

Selected Questions on Theology of God the Redeemer

**International Theological
Commission**

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SELECT QUESTIONS
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PRELIMINARY NOTE

The study of the theology of redemption was proposed to the members of the International Theological Commission by His Holiness Pope John Paul II in 1992. A Sub-Commission was established to prepare this study composed of Prof. Jan Ambaum, Prof. Joseph Doré, Prof. Avery Dulles, Prof. Joachim Gnilka, Prof. Sebastian Karotemprel, Msgr. Miceál Ledwith (President), Prof. Francis Moloney, Msgr. Max Thurian, and Prof. Ladislaus Vanyo.

General discussions on this theme took place during several meetings of the Sub-Commission, and at the Plenary sessions of the International Theological Commission itself, held at Rome in 1992, 1993 and 1994. This text was approved *in forma specifica* by vote of the Commission on 29 November 1994, and was submitted to its President, His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, who has approved it for publication.

The International Theological Commission does not propose to offer new theological elements, but rather, by providing here a synthesis of contemporary theological approaches, offers a sure point of reference for the continuing discussion and investigation of this question.

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PART I: THE HUMAN CONDITION AND THE REALITY OF REDEMPTION

A. The Actual Situation

1. An adequate consideration of the theology of redemption today has to begin with an outline of the authentic Christian teaching on redemption and its bearing on the human condition, as the Church has propounded this teaching in the course of her tradition.

2. The primary statement that needs to be made is that the doctrine of redemption concerns what God has accomplished for us in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, namely the removal of the obstacles lying between God and us, and the offer to us of participating in God's life. In other words, redemption is about God—as the author of our redemption—before it is about us, and it is only because this is so, that redemption can truly mean liberation for us and can be for all time and all times the Good News of Salvation. That is to say, it is only because redemption is primarily about the glorious goodness of God, rather than about our need, for all that redemption takes care of that need—that it is a liberating reality for us. If redemption, on the contrary, were to be judged or measured by the existential need of human beings, how could we avoid the suspicion of having simply created a Redeemer-God in the image of our own need?

3. There is a parallelism here with what we find in the doctrine of creation. God created all things, and human beings in his own image, and found his creation to be “very good” (Gen 1:31). This all precedes the beginning of our history in which human activity does not turn out to be as unambiguously “good” as God's creation. However despite that, the Church's teaching down through the centuries—based on Scripture—has always been that the image of God in the human person, although often concealed and twisted in history as a result of original sin and its effects, has never been completely eradicated or destroyed. The Church believes that sinful human beings have not been abandoned by God, but rather that God, in his redeeming love, intends a glorious destiny for the human race, and indeed for the whole created order, which is already seminally present in and through the Church. From the Christian perspective such considerations underlie and support the belief that life here and now is worth living. Yet any general call to “affirm life” or “to say ‘yes’ to life”,

while undoubtedly relevant in this regard and to be welcomed, does not exhaust the mystery of redemption, as the Church tries to live it.

4. Christian faith is therefore careful not, on the one hand, to divinize or to idolize human beings because of their greatness, their dignity and their achievements, nor, on the other hand, to condemn them or crush them because of their failures and misdeeds. Christian faith does not underestimate the human potential and desire for growth and fulfillment, and the achievements to which the actualization of this potential and desire can effectively lead. Not only are such achievements not considered a priori by faith as obstacles to be overcome or adversaries to be combated, but they are, on the contrary, positively evaluated from the outset. From the first pages of the book of Genesis to the encyclicals of recent Popes; the invitation addressed to human beings—and, of course, in the first place to Christians—is always to organize the world and society in such a way as to improve at all levels the conditions of human life, and beyond that, to enhance the happiness of individuals, promote justice and peace among all and, as far as possible, foster a love, which, in being translated into words and actions, does not exclude anyone on the face of the earth.

5. As regards human evil and suffering, they are in no sense underestimated by faith: faith is not, under the pretext of proclaiming eternal happiness in a world to come, in any way inclined to ignore the many kinds of pain and suffering which afflict individuals, nor the obvious collective tragedy inherent in many situations. But for all that, neither does faith rejoice in evil and times of trial in themselves, as if it would not exist without them.

6. Here, as a first step at least, faith is content simply to take note and to record. It is therefore not permissible to accuse faith of closing its eyes; but it is just as impermissible to be resentful towards faith, accusing it of treating evil and suffering as fundamental facts without which faith would have no credible foundation, as if, in short, faith could only be based, as a *sine qua non* condition of its existence, on the wretchedness of the human condition, and on the effect and recognition of such despondency.

7. Evil and suffering are not, in fact, in the first place, a function of any particular *theological interpretation* of life, but are a universal *experience*. And the first movement of faith, in the face of evil and suffering, is not to exploit them for its own ends! If Christian faith takes account of them it is,

in the first place, simply in order to make a coherent and honest assessment of the real, concrete historical situation of the human race. And faith's only concern is to know whether, how and under what conditions, its vision of this actual historical situation can still win people's attention and adherence today—while taking into consideration their own analyses of their condition, and the attitudes they adopt in the different situations they have to face.

8. Christian faith does however have a specific perspective on the human condition which in many respects illuminates what many non-Christian world views assert in their own way. Firstly, faith underlines that evil appears *as being always—already there in history and in humanity*: evil transcends and precedes all our individual responsibilities and appears to spring from “powers” and even a “spirit” that are present before our act, and to a certain extent are external to any personal consciousness and will acting in the here and now.

9. Secondly, faith points out that the evil and suffering that affect the historical condition of human beings have also, and even to a large extent, their *source in the heart of human beings*, in their selfish reflexes, their appetites for pleasure and power, their silent complicity in evil, their cowardly capitulation to evil, their terrible hard-heartedness. Nevertheless, biblical revelation and Christian faith do not despair of the human person; on the contrary, they continue to appeal to free will, to the sense of responsibility, to the ability to take decisive action in order to change—and to those moments of lucid awareness in which these faculties can be effectively exercised. Faith believes indeed that all are fundamentally capable both of distancing themselves from everything that conditions them negatively, and of giving up their own selfishness and self-absorption, in order to commit themselves to the service of others, and in that way open themselves to a living hope that could even surpass all their desires.

10. For Christian faith, then, human beings are as a matter of historical fact alienated from the holiness of God because of sin, over and above the fact that we are distinct from God by virtue of being created and not intrinsically divine. This twofold difference between God and humanity is witnessed to in Scripture and is presupposed by all orthodox Christian writing in post-biblical times. But the divine initiative in moving in love towards sinful humanity is a continuous feature of God's dealings with us before and

within history, and is the underlying presupposition of the doctrine of redemption. Thus, the dialectic of grace and sin presupposes that before any sin entered the world, God's grace had already been offered to human beings. The internal logic of the Christian view of the human condition demands also that God be the author of redemption, since what is in need of being healed and saved is nothing less than the very image of God himself in us.

11. The value of created human nature is, then, for Christian faith, guaranteed from the beginning by God himself and is indestructible, and similarly the reality of redemption has been won and is guaranteed by God in Christ also forever. Both creation and redemption, the Church teaches, are rooted in God's gracious and unfathomable goodness and freedom, and from our point of view remain incomprehensible, inexplicable and wonderful. The search for an understanding of these realities springs from a prior, underivable and hence irreducible act or attitude of thanksgiving for them.¹

12. While a full understanding of redemption is surely impossible for us, nevertheless some understanding of the doctrine is not only possible but demanded by the very nature of redemption which is concerned with the truth, value and ultimate destiny of all created reality. If no attempt to understand redemption were to be permitted, the reasonableness of faith would be undermined, the legitimate search for understanding would be denied to faith and the result would be fideism. Furthermore since the whole human person is redeemed by Christ, this must be capable of being shown to be true in the intellectual order.²

13. For Christian faith the truth of redemption has always illuminated in particular those aspects of the human condition which point most obviously to the human need for salvation. Human beings experience fragmentation, inadequacies and frustrations in their lives at many levels. To the extent that human beings often consider themselves responsible for the fragmented, unsatisfactory quality of their experience, they confess, in traditional language, their sinfulness. However, if the full picture of the human condition is to be painted, those aspects of life which disfigure and destroy human existence and for which no one is, apparently, directly responsible, must also be noted. For they too speak eloquently of the human need for redemption. Such realities as famine, pestilence, natural catastrophes,

illness, physical and mental suffering, and death itself, reveal that evil—as the Christian tradition has of course always recognized—is by no means exhausted by what is termed “*malum culpae*” (moral evil), but covers also “*malum poenae*” (suffering), whether this be evil in itself or arise from the limitations of nature. Traditionally, however—as the biblical witness itself reveals—all suffering, and indeed death itself, has been understood as springing from sin, “the mystery of iniquity” in Saint Paul’s phrase (2 Thess 2:7).

