

From Catholic Piety to Ecumenical Spirituality: *The Canadian Messenger in the 1960s*

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The 1960s proved to be a pivotal period of Catholic evolutionary transformation. This was the time of the Second Vatican Council when the assembled fathers connected with the roots of the early Church. They reestablished Christian authenticity and discarded barnacles which had accumulated during fifteen hundred years. This study of the *Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart* looks for the tell tail signs of changing religious culture among Canadian Catholics. The Council initiated a paradigm shift in Catholic devotional attitudes, intensified interest toward ecumenism, and extended enthusiasm for social justice. The pages of the *Messenger* reflect the changing attitudes of Canadian Catholics toward interdenominational participation and shared social involvements.

Published around the world, *The Messengers of the Sacred Heart* have striven to promote quintessential papal devotion by circulating the Holy Father's personal spirituality through the monthly prayer intentions. Every year the Roman office of the Apostleship of Prayer formulated eighteen general intentions, and these were submitted to the pope a year ahead of time. The pope selected twelve from the eighteen intentions and, often in his own hand, edited them to reflect more fully the needs of the Church.¹ The Jesuit Fathers in various countries around the world published more than forty-five Messengers in thirty-five different languages. The *Messengers* were widely read and highly interactive between the editor and the readers.² *The Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, existing for one hundred and ten years, published 55,000 copies at a high point in 1948, and continues today to publish 15,000 copies.³ It has the longest publication record of any Catholic monthly in Canada, and during

¹ Interview with Frederick J. Power SJ, editor of the *Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart* for over thirty-five years, *Messenger* office, Toronto, 30 November 2000.

² Ann Taves, *The Household of the Faith: Roman Catholic Devotions in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), 55.

³ *The Canadian Messenger Archives*, 661 Greenwood Avenue, Toronto, Circulation Files.

the early 1960s, the decade we are interested in, reflected a strong component of Canadian devotional spirituality.⁴

The *Messenger* during the first half of the twentieth century in many ways typified Canadian Catholic piety. In its pages one can find instruction in devotional piety and spiritual perfection.⁵ The centre of this devotion, however, was the love of Jesus Christ under the mystical image of the Sacred Heart and its associated parish devotion of the Apostleship of Prayer. Moreover, integral to the love of God in the world was commitment to social justice as part of the life of Christians. Catholic social thought included the practical goals of a living wage, adequate education, and health care. In the early 1960s the *Messenger* also sought the conversion of non-Catholics to the Church, and its targets included Canadian Protestants and the members of Asian and African religions.⁶

Archbishop Angelo Roncalli, a Vatican diplomat who during and after the Second World War served in Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, and France, accurately perceived the leaks in the barque of Peter. Historian James Fisher rightly identified the beginning of the disintegration of ultramontane Catholicism in North America in the early 1950s.⁷ After election as John XXIII, Roncalli announced the convocation of the Second Vatican Council in Rome to repair the leaks springing up in the barque. In July 1959, he called a preliminary meeting of bishops and theologians, and let them address issues and offer solutions.⁸ The calling of the Council provoked vigorous opposition, and “getting the Council under way,” observed Peter Hebblethwaite, “was like cranking up some enormous machine.”⁹ To start the proceedings, Rome sent letters to the 3000 bishops and Catholic institutions around the world asking for their *vota*, that is, their suggestions for the council agenda. Bishops consulted priests and laity about recommendations for the agenda and

⁴ Terence J. Fay, “*The Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart, 1905-1927: Window on Ultramontane Spirituality*,” *CCHA Historical Studies* 64 (1998), 9-13. See other articles on the workings of the *Messenger* in the *CMSH* 71 (January 1961), 20-21, 42-3; 22-3; (April 1961), 26-7; (May 1961), 26-7.

⁵ Robert A. Orsi, *Catholic Lives, Contemporary America*, ed. by Thomas J. Ferraro (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997), 54-5.

⁶ Fay, “*The Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart, 1905-1927*,” 14-26.

⁷ James T. Fisher, *The Catholic Counterculture in America, 1933-1962* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 249-50 and 253-4.

⁸ Giancarlo Zizola, *The Utopia of Pope John XXIII* (New York: Orbis, 1978), 233-42; E. E. Y. Hales, *Pope John and His Revolution* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1965), 97-100.

⁹ Peter Hebblethwaite, *Pope John XXIII: Shepherd of the Modern World* (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 321-4 and 370.

submitted 2000 replies.¹⁰ Historian Giancarlo Zizola describes the bishops' *vota* as lacking imagination and universality and not meeting John's open challenge to the Roman Curia. Worldwide episcopal inertia was a reflection of "the great cultural standstill that had befallen Catholicism after the anti-modernist repressions at the beginning of the century."¹¹ Seventy-six per cent of Canadian bishops responded, but their replies gave little hint of a new Jerusalem being envisioned or constructed.¹² Discussion slowly emerged in the Catholic press about what topics might be discussed at the Council and what benefits might be gained from the renewal. In fact, little information surfaced from the *in-camera* sessions except for some significant leaks revealed by Xavier Rynne in the *New Yorker*, or generalities published in *The Tablet*, *America*, or *Commonweal*. Yet this trickle of information stimulated much optimism and speculation in the Catholic media.¹³

The *Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart* was among those publications expressing high hopes while publishing few facts. The new editor of the magazine, Cecil C. Ryan, was a well-liked and highly regarded Jesuit,¹⁴ an experienced university administrator, and most inquisitive about council discussions.¹⁵ Up until this time, as John Allen opines, "Catholics were not permitted to as much as say the Lord's Prayer with other Christians until after Vatican II."¹⁶ Peter Hebblethwaite recounts that because of his dialogue with other Christians even Cardinal Augustine Bea was accused of "mixed bathing," that is indulging in ecumenism to the point of compromise. At the time, as Hebblethwaite observes, "Nuncios and Apostolic Delegates were on the lookout for rash or indiscriminate bathers in ecumenical waters."¹⁷ After decades of a literary and ultramontane philosophy at the *Messenger*, the postwar circulation of 55,670 in the early 1950s had fallen dramatically to 23,856 by 1959. The Jesuit superior, Gordon George SJ, in the summer of 1960

¹⁰ Hales, *Pope John and His Revolution*, 103-04.

