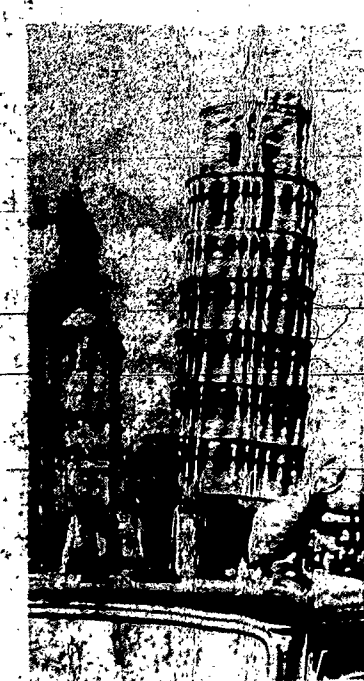


Another Cat Out of the Bag

Pope Paul let a theological cat out of the bag during his mid-June visit to Italy's Eucharistic Congress in Pisa.

He "opened a window" on a discussion lesser churchmen have kept shut — speculation going on among theologians about "transubstantiation." Always a tongue-twister for youngsters studying their catechism, the unwieldy word was declared "apt" by the sixteenth century Council of Trent for explaining what happens when the priest says Christ's words "this is my body this is my blood" at Mass.

Pope Paul in his talk at Pisa to a crowd estimated from 100,000 to 300,000 said he wanted "to dissipate a few uncertainties which have arisen in recent times from the attempt to give an elusive interpretation to the traditional and authoritative doctrine of the Church concerning a matter of such importance."



POPE PAUL AT PISA
Some people think it's the Church that's leaning.

If he hadn't said this to the throngs at the Pisa ceremony, it's hardly likely most of them — or many of us — would ever have heard about the problem.

As is frequently the practice in papal speeches, he did not specify the "uncertainties" nor who was proposing the "elusive interpretation" but it is a fact that some Dutch and Belgian theologians have come up with the word "transubstantiation" — to shift emphasis from what happens to the bread and

wine at Mass to what happens between God and the communicant.

The theologians don't call into question at all the ancient faith, as Pope Paul stated it, that "Christ is truly present in the Eucharist."

Their quarrel is not with their Church or its teachings but with the pre-Christian Greek philosopher Aristotle and his viewpoint on the way our world and its contents are stuck together.

But because they are tampering with a word that the Catholic Church has used for nine centuries to describe its central faith in Christ's continuing presence, the Pope is understandably concerned — but it is interesting to note he issued a word of caution not of prohibition.

So this discussion, as others, will undoubtedly continue.

Many Catholics view such discussions as unsettling their faith — one, for example, after reading in Time magazine about the theologians' questioning of transubstantiation.

There can be no denying the fact that not so long ago Catholics could claim they had the neatest and most polished set of clear and distinct religious answers on earth. Dominican Father Feijoo Kerr in a recent issue of Blackfriars magazine admitted, "This is no longer possible. Catholic theology seems at present in chaos: glorious chaos in the opinion of some, dire catastrophe in that of others. . . . Ideas that have been fixed for centuries are in process of revision, positions that have been taken for as long as now under scrutiny for reconstruction."

It's little wonder if some of Pope Paul's listeners at Pisa wondered if perhaps it was the Church that was leaning in a far more precarious position than was the famed tower which formed a backdrop for his talk.

Yet even the staunchest conservative must admit that the Church can't speak effectively to a changing world with a static theology. Theology is but the wrapping paper of mysteries which ultimately have to be accepted on faith — problem enough for any man but why complicate it for those who don't like Greek philosophical or medieval European wrappings?

If we allow changes in terminology to disturb us, we betray a rather shallow acquaintance with a far more critically significant word — the name of God as revealed to us in the Bible.

Harvey Cox in his book "The Secular City" says, "It is common knowledge that the people of Israel went through several stages in naming Him, and they may not be through yet. At various times they used the terms El Elyon, El Shaddai, and — of course — Yahweh. They freely borrowed these designations from neighboring peoples and discarded them with what now seems to us an amazing freedom, especially in view of the enormous power inherent in names in Hebrew culture. A remarkable evidence of this daring willingness to move to new names when the historical situation warranted it is found in Exodus 6: 2 and 3: 'And God (El) said to Moses, I am the Lord (Yahweh). I appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as God Almighty (El Shaddai), but by my name the Lord (Yahweh), I did not make myself known to them.' . . . After the period of the Exile, the Jews again switched their nomenclature. Disturbed by the debasement of the name Yahweh, which was considered too holy for everyday use, they began using the word Adonai which is still used in synagogues."