14. While the challenges just mentioned are the most basic existential difficulties faced by human beings, there are also a whole series of other more intimate problems that confront people. They have, in the first place, difficulties in achieving as individuals personal, inner equilibrium. Secondly, they have difficulties in living in harmony with their fellow human beings, as the history of warfare, with all its attendant cruelty and horror, reveals. Thirdly, their inability to live well with non-human nature is reflected dramatically in the contemporary world in the ecological question. Fourthly, when the pressures of living become too intense, there can easily arise the suspicion that human existence is doomed to failure and ultimate meaninglessness. Underlying the above critical areas there is, finally, the question of humanity’s as yet unfinished search for that peace with God, which is frustrated by the powerful and all-pervasive reality of sin.

15. This preliminary sketch of how for Christian faith the truth of redemption illuminates the human condition must be complemented by an assessment of how today human beings themselves see their actual historical situation.

16. We turn firstly, however, to review briefly the understanding of redemption propounded by the great World Religions. In doing so, here in this review section, we may leave aside Judaism, in which Christianity has its roots, and shares with it a view of redemption based on the sovereign goodwill of God the Creator towards the errant human race as expressed in the Covenant.

B. Relationships with the World Religions

17. *Hinduism* is not a monolithic religion. It is rather a mosaic of religious beliefs and practices that claims to offer the human race redemption and salvation. Although early Vedic Hinduism was polytheistic, later Vedic

tradition came to speak of ultimate Reality, also referred to as “Atman” or “Brahman”, as One, out of which all things emerged with a specific, triadic mode of manifestation. “Brahman” itself is incomprehensible and formless, but is also the Self-existent Conscious being who is the fullness of Bliss. At a more popular, personal level, divinities such as Shiva, destroyer of the imperfect, Vishnu and his “avatars” (“incarnations”) like Ram, the Enlightened One, Krishna and the Mother Goddess Shakti—correspond to the attributes of the Supreme Reality. God's “incarnations” descend to earth to deal with evil when it becomes powerful on earth.

18. Making due allowances for over-simplification, one could say that for Hinduism the human person is a spark of the divine, a soul (“atman”) embodied because of “avidya” (ignorance: either a kind of metaphysical ignorance of one's true nature or a kind of original ignorance). As a result, the human being is subject to the law of “karma” or rebirth, the cycle of birth and rebirth being known as “karma-samsara”, or the law of retribution. Selfish desire, leading to spiritual ignorance, is the source of all evil, misery and suffering in the world.

19. Redemption for Hinduism—expressed by such terms as “moksha” and “mukti”—is thus liberation from the law of “karma”. Although human beings can in three (not mutually exclusive) ways take some steps towards their salvation—through disinterested action, spiritual intuition and loving devotion to God—the final stage of salvific communion with God can only be attained with the help of grace.

20. As regards *Buddhism*, one can begin by saying that Buddha, in dealing with the suffering of the world, rejected the authority of the Vedas, the usefulness of sacrifices, and saw no use either in metaphysical speculations about the existence of God and the soul. He sought deliverance from suffering from within man himself. His central insight is that human desire is the root of all evil and misery—which in turn gives rise to “ignorance” (“avidya”)—and the ultimate cause of the cycle of birth and rebirth.

21. After Buddha there arose many schools of thought which elaborated his simple basic teachings into systems dealing with the doctrine of “karma” as the tendency, inherent in action, to be born again. Historical human life has no unifying, personal, substantive existential thread; it is made up merely of unconnected existential fragments of birth, growth, decay and death. The

doctrine of “anicca”, or the “non-permanence” of all reality, is central to Buddhism. The notion of existential impermanence precludes the possibility of the existence of an “atman” and hence Buddha’s silence on the existence of God or the “atman”. Everything is appearance (“maya”). Nothing can be said about reality, either positively or negatively.

22. Redemption for Buddhism consists therefore in a state of liberation (“Nirvana”) from this world of appearance, a liberation from the fragmentary nature and the impermanence of existence, achieved through the suppression of all desire and all consciousness. Through such liberation a pure, indeterminate state of emptiness is attained. Being radically other than the transitory torment of this world of Maya, Nirvana—literally: “extinction” or “going out” (i.e. of all desires), as the light of a candle goes out when the wax has been burned away—eludes earthly definition, but it is not simply a state of sheer extinction or total annihilation. Nirvana is not an intellectual goal but an experience that is indefinable. It is the liberation from all desires and cravings, the release from the cycle of rebirth and sorrow (“dukha”). The most perfect way to liberation for Buddhists is the Eight-fold Way—right understanding, right intention, right speech, right conduct, right occupation, right endeavor, right contemplation, and right concentration (“Vinayana Pitaka”)— which places all its emphasis on human efforts. From the perspective of Buddhism all other religious paths are imperfect and secondary.

23. Like Judaism and Christianity, *Islam* (“Submission”) is a monotheistic, covenantal religion with a firm belief in God as the Creator of all things. As its name suggests, it sees the key to true religion and hence to salvation in Faith, Trust and total Submission to the will of the all-merciful God.

24. According to the faith of the Moslems the religion of Islam was revealed by God from the very beginning of humankind and confirmed through successive covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. Islam sees itself as the completion and fulfillment of all the covenants that have existed from the beginning.

25. Islam has no concept of original sin and the Christian sense of redemption has no place in Islamic thought. All human beings are simply seen as in need of salvation which they can obtain only by turning to God in total faith. The concept of salvation is expressed also by the term “success”

or “prosperity”. However, the idea of salvation is best expressed by terms like “safety” or “protection”: in God the human race finds definitive safety. The fullness of salvation—conceived of in terms of corporeal and spiritual delights³—is achieved only on the Last Day with the Final Judgment and in life in the hereafter (“Akhira”). Islam believes in a kind of predestination in the matter of salvation, either to the bliss of paradise or to the suffering of hell fire (“Nar”), but the human being remains free to respond by faith and good works. The means of achieving salvation apart from the profession of faith are: ritual prayer, legal alms-giving, the fast of Ramadan and pilgrimage to the house of God in Mecca. A few traditions add to these means “jihad” or “struggle”, as holy war to spread or defend Islam, or, more rarely, as personal spiritual struggle.

26. Apart from the great classical religions of the world, there are other religions, variously called Traditional, Primal, Tribal or Natural religions. The origins of these religions are lost in antiquity. Their beliefs, cults and ethical codes are transmitted by living oral tradition.

27. The followers of such religions believe in a Supreme Being, identified under different names and believed to be the creator of all things, but himself uncreated and eternal. The Supreme Being has delegated the supervision of the affairs of the world to lesser divinities known as the spirits. These spirits influence human well-being or woe. Propitiation of the spirits is very important for human well-being. In Traditional Religions the sense of a group's communion with the ancestors of the clan, the tribe and the wider human family is important. The departed ancestors are revered and venerated in various ways though not worshipped.

28. Most Traditional Religions have myths and epic stories that speak of a state of bliss with God, fall from an ideal situation, and expectation of some kind of redeemer-savior to reestablish the lost relationship, and bring about reconciliation and the state of bliss. Salvation is conceived of in terms of reconciliation and harmony with the departed ancestors, the spirits and God.

C. The Christian Doctrine of Redemption and the Modern World

29. Apart from considering the views of redemption propounded by the great world religions and the more localized traditional ancestral religions of many human cultures, one must, however, also pay some attention to other *contemporary* alternative movements and lifestyles which promise

salvation to their followers (e.g., modern cults, the many different “New Age” movements, and ideologies of autonomy, emancipation and revolution). Yet caution is called for in this area, and the risk of oversimplification must, if possible, be avoided.

30. It would be misleading to suggest, for example, that contemporary people fall into one of only two categories: either that of a self-confident “modernity” believing in the possibility of auto-redemption, or that of a disenchanted post-modernity despairing of any improvement in the human condition from, as it were, “within” and relying only on the possibility of salvation from “without”. Instead, what one does find is a cultural and intellectual pluralism, a wide range of differing analyses of the human condition and a variety of ways of trying to cope with it. Alongside a kind of flight into pleasurable diversion or the absorbing, passing attractions of hedonism, one finds a retreat to various ideologies and new mythologies. Alongside a more or less resigned, lucid and courageous stoicism, one finds both a disillusionment claiming to be tough-minded and realistic, and resolute protest against the reduction of human beings and their environment to marketable resources that can be exploited, and against the corresponding relativization, underestimation and ultimately trivialization of the dark side of human existence.

