beings from sin's enslaving power and imparts the gift of new life in Christ. When persons come by faith to share in Christ, God no longer imputes to them their sin and through the Holy Spirit effects in them an active love. These two aspects of God's gracious action are not to be separated, for persons are by faith united with Christ, who in his person is our righteousness (1 Cor 1:30): both the forgiveness of sin and the saving presence of God himself. Because Catholics and Lutherans confess this together, it is true to say that:

23. When Lutherans emphasize that the righteousness of Christ is our righteousness, their intention is above all to insist that the sinner is granted righteousness before God in Christ through the declaration of forgiveness and that only in union with Christ is one's life renewed. When they stress that God's grace is forgiving love ("the favor of God"[12]), they do not thereby deny the renewal of the Christian's life. They intend rather to express that justification remains free from human cooperation and is not dependent on the life-renewing effects of grace in human beings.

24.When Catholics emphasize the renewal of the interior person through the reception of grace imparted as a gift to the believer," they wish to insist that God's forgiving grace always brings with it a gift of new life, which in the Holy Spirit becomes effective in active love. They do not thereby deny that God's gift of grace in justification remains independent of human cooperation. [cf. Sources for section 4.2].

4.3 Justification by Faith and through Grace

25. We confess together that sinners are justified by faith in the saving action of God in Christ. By the action of the Holy Spirit in baptism, they are granted the gift of salvation, which lays the basis for the whole Christian life. They place their trust in God's gracious promise by justifying faith, which includes hope in God and love for him. Such a faith is active in love and thus the Christian cannot and should not remain without works. But whatever in the justified precedes or follows the free gift of faith is neither the basis of justification nor merits it.

26. According to Lutheran understanding, God justifies sinners in faith alone (sola fide). In faith they place their trust wholly in their Creator and Redeemer and thus live in communion with him. God himself effects faith as he brings forth such trust by his creative word. Because God's act is a new creation, it affects all dimensions of the person and leads to a life in hope and love. In the doctrine of 'justification by faith alone," a distinction but not a separation is made between justification itself and the renewal of one's way of life that necessarily follows from justification and without which faith does not exist. Thereby the basis is indicated from

[12] Cf. WA 8:106; American Edition 32:227.

[13] Cf. DS 1528

which the renewal of life proceeds, for it comes forth from the love of God imparted to the person in justification. Justification and renewal are joined in Christ, who is present in faith.

27. The Catholic understanding also sees faith as fundamental in justification. For without faith, no justification can take place. Persons are justified through baptism as hearers of the word and believers in it. The justification of sinners is forgiveness of sins and being made righteous by justifying grace, which makes us children of God. In justification the righteous receive from Christ faith, hope, and love and are thereby taken into communion with him.[14] This new personal relation to God is grounded totally on God's graciousness and remains constantly dependent on the salvific and creative working of this gracious God, who remains true to himself, so that one can rely upon him. Thus justifying grace never becomes a human possession to which one could appeal over against God. While Catholic teaching emphasizes the renewal of life by justifying grace, this renewal in faith, hope, and love is always dependent on God's unfathomable grace and contributes nothing to justification about which one could boast before God (Rom 3:27). [See Sources for section 4.3].

4.4 The Justified as Sinner

28. We confess together that in baptism the Holy Spirit unites one with Christ, justifies, and truly renews the person. But the justified must all through life constantly look to God's unconditional justifying grace. They also are continuously exposed to the power of sin still pressing its attacks (cf. Rom 6:12-14) and are not exempt from a lifelong struggle against the contradiction to God within the selfish desires of the old Adam (cf. Gal 5:16; Rom 7:7-10). The justified also must ask God daily for forgiveness as in the Lord's Prayer (Mt. 6:12; 1 Jn 1:9), are ever again called to conversion and penance, and are ever again granted forgiveness.