¹¹ Zizola, *Utopia of Pope John XXIII*, 245 and 246.

¹² Guiseppe Alberigo and Joseph Komonchak, eds., *History of Vatican II* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1995-2000) 1:98.

¹³ Michael A. Fahey, "A Vatican Request For Agenda Items Prior to Vatican II: Responses by English-Speaking Canadian Bishops," in *L'Eglise Canadienne et Vatican II*, ed. by Gilles Routhier (Saint-Laurent, Quebec: Fides, 1997), 62-70; Xavier Rynne, *Vatican Council II* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1999); Alberigo and Komonchak, *History of Vatican II*, (1995), 1:357-64.

¹⁴ Terence J. Fay, Data Base for the Dictionary of Jesuits in Canada, Toronto, April 1991, Archives of the Society of Jesus of Upper Canada (ASJUC).

¹⁵ *Dictionary of Jesuit Biography: Ministry to English Canada, 1842-1987* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Jesuit Studies, 1991), 312-13.

¹⁶ John L. Allen, *Cardinal Ratzinger: The Vatican's Enforcer of the Faith* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 217.

¹⁷ Hebblethwaite, *John XXIII*, 379-80.

appointed Father Cecil Ryan the editor to reorganize the monthly and position it to disseminate conciliar theology.¹⁸ The circulation recovered somewhat during the Ryan years to a high of 28,494 in 1963 and afterwards stabilized at 15,000 Canadian, American, and off-shore readers.¹⁹

Analysing the readership of American Catholic periodicals, Robert Orsi explains that the readers were an educated and literate group. “These periodicals have always appealed mainly to a middle-class, not a working-class, readership, for obvious reasons, and they have always promoted the devotional piety that has been seen since the early modern period as the foundation of Catholic life and a bulwark against modernity.” In fact, Catholic magazines forged an “idiom in which modern American Catholics not only discovered who they were, but constituted themselves as well.”²⁰ Two *Canadian Messenger* surveys of 1977 and 1997 shed some light on readership in Canada. They reveal that eighty-one per cent of *Messenger* readers lived in urban centres and most of these were long-term subscribers. Eighty-four per cent had a university or high school education (44% university; 40% high school). Eighty per cent liked the articles on the monthly prayer intention of the pope and the general mission intention which revealed their interest in social justice and missionary progress in world nations. The readers, whether single, married, or widowed, were mostly middle aged and older. Nine per cent of the readers were clergy or religious. The readers were located principally in Ontario, but also, in descending order of the subscriptions, in Quebec, the Maritime provinces, and western Canada.²¹ In similar fashion to the American magazines, the *Canadian Messenger* appealed to Canadian middle-class readers, and like its American counterparts, was in the business of forming Canadian idioms so that Catholics could discover who they were and thus the journal was a weathervane of Canadian Catholic attitudes. In the 1960s the *Canadian Messenger* spoke out on the renewal of Catholic spirituality, the initiation of Christian ecumenism, and the extension of social justice.

By January of 1960 the General Intentions published in the *Messenger* began to amplify the themes of the Second Vatican Council and in the process transformed Catholic piety. For instance, the first article in the new year proclaimed that the Holy Father’s General Intention was religious unity through devotion to the Sacred Heart. Christ offered his sacrifice at the Last

¹⁸ ASJUC, A 198 (Cecil C. Ryan File), Provincial A. J. Macdougall to C.C. Ryan, Editor of the *Messenger*, 7 August 1966.

¹⁹ *The Canadian Messenger* Archives, 661 Greenwood Avenue, Toronto, Circulation Files.

²⁰ Orsi, *Catholic Lives, Contemporary America*, 54-6.

²¹ Inventory questionnaire, *Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, February and June 1977, and February, June, July, and September 1997; and *Canadian Messenger* Archives.

Supper and asked his followers to offer themselves in a similar fashion, but the article suggested that many Christians were reluctant to do this. The Church insisted that when all gather together in the unity of belief at the feet of God the Father, the sacrifice of Christ would be made fruitful. Christians united in the Heart of Christ will be able to forget their prejudices in his love for them.²² It was clear from this entry that the Catholic view of Church unity still envisioned aberrant Protestant churches parading back to the Rome to accept its obedience, fraternity, and doctrines.²³

The limited view of the Roman Curia as to what the Council might accomplish was revealed in a March article. The papal Secretary of State, Cardinal Tardini, told reporters that the Council's "chief business will be the growth of the Catholic Faith, renewal along right lines, and the adaption of ecclesial discipline to the needs of the present time." This was clearly a bureaucratic interpretation of the issues a Council might deal with – in other words maintaining institutional growth while supervising clerical housekeeping tasks. Peter Hebblethwaite thinks that Tardini deliberately slowed council preparations "for whatever reasons," thinking perhaps that John might not last much longer, but "fell victim to a divine irony, dying himself on July 30, 1961."²⁴

The vision of good Pope John and the Second Vatican Council was not to be found in the words of Tardini. Many Protestants optimistically hoped that a Council would be genuinely ecumenical, discussing Christian problems, and restoring unity among the various denominations. They remembered John's words that those "who are separated from this Apostolic See will receive as a gentle invitation to seek and find that unity for which Jesus Christ prayed so ardently." But Cardinal Tardini had other thoughts and made it clear that in his mind only bishops in union with the Holy See could attend the Council. As it turned out, non-Catholic dignitaries did attend the proceedings as observers, making their views known through private contacts. At this point the *Messenger* author agreed with Tardini that sacrificing the truth of the Roman church would not bring unity with other Christian churches. A curial official in Rome affirmed Tardini's view that the church councils of Nicea, Ephesus, and Chalcedon did not compromise Church teachings, and Vatican Two would not do so either.²⁵

²² *The Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart (CMSH)*, 70 (January 1960), 6-8, 47.