31. One fact in the contemporary situation is therefore abundantly clear: *the concrete condition of human beings is full of ambiguities*. One could describe in many ways the two “poles” between which each particular individual human being, and humanity in its totality, are in fact torn. There is, for instance, in each individual, on the one hand, an ineradicable desire for life, happiness and fulfillment, and on the other hand, the inevitable experience of limitation, dissatisfaction, failure and suffering. If one passes from the individual to the general sphere one can see the same picture on a larger canvas. Here too, one can point, on the one hand, to the immense progress that has been made possible by science and technology, by the spread of the means of communication, and by the advances made, for example, in the domain of private, public and international law. But, on the other hand, one would also have to point to so many catastrophes in the world, and, among human beings, to so much depravity, the result of all of which is that a very great number of people suffer terrible oppression and exploitation and become helpless victims of what can only in fact appear to

them to be a cruel fate. It is clear that, despite differences of emphasis, any unclouded optimism about general and universal progress through technology has been losing ground perceptibly in our day. And it is in the contemporary context of widespread injustice and lack of hope that the doctrine of redemption has to be presented today.

32. Yet it is important to note that Christian faith does not rush into judgment: either to reject *in toto*, or to endorse too uncritically. Proceeding with both goodwill and discernment, it does not fail to note, in the great diversity of analyses and attitudes which it encounters, several fundamental insights which appear to it to correspond in themselves to a profound truth about human existence.

33. Faith notes also, for example, that despite their limitations and within them, human beings nevertheless seek a possible “fulfillment” for their lives; that evil and suffering are experienced by them, in short, as something profoundly “abnormal”; that the different forms of protest raised from this perspective are in themselves alone the sign that human beings cannot but be seeking for “something else”, “something more”, “something better”. And finally, as a consequence of this, Christian faith sees that contemporary human beings are not simply looking for an *explanation* of their condition but are waiting or hoping—whether they acknowledge it or not—for an *effective deliverance* from evil, and a *confirmation and fulfillment* of all that is positive in their lives: the desire for the good and the better, etc.

34. Yet while the Church recognizes the importance of trying to understand and assess the actual problems of human beings in the world, the differing attitudes provoked by them and the concrete proposals made to tackle them, she also recognizes the need never to lose sight of the fundamental question underlying these problems and necessarily underlying also any proposed way of resolving them, the question of truth: What is the truth of the human condition? What is the meaning of human existence, and what—from the perspective of the present itself—can human beings ultimately hope for? In presenting the doctrine of redemption to the world, the Church can perhaps address various differing perspectives on ultimate questions by concentrating on the aspect of the Christian faith in redemption which is perhaps the most crucial one for humanity: hope. For redemption is the only reality powerful enough to meet real human need, and the only reality deep enough to persuade people of what is really in them.⁴ This redemptive

message of hope is grounded in the two key Christian doctrines of Christology and the Trinity. In these doctrines one finds the ultimate rationale for the Christian understanding of human history, and of the human person, made in the image of the Triune God, a Unity in Community, and redeemed out of love by God's only Son, Jesus Christ, for the purpose of participation in the divine life, for which we were in the first place created. This participation is what is indicated by the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, when human beings in their total reality share in the fullness of divine life.

35. The Christian assessment of the human condition does not thus stand by itself but is an aspect of a much larger vision at whose center is the Christian understanding of God and of God's relationship to the human race and the whole of the created order. This larger vision is that of a Covenant which God willed and wills for the race. It is a Covenant by which God wills to associate human beings with his life, fulfilling—even beyond everything that they can themselves desire or conceive—all that is positive within them, and liberating them from all that is negative within them and that frustrates their life, happiness and development.

36. But it is essential to point out that if Christian faith speaks in this way about God and his will to institute a Covenant with human beings, it is not because we have been, as it were, only informed (by way of mere teaching) of God's intentions. It is because, in a much more radical way, God has literally *intervened in history*, and has acted at the very heart of history: by his "mighty deeds", throughout the whole Old Covenant in the first place, but supremely and definitively through and in Jesus Christ, his own, true and only Son, who entered, incarnate, into the human condition, in its totally concrete and historical form.

37. Strictly speaking, it follows from this that, in order to set out what they have to say about the human condition, believers do not begin by questioning themselves about it, and then go on to ask themselves what further enlightenment the God they profess can shed on it. Correlatively, and still strictly speaking, Christians do not begin by affirming God on the strength of a line of argument or, at least, not on the strength of purely abstract reflection, and then go on, only as a secondary move, to examine what enlightenment this prior acknowledgement of his existence could bring to bear on the historical destiny of humanity.

38. In reality, for biblical revelation, and thus for Christian faith, to know God, is to confess him on the basis of what he himself has done for human beings, *revealing them fully to themselves* in the very act of *revealing himself to them*, precisely by entering into relation with them: by setting up and offering a Covenant to them, and by going, for this purpose, to the point of coming into and becoming incarnate in their very human condition.

39. It is, finally, from this perspective that the vision of the human person and of the human condition, put forward by Christian faith, acquires its whole specificity and its whole richness.

40. Finally, some attention should be paid to what one might call the internal Christian debate on redemption, and especially to the question of how the suffering and death of Christ is related to the winning of the world's redemption. The importance of this question is heightened today in many quarters because of the perceived inadequacy—or at least perceived openness to serious and dangerous misunderstanding—of certain traditional ways of understanding Christ's work of redemption in terms of compensation or punishment for our sins. Furthermore the acuteness of the problem of evil and suffering has not lessened with the passage of time, but rather intensified, and the ability of many to believe that it can be adequately dealt with at all, has in this century been undermined as a matter of factual record. In such circumstances it would seem to be important to think anew about how the redemption reveals the glory of God. The question can be posed whether an attempt to understand the doctrine of the redemption might be, at heart, an exercise in theodicy, an attempt to suggest a credible answer to the "mystery of iniquity", in Saint Paul's phrase, in the light of Christian faith. The mystery of Christ and the Church is the divine answer. In short, is redemption God's justification, that is to say, most profound *revelation* of himself to us, and thereby the gift to us of the peace "which passes all understanding" (Phil 4:7)?

41. The purpose of this document is not to be a comprehensive treatment of the whole area of redemption theology, but rather to face selected questions in redemption theology that pose themselves with a particular force in the Church today.

PART II: BIBLICAL REDEMPTION: THE POSSIBILITY OF FREEDOM

1. The biblical record reflects a never-ending search for the ultimate significance of the human condition.⁵ For Israel, God is made known through Torah, and for Christianity, God is made known through the person, the teaching, the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Yet, both the Law and the incarnation still leave humanity in the ambiguity of a revelation given, matched by a human history which does not respond to the truths revealed. We still “groan inwardly, as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies” (Rom 8:23).

2. The human being faces a dramatic situation where all efforts to free itself from its self-imposed suffering and slavery are doomed to failure. Finite because of our origin as creatures, infinite because of our call to be one with our Creator, we are not capable, on the basis of our own efforts, of passing from the finite to the infinite. Thus, the Christian looks beyond human achievement. “Restless are our hearts, until they rest in you” (Augustine, *Confessions* 1,1).

3. Already in its civil legislation, Israel had a consciousness of a “redeemer” (*go'el*). Families could pay the ransom for a relative, to preserve the solidarity of the family.⁶ The importance of the solidarity of the family lies behind such legal institutions as levirate marriage,⁷ blood vengeance⁸ and the jubilee year.⁹ Israelite law allows for a condemned person to be bought back.¹⁰ The payment of the *kofer* frees the guilty person, his or her family, the injured family, and the whole community, as conflict is resolved. There are some Old Testament narratives where redeeming activities which have their roots in this legal background take place. Through the self-offering of Judah, who reverses his crime against Joseph,¹¹ the family is redeemed from vengeance. Similarly, Jacob, who had robbed Esau of his inheritance blessing, repays this with a large part of his property.¹² Vengeance is avoided.

4. Israelite religion developed a liturgy of expiation. It was the symbolic act of homage by which the guilty person covers and repays a debt to YHWH. The essential elements of this liturgy were:

a. The rites are of divine institution (holy places, holy priesthood and rites dictated by YHWH).

b. YHWH is the one who forgives.¹³

c. The rites are all sacrificial, and generally blood sacrifices, where the blood that represents life is poured out. YHWH gives human beings blood for the rite of forgiveness.¹⁴ Sacrificial blood expresses the gratuity of forgiveness at the level of ritual expression.