The significance of such changes becomes obvious if we were told to change such familiar terms as God the Father to George and Jesus to Robert and Mary to Lily.

But what is probably more significant is that when Moses first encountered God at the burning bush, God made His famous promise, "I will be with you," a promise echoed by our own divine Lord many centuries later.

No matter how often the name of God changed and no matter how much the idea of the image of God also changed, the chosen people of the Old Testament, down to the Jews — even down to the Warsaw Ghetto, Buchenwald and Auschwitz — knew that often in strange ways but always in the final analysis truly and emphatically, God keeps His promise.

So for Christian people of the New Testament. Despite the dire warnings of the catastrophists, and through all the theological mazes we may yet be led, those who have faith will nonetheless also know as they gather at the altar to fulfill the Lord's command to "do this" in His memory that He will still keep His promise to be present to them in a way no theologian can ever adequately describe.

—Faber Henry Atwell

Episcopalians, Catholics

'Brass Tacks' Dialogue Paves Way to Work for Unity

Washington — (NC) — The Episcopal Church's representatives at the historic first official talks with representatives of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States have received an enthusiastic go-ahead sign for further talks from their church's Joint Commission on Ecumenical Relations.

The full commission met at the Virginia Theological Seminary in suburban Alexandria immediately after the initial meeting between eight Anglicans and seven Roman Catholics at the headquarters of the National Catholic Welfare Conference here on June 22.

The Washington meeting — at which the seven member Roman Catholic group was headed by Bishop Charles H. McManus of Kansas City-St. Joseph and the eight member Episcopal delegation by Bishop Donald H. V. Hallock of Milwaukee — centered on pastoral matters.

THE DELEGATES agreed that the "widespread practice of 'conditional baptism' of Episcopalians received into the Roman Catholic Church does not conform with traditional Christian doctrine. The Episcopalians agreed that confirmed Roman Catholics received into the Episcopal Church should under no circumstances be conditionally reconfirmed by Anglican bishops.

On another score, it was agreed that the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity "should be informed of the group's concern for the problems and irritants connected with mixed marriages."

The group laid plans for a second talk to be held somewhere in the Midwest in January or February on the theme, "The Eucharist, Sign and Cause of Unity: The Church as Eucharistic Fellowship."

Immediately following the day-long session, the Anglican delegates went across the Potomac for the meeting of their full ecumenical commission — of which all eight are members — at the Alexandria seminary.

The chairman of the full commission, Episcopal Bishop Robert F. Gibson, Jr. of Virginia, said later that the commission was "very happy and thoroughly satisfied" by Bishop Hallock's report on the talks with the Roman Catholic representatives. Bishop Gibson said the initial dialogue appeared to have been "very satisfactory and progressive . . . both as to content and in the way it went," and that "everybody on both sides seems very pleased."

Paul Day of New York, ecumenical officer of the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church, who is a member of the sub-commission for talks with Roman Catholics, said the full commission "welcomed the sub-commission's report on the talks with great warmth." He said that "all of us expect that differences are not likely to lead to controversy but rather to the enrichment of each other's understanding."

Day added: "One of the reasons we were particularly delighted was that from the Episcopal standpoint the opening up of these conversations (with Roman Catholics) gives a much clearer perspective of Christian unity. This is another step toward developing real Christian unity."

The Episcopal layman said of the talks at the N.C.W.C. building: "We got right down to brass tacks. There was considerable identity of vocabulary: we found we meant the same things by the same words. The things that bothered us were the sort of things we could all recognize."

Another of the participants, the Rev. William J. Wolf, professor of theology at the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, Mass., said that the Episcopalians "couldn't have been more pleased with the spirit of the first meeting."

Dr. Wolf, who is also an Episcopal Church delegate for ecumenical talks with Orthodox and Protestant churches, said that both the Anglican and Roman Catholic representatives "agreed that we have more working for us than perhaps in other negotiations that we've been involved in."

That is how a Netherlands professor, Dr. Hans M. Fortmann, sums up his view in the "Par Romanica Journal" of Fribourg, Switzerland, on a subject which today is being keenly debated by Catholics in Europe. He is far from being a solitary voice in favor of more open discussion of their respective positions by Catholics and Communists.

Interest in the issue was raised by Pope John XXIII when in "Pacem in Terris" he distinguished between theories condemned by the Church and movements inspired by such false theories but subject to evolution with the passage of time. We should not refuse approval to the elements in such movements which agree with our own and respond to the just aspirations of man, the Pope wrote.