²³ See E. E. Y. Hales, *Pope John and His Revolution*, 102, offering a similar interpretation of John's intention.

²⁴ *CMSH* 70 (March 1960), 6; Hebblethwaite, *Pope John XXIII*, 370.

²⁵ *CMSH* 70 (March 1960), 7-8; see a history of church councils by Henry F. Unger, "Ecumenical Councils: Some Interesting Sidelights," *CMSH* 71 (February 1961), 28-30.

On the Feast of Pentecost 1960, Pope John asked for prayers to reunite Christians through the power of the Holy Spirit residing in the Church. Canadians prayed for this intention, grieving that many millions of Christians through no fault of their own were

deprived of full participation in the life of the Church, passing their lives unaware of the sacrifice of Calvary ... never experiencing the joys of union with Christ in Holy Communion; never knowing the ... consolation of the sacrament of penance."²⁶

Cardinal Bea, president of the Secretariat for Christian Unity, explained this insight saying "it is no merit of ours to have been born and brought up in a family belonging to the Catholic Church, so it is no fault of theirs that they are children of parents separated from the Church." Pope John affirmed "whether we like it or not, they are our brothers."²⁷ But lest Catholics be too aggressive in their evangelization of other believers and non-believers, the pope at Christmas asked Catholics to pray in humility for world peace. Anger and pride must be avoided in dialogue between different religions. Pride led to Dachau, Belsen, and Buchenwald, and this was not to be repeated. Rather the Prince of Peace listens to the pleas of the humble and contrite and not to the aggressive voices of the proud and angry.²⁸

A year after the Council was announced, Catholics remained self-confident and tranquil, not suspecting the wave of renewal that was about to strike their Church. They were still immersed in a culture that looked to the literary magic of G. K. Chesterton and historic insights of Hillary Belloc. The *Messenger* in the early 1960s initiated with great pride a cover series of traditional colour photos of Jesus. In the same tradition, Catholics continued their Roman devotions, fostered family growth, and cultivated stable parishes. The bishops continued to send out missionaries to convert non-believers in the Canadian North and in faraway lands.

Of particular interest during conciliar years in the West was the awakening of Catholics to the fellowship of Eastern Christians. In the *Messenger* of 1961, Jesuit theologian John I. Hochban explained the January intention that the truth and love of Christ would remove the divisions of Christian unity.²⁹ The theologian saw "the Catholic Church with upwards of four hundred million members effectively united in one creed, code, and cult under one visible head." In contrast, he noted that at the meeting of the World Council of Churches in 1954, one hundred and sixty-eight different denominations of "highly divergent" theologies converged. Yet in spite of confusions, Hochban reflected confidently that there was a "new spirit" leading Christians toward

²⁶ *CMSH* 70 (June 1960), 6-8.

²⁷ Hebblethwaite, *Pope John XXIII*, 381.

²⁸ *CMSH* 70 (December 1960), 6-8.

²⁹ *Dictionary of Jesuit Biography*, 143-4.

unity. The Jesuit theologian reminded readers that the Catholic Church did not need to pray with other denominations for unity “since she knows that she has received this as one of the gifts of her espousal to the Son of God.” Rather, it was the obligation of Catholics “to pray that the Holy Spirit enlighten the minds of our separated brethren” that they might accept Catholic doctrine, and thus, they could receive from the Catholic Church the gift of Christian unity. Protestants must also learn to recognize the difference between Catholic doctrines, such as belief in papal primacy and infallibility, which must be believed, and Catholic customs, such as the private revelations of Fatima, which need not be believed. Hochban concluded that it is the duty of Catholics to pray “that separated Christians return to the one true Church.” Elsewhere and at a slightly later date, John Hochban described the divided state of Christianity as “a tragedy.” Regarding the question of who was to blame, he answered “today leading Protestants and Catholics admit that the blame must be shared by both sides. Many Roman Catholics today are saying that the perpetuation of the divisions of Christendom is not simply due to Protestant hardheadedness, but also due to the wrong kind of Catholic intransigence.”³⁰

The Church Unity Octave of 1961 included prayer for the union of all Christians in the true Faith, especially the reconciliation of the Eastern Churches, Anglicans, European Protestants, and American Christians, along with the return of lapsed Catholics and the entry of Jewish people into their heritage of Jesus Christ.³¹ Pope John in his intention avoided the word “return,” but rather asked Catholics to pray for the Council as an instrument of Christian union.

The preparations undertaken by the pontifical commission caused the magazine to exclaim that the Church is “taking stock of herself, making a grand examination of conscience with a view to her own spiritual perfection and the conversion of the world.” The pope in this intention invited all Catholics to pray to the Holy Spirit to guide them in their own examination of conscience to make the work of the Council more comprehensive and authentic. Catholics through prayer must stand in solidarity with Jesus Christ and with the goals of the Council.³²

Lest the promise of ecumenism make Catholics too euphoric, the *Messenger* published two articles by Cardinal Bea itemizing obstacles to unity. The cardinal was a Jesuit Scripture scholar who had been privy to Vatican politics since 1924 and senior by six months to John XXIII. His appointment as president of the Secretariat of Christian Unity upended the control of Cardinal Ottaviani’s Holy Office and launched “the Church on a radically new

³⁰ *CMSH* 71 (January 1961), 6-8, 45-8; ASJUC, A-143 (John Hochban File), Ecumenism, File #3, “The Protestant-Catholic Encounter.”

³¹ *CMSH* 71 (January 1961), 37.