5. Holy people, and especially Moses and the prophets who followed him, had great value before God. This counterbalanced the disvalue of the evil and sin of others. Thus, they attached great importance to intercession for the forgiveness of sin.¹⁵ The figure of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53:4-12 would be repeatedly used in the New Testament as a type of Christ the Redeemer.

6. The narratives of the action of God in the Exodus (Ex 1-15), and the redeeming love of Esther and Ruth¹⁶ show how freedom comes from the unselfish gift of self for a nation or a family. These same sentiments are found in the prayer life of Israel, which celebrates God's redeeming love for his people in the Exodus¹⁷ and his care and goodness which brings freedom and wholeness to the life of the people.¹⁸

7. These ancient themes of liberation and redemption are brought to a sharper focus in Jesus Christ. A product of this world, and a gift of God to the world, Jesus of Nazareth points the way to an authentic and lasting freedom. In his person, his words and his deeds, he showed that the reigning presence of God was at hand, and he called everyone to conversion so that they might be part of this kingdom.¹⁹ Jesus of Nazareth told parables of the kingdom which shattered the deep structure of our accepted world view.²⁰ They remove our defenses and make us vulnerable to God. Here God touches us, and the kingdom of God arrives.

8. Jesus, the teller of the parables of the kingdom of God, was the Parable of God. His unswerving openness to God is found in his relationship to the traditional God of Israel, God as *Abba*.²¹ It can be seen in his preparedness, as the Son of Man, to undergo all possible insult, suffering and death, in the conviction that—in the end God would have the last word.²² He gathered

followers,²³ and shared his table with sinners, reversing accepted values as he offered them salvation.²⁴ He persevered in his life-style and in his teaching, despite the tension that this created around him,²⁵ culminating in his symbolic “destruction” of the Temple (Mk 11:15-19; Mt 21:12-13; Lk 19:45-48; Jn 2:13-22), his final supper which promised to be the first of many such suppers,²⁶ and his death upon the Cross.²⁷ Jesus of Nazareth was the most free human being that ever lived. He had no desire to *control* his future, as his radical trust in his Abba-Father freed him from all such concerns.

9. The Johannine story of the Cross tells of the revelation of a God who so loved the world that he gave his own Son.²⁸ The Cross is the place where Jesus is “lifted up”,²⁹ to glorify God and thus come to his own glory.³⁰ “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (15:13). Because the Cross makes God known, all subsequent believers must “look upon him whom they have pierced” (19:37).

10. So much of the search for liberation, freedom, or any other of the terms used today to speak of what might be called a “redemption” from the ambiguities of the human situation, are attempts to avoid and ignore suffering and death. The way of Jesus of Nazareth indicates that the free gift of oneself to the ways of God, cost what it may, brings glory to ourselves and also to God. The death of Jesus is not the act of a merciless God exacting the supreme sacrifice; it is not a “buying back” from some alienating power which has enslaved. It is the time and the place where a God who is love and who loves us is made visible. Jesus crucified tells how much God loves us, and affirms that in this gesture of love a human being has given unconditional assent to God's ways.

11. The Gospel of the crucified Jesus demonstrated the solidarity of the love of God with suffering. In the person of Jesus of Nazareth this saving love of God and his solidarity with us is given its historical and physical form. Crucifixion, a despicable form of death, became “Gospel”. Although much of the Old Testament sees death as final and tragic,³¹ this view is gradually overcome by the emerging idea of an after-life³² and in Jesus’ teaching that God is a God of the living, not of the dead.³³ But the bloody event of Calvary demanded that the early Church explain, both for itself and for its mission, the atoning efficacy of a sacrificial death of Jesus on the Cross.³⁴

12. The New Testament uses sacrificial images to explain the death of Christ. Salvation cannot be obtained through mere moral perfection, and sacrifice cannot be regarded as the relic of an outmoded religiosity. Judaism already provided the model of the expiatory death of the model martyr,³⁵ but this is carried further in the New Testament because of the decisive significance given to “the blood of Christ”. The Cross of Jesus, which occupied a central position in the early proclamation, involved the shedding of blood. The salvific significance of Jesus’ death was explained in terms borrowed from the Old Testament sacrificial liturgy, where blood played an important role. Continuing but transforming the Old Testament understanding of blood as the essential mark of life, sacrificial language and theology emerged in the early Church:

i. By a typological argument, the blood of Christ was regarded as effective in establishing a new and perfect covenant between God and the New Israel.³⁶ But unlike the repeated actions of the priests of the former covenant, the blood of Jesus, the only means of obtaining remission and sanctification,³⁷ flows only once, in a sacrifice which is offered once for all.³⁸

ii. The term “death” by itself would not signify a redemptive work. “Blood” implies more than death. It has the active connotation of life.³⁹ The sprinkling of blood upon the altar was regarded as the essential and decisive act of offering (Leviticus), but for Paul, the efficacy assigned to the blood of Christ (justification, redemption, reconciliation and atonement) goes far beyond the scope claimed for blood in Leviticus, where its effect is only negative, the covering or neutralizing of that which forbids safe or acceptable worship of God (Rom 3:24-25). Christ is regarded as the *kaporeth*: at the same time offering and propitiation.

iii. To be in covenant means to obey.⁴⁰ The idea of obedience and loyalty to Torah unto death was well known in first-century Judaism. Paul is able to explain the death of Jesus as obedience to the demands of God.⁴¹ This obedience is not the placating of an angry God, but a free offering of self which enables the creation of the New Covenant. The Christian enters the New Covenant by imitating the patience and obedience of Jesus.⁴²

iv. Like the whole of the earthly life of Jesus⁴³ his death on the Cross took place in the presence of, and with the assistance of, the Holy Spirit.⁴⁴ Here every analogy with the Old Testament falls short. It is Jesus Christ “who through the eternal Spirit offered himself” (Heb 9:14). Everything that happens on the Cross is a witness to the Father, and according to Paul, nobody can call God Father except in the Spirit, and the Spirit of God attests to him in believers.⁴⁵ For the Fourth Gospel the Spirit is given to the Church as Jesus cries out, “It is finished”, and hands down the Spirit (Jn 19:30: *Paredoken to pneuma*).

v. Jesus’ death was praise and exaltation of God. He remained faithful in death; he demonstrated the reign of God, and thus in the death of Jesus God was present. For this reason the earliest Church attributed to Jesus’ death a redemptive power: “Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek” (Heb 5:8-10). The sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross was not only *passio*, but also *actio*. The latter aspect, the voluntary self-offering to the Father, with its pneumatic content, is the most important aspect of his death. The drama is not a conflict between fate and the individual. On the contrary, the Cross is a liturgy of obedience manifesting the unity between the Father and the Son in the eternal Spirit.

13. Jesus risen affirms God’s gracious response to such self-giving love. In the end, Christianity gazes upon an empty Cross. Jesus of Nazareth’s unconditional acceptance of all that was asked of him by his Father has led to the Father’s unconditional “yes” to all that Jesus has said and done. It is the resurrection which proclaims that the way of Jesus is the way that overcomes sin and death into a life which has no limits.

14. Christianity has the task of announcing in word and deed the inbreak of freedom from the many slaveries which de-humanize God’s creation. The revelation of God in and through Jesus of Nazareth, crucified but risen, calls us to be all that we were created to be. The person who participates in the love of God revealed in and through Jesus Christ becomes what he or she was created to be: the image of God,⁴⁶ as Jesus is the icon of God.⁴⁷ The story of Jesus shows that it will cost no less than everything. But the

response of God to Jesus' story is equally dramatic—death and sin have been conquered once and for all.⁴⁸

15. The power of destruction remains in our hands; the story of Adam is still with us.⁴⁹ But the gift of Christ-like obedience offers the hope of transformation to the world,⁵⁰ free from the Law for a fruitful union with Christ (7:1-6). To live under the Law makes true freedom impossible (7:7-25), while life in the Spirit enables a freedom which comes from the gracious gift of God (8:1-13). But such freedom is only possible through death to sin so that we may be “alive to God in Christ Jesus”.⁵¹

16. The redeemed life of Christians has an obvious historical character, and an inevitable social dimension. Relationships between masters and slaves can never be the same again;⁵² there is no longer slave and free person, no longer Greek or Jew, no longer male and female.⁵³ Christians are called to be authentically human in a divided world, the unique manifestation of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, living by the Spirit and walking by the Spirit.⁵⁴

17. In the soteriology of the Letter to the Ephesians and the Letter to the Colossians, the themes of peace and reconciliation stand out: “He [Christ] is our peace” (Eph 2:14). Peace (*shalom*) and reconciliation here become the heart and best expression of redemption. But this aspect of redemption is not new. The word “peace” is to be understood in the light of its rich use across the biblical tradition. It has a threefold dimension:

i. It means peace with God: “Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord, Jesus Christ” (Rom 5:1).

ii. It means peace among human beings. It involves their being well-disposed to one another. The peace, which is Christ, destroys the walls of hatred, division and disagreement, and is built upon mutual trust.

iii. It means the all-important internal peace which the human being can find within himself or herself. This aspect of the peace of Christ has far-reaching consequences. Paul speaks in Romans 7:14-25 of the human person divided against itself, whose will and actions are in conflict with each other. This person, without the liberating power which comes from the gift of the grace and peace of Jesus Christ, can only cry out: “Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” (Rom 7:24). Paul

immediately provides the answer: “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (v. 25a).