29. Lutherans understand this condition of the Christian as a being "at the same time righteous and sinner." Believers are totally righteous, in that God forgives their sins through Word and Sacrament and grants the righteousness of Christ which they appropriate in faith. In Christ, they are made just before God. Looking at themselves through the law, however, they recognize that they remain also totally sinners. Sin still lives in them (1 Jn 1:8; Rom 7:17,20), for they repeatedly turn to false gods and do not love God with that undivided love which God requires as their Creator (Deut 6:5; Mt 22:36-40 pr.). This contradiction to God is as such truly sin. Nevertheless, the enslaving power of sin is broken on the basis of the merit of Christ. It no longer is a sin that "rules" the Christian for it is itself "ruled" by Christ with whom the justified are bound in faith. In this life, then, Christians can in part lead a just life. Despite sin, the Christian is no longer separated from God, because in the daily return to baptism, the person who has been born anew by baptism and the Holy Spirit has this sin forgiven. Thus this sin no longer brings damnation and eternal death.[15] Thus, when Lutherans say that justified persons are also sinners and that their opposition to God is truly sin, they do not deny that, despite this sin, they are not separated from God and that this sin is a "ruled" sin. In these affirmations, they are in agreement with Roman Catholics, despite the difference in understanding sin in the justified.

30. Catholics hold that the grace of Jesus Christ imparted in baptism takes away all that is sin "in the proper sense" and that is "worthy of damnation" (Rom 8:1).[16] There does, however, remain in the person an inclination (concupiscence) which comes from sin and presses toward sin. Since, according to Catholic conviction, human sins always involve a personal

[14] Cf. DS 1530.
[15] Cf. Apology II:38-45; Book of Concord, 105f.
[16] Cf. DS 1515.

element and since this element is lacking in this inclination, Catholics do not see this inclination as sin in an authentic sense. They do not thereby deny that this inclination does not correspond to God's original design for humanity and that it is objectively in contradiction to God and remains one's enemy in lifelong struggle. Grateful for deliverance by Christ, they underscore that this inclination in contradiction to God does not merit the punishment of eternal death[17] and does not separate the justified person from God. But when individuals voluntarily separate themselves from God, it is not enough to return to observing the commandments, for they must receive pardon and peace in the Sacrament of Reconciliation through the word of forgiveness imparted to them in virtue of God's reconciling work in Christ. [See Sources for section 4.4].

4.5 Law and Gospel

31. We confess together that persons are justified by faith in the gospel "apart from works prescribed by the law" (Rom 3:28). Christ has fulfilled the law and by his death and resurrection has overcome it as a way to salvation. We also confess that God's commandments retain their validity for the justified and that Christ has by his teaching and example expressed God's will which is a standard for the conduct of the justified also.

32. Lutherans state that the distinction and right ordering of law and gospel is essential for the understanding of justification. In its theological use, the law is demand and accusation. Throughout their lives, all persons, Christians also, in that they are sinners, stand under this accusation which uncovers their sin so that, in faith in the gospel, they will turn unreservedly to the mercy of God in Christ, which alone justifies them.

33. Because the law as a way to salvation has been fulfilled and overcome through the gospel, Catholics can say that Christ is not a lawgiver in the manner of Moses. When Catholics emphasize that the righteous are bound to observe God's commandments, they do not thereby deny that through Jesus Christ God has mercifully promised to his children the grace of eternal life." [See Sources for section 4.5].

4.6 Assurance of Salvation

34. We confess together that the faithful can rely on the mercy and promises of God. In spite of their own weakness and the manifold threats to their faith, on the strength of Christ's death and resurrection they can build on the effective promise of God's grace in Word and Sacrament and so be sure of this grace.

35. This was emphasized in a particular way by the Reformers: in the midst of temptation, believers should not look to themselves but look solely to Christ and trust only him. In trust in God's promise they are assured of their salvation, but are never secure looking at themselves.