³² *CMSH* 71 (February 1961), 6-8, 48.

course.”³³ Bea knew from the Scripture that God wished all Christians to be one,³⁴ but recognized that in fact Catholics numbered 500,000,000, Protestants 238,000,000, and Orthodox 165,000,000. Grave obstacles imbedded in Protestant, Orthodox, and Catholic history stood in the way of Christian unity. These obstacles could not be overlooked, but must be carefully examined.³⁵

Along with their solicitude for Protestants, Catholics showed a great interest in the Christians of the Eastern tradition. An article appeared in the *Messenger* about “Santa Sophia,” the Saint Peter’s of the Eastern Church. It remembered the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453 and the tragic loss of this great church of Christianity.³⁶ The Catholic Church rightly cherished its Eastern and Western heritages and recognized a dozen liturgical languages including Latin, Greek, Slavonic, Arabic, Armenian, and Syriac. For its own part, the Byzantine Church had always respected vernacular languages and translated its liturgy from Greek to Slavonic, old Georgian, modern Romanian, Magyar, Arabic, and even French and English. Compared with Western liturgies, Eastern liturgies adopted a slower pace, were contemplative, and enjoyed long chants and beautiful litanies. The Eastern churches retained the sung Mass, the standing congregation, and priestly concelebration. In contrast, the musical parts of the Latin Mass were shortened to single verses, for instance, in the Entrance Antiphon, Lord Have Mercy, and the Gradual Verse. In Eastern liturgy, the kiss of peace, bowing rather than genuflecting, and leavened bread remained current. The contemplative Eastern liturgy dwelt on the divinity of the Lord, whereas the functional Western liturgy focussed on his humanity. The Eastern liturgy celebrated Easter with great joy, whereas in the West, Christmas was the major feast. The two traditions were rich in themselves but, the *Messenger* contended, were bound together by their liturgical veneration of the Mother of God and the saints.³⁷

The Orthodox Church, according to Cardinal Bea, would have found union with Rome easy as it possessed episcopal succession, valid sacraments, apostolic and patristic tradition, and lacked only papal primacy and infallibility. The Orthodox notion of church unity had progressed through the centuries from submission to the patriarchal see to the mutual communion of local churches. In fact, after the fall of the Byzantine Empire the Patriarch of Constantinople lost his ecclesial pre-eminence, and Orthodox churches were today grouped together by nationality. Thus, Orthodox Christians were divided into sixteen national patriarchates, independent of each other and often involved in mutual strife. While the authority of the bishops waned through the

³³ Hebblethwaite, *Pope John XXIII*, 375-85.

³⁴ John 17: 11 & 21.

³⁵ *CMSH* 71 (March 1961), 11-13.

³⁶ *CMSH* 70 (January 1961), 10-12.

³⁷ *CMSH* 70 (February 1960), 10-12.

centuries, the power of the lay-controlled Holy Synod had grown. This devolution of the political centre of Orthodoxy made union with the Western Church more remote. With conciliar optimism, however, the *Messenger* asserted that the grace of God would overcome difficulties and bring about healing, reconciliation, and unity.³⁸

Catholic thinking on the Eastern church was progressing. Precocious seminary professors and educated Catholics in Canada, aware of theological renewal in Belgium, France, and Germany, were preparing for the restoration of public worship in their churches. For instance, Theodore Fournier of St. Augustine's Seminary in Toronto³⁹ wrote about the significance of updating the Roman ritual. He apologized to those who might believe that the form of the Eucharistic celebration came from "our Lord Himself," but proceeded to explain that there were at least nineteen ways of celebrating Mass in the Catholic Church.⁴⁰ The Council of Trent had demanded uniformity in the celebration of the Latin Mass, but had not legislated for the Eastern churches. While the Eucharistic prayer, that is the God-given part of the Mass, Fournier taught, was one and the same in both Eastern and Western churches, the liturgy of the Word, that is the human part, could vary. In fact among the early Christian communities, he continued, Jewish believers imitated the Lord by repeating the Last Supper and adding the Agape following. To honour the resurrection of the Lord, the Jewish Christian Eucharist was moved from the Sabbath to Sunday and from evening to morning.⁴¹

The Eucharist in the early Church was celebrated in Christian homes and was preceded by scriptural readings, prayers, sermons, and the singing of psalms. The Agape, the "banquet of brotherly love," was later detached from

³⁸ *CMSH* 71 (March 1961), 11-13.

³⁹ Father Theodore H. Fournier after ordination was sent by Archbishop James McGuigan to teach English literature, church history, and liturgy at St. Augustine's Seminary. Father Fournier, without the advantage of a graduate degree, had great success teaching and giving public lectures on the history and transformation of the liturgy. He is now retired at Barrie, Ontario, and upon reflection, believes that the liturgical changes were perhaps too sweeping and too swift.

⁴⁰ *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw-Hill for Catholic University of America, 1965-1996), 12:516-17, admits the number is in dispute but lists eighteen rites in the Catholic Church: Coptic, Ethiopian, Syrian, Maronite, Malankar, Bulgarian, Greek, Georgian, Italo-Albanian, Melchite, Rumanian, Russian, Serbian, Ukrainian, Chaldean, Malabar, Armenian, and Latin. The separateness of the Byzantine Slavonic rite of Bielorusuthenia and Volinia from the Russian or Ukrainian rite is in dispute. Also, the separateness of the Italo-Albanian rite from the Greek rite is questioned.