18. In the hymn to Christ which opens the Letter to the Colossians (Col 1:15-20) the redemption brought about by Christ is praised as a universal, cosmic redemption. The whole creation is to be liberated from its bondage to decay to obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. This theme of the essentially God-oriented integrity of the whole of creation, already eloquently spelt out in Paul's earlier Letter to the Romans,⁵⁵ makes us conscious of our contemporary responsibilities towards creation.

19. In the Letter to the Hebrews we find the image of the wandering people of God, on their way to the promised land of God's rest (Heb 4:11). The model is that of Moses' generation, journeying through the wilderness for forty years in search of the promised land of Canaan. In Jesus Christ, however, we have the “pioneer of salvation” (2:10) who, because of his Sonship, far surpasses Moses.⁵⁶ He is the high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. His priesthood not only surpasses the priesthood of the Old Covenant, but has abolished it (7:1-28). Jesus Christ has freed us from our sins through his sacrifice. He has sanctified us and made us his brethren. He has redeemed those who, through fear of death, were subject to lifelong bondage (2:10-15). He appears now as our advocate before the face of God (9:24; 7:25).

20. Thus, the Christian journey through history is marked by an unshakeable trust. It is true that “hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience” (Rom 8:24-25). We may not see it, but we have been given the promise of the New Jerusalem, the place where: “He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.... Behold, I make all things new” (Rev 21:3-5). Already gifted with the Spirit, the freedom and the guarantee⁵⁷ which flows from the death and resurrection of Jesus, we move confidently towards the end of time crying: “Come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev 22:20).

PART III: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

A. Patristic Interpretations of Redemption

Introduction

1. The Fathers continued the New Testament teaching on redemption, developing and elaborating certain themes in the light of their own religious and cultural situation. Stressing liberation from paganism, idolatry, and demonic powers, and in accordance with the contemporary mentality, they interpreted redemption mainly as a liberation of the mind and spirit. However, they did not ignore the importance of the body, in which the signs of deterioration and death, as consequences of sin,⁵⁸ appeared most obviously. Adhering to the axiom “*caro cardo salutis*”, they repudiated the Gnostic conception of the redemption of the soul only.

2. The Fathers have a clear notion of the “objective” work of redemption and reconciliation which brings about the salvation of the whole world, and a “subjective” work which concerns individual human beings. The “objective” is intimately concerned with the incarnation and Christology, while the “subjective” is concerned with the sacraments and the doctrine of grace, which accompany and direct human history towards the *eschaton*.

The Apostolic Fathers and the Apologists

3. Ignatius of Antioch uses the soteriological title *Christos iatros* (*Christus medicus*). “There is one Physician who is both flesh and spirit, born and yet not born, who is God in man, true life in death, both of Mary and of God, first passible and then impassible, Jesus Christ our Lord.”⁵⁹ Christ does not merely cure the illness, but he embraces death, in as much as it is life; indeed true life is found in death. His healing activity, which is part of his redemptive work in the Gospels, expresses first of all his divine goodness: he intended his healings and exorcisms to be good deeds for which people would praise the Father. His healings were founded on his divine power to forgive sins, for which he required faith as the sole condition. This stream of thought can be found in the First Letter of Clement,⁶⁰ the Letter to Diognetus,⁶¹ and in Origen.⁶²

4. Justin's thought is intimately tied to the creed. His understanding of the *Christos didaskalos* and the *Logos didaskalos* recalls Jesus' teaching under Pontius Pilate. The Apologists emphasize the figure of *Christus Magister*

(*Christos didaskalos*), and their interest still centers on his teaching and exorcisms, but Justin relies mainly on the tradition of the sacramental practice of the Church and on the credal formulations for his explanation of the healing presence of Christ. The words of the Logos come with divine force; they have liberating power. Genesis 6:1-4 set in motion evil forces, and salvation history is marked by the encounters between Christ and the demons in a struggle against ever-growing depravity, as is taught in Justin's *Apologia* (5-6, 6) and in Athenagoras (*Supplic.* 25, 3, 3-4). The article of the Apostles' Creed "*descendit ad inferos*" describes the culmination of this battle through Jesus' baptism, temptation, exorcisms and resurrection. In a similar fashion, Justin's use of *soter* to speak of the continuation of Christ's redeeming work comes from the formulas of the liturgy and the creed. The same can be said for his idea of Jesus as *Redemptor* and helper, Son of God, first born of all creation, born of a virgin, who suffered under Pontius Pilate, died and rose from the dead, and who ascended into heaven, expelling, defeating and subduing all the demons.⁶³ Justin, while continuing the thought of the Apostolic Fathers, depends also upon the baptismal creeds, the New Testament, and the *soteria* lived out in the sacraments of the Church.

Irenaeus

5. Irenaeus, at the beginning of *Adversus haereses* Book 5, explains: Christ the teacher (*Christus Magister*) is the Word made man who has established communion with us, so that we can see him, grasp his word, imitate his deeds, fulfill his commands, and put on incorruptibility. In this we are remade in the likeness of Christ. At the same time, Christ is mighty Word and true man (*Verbum potens et homo verus*), who intelligibly (*rationabiliter*) redeemed us by his blood, giving himself as a ransom (*redemptionem*) for us. For Irenaeus, redemption was realized in a way which the human being was capable of understanding (*rationabiliter*): the Word, who is absolute in power, is also perfect in justice. The Word can therefore oppose the enemy, not with force, but with persuasion and kindness, assuming all that rightfully belongs to him (*sua proprie et benigne assumens*). Irenaeus does not concede that Satan has any right to domination over humankind after the Fall. On the contrary, Satan rules unjustly (*injuste*) because we belong to God according to our nature (*natura essemus Dei omnipotentis*). In redeeming us by his blood Christ inaugurated

a new stage in the history of salvation, sending forth the Spirit of the Father so that God and humanity can unite and be in harmony. Through his incarnation he truly and surely granted incorruptibility to humanity.⁶⁴ The Redeemer and the redemption are inseparable because redemption is nothing else than the unity of the redeemed with the Redeemer.⁶⁵ The very presence of the divine Logos in humanity has a healing and elevating impact on human nature in general.

6. Irenaeus' notion of "recapitulation" (*anakephalaiosis*) involves the restoration of God's image in man. Although the expression comes from Ephesians 1:10, Irenaeus' thought has a broad biblical basis. The *terminus a quo* of redemption is deliverance from the dominion of Satan and the recapitulation of the previous history of humankind. The *terminus ad quem* is the positive aspect: the renewal of God's image and likeness. The first Adam carries in himself the seed of the whole human race; the second Adam, by means of the incarnation, recapitulates every individual who has lived until then, and addresses all people and languages. Redemption does not only look to the past; it is an openness to the future. For the recapitulation of God's image and likeness both the *Verbum* and the *Spiritus* must be present. The first Adam foreshadows the incarnate Word, in view of whom the *Verbum* and the *Spiritus* had formed the first man, but he came to a standstill in "childhood" because the Spirit who gives growth left him. The granting of the likeness of the Holy Spirit introduces the new and final period of the "*oeconomia*", which was completed at the resurrection when the whole human race received the form of the new Adam.⁶⁶ The pneumatic aspect of the *anakephalaiosis* is important because the enduring possession of life is possible only through the Spirit.⁶⁷ Although the incarnation summarizes the past, condensing it in the recapitulation, it in some sense brings the past to an end. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which was inaugurated at the resurrection, directs history towards the *eschaton*, and makes the *anakephalaiosis* truly universal.