He noted that the Roman Catholic Church and the 42-million member Anglican Communion share much in common in their theological and liturgical outlook. But he said that "there is a greater possibility for dialogue between Episcopalians and Roman Catholics in this country at this time than in England. In the United States we have neither a historical nor psychological barrier, as neither church has been in an official persecuting position toward the other."

Msgr. William W. Baum of Washington, executive secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Commission on Ecumenical Affairs, concurred with the Episcopalians on the friendly spirit of the first meeting. He went on to say that whereas the formal discussions to be held between American Catholic and Lutheran representatives in Baltimore July 6-7 are to be strictly theological in nature, the Anglican-Catholic talks have begun more on a pastoral level.

He noted that the presence of three bishops on each team highlighted this pastoral concern. He said that for the discussions on the Holy Eucharist at the next Anglican-Catholic session, however, another theologian is to be added to the Catholic group, and will be asked to prepare one of the two "position papers" in advance.

Msgr. Baum said the choice of the Eucharist as the focal point of discussion came naturally. Both churches, he noted, hold the Eucharistic celebration to be the central act of worship, the great action of Christ through His Church. And whether it is called "Mass" or the "sacrament of the Lord's Supper," the Eucharist is held by both churches to be the supreme expression of Christians' communion with Christ and with each other.

Msgr. Baum also cited the fact that the Second Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism states specifically that "the teaching concerning the Lord's Supper, the other sacraments, worship, the ministry of the Church, must be the subject of the dialogue."

Another of the Catholic participants, Father George H. Tard, A.A., chairman of the theology department at Mt. Mercy College, Pittsburgh, concurred that the choice of the Holy Eucharist as the theme for discussion "showed the great amount of agreement that existed prior to the meeting." He said that "there is so much in common in the official doctrine of the two churches, and the areas of disagreement more peripheral, that this was a logical choice as a specific topic for discussion."

The thorny question of the validity of Anglican orders was not raised at the June 22 meeting. Pope Leo XIII in 1896 issued a bull declaring that because of a defect of intent and of form in the administration of Holy Orders for a period during the 16th century, the Anglican Church had lost the apostolic succession and therefore the orders of her bishops, priests and deacons were invalid.

Pope Leo's declaration, while not claiming infallibility, offered an end to Roman Catholic discussion of the subject.

Anglican theologians and historians have not only disputed the papal assertions, but have insisted that even if Pope Leo was right about the 16th-century question, the Anglican

Church regained the apostolic succession through a 17th-century Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud, from whom the present Anglican episcopate derives. They hold that Archbishop Laud himself was consecrated by some bishops in undisputed Irish and Italian successions.

At the Catholic-Anglican meeting here, however, the general view appeared to be that the question of orders would solve itself with the delving into major concerns of Christian life, and especially in the wider context of the Holy Eucharist. Participants on both sides see the progress in sacramental theology such as to have developed deeper perspectives than those of the 19th century.

The concern of the participants at the June meeting centered on the pursuit of holiness — primarily through the celebration of the Holy Eucharist — as the basis for unity. There was agreement that only by pursuing oneness with Christ can Christians become one with one another. The delegates said in their joint statement after the meeting that they "rejoice" in the new possibilities for common prayer "and we encourage our people to take advantage of them."

There was discussion at the meeting of the Vatican Council ecumenism decree's statement that "though the ecclesial communities which are separated from us lack the fullness of unity with us flowing from Baptism, and though we believe they have not retained the proper reality of the eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Orders, nevertheless when they commemorate His death and

resurrection in the Lord's Supper, they profess that it signifies life in communion with Christ and look forward to His coming in glory."