36. Catholics can share the concern of the Reformers to ground faith in the objective reality of Christ's promise, to look away from one's own experience, and to trust in Christ's forgiving word alone (cf. Mt 16:19; 18:18). With the Second Vatican Council, Catholics state: to have faith is to entrust oneself totally to God,[19] who liberates us from the darkness of sin and death

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[17]Cf. DS 1515.
[18]Cf. DS 1545.
[19]Cf. DV 5.

and awakens us to eternal life.[20] In this sense, one cannot believe in God and at the same time consider the divine promise untrustworthy. No one may doubt God's mercy and Christ's merit. Every person, however, may be concerned about his salvation when he looks upon his own weaknesses and shortcomings. Recognizing his own failures, however, the believer may yet be certain that God intends his salvation. [See Sources for section 4.6].

4.7 The Good Works of the Justified

37. We confess together that good works—a Christian life lived in faith, hope and love—follow justification and are its fruits. When the justified live in Christ and act in the grace they receive, they bring forth, in biblical terms, good fruit. Since Christians struggle against sin their entire lives, this consequence of justification is also for them an obligation they must fulfill. Thus both Jesus and the apostolic Scriptures admonish Christians to bring forth the works of love.

38. According to Catholic understanding, good works, made possible by grace and the working of the Holy Spirit, contribute to growth in grace, so that the righteousness that comes from God is preserved and communion with Christ is deepened. When Catholics affirm the "meritorious" character of good works, they wish to say that, according to the biblical witness, a reward in heaven is promised to these works. Their intention is to emphasize the responsibility of persons for their actions, not to contest the character of those works as gifts, or far less to deny that justification always remains the unmerited gift of grace.

39. The concept of a preservation of grace and a growth in grace and faith is also held by Lutherans. They do emphasize that righteousness as acceptance by God and sharing in the righteousness of Christ is always complete. At the same time, they state that there can be growth in its effects in Christian living. When they view the good works of Christians as the fruits and signs of justification and not as one's own "merits", they nevertheless also understand eternal life in accord with the New Testament as unmerited "reward" in the sense of the fulfillment of God's promise to the believer. [See Sources for section 4.7].

5. The Significance and Scope of the Consensus Reached

40. The understanding of the doctrine of justification set forth in this Declaration shows that a consensus in basic truths of the doctrine of justification exists between Lutherans and Catholics. In light of this consensus the remaining differences of language, theological elaboration, and emphasis in the understanding of justification described in paras. 18 to 39 are acceptable. Therefore the Lutheran and the Catholic explications of justification are in their difference open to one another and do not destroy the consensus regarding the basic truths.

41. Thus the doctrinal condemnations of the 16th century, in so far as they relate to the doctrine of justification, appear in a new light: The teaching of the Lutheran churches presented in this Declaration does not fall under the condemnations from the Council of Trent. The condemnations in the Lutheran Confessions do not apply to the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church presented in this Declaration.

[20] Cf. DV 5.

42. Nothing is thereby taken away from the seriousness of the condemnations related to the doctrine of justification. Some were not simply pointless. They remain for us "salutary warnings" to which we must attend in our teaching and practice.[21]

43. Our consensus in basic truths of the doctrine of justification must come to influence the life and teachings of our churches. Here it must prove itself. In this respect, there are still questions of varying importance which need further clarification. These include, among other topics, the relationship between the Word of God and church doctrine, as well as ecclesiology, ecclesial authority, church unity, ministry, the sacraments, and the relation between justification and social ethics. We are convinced that the consensus we have reached offers a solid basis for this clarification. The Lutheran churches and the Roman Catholic Church will continue to strive together to deepen this common understanding of justification and to make it bear fruit in the life and teaching of the churches.

44. We give thanks to the Lord for this decisive step forward on the way to overcoming the division of the church. We ask the Holy Spirit to lead us further toward that visible unity which is Christ's will.

[21] Condemnations of the Reformation Era, 27.

Resources for

the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification

In parts 3 and 4 of the "Joint Declaration" formulations from different Lutheran-Catholic dialogues are referred to. They are the following documents:

"All Under One Christ," Statement on the Augsburg Confession by the Roman Catholic/Lutheran Joint Commission, 1980, in: Growth in Agreement, edited by Harding Meyer and Lukas Vischer, New York/Ramsey, Geneva, 1984, 241-247.