Greek Traditions

7. Athanasius never overlooked the significance of sin, but he saw clearly that the redeemer had to heal, not only the reality of sin itself, but also its consequences: the loss of likeness to God, corruption and death.⁶⁸ Athanasius held that if God had only needed to consider sin, he could have effected the redemption in some other way than by the incarnation and

crucifixion. He did not deny that Christ entered into immediate contact with sin, but affirmed that although sin did not affect Christ's divine nature, he experienced in his human nature the consequences of sin. He entered the world of sin and corruption, because corruption and death are themselves sin.⁶⁹

8. Gregory of Nazianzus teaches that the incarnation took place because humankind needed greater help. Previous to the incarnation, God's pedagogy had been insufficient.⁷⁰ Christ took on the whole of the human condition to free us from the domination of sin,⁷¹ but the source of salvation, made possible by the incarnation, is the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.⁷² Gregory totally rejects the supposition that God entered into negotiation with Satan, and the suggestion that a ransom was paid to the Father. Whatever was touched by the divinity was sanctified.⁷³ This notion is developed by Gregory of Nyssa who combines Johannine imagery to claim that the Word, as a shepherd, united himself to the hundredth sheep. Drawing an analogy with “the Word became flesh”, he states that “the shepherd became the sheep.”⁷⁴ This idea returns in Augustine: “Ipse et pro omnibus pateretur, ovis est factus.”⁷⁵

Latin Traditions

9. In the Latin tradition, Ambrose and Augustine drew from the richness of the Church's “mysteries”, the liturgical life, the prayer and especially the sacramental life, flourishing in the Latin Church by the fourth century. Ambrose, whose knowledge of Greek enabled him to bring much of the Eastern tradition to the West, based his teachings upon the sacraments of Baptism, Penance and Eucharist. This not only furnishes us with a priceless testimony to the sacramental life of the Latin Church, but to the way in which the *Ecclesia orans* understood the mystery of God's redeeming action in the event of Christ, past (objective redemption), present and future (subjective redemption).⁷⁶

10. Augustine is not an innovator in Christian thought on redemption. However, with depth and insight, he elaborates and synthesizes the traditions, the practices and the prayers of the Church which he received. Only God can help humankind in its powerlessness.⁷⁷ Augustine reveals the deep gulf between our actual state and our divine vocation. There can be no dealing between God and Satan. Redemption can only be a work of grace.⁷⁸

In God's plan of salvation the mission of Christ is restricted to a certain time, but yet is a supra-terrestrial reality: the love of the angry God towards humanity. This everlasting love, through the crucifixion and death of Christ, brings about reconciliation and Sonship.⁷⁹ The work of redemption must be worthy of both God and man, and thus God forgives and forgets sin only if the human person repents and atones for it. When this happens, God abolishes sin and death. Thus reparation and reconciliation are based on righteousness, as only in this way can humanity be responsibly involved in the history of salvation. Humanity is lured towards reconciliation to such an extent that it actively accepts salvation and redemption.

11. Redemption is not an event which simply happens to the human being. We are actively involved in it, through our head, Jesus Christ. The redeeming sacrifice of Christ is the apex of the cultic and moral activity of humankind. It is the one and only meritorious sacrifice (*sacrificium singulare*). The death of Jesus Christ is a perfect sacrifice and an act of worship. The crucifixion is a summation of all the sacrifices previously offered to God. Accepted by the Father, it obtains salvation for Christ's brothers and sisters. Repeating an idea, which, as with Ambrose, was associated with his understanding of the redemptive effect of the sacramental life of the Church, especially Baptism, Augustine taught that all sacrifices, including that of the Church, can only be a "figure"⁸⁰ of the *sacrificium singulare*, the sacrifice of Christ.⁸¹

12. Although it is sheer grace, redemption involves the satisfaction made through the obedience of the Son of God, whose blood is the ransom by means of which he merited and obtained justification and liberation.⁸² Jesus Christ fights his battle as a human being and in this way saves the honor of humanity in his perfect response to God (the "*factio*" called for from humankind) and also reveals the majesty of God (the "*satis*" from God which completes "*satisfactio*"). Thus Christ is not only a healer but also a hallower, who saves by sanctifying. Continuing a tradition of the earlier Fathers, Augustine insists that Christ is the head of humankind, but because he was already also Savior of humankind before all time and before his incarnation, Christ influences all individuals, as well as humanity in general.

Conclusion

13. Themes which come to us from the biblical tradition form the basis of the patristic reflection upon redemption. The gulf between the human condition, and the hope for freedom to be sons and daughters of the one true God, are clearly understood and presented, God's initiative bridges the gulf through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and his resurrection. Within the different schools of thought, these elements form the basis of the patristic reflection. Equally important to the Fathers is the association of human history and of human individuals with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. A life of love and obedience mirrors, and, in some way, involves us in the perennial significance of his life and death. Although they spoke in different ways, reflecting their own world views and their own problems, the Fathers of the Church further elaborated, on the basis of the New Testament and the growing “mysteries” of the Church's life, prayer and practice, a solid body of tradition upon which later theological reflection could build.

B. More Recent Theories of Redemption

14. Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Church provide a solid foundation for reflection on the redemption of the human race through the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Christ as the incarnate Son of God. They provide also an abundance of metaphors and analogies with which to illustrate and contemplate Christ's redemptive work. Speaking of Christ as conqueror, teacher, and physician, the Fathers tended to emphasize the “descending” action of God, but they did not neglect the work of Christ as one who offers satisfaction, paying the “ransom” that is due, and offering the one acceptable sacrifice.

15. It would be beyond the scope of the present document to trace the history of the theology of redemption down through the centuries. It may suffice for our purposes to indicate a few highlights of that history for the sake of ferreting out the main issues that have to be dealt with in a contemporary treatment.

Middle Ages

16. The medieval contribution to the theology of redemption may be studied in Anselm, Abelard, and Thomas Aquinas. In his classic work *Cur Deus Homo*, Anselm, without forgetting the “descending” initiative of God in the incarnation, puts the accent on the “ascending” work of legal

restitution. He begins with the idea of God as sovereign Lord, whose honor is offended by sin. The order of commutative justice demands adequate reparation, which can only be given by the God-man. "This debt was so great that, while none but man must solve the debt, none but God was able to do it; so that he who does it must be both God and man."⁸³ By offering adequate satisfaction, Christ delivers humanity from the penalty due to sin. Emphasizing the satisfactory death of Christ, Anselm is silent regarding the redemptive efficacy of Christ's resurrection. Concerned with deliverance from guilt, he pays little attention to the aspect of divinization. Concentrating his attention on objective redemption, Anselm does not expatiate on the subjective appropriation of the effects of redemption by the redeemed. He does, however, recognize that Christ set an example of holiness for all to follow.⁸⁴

17. Peter Abelard, while not denying the satisfactory value of Christ's death, prefers to speak of Christ as teaching by way of example. In his view, God could have satisfied his honor without the Cross of Christ, but God wanted sinners to recognize themselves as objects of the crucified love of Jesus and thereby be converted. Abelard sees in the passion of Christ a revelation of God's love, an example that stirs us to imitation. As his *locus classicus* he appeals to John 15:13: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends."⁸⁵

18. Thomas Aquinas takes up Anselm's satisfaction concept but interprets it in ways reminiscent of Abelard. For Aquinas satisfaction is the concrete expression of sorrow for sin. He holds that Christ's passion compensated for sin by being preeminently an act of love, without which there could be no satisfaction.⁸⁶ In his sacrifice Christ offered God more than was demanded. Quoting 1 John 2:2, Aquinas declares that the passion of Christ satisfied superabundantly for the sins of the whole world.⁸⁷ The death of Christ was necessary only as a result of God's free decision to redeem humankind in a suitable manner, showing forth both the justice and the mercy of God.⁸⁸ For Aquinas Christ the Redeemer heals and divinizes sinful human beings not only by his Cross but also by his incarnation and by all his *acta et passa in carne*, including his glorious resurrection. In his suffering and death Christ is not a mere substitute for fallen sinners, but rather the representative head of a regenerated humanity. Aquinas maintains "that Christ is the head of the Church, and that the grace that he possesses as head is passed on to all the

members of the Church because of the organic conjunction that obtains within the Mystical Body.”⁸⁹

Reformation and Counter-Reformation

19. The Protestant Reformers took over the Anselmian theory of satisfaction, but they did not distinguish, as he did, between the alternatives of satisfaction and punishment. For Luther, satisfaction takes place precisely through punishment. Christ stands under God's wrath, for, as Paul teaches in the Letter to the Galatians, 3:13, he took on not only the consequences of sin, but sin itself.⁹⁰ Christ, according to Luther, is the greatest robber, murderer, adulterer, and blasphemer that ever lived.⁹¹ At some points Luther speaks paradoxically of Christ as altogether pure and yet the greatest sinner.⁹² Because Christ has fully paid the debt due to God, we are dispensed from any performance. Sinners can complete the “happy exchange” if they cease to rely on any merits of their own and clothe themselves by faith with the merits of Christ, just as he clothed himself with humanity's sins.⁹³ Justification takes place through faith alone.