⁴¹ *CMSH* 72 (June 1962), 32-3.

the Mass because it became a source of disunity among Christians. The order of Eucharistic celebration was stabilized to the preparatory prayer, scriptural readings, musical interlude, bishop's sermon, offerings, consecration, and communion. The Christian churches of both East and West followed this form by adapting it to their cultures. The patriarchal sees of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Constantinople inserted this form in their own cultures, and it became normative in their regions. Not surprisingly, the Western and Eastern liturgies differed in appearance. Eastern liturgies were enriched with symbolism, while the Roman liturgy remained lean and austere. The Catholic Church, with a unified format underpinning its various liturgical expressions, allowed cultural diversity. Participation of the faithful in these recognizable liturgies remained its strength.⁴²

In contrast to the Orthodox, the Protestants offered a more difficult scenario for unity. According to the *Messenger*, many recognized their limited heritage and wished to share in Catholic benefits. The Protestant desire for unity was manifested in the gathering of the World Council of Churches at Geneva in 1948. The one hundred and eighty members, including some Orthodox churches, agreed on Trinitarian theology as the bedrock but were unable to share together a fullness of faith. Protestant problems in moving toward Catholic unity were first the lack of theological authority and second the ecclesial jurisdiction to carry on dialogue. A third problem was the inherited Protestant misunderstanding and distrust of Catholics.⁴³ And a fourth problem was that Catholics, failing to live their faith, scandalized their Protestant friends. Despite such problems, it was clear to Cardinal Bea that Christians of good will would discover the ecumenical spirit in God's love for them.⁴⁴

In 1961, a year before the first session of the Council, a *Messenger* article revealed that a corner was about to be turned. William H. Quiery SJ stressed a new-found Catholic awareness of the strong faith of their Christian brothers and sisters. He delighted in the visit the previous year of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Holy See. Hebblethwaite tells the delightful story of this encounter from Geoffrey Fisher's account, that is, the visit was a great success, an historic event, the first such event in four hundred years! Hebblethwaite also gives an account of the Roman side of the story related by Evelyn Waugh. Evidently, the English Jesuit Archbishop Roberts visited Pope John the following week, and upon greeting the pope, John replied to Roberts, "There was another Archbishop from your country here the other day. Now who was

⁴² *Ibid.*, 33-4.

⁴³ John L. Allen relates that Cardinal Ratzinger has recently acknowledged "the authority of the Lutheran World Federation to reach agreement with the Vatican," in *Cardinal Ratzinger: The Vatican's Enforcer of the Faith* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 234.

⁴⁴ *CMSH* 71 (April 1961), 10-12.

he?”⁴⁵ Quiry pointed out that Christ lives in Christians who are authentic and can bring them into unity. He chided Catholics who think they “have everything to *give* to our separated brethren and nothing to *take*,” and he added that many Protestants think exactly the same. Both sides believed that they were in the right and the other in the wrong.⁴⁶

Such attitudes, the article concluded, make ecumenical progress impossible. Rather Catholics must look to Protestants as “a group of good people outside the Church” who have many practices and theological insights to share with Catholics. For instance, the Protestant love for Holy Scripture has done much to stimulate bible study and the love for Jesus, and such practices benefit both Catholics and Protestants. The Protestant sense of community worship has taught Catholics much about liturgical gatherings and Christian fellowship.⁴⁷

Catholics felt, Quiry reiterated, that they have much to give. These gifts included the commitment of religious sisters and brothers, doctrinal harmony, and an extensive educational system. Yet Catholics, he believed, must not look for a miraculous and speedy reunion but prepare for the long term forging of new ecumenical friendships by patience, prayer, and discipline. Catholics must increase their respect for Protestants and treat them with special consideration as fellow believers. Catholics must pray over the Scriptures, strengthen their faith, eliminate sin in their life, and reflect the image of Christ. They must pray for the gift of fraternal charity for themselves and for others.⁴⁸ Catholics felt confident that they were in the ecumenical driver’s seat.

When Apostolic Delegate to Greece and Turkey from 1935 to 1945, Archbishop Roncalli resided in Istanbul.⁴⁹ After the death of Pius XI in 1939, he organized a memorial service for the deceased pontiff in the Catholic cathedral at Athens.⁵⁰ Delegations from the Orthodox and Gregorian patriarchs were invited as guests, and Roncalli shared the memorial ceremony with the Eastern Catholic prelates gathering there. The prelates participated in their own languages and cultures – Arabic, Bulgarian, Greek, and Armenian – and Roncalli himself imparted his own absolution in Latin. The common liturgy represented for those present the Catholic union of Eastern and Western Christians. Roncalli shared his dream with those present: “One day – perhaps still very distant – the vision of Christ, the *one fold and the one shepherd*, will be a grand reality of heaven and earth ... May then the effort to grow in the spirit of fraternal love be the task of us all ... *in one, holy, Catholic and*

⁴⁵ Hebblethwaite, *Pope John XXIII*, 383-4.

⁴⁶ *CMSH* 71 (October 1961), 30-31.

⁴⁷ *CMSH* 71 (October 1961), 31-2.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 32-3.

⁴⁹ Hebblethwaite, *Pope John XXIII*, 143-4.

⁵⁰ Alden Hatch, *A Man Named John: The Life of Pope John XXIII* (New York: Hawthorn, 1963), 114.

*Apostolic Church.*⁵¹ The future pope saw the significance of ecumenical gatherings and the importance of all striving toward unity. For him, “the division of Christians is a tragedy for which we are all in some way responsible.”⁵²

The *Messenger* continued to believe that this unity can only be “achieved by the return of the separated brethren” to the flock. For the magazine, there was “no question of a new church in which all Christians unite by a sort of general compromise much like the formation of a new political party in which various groups get together to hammer out a common platform.” The doctrine of the Catholic Church was not of its own making and open to change. At the assembly of the World Council of Churches in India in November 1961, Catholic observers were in attendance. Among them was Cardinal Bea who advised his non-Catholic colleagues that he would keep them informed of the council proceedings and welcome their suggestions during the Council.⁵³ Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury in 1962 affirmed the ecumenical progress which was being made by stating on television: “We must press on with the work of Christian unity. It can be done. I mean to do it.” Great desire and high hopes existed on all sides to end the scandal of Christian division.⁵⁴ From inward-looking piety, Catholic devotion was undergoing a paradigm shift to outward concern for the neighbour by ecumenism and social justice.