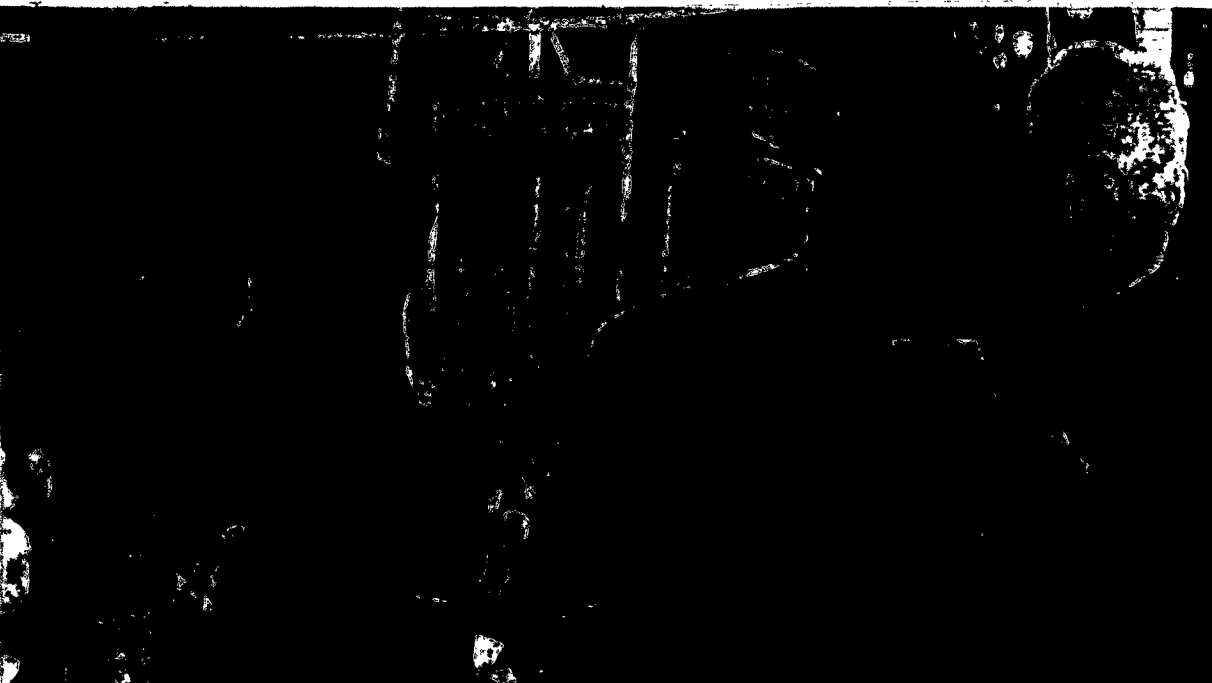
On this score, participants in the meeting made the point that it is not so much a question of validity of the celebration of the Eucharist, but of value. Thus while the Roman Church might consider something lacking in the Eucharistic celebrations of Anglicans and Protestants because of the question of orders, there can also be "incompleteness" in the celebration of the Mass by Roman Catholic priests.

This incompleteness exists, it was suggested, despite the fact that Christ Himself is present exercising His priestly office in the Mass, and there is no doubt of validity.

It was noted that the Constitution on the Liturgy enacted by the Vatican Council cites the Mass of the local bishop, surrounded by his priests and people and with their full, active participation, as "the pre-eminent manifestation" of the Church's worship. Therefore there is presumably less fullness in a normal parish Mass, with the priest as presiding celebrant instead of the bishop, it was held.

In the same way, since the constitution asserts that "all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy," there is presumably something missing when people are present at Mass simply as spectators instead of participants. The same thing holds true in some way when a priest offers a "private" Mass with no congregation at all, it was suggested.

Catholic, Lutheran Dialogue This Week



An Orthodox, Protestant and Catholic clergyman lead prayers at a rite in Hamburg, Germany. Vatican Council encouraged such practices as necessary step to ultimate religious unity.

The "position papers" for both churches were prepared by men who are world-renowned in the field of theology and ecumenism. The Catholic paper is the joint work of two of the eminent theology professors of the Jesuits' Woodstock College, just west of Baltimore — Father John Courtney Murray, S.J., and Father Walter J. Burghardt, S.J. The corresponding Lutheran presentation is the work of Dr. George Lindbeck, associate professor of the history of theology at the Yale University Divinity School, and the Rev. Warren A. Quanbeck, professor of systematic theology at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.

Both Drs. Quanbeck and Lindbeck — the latter the sole Lutheran layman taking part in the discussions — have served as official delegate-observers for the Lutheran World Federation at the Second Vatican Council.

The Catholic participants in the talks in addition to Fathers Burghardt and Murray will be Msgr. Joseph W. Baker, vice chairman of the archdiocesan ecumenism commission in St. Louis; Father Raymond Brown, S.S., Scripture scholar on the

faculty of St. Mary's seminary, Baltimore; Father Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B., of St. John's abbey, Collegeville, Minn., liturgical expert; Dr. James F. Mooney, Catholic layman and historian who recently relinquished his professorship at Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa., to join the faculty of the school of religion of the State University of Iowa, Iowa City; and Father George Tard, A.A., French-born ecumenist who is chairman of the theology department at Mt. Mercy College, Pittsburgh.