20. Calvin presents an imputative understanding of the sinfulness of Christ. Christ, he says, was covered by the filth of sin through “transferred imputation”.⁹⁴ “The guilt that held us liable for punishment has been transferred to the head of the Son of God. We must above all remember this substitution”⁹⁵ in order to be delivered from anxiety. Not only did Jesus die as a malefactor; he also went to hell and suffered the pains of the damned.⁹⁶

21. In the seventeenth century Hugo Grotius cast the soteriology of Calvin into a more juridical form, explaining at some length how the shedding of Christ's blood shows forth God's hatred for sin.⁹⁷

22. The Council of Trent gives a brief discussion of redemption in its Decree on Justification. Basing itself on Augustine and Aquinas, the Council maintained that Christ through his great love merited our justification and satisfied for us on the tree of the Cross.⁹⁸ The doctrine of satisfaction is integrated by Trent into a broader framework that includes the divinization imparted to justified sinners through the Holy Spirit, who makes them living members of the Body of Christ.⁹⁹

Liberal Protestantism

23. In some versions of Protestant, and even Catholic, pulpit oratory, the penal substitution theory depicted God almost as a vengeful sovereign exacting reparation for his offended honor. The idea that God would punish the innocent in place of the guilty seemed incompatible with the Christian conviction that God is eminently just and loving. It is understandable, therefore, that liberal Christians took a very different approach, in which the vindictive justice of God held no place. Going back in some respects to Abelard, some nineteenth-century theologians emphasized the exemplary love of Jesus, which evokes a response of gratitude, enabling others to imitate his loving actions and thereby attain justification. Under the influence of Kant the doctrine of redemption was purified of its supposed “sacerdotal corruptions”, including the concepts of sacrifice and penal satisfaction. Albrecht Ritschl, with due credit to Kant, redefined redemption in terms of freedom to collaborate in an association of virtue with a view to the “kingdom of God”.¹⁰⁰

24. A variant of the liberal theory may be found in Schleiermacher, who maintained that Jesus draws us to perfection not so much by what he does as by what he is, as the supreme instance of human consciousness transformed by union with the divine. Rather than speaking simply of moral influence, Schleiermacher used organic, even physical, categories of causality. “By imparting to them a new vital principle the Redeemer assumes the believers into the fellowship of his unclouded blessedness, and this is his reconciling activity.”¹⁰¹

Twentieth-Century Movements

25. Several new theories of redemption have surfaced in the twentieth century. In the kerygmatic theology of Rudolf Bultmann God redeems humanity by means of the proclamation of the Cross and the resurrection. The redemptive significance of the Cross, for Bultmann, lies not in any “ascending” theory of sacrifice or vicarious satisfaction (both of which savor of mythology), but in the “descending” judgment of the world and its deliverance from the power of evil. The paradoxical message of salvation through the Cross arouses in its hearers a response of loving submission, whereby they are moved from inauthentic to authentic existence. “To believe in the cross of Christ does not mean to concern ourselves with a mythical process wrought outside of us and our world, with an objective

event turned by God to our advantage, but rather to make the cross of Christ our own, to undergo crucifixion with him.”¹⁰²

26. Paul Tillich has a similar existential theory, except that he ascribes the power to overcome human estrangement to the biblical image of Jesus as the Christ, and especially to the symbol of the Cross. “The Cross is not the cause but the effective manifestation of God's taking the consequences of human guilt upon himself.”¹⁰³ As God participates in human suffering, so we are redeemed by freely participating in the divine participation and allowing it to transform us.¹⁰⁴

27. In either form the existential theory attributes redemption to the power of God working through the words or symbols that transform human self-understanding. Only secondary attention is paid to Jesus himself, who is considered to be an obscure, myth-encumbered figure of history.

28. Reacting against the neglect of the historical Jesus in kerygmatic theology and against the Church-centered piety of recent centuries, some recent theologians have striven to reconstruct the actual history of Jesus and have emphasized the manner in which his death resulted from his struggle against oppressive and unjust structures, both political and religious. Jesus, it is held, championed the rights of the poor, the marginalized, the persecuted. His followers are required to enter into solidarity with the downtrodden. Jesus' life and death are seen as redemptive insofar as they inspire others to take up the struggle for a just society. This type of soteriology is characteristic of liberation theology and some versions of political theology.¹⁰⁵

29. Liberation theology can seem to be one-sided in its emphasis on social reform. As some of its adherents acknowledge, holiness cannot be achieved, nor can sin be overcome, by a mere change of social and economic structures. Because evil has its source to a great extent in the human heart, hearts and minds must be transformed and imbued with life from above. Liberation theologians differ among themselves in the emphasis that they give to eschatological hope. Some of them state explicitly that the kingdom of God cannot be fully established by human action within history but only by God's action at the *Parousia*.

30. Among modern theologians who wish to restore the sense of God's "descending" action on behalf of his needy creatures, Karl Rahner deserves special mention. He depicts Jesus as the unsurpassable symbol that manifests God's irreversible universal salvific will. As a symbolic reality, Christ effectively represents both God's irrevocable self-communication in grace and the acceptance of that self-communication by humanity.¹⁰⁶ Rahner is very reserved towards the idea of expiatory sacrifice, which he describes as an ancient notion that was presupposed as valid in New Testament times, but one that "offers little help today toward understanding what we are looking for", i.e. the causal significance of the death of Jesus.¹⁰⁷ In Rahner's theory of quasi-sacramental causality God's salvific will posits the sign, in this case the death of Jesus along with his resurrection, and in and through the sign it causes what is signified.¹⁰⁸

31. It would seem that for Rahner the essential benefits of redemption may be obtained through the acceptance of the inner self-communication of God which is given to all, as a "supernatural existential", even before the good news of Jesus Christ is heard. The message of the gospel, when it becomes known, makes it possible to understand better what is already implied in God's inner word of grace. All who hear and believe the Christian message obtain assurance that God's final word toward human beings is not one of severity and judgment but one of love and mercy.

32. Rahner's theory is of unquestionable value in placing the emphasis on God's loving initiative and on the appropriate response of trust and gratitude. It gets away from the legalistic and moralistic limitations of some earlier theories. Some have questioned, however, whether the theory gives sufficient place to the causal efficacy of the Christ event and especially to the redemptive character of Jesus' death on the Cross. Does the Christ-symbol simply express and communicate what is antecedently given in God's universal salvific will? Is God's inner word (as "transcendental revelation") emphasized at the expense of the outer word given in the proclamation of the gospel as good news?

33. Going beyond Rahner, several contemporary theologians have introduced a more radical distinction between the transcendental and the predicamental aspects of religion. For them revelation as a transcendental orientation is given to the human spirit always and everywhere. In the

various religions, including Judaism and Christianity, they find historically and culturally conditioned symbolizations of a spiritual experience common to them all. All religions are regarded as redemptive to the extent that their “myths” arouse awareness of the inward working of grace and impel their adherents to liberative action. Notwithstanding their doctrinal divergences, it is contended, the various religions are united in their orientation to salvation. “The common thrust, however, remains *soteriological*, the concern of most religions being *liberation (vimukti, moksa, nirvana)*.”¹⁰⁹ On the basis of reasoning such as this, one contemporary theologian calls for a transition from theocentrism or Christocentrism to what he calls “soteriocentrism”.¹¹⁰

34. These interreligious approaches are praiseworthy attempts to achieve harmony between different religious conceptions and to reclaim the centrality of soteriology. But the distinct identities of the religions are placed in jeopardy. Christianity, in particular, is denatured if deprived of its doctrine that all redemption comes not simply through an interior working of divine grace or through human commitment to liberative action but through the saving work of the incarnate Word, whose life and death are actual historical events.

35. From the transcendental theology of religions there is but a short step to the New Age theories to which allusion has been made in Part I. On the assumption that the divine is an inherent constituent of human nature, some theologians urge a creation-centered religion of celebration in place of the traditional Christian emphasis on the Fall and the redemption. Salvation is held to consist in the discovery and actualization of the immanent divine presence through cosmic spirituality, joyous liturgy, and psychological techniques of consciousness-raising or self-mastery.¹¹¹

36. The methods of spiritual awareness and discipline that have been developed in the great religious traditions and in some contemporary “human potential” movements should not be neglected, but they are not to be equated with redemption in the Christian sense of the word. There are no valid grounds for minimizing the pervasive effects of sin and the incapacity of humanity to redeem itself. Humanity is not redeemed, nor is God fittingly glorified, except through God's merciful action in Jesus Christ.