Denzinger-Schönmetzer, Enchiridion symbolorum ...32nd to 36th edition (hereafter: DS). Denzinger-Hünermann, Enchiridion symbolorum ...since the 37th edition (hereafter: DH).

Evaluation of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity of the Study Lehrverurteilungen - kirchentrennend?, Vatican, 1992, unpublished document (hereafter: PCPCU).

Justification by Faith, Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue VII, Minneapolis, 1985 (hereafter: USA).

Position Paper of the Joint Committee of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany and the LWF German National Committee regarding the document "The Condemnations of the Reformation Era. Do They Still Divide?" in: Lehrverurteilungen im Gespräch, Göttingen, 1993 (hereafter: VELKD).

The Condemnations of the Reformation Era. Do they Still Divide? Edited by Karl Lehmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg, Minneapolis, 1990 (hereafter: LV:E)

For 3: The Common Understanding of Justification (paras 17 and 18) (LV:E 68f; VELKD 95)

- "... a faith centered and forensically conceived picture of justification is of major importance for Paul and, in a sense, for the Bible as a whole, although it is by no means the only biblical or Pauline way of representing God's saving work" (USA, no. 146).

- "Catholics as well as Lutherans can acknowledge the need to test the practices, structures, and theologies of the church by the extent to which they help or hinder 'the proclamation of God's free and merciful promises in Christ Jesus which can be rightly received only through faith' (para. 28)" (USA, no. 153).

Regarding the "fundamental affirmation" (USA, no. 157; cf. 4) it is said:

- "This affirmation, like the Reformation doctrine of justification by faith alone, serves as a criterion for judging all church practices, structures, and traditions precisely because its counterpart is 'Christ alone' (solus Christus). He alone is to be ultimately trusted as the one mediator through whom God in the Holy Spirit pours out his saving gifts. All of us in this dialogue affirm that all Christian teachings, practices, and offices should so function as to foster 'the obedience of faith' (Rom. 1:5) in God's saving action in Christ Jesus alone through

the Holy Spirit, for the salvation of the faithful and the praise and honor of the heavenly Father" (USA, no. 160).

- "For that reason, the doctrine of justification—and, above all, its biblical foundation—will always retain a special function in the church. That function is continually to remind Christians that we sinners live solely from the forgiving love of God, which we merely allow to be bestowed on us, but which we in no way—in however modified a form—'earn' or are able to tie down to any preconditions or postconditions. The doctrine of justification therefore becomes the touchstone for testing at all times whether a particular interpretation of our relationship to God can claim the name of 'Christian.' At the same time, it becomes the touchstone for the church, for testing at all times whether its proclamation and its praxis correspond to what has been given to it by its Lord" (LV:E 69).

– "An agreement on the fact that the doctrine of justification is significant not only as one doctrinal component within the whole of our church's teaching, but also as the touchstone for testing the whole doctrine and practice of our churches, is—from a Lutheran point of view—fundamental progress in the ecumenical dialogue between our churches. It cannot be welcomed enough" (VELKD 95, 20-26; cf. 157).

- "For Lutherans and Catholics, the doctrine of justification has a different status in the hierarchy of truth; but both sides agree that the doctrine of justification has its specific function in the fact that it is the touchstone for testing at all times whether a particular interpretation of our relationship to God can claim the name of "Christian". At the same time it becomes the touchstone for the church, for testing at all times whether its proclamation and its praxis correspond to what has been given to it by its Lord' (LV:E 69). The criteriological significance of the doctrine of justification for sacramentology, ecclesiology and ethical teachings still deserves to be studied further" (PCPCU 96).

For 4.1: Human Powerlessness and Sin in Relation to Justification (paras 19-21) (LV:E 42ff; 46; VELKD 77-81; 83f)

– "Those in whom sin reigns can do nothing to merit justification, which is the free gift of God's grace. Even the beginnings of justification, for example, repentance, prayer for grace, and desire for forgiveness, must be God's work in us" (USA, no. 156.3).