The Lutheran scholars named to take part in the formal talks, in addition to Drs. Lindbeck and Quanbeck, are: the Rev. Kent S. Knutson, professor of systematic theology at Luther Seminary, St. Paul; the Rev. Fred Kramer, professor of dogmatics at Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Ill.; the Rev. Arthur C. Piepkorn, professor of systematic theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; the Rev. Joseph A. Stiller, former president of the American Theological Society who is now a member of the faculty of the divinity school of the University of Chicago;

and the Rev. John H. P. Reumann, professor of New Testament studies at the Mount Airy Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia.

Dr. Reumann will be substituting at this first meeting for the Rev. Krister Stendahl, Swedish-born theologian who has been teaching at the Harvard University Divinity School for the past 11 years and is now Frothingham professor of Biblical Studies there.

Bishop Murphy and Msgr. Baum are also to attend the meeting, with the bishop presiding at the opening session which falls on the 550th anniversary of the death of the Bohemian reformer and forerunner of Martin Luther, John Hus, who was ordered burned at the stake by the ecumenical Council of Constance in 1415.

The National Lutheran Council's Dr. Empie is expected to preside on the second day. Another top NLC official, the Rev. Virgil Westlund, is also expected to attend. The sessions are to be opened with prayers, with a Catholic leading on the first day and a Lutheran on the second.

Can Catholics Have Dialogue with Reds?

By GARY McEOIN

"The need for a dialogue with Marxism would seem to follow from the fact that the other roads do not lead anywhere . . . The tendency to cut one side off from the other is not exclusive to those who built the Berlin wall. The wall already existed in people's minds."

That is how a Netherlands professor, Dr. Hans M. Fortmann, sums up his view in the "Par Romanica Journal" of Fribourg, Switzerland, on a subject which today is being keenly debated by Catholics in Europe. He is far from being a solitary voice in favor of more open discussion of their respective positions by Catholics and Communists.

Interest in the issue was raised by Pope John XXIII when in "Pacem in Terris" he distinguished between theories condemned by the Church and movements inspired by such false theories but subject to evolution with the passage of time. We should not refuse approval to the elements in such movements which agree with our own and respond to the just aspirations of man, the Pope wrote.

It can even happen, he added, "that a drawing nearer together or a meeting for the attainment of some practical end, which was formerly deemed inappropriate or unproductive, might now or in the future be considered opportune and useful."

Pope Paul VI returned to the subject last year in his "Ecclesiam suam." Discussing the possibility of a dialogue with atheism and with communism in particular, he did not rule it out in principle. Dialogue with communism, however, is very hard to achieve, if not impossible, he commented, in view of the attitude of communist regimes toward religion and believers.

The more recent creation by Pope Paul of the Secretariat for Non-Believers headed by Cardinal Koening of Vienna has caused some to conclude that the Pope did not mean to close the door by what he said in "Ecclesiam suam." This view has been strengthened by the presence of the secretary of this Secretariat, an Italian Salesian priest, at a meeting of

Catholics with Communists from both sides of the Iron Curtain last month. The meeting was arranged at Salzburg, Austria, by the Society of St. Paul, a German organization for Catholic university professors.

A famous German Jesuit, wellknown for his contributions to the Vatican Council, Father Karl Rahner, was the leading Catholic expert at this meeting. For Christianity, he said, the essence of man is that he can attain to an absolute future, namely, God. But within this framework, Christianity has a positive attitude towards man's work on earth, his increasing control of nature, his conquest of earth's liberty. It can cooperate with others to gain these ends, provided the absolute end is not excluded.

Even before the Salzburg talks, Catholics and Communists had presented their viewpoints at various meetings in France in 1964 and 1965. In Italy a book has just been published containing five essays by Catholics and five by Communists. The resistance to dialogue seems stronger, however, in Italy than in the countries to

the north. The steady drift of Italian politics towards the left makes it impossible to separate the philosophic issues from the practical ones of parliamentary majorities.

The Jesuit "Civiltas Cattolica," published in Rome, recently examined the question in this perspective and concluded that Catholics had nothing to gain in Italy today from cooperation with Marxists. The same view was expressed a little earlier by the Vatican's "Osservatore Romano," and it was also implicit in a statement of Pope Paul on the feast of St. Joseph, although the Pope did not specifically mention communism.

It is interesting to contrast the view of a Catholic in a country in which the Communists actually control the political machinery. Claiming that dialogue is "indispensable," Catholic deputy minister of the Polish Diet writes in the "Par Romanica Journal" that "contemporary culture certainly owes much to Marxism, and one cannot but see that it is a constituent element in the common heritage of mankind."

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