During the second year of the Council, ecumenism became a central concern. In past centuries religious conversions were won by the clanging sword and the flashing lance. With the shrinking world, it became apparent that in religious matters nothing is achieved by force. To crush enemies in battle was not to win their minds or hearts but to make them embittered enemies. In Canada during the 1960s ecumenical relations grew first among the clergy. Cardinal Paul-Emile Léger, for instance, asked Catholics to pray for the success of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches meeting in Montreal from 12 to 26 July 1963. He exhorted his parishioners: “We must pray the Father of Light to enlighten our Christian brethren and to guide their deliberations. We must never forget that, though these brothers in Christ do not fully share in our faith, they are nevertheless our brothers in Christ and they also labor under the inspiration of the Spirit in the quest of unity.” Responding in kind, the Protestant weekly *Christian Century* marvelled, “So far as we know, Cardinal Léger’s call for prayer for the success

⁵¹ *CMSH* 72 (May 1962), 6-7.

⁵² *CMSH* 72 (January 1962), 8.

⁵³ Bea in the service of ecumenism spent so much time in flight to various meetings and to different countries that the Roman anecdote emerged: “See the World with BEA”—also the acronym for British European Airways. Hebblethwaite, *Pope John XXIII*, 377.

⁵⁴ *CMSH* 72 (May 1962), 8-9.

of the Montreal meeting was the first such call issued by any Christian leader. His action is much appreciated.”⁵⁵

Not to be outdone in generosity, Archbishop Philip Pocock, delighted that “Anglicans throughout the world, together with other Christian Churches,” offered prayers for the success of the Ecumenical Council in Rome, asked Catholics in the Archdiocese of Toronto to pray for the international meeting of the Anglican Churches in that city. He recalled that Pius XII and John XXIII had made Catholics aware that all baptized Christians were part of the body of Christ. Pocock continued that this “spiritual brotherhood involves an obligation of sympathetic understanding and of love manifested in prayer and action.”⁵⁶ The sincere gestures of Léger and Pocock in support of the assemblies of other Christians pointed to healthy new interfaith relations in Canada and outside of Canada.

The Canadian missionary Murray Abraham in India proposed that it was only “when you love your enemy that you truly conquer him, not by destroying him, but by changing him; for love transforms an enemy into a friend.” The new crusade to convert non-Christians, in Abraham’s view, must be based on understanding and love. Pius XI insisted, Murray Abraham pointed out, that missionaries must learn the culture and language of non-Christians. This work was difficult and arduous, but it was toil which would bear much fruit. A missionary in the Jesuit tradition of indigenisation, Abraham showed great sensitivity for the believers of other cultures, yet in the mentality of the Church, continued to believe in the necessity of conversion to Catholicism for salvation.⁵⁷

Pope John’s intention of January 1963 confirmed this Catholic attitude by asking members of the Apostleship of Prayer to offer their prayers, works, joys, and sufferings “that the existing desire of church unity among Protestants may lead to the knowledge of the true Church of Christ.” The papal intention felt it was building upon the Protestant desire for unity demonstrated by the founding in 1948 of the World Council of Churches, by the subsequent establishment of its headquarters in Geneva, and by its General Assembly meetings in various world centres. In the magazine’s view, the “extreme individualism” of the Reformation had resulted in Protestant alienation from the Catholic Church. But by the time of the Second Vatican Council, all Christians once again sought their roots, encountered a “rediscovery of the Church,” and saw the need for the social nature of Christian witness.

⁵⁵ *The Ecumenist: A Journal for Promoting Christian Unity* 1 (5, June-July 1963), 69-70.

⁵⁶ *The Ecumenist* 1 (5, June-July 1963), 104.

⁵⁷ *CMSH* 72 (December 1962), 16-17. Jesuit Robert de Nobili in seventeenth-century India embraced Hindu literature and culture as did Matteo Ricci in China and Alexander de Rhodes in Vietnam.

Protestants, according to the *Messenger*, were rediscovering that Holy Scripture belongs “essentially to the Church and is entrusted to her and her interpretation.” Individuals realized they could no longer interpret the Scriptures on their own but must seek the understanding and full membership in the true Church. While Protestants return to the Church, Catholics must conduct themselves with humility and kindness and facilitate that return.⁵⁸ However, the Protestant observer at the Council, Dr. Skydsgaard, warned “it would be a mistake for Catholics to be under the illusion that any number of Protestants looked upon the Roman Catholic Church with ‘nostalgia’ or desire to ‘return’ pure and simple to the bosom of a Church which they still regarded as defective.” Rather the churches, he believed, must sit down and talk over their differences as equals.⁵⁹

The Church Unity Octave during the third week of January 1963 prayed daily for the union of all Christians in the Church, including Eastern Christians, Anglicans, European and American Protestants, lapsed Catholics, and the Jewish people.⁶⁰ Cardinal Léger at this time explained the differences between Protestants and Catholics. He stated that all were validly baptized and inserted into the body of Christ, but some by the divergence of their beliefs broke off communion with the Catholic Church and no longer fully share its gifts.⁶¹ In Rome, council delegates differed and two divergent mentalities came to light. The first sided with the defenders of the Counter-Reformation who regarded Christian unity achievable only when “others” returned to the Catholic Church. The second mentality “understood that all truths do not stand on the same level, and saw in the gospel message itself and in the cries of the contemporary world the need of a common witness to the Christian faith.”⁶² The dialogue with Protestants was for Léger a beginning step toward Christian unity.⁶³

Exposure to the Council and to ecumenical influences transformed the thinking of the new pope, Paul VI, and many Catholics with him. In the *Messenger*, prayer formulas progressively changed. Catholics now prayed for the reunion of all Christians rather than for the return of lapsed Christians to the true Church. The general papal intention for January 1964 asked that Christians work and pray together for cooperation. A common understanding, it was believed, must be forged between Protestants and Catholics.⁶⁴ To dramatize this new ecumenical message, Pope Paul made a pilgrimage to the

⁵⁸ *CMSH* 73 (January 1963), 5-7.

⁵⁹ Rynne, *Vatican Council II*, 256-7.