Retrieval of Earlier Tradition

37. A number of contemporary Catholic theologians are seeking to maintain in tension the “descending” and “ascending” themes of classical soteriology. Often leaning towards a narrative or dramatic theology of redemption, these authors have retrieved important themes in the biblical accounts, in Irenaeus, Augustine, and Thomas Aquinas. The following composite sketch is based on materials taken from a variety of recent authors.

38. As distinct from legalistic theories of restitution or penal substitution, these theories put the accent on what we may call representative headship. While not overlooking the opposition between the Redeemer and the redeemed, these theories emphasize the way in which Christ identifies himself with fallen humanity. He is the new Adam, the progenitor of a redeemed humanity, the Head or the Vine into whom individuals must be incorporated as members or branches. Sacramental participation is the normal manner whereby individuals become members of the Body of Christ and grow in their union with him.

39. The theory of representative headship understands redemption as God's gracious intervention into the human situation of sin and suffering. The incarnate Word becomes the gathering point for the constitution of a reconciled and restored humanity. The entire career of Jesus, including the mysteries of his hidden and public life, is redemptive, but it comes to a culmination in the paschal mystery whereby Jesus, through his loving submission to the Father's will, seals a new covenant relationship between God and humanity. The death of Jesus, which results inevitably from his courageous opposition to human sin, constitutes his supreme act of sacrificial self-giving, and is under that aspect pleasing to the Father, satisfying in an eminent way for the disorder of sin. Without being personally guilty or being punished by God for the sins of others, Jesus lovingly identifies with sinful humanity and experiences the pain of its alienation from God.¹¹² In his meekness Jesus allows his enemies to unload their resentment upon him. Returning love for hatred, and consenting to suffer as though he were guilty, Jesus makes God's merciful love present in history and opens a channel through which redemptive grace can flow forth upon the world.

40. The work of redemption completes itself in the risen life of the Savior. In raising Jesus from the dead, God establishes him as the source of life for

the many. The resurrection is the outpouring of God's creative love into the empty space created by Jesus' "kenotic" self-abnegation. Through the risen Christ, acting in the Holy Spirit, the process of redemption continues to the end of time, as new individuals are, so to speak, "grafted" into the Body of Christ. Sinners are redeemed when they open themselves to God's generous self-bestowal in Christ; when, with the help of his grace, they imitate his obedience, and when they place their hope of salvation in God's continued mercy in his Son. To be redeemed, in short, is to enter into communion with God through solidarity with Christ. In the Body of Christ the walls of division are progressively demolished; reconciliation and peace are achieved.

PART IV: SYSTEMATIC PERSPECTIVES

A. The Identity of the Redeemer: Who Is the Redeemer?

1. From the very ideas of sin or fallenness, on the one hand, and of grace or divinization on the other, it seems evident that fallen human nature was not by itself capable of restoring its broken relationship with God and entering into friendship with him. A true Redeemer, therefore, would have to be divine. It was highly fitting, however, that humankind should play a part in repairing for its own collective fault. In the words of Thomas Aquinas, “A mere man could not satisfy for the whole human race; but God did not have to make satisfaction; therefore it was needed [*oportebat*] for Jesus Christ to be both God and man.”¹¹³ According to Christian faith, God did not cancel out human guilt without the participation of humanity in the person of the new Adam, in whom the whole race was to be regenerated.

2. The redemption, therefore, is a process involving both the divinity and the humanity of Christ. If he were not divine he could not pronounce God's effective judgment of forgiveness nor could he bring a share in God's inner Trinitarian life. But if he were not man Jesus Christ could not make reparation in the name of humanity for the offenses committed by Adam and Adam's posterity. Only because he has both natures could he be the representative head who offers satisfaction for all sinners and who bestows grace upon them.

3. As a work of God *ad extra*, redemption is attributable to all three of the divine persons, but in different respects it is attributed to each of them. The initiative whereby the Son and the Spirit are sent into the world is attributed to the Father, the aboriginal source from whom all blessings flow. The Son, inasmuch as he becomes incarnate and dies on the Cross, effects the reversal whereby we are transformed from enmity into friendship with God. The Holy Spirit, sent into the minds and hearts of believers, enables them to partake personally in the benefits of God's redemptive action. After the Ascension of Christ, the Holy Spirit makes present the fruits of Christ's redemptive activity in and through the Church.¹¹⁴

4. Who is the Redeemer? This question can only be answered from within the Church and through the Church. To know the Redeemer is to belong to the Church. Augustine emphasized this in his teaching on the whole Christ, *Christus totus*, Head and Members together. As Gregory the Great put it,

“Our Redeemer is seen to be one person with the holy Church that he has made his own.”¹¹⁵ The life of the Church as the Body of Christ is not to be amputated from the life of the Head. John Eudes provides an initial approach to a description of the Redeemer's uniqueness: “We must continue to accomplish in ourselves the stages of Jesus' life and his mysteries and often to beg him to perfect and realize them in us and in his whole Church. ... For it is the plan of the Son of God to make us ... partake in his mysteries and to extend them to and continue them in us and in his whole Church.”¹¹⁶ *Gaudium et spes*, 22, expresses this all-embracing uniqueness of the Redeemer: “The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light. For Adam, the first man, was a figure of Him Who was to come, namely Christ the Lord. Christ, the final Adam, by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and His love, fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear. . . . Since human nature as He assumed it was not annulled, by that very fact it has been raised up to a divine dignity in our respect too. For by His incarnation the Son of God has united Himself in some fashion with every man. He worked with human hands, He thought with a human mind, acted by human choice and loved with a human heart.” John Paul II echoes this in *Redemptor hominis*, 13, 3: “With each [man] Christ has united himself for ever through this mystery [of the redemption].”

5. Through the incarnation of the Word the Redeemer's uniqueness becomes discernible to us already in its redeeming force. In the paschal mystery the Redeemer has made salvation available to all: “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself” (Jn 12:32). The gift of Pentecost enabled his apostles and disciples finally to recognize who and what Jesus was as in the fellowship of the Church—the teaching, the breaking of bread, the prayers (Acts 2:42)—they became aware of what Jesus had done for them, what he had taught and commanded. This is precisely the function of the Holy Spirit in Johannine theology (cf. Jn 16:13-15).

6. Hence we as human beings can come to know who the Redeemer is, but only within the community of the Church and through it. Christ cannot be isolated from the Church. Christ is precisely the one who nourishes his body as Church and so draws the community of believers into the work of

bringing about the redemption. It would also be a mistake to burden the Church with an autonomy it could not bear on its own.

7. Christ's uniqueness is to be understood within this “Christological constellation” that takes concrete shape in the Church. The Easter mystery forms the context for the Church's liturgical year.¹¹⁷ Christians are invited—through the objectivity of their faith (*fides quae*) and also in accordance with their own possibilities within the Church community—to confess and preach Christ as the one and only Redeemer of this world so that the Church is the sacrament of universal salvation. The Christ event will be made available through the Church in so far as the Church perceives, explains and preaches the uniqueness of the Redeemer.

8. The Church makes present the one and only Redeemer in that as a community (*koinonia*) living out the Easter mystery, the Church welcomes all who experience justification in Christ in Baptism or in the sacrament of Reconciliation and want to live out the redemption. Though here we must also take into account that communion in Christ's sacrifice (“*prospora*”) also involves a share in his sufferings;¹¹⁸ this suffering with Christ which is expressed both sacramentally and effectively in the Christian life contributes to the building up of the Church and is hence redemptive.

9. The meaning of the redemption and the uniqueness of the Redeemer are revealed in the activities that are constitutive of the Church in this world: *martyria*, *diakonia* and *leitourgia*. As the Lord's *koinonia* the Church summons humanity to a selfless *prospora* lifestyle which has its basis principally in the Eucharist but also in the communion of saints—in which Mary has a special place. This knowledge, acquired from the lived faith of the Church, that an inter-subjectivity exists between the redeemed and the one and only Redeemer, can be objectified in genuine theological statements. Such statements, when they start from the objectivity of the Redeemer, can strengthen the individual's life of faith and give it a precise shape. Very ancient, for example, and inseparably linked to knowledge of the uniqueness of the Redeemer, is the celebration of Sunday as the Day of the Resurrection of the one who was crucified.

10. The association of the Church in the redemptive work of Christ is eminently verified in the person of Mary, Mother of the Church. By singular grace she was preserved from all sin, and her association with

Christ's redemptive work would come to a climax at the crucifixion, when, “grieving exceedingly with her only begotten Son, [she united] herself with a maternal heart with His sacrifice, and lovingly [consented] to the immolation of this Victim which she herself had brought forth.”¹¹⁹ In the words of John Paul II, “With the redeeming death of her Son, the maternal mediation of the