– *"Both* are concerned to make it clear that ... human beings cannot ... cast a sideways glance at their own endeavors ... But a response is not a 'work.' The response of faith is itself brought about through the uncoercible word of promise which comes to human beings from outside themselves. There can be '*co*operation' only in the sense that in faith the heart is involved, when the Word touches it and creates faith" (LV:E 46f).

- "Where, however, Lutheran teaching construes the relation of God to his human creatures in justification with such emphasis on the divine 'monergism' or the sole efficacy of Christ in such a way, that the person's willing acceptance of God's grace—which is itself a gift of God—has no essential role in justification, then the Tridentine canons 4, 5, 6 and 9 still constitute a notable doctrinal difference on justification" (PCPCU 22).

- "The strict emphasis on the passivity of human beings concerning their justification never meant, on the Lutheran side, to contest the full personal participation in believing; rather it meant to exclude any cooperation in the event of justification itself. Justification is the work of Christ alone, the work of grace alone" (VELKD 84,3-8).

For 4.2: Justification as Forgiveness of Sins and Making Righteous (paras. 22-24) (USA, nos. 98-101; LV:E 47ff; VELKD 84ff; cf. also the quotations for 4.3)

- "By justification we are both declared and made righteous. Justification, therefore, is not a legal fiction. God, in justifying, effects what he promises; he forgives sin and makes us truly righteous" (USA, no. 156,5).

– "Protestant theology does not overlook what Catholic doctrine stresses: the creative and renewing character of God's love; nor does it maintain ..God's impotence toward a sin which is 'merely' forgiven in justification but which is not truly abolished in its power to divide the sinner from God" (LV:E 49).

- "The Lutheran doctrine has never understood the 'crediting of Christ's justification' as without effect on the life of the faithful, because Christ's word achieves what it promises. Accordingly the Lutheran doctrine understands grace as God's favor, but nevertheless as effective power ..'for where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation' (VELKD 86,15-23).

– "Catholic doctrine does not overlook what Protestant theology stresses: the personal character of grace, and its link with the Word; nor does it maintain ..grace as an objective 'possession' (even if a conferred possession) on the part of the human being - something over which he can dispose" (LV:E 49).

For 4.3: Justification by Faith and through Grace (paras. 25-27) (USA, nos. 105ff; LV:E 49-53; VELKD 87-90)

- "If we translate from one language to another, then Protestant talk about justification through faith corresponds to Catholic talk about justification through grace; and on the other hand, Protestant doctrine understands substantially under the one word 'faith' what Catholic doctrine (following 1 Cor. 13:13) sums up in the triad of 'faith, hope, and love' (LV:E 52).

- "We emphasize that faith in the sense of the first commandment always means love to God and hope in him and is expressed in the love to the neighbour" (VELKD 89,8-11).

–"Catholics ..teach as do Lutherans, that nothing prior to the free gift of faith merits justification and that all of God's saving gifts come through Christ alone" (USA, no. 105).

- "The Reformers ..understood faith as the forgiveness and fellowship with Christ effected by the word of promise itself .. This is the ground for the new being, through which the flesh is dead to sin and the new man or woman in Christ has life (sola fide per Christum). But even if this faith necessarily makes the human being new, the Christian builds his confidence, not on his own new life, but solely on God's gracious promise. Acceptance in Christ is sufficient, if 'faith' is understood as 'trust in the promise' (fides promissionis)" (LV:E 50).

- Cf The Council of Trent, Session 6, Chap. 7: "Consequently, in the process of justification, together with the forgiveness of sins a person receives, through Jesus Christ into whom he is grafted, all these infused at the same time: faith, hope and charity" (DH 1530).

- "According to Protestant interpretation, the faith that clings unconditionally to God's promise in Word and Sacrament is sufficient for righteousness before God, so that the

renewal of the human being, without which there can be no faith, does not in itself make any contribution to justification" (LV:E 52).