⁶⁰ *CMSH* 73 (January 1963), 15.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁶² Alberigo and Komonchak, *History of Vatican II*, (2000), 3:263.

⁶³ Rynne, *Vatican Council II*, 241.

⁶⁴ *CMSH* 74 (January 1964), 4.

Holy Land to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.⁶⁵ Paul VI's visit proved wise as the papacy demonstrated it led the ecumenical movement which the council fathers had espoused. In Jerusalem Paul met the Greek and Armenian patriarchs and eased Christian tensions. Paul publically authenticated the Catholic return to gospel sources and its link with the community of the Apostle Peter, emphasizing the direct line "running from Christ to Peter and to Rome."⁶⁶ Shortly after, the Vatican Council published the *Decree on Ecumenism* in November 1964 and the *Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* in October 1965.⁶⁷ In January 1966 the papal intention in the *Messenger* prayed that Christians of different faiths move toward unity, "that all Christians, increasingly open to the will of God, may work wholeheartedly for the perfecting of Christian unity."⁶⁸

The Church Unity Octave during the next few years was enriched with an ecumenical ring. Catholics were to pray for the unity of all Christians in the Church, including Orthodox and separated European and Canadian Christians.⁶⁹ The octave prayer by 1966 did not ask any longer for the return of these various religious denominations, but rather for the "unity of all Christians in the Church." Even the term "church" was defined now not as Roman Catholic but left for common usage to work out.⁷⁰ Council peritus Gustave Weigel believed that "the beauty of the ecumenical movement was that it remained something fuzzy and ill-defined; it was desirable to keep it that way and not allow it to become petrified if further progress was to be made." The editor of the *Messenger* took the insight one step farther. Father Ryan saw the love of the Sacred Heart as central to Protestant-Catholic reconciliation. Its devotion was the "personal and communal attachment to Christ and loyalty to his interests," that is, to the unity of all Christians. Both Protestants and Catholics had a strong devotion to Jesus Christ "who is love" and can go to Christ through the Father.⁷¹ The Sacred Heart of Jesus must become "the guiding force of our lives," asserted the *Messenger*, and thus "we grow in love for Him and for our fellow men." It was in the love of Christ that "we shall meet and love and be one with all our brother Christians."⁷² The *Messenger* clearly saw the devotion to the Sacred Heart as the linchpin of God's love between Catholics and other believing Christians and the guiding light of ecumenism.

⁶⁵ *CMSH* 74 (March 1964), 7-9.

⁶⁶ Alberigo and Komonchak, *History of Vatican II* (1997), 344-5.

⁶⁷ Flannery, *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, Unitatis Redintegratio*, 452-70 and *Nostra Aetate*, 738-42.

⁶⁸ *CMSH* 76 (January 1966), 6.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 6; Rynne, *Vatican Council II*, 241.

⁷¹ *CMSH* 74 (January 1964), 5.

⁷² *CMSH* 76 (January 1966), 7.

The conciliar spirit and cooperation with other faiths revealed itself in its extension to social justice. The papal encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (1963) inspired this enterprise. The *Messenger* demonstrated its sympathy with these shared ideals. The magazine asked the laity to form their views on the Gospel values of justice and charity, and that they be instruments to social justice in all communities.⁷³

The papal general intention for October 1964 prayed that the world find a way to feed the needy and, in the open spirit of the Council, published a daring article. Family planning and population regulation was a bone of contention between Protestants and Catholics and needed to be eased. The reflection began with an account of the population explosion since the seventeenth century. The world population at the time was one half billion people, which two hundred years later increased to one and one-quarter billion people. The world population topped three billion people in 1960 and was predicted to double to six billion by the end of the century. Whereas the world's resources were able to feed this increased population, the article pondered whether this posture could be maintained indefinitely. It suggested the Church must come to grip with the following questions:

Must the earth's population be limited to avert universal starvation, ill health, and maladjustment? Above all is it immoral, inconsistent with divine and humane laws, to put a limit on population? Can any justifiable change be made, for humane purposes, in the stand to be taken by a consistent Catholic?⁷⁴

The Church will have to guide Catholics, the magazine article pressed, to reconcile procreation with the parental responsibilities to limit their family and provide for their children's education through university. The author asked the Canadian Apostleship members to pray that the Church have God's light to reconcile these conflicting human values.

Hunger and deprivation throughout Asia and Africa were so common. A young man growing up in India has seen enough misery for a lifetime: whining beggars, women dressed shamefully in rags, babies' stomachs swollen with worms, little children covered with sores from undernourishment, men and women idle and bitter in the streets, families of ten and twelve cramped inside filthy, stinking hovels, sleeping fitfully in the fierce heat, sweating their lives away.⁷⁵

Young people in India and Africa, according to Murray Abraham teaching in Darjeeling, have matured with scenes like this being burned into their memory. They craved material goods to alleviate the starvation and poverty of their families. They wanted the wealth of the West as depicted on magazine covers showing glamorous fashion models sitting comfortably in their cars and luxuriously in their boats. The question was, according to Abraham, how to

⁷³ *CMSH* 71 (September 1961), 6-7 and 46.

⁷⁴ *CMSH* 74 (October 1964), 4-5.