- "As Lutherans we maintain the distinction between justification and sanctification, of faith and works, which however implies no separation" (VELKD 89,6-8).

- "Catholic doctrine knows itself to be at one with the Protestant concern in emphasizing that the renewal of the human being does not 'contribute' to justification, and is certainly not a contribution to which he could make any appeal before God. Nevertheless it feels compelled to stress the renewal of the human being through justifying grace, for the sake of acknowledging God's newly creating power; although this renewal in faith, hope, and love is certainly nothing but a response to God's unfathomable grace" (LV:E 52f).

– "Insofar as the Catholic doctrine stresses that grace is personal and linked with the Word, that renewal ..is certainly nothing but a response effected by God's word itself, and that the renewal of the human being does not contribute to justification, and is certainly not a contribution to which a person could make any appeal before God, our objection ..no longer applies" (VELKD 89,12-21).

For 4.4: The Justified as Sinner (paras. 28-30) (USA, nos. 102ff; LV:E 44ff; VELKD 81ff)

– "For however just and holy, they fall from time to time into the sins that are those of daily existence.
What is more, the Spirit's action does not exempt believers from the lifelong struggle against sinful tendencies. Concupiscence and other effects of original and personal sin, according to Catholic doctrine, remain in the justified, who therefore must pray daily to God for forgiveness" (USA, no. 102).

- "The doctrines laid down at Trent and by the Reformers are at one in maintaining that original sin, and also the concupiscence that remains, are in contradiction to God ..object of the lifelong struggle against sin .,[A]fter baptism, concupiscence in the person justified no longer cuts that person off from God; in Tridentine language, it is 'no longer sin in the real sense; in Lutheran phraseology, it is peccatum regnatum, 'controlled sin' (LV:E 46).

– "The question is how to speak of sin with regard to the justified without limiting the reality of salvation. While Lutherans express this tension with the term 'controlled sin' (peccatum regnatum) which expresses the teaching of the Christian as 'being justified and sinner at the same time' (simul iustus et peccator), Roman Catholics think the reality of salvation can only be maintained by denying the sinful character of concupiscence. With regard to this question a considerable rapprochement is reached if LV:E calls the concupiscence that remains in the justified a 'contradiction to God' and thus qualifies it as sin" (VELKD 82,29-39).

For 4.5: Law and Gospel (paras. 31-33)

- According to Pauline teaching this topic concerns the Jewish law as means of salvation. This law was fulfilled and overcome in Christ. This statement and the consequences from it have to be understood on this basis.

- With reference to Canons 19f of the Council of Trent, the VELKD (89,28-36) says as follows:

"The ten commandments of course apply to Christians as stated in many places of the confessions.. If Canon 20 stresses that a person ..is bound to keep the commandments of God, this canon does not strike to us; if however Canon 20 affirms that faith has salvific power only on condition of keeping the commandments this applies to us. Concerning the reference of the Canon regarding the commandments of the church, there is no difference between us if these commandments are only expressions of the commandments of God; otherwise it would apply to us."

- The last paragraph is related factually to 4.3, but emphasizes the 'convicting function' of the law which is important to Lutheran thinking.

For 4.6: Assurance of Salvation (paras. 34-36) (LV:E 53-56; VELKD 90ff)

- "The question is: How can, and how may, human beings live before God in spite of their weakness, and with that weakness?" (LV:E 53).

- "The foundation and the point of departure [of the Reformers is] ..the reliability and sufficiency of God's promise, and the power of Christ's death and resurrection; human weakness, and the threat to faith and salvation which that involves" (LV:E 56).

- The Council of Trent also emphasizes that "it is necessary to believe that sins are not forgiven, nor have they ever been forgiven, save freely by the divine mercy on account of Christ;" and that we must not doubt "the mercy of God, the merit of Christ and the power and efficacy of the sacraments; so it is possible for anyone, while he regards himself and his own weakness and lack of dispositions, to be anxious and fearful about his own state of grace" (Council of Trent, Session 6, chapter 9, DH 1534).

- "Luther and his followers go a step farther. They urge that the uncertainty should not merely be endured. We should avert our eyes from it and take seriously, practically, and personally the objective efficacy of the absolution pronounced in the sacrament of penance, which comes 'from outside.' ..Since Jesus said, 'Whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven' (Matt. 16:19), the believer ..would declare Christ to be a liar ..if he did not rely with a rock-like assurance on the forgiveness of God uttered in the absolution ..This reliance can itself be subjectively uncertain - that the assurance of forgiveness is not a security of forgiveness (securitas); but this must not be turned into yet another problem, so to speak: the believer should turn his eyes away from it, and should look only to Christ's word of forgiveness" (LV:E 53f).

- "Today Catholics can appreciate the Reformer's efforts to ground faith in the objective reality of Christ's promise, 'whatsoever you loose on earth ....' and to focus believers on the specific word of absolution from sins. ..Luther's original concern to teach people to look away from their experience, and to rely on Christ alone and his word of forgiveness [is not to be condemned]" (PCPCU 24).

- A mutual condemnation regarding the understanding of the assurance of salvation "can even less provide grounds for mutual objection today—particularly if we start from the foundation of a biblically renewed concept of faith. For a person can certainly lose or renounce faith, and self-commitment to God and his word of promise. But if he believes in this sense, he *cannot at the same time* believe that God is unreliable in his word of promise. In this sense it is true today also that— in Luther's words—faith *is* the assurance of salvation" (LV:E 56).

– With reference to the concept of faith of Vatican II, see Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, no. 5: "The obedience of faith' ..must be given to God who reveals, an obedience by which man entrusts his whole self freely to God, offering the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals,' and freely assenting to the truth revealed by Him."

– "The Lutheran distinction between the certitude (certitudo) of faith which looks alone to Christ and earthly security (securitas), which is based on the human being, has not been dealt with clearly enough in the LV. The question whether a Christian "has believed fully and completely" (LV:E 53) does not arise for the Lutheran understanding, since faith never reflects on itself, but depends completely on God, whose grace is bestowed through word and sacrament, thus from outside (extra nos)" (VELKD 92,2-9).

For 4.7: The Good Works of the Justified (paras. 37-39) (LV:E 66ff, VELKD 90ff)

- "But the Council excludes the possibility of earning *grace*-- that is, justification - (can. 2; DS 1552) and bases the earning or merit of *eternal life* on the gift of grace itself, through membership in Christ (can. 32: DS 1582). Good works are 'merits' as a *gift.* Although the Reformers attack 'Godless trust' in one's own works, the Council explicitly excludes any notion of a claim or any false security (cap. 16: DS 1548f). It is evident ..that the Council wishes to establish a link with Augustine, who introduced the concept of merit, in order to express the responsibility of human beings, in spite of the 'bestowed' character of good works" (LV:E 66).

- If we understand the language of "cause" in Canon 24 in more personal terms, as it is done in chapter 16 of the Decree on Justification, where the idea of communion with Christ is foundational, then we can describe the Catholic doctrine on merit as it is done in the first sentence of the second paragraph of 4.7: growth in grace, perseverance in righteousness received from God and a deeper communion with Christ.

– "Many antitheses could be overcome if the misleading word 'merit' were simply to be viewed and thought about in connection with the true sense of the biblical term 'wage' or reward" (LV:E 67).

– "The Lutheran confessions stress that the justified person is responsible not to lose the grace received but to live in it ..Thus the confessions can speak of a preservation of grace and a growth in it. If righteousness in Canon 24 is understood in the sense that it affects human beings, then it does not strike to us. But if 'righteousness' in Canon 24 refers to the Christian's acceptance by God, it strikes to us; for this righteousness is always perfect; compared with it the works of Christians are only 'fruits' and 'signs"' (VELKD 94,2-14).

- "Concerning Canon 26, we refer to the Apology where eternal life is described as reward: '..We grant that eternal life is a reward because it is something that is owed—not because of our merits but because of the promise'" (VELKD 94,20-24).

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