⁷⁵ *CMSH* 74 (November 1964), 20.

teach Africans and Asians to work and struggle for the things they need for human lifestyle – adequate food, housing, clothing, education, and security – but without at the same time encouraging them to sell their souls for a pot of gold? Pope John, Abraham noted, indicated that “there was nothing wrong with asking for sweets now and then, but sweets weren’t everything.” The papal letter called for basic justice in the distribution of the world’s goods and an adequate balance of human and spiritual goods for all people on the earth.⁷⁶

In *Pacem in Terris*, Pope John discussed the necessity of justice for genuine peace in the world. F. A. von Pilis explained the encyclical in a series of articles published in the *Messenger*. The universe was created by God with “astonishing order,” Pilis wrote, so that humanity could harness the forces of nature to the benefit of all. God endowed human nature with intelligence and free will. Unlike the fixed laws of the physical universe, human beings following God’s law voluntarily reflected this order which was the basis of a wide array of rights. These rights included the right to life, good reputation, just wage, adequate education, freedom of worship, and social security. The basic cell of human society was the right to marry and to raise a family. These rights call humans to contribute to the establishment of the civil order but in a way by which rights and duties were reciprocal. These rights needed public authority, however, to guide them and provide incentives for human development to reach its potential. In this new world, working people would be guaranteed a living wage and women’s rights would be secured in domestic and public life.⁷⁷

Public authority, in the eyes of *Pacem in Terris*, derived its authority from God and can command citizens by both physical and moral force. Thus to deal with the inequalities in society, civil governments must act to support and see human rights respected. Without public sanction, human rights are ineffective. To protect human rights, governments must supervise transportation, communications, drinking water, public health, insurance, and education. The government has at its disposal the physical force to issue threats and offer incentives to the common good, and the moral force to appeal directly to the conscience of the citizen to cooperate in the common good. The civil authority must use its power in fairness to give more attention to the less fortunate since they are unable to assert their legitimate claims.⁷⁸

Nations, like humans, enjoy a basic independence to rule themselves. As all people were created equal, it was also true that cultures and nations have equal rights to govern themselves and to exercise their unique virtue, talent, and wealth. Racism between states must be eliminated, and it must be recognized that all states are equal in dignity and have the same rights to

⁷⁶ *CMSH* 74 (November 1964), 20-21.

⁷⁷ *CMSH* 74 (June 1964), 8-11.

⁷⁸ *CMSH* 74 (July-August 1964), 30-32.

existence and self-development. Within nations, minorities are to be protected and cherished for their special gifts. Minorities must recognize the advantages accorded to them and endeavour not to become “watertight compartments.” Admitting the primary principle that “work should be taken to the workers, not vice versa,” yet when this does not occur, political and economic refugees should be welcomed to other countries and given basic help to settle and integrate. Civil servants by discerning God’s laws for the governance of relations between states can guide nations to resolve their differences and stabilize world peace. Rich nations should help developing nations but always respecting their liberty. Papal teaching reminded sovereign nations of St. Augustine’s pithy admonition: “What are kingdoms without justice but bands of robbers?”⁷⁹

The Holy See envisioned in the spring of 1963 a growing consensus across the world that sovereign states would in future settle disputes by the conciliar method of negotiation and consensus. The threat of nuclear war which diverted enormous financial, natural, and human resources from world problems confirmed this insight. Mutual disarmament was called for to dispose of nuclear weapons and ease the fear of extinction.⁸⁰ The increased movement of ideas, persons, and goods was leading to a global community. Sovereign nations were beginning to admit that they could not resolve their internal problems without the help of other nations. The fruit of ecumenism would be to strengthen the coming of world government, but it must include respect for human rights and representation from every state. The *Messenger* quoted the Holy Father saying, “This means that the public authority of the world community must tackle and solve problems of an economic, social, political or cultural character which are posed by the universal common good.” He acknowledged that the UN General Assembly in approving the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was well on the way to organize world community, and “may be ever more equal to the magnitude and nobility of its tasks.” He exhorted all people to take an active part in public life, strive for the common good of humanity, and work to consolidate the Christian desire of world peace.⁸¹ The response from *Messenger* readers to these articles on the encyclical was surprisingly light. A reader from Toronto wrote simply, “Thank you for the commentary on *Peace On Earth*. The more publicity it gets the better.”⁸² Catholic piety was stretched during the 1960s from the practice of ecumenism to the shared exercise of social justice.

The articles of the Sacred Heart *Messenger* and the responses of its readers during this pivotal period of the 1960s reflected Canadian Catholics in

⁷⁹ *CMSH* 74 (September 1964), 20-22.

⁸⁰ *CMSH* 74 (October 1964), 20-22.

⁸¹ *CMSH* 74 (November 1964), 16-19.

⁸² *MSCH* 74 (September 1964), 15.

transition. The magazine looked to the bishops, theologians, and observers at the Second Vatican Council to renew Canadian Catholic spirituality, to pave the way for reunion with separated brethren, and to extend social justice to the world community.

The desire for unity was manifested by both Catholics and Protestants. Christians recognized that their troubled histories as obstacles to be confronted and overcome. Let us recall that until the Council, Catholics were not permitted to attend Protestant services nor to carry on ecumenical dialogue. The beginning of the Catholic outreach to separated Christians during the 1960s was a remarkable step forward which began according to the *Messenger* by praying for Christian unity. This meant moving beyond prayer for the return of other Christians to ecumenical outreach and sharing in good works. Through the years of the Vatican Council, Catholics sensed their attitudes changing toward fellow Christians, and the *Messenger* appropriately rephrased papal intentions from the “return [of non-Catholics] to the Catholic Church” to praying for “the unity of Christians in the Church” – using Church in the inclusive sense. Many Protestants also needed time to overcome their hostility and modify their views. It was now recognized that both sides required space to overlook past animosity and time for authentic conversion and mutual acceptance.

The magazine expanded its coverage of ecumenical events such as Pope Paul’s pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The *Messenger* featured the papal encyclicals during the 1960s to show the Church’s desire to dialogue with other Christians about social justice in a rapidly changing world. The *Messenger* elaborated the Council’s emphasis on Christian commitment in justice issues, such as, caring for the needy, respect for minority groups, concern for developing nations, and the promotion of nuclear disarmament. Focussed on the love of Christ and mirroring Canadian Catholics in the mainstream, the *Messenger* in the 1960s hoped, by supporting human rights and encouraging responsibility, to shape a better society. This pivotal period saw Catholics uprooted from their traditional devotions and redirecting their involvement through ecumenical ministries toward social justice. In just a few years, Canadian Catholics travelled from the narrow piety of conformity and obedience to the ecumenical spirituality of world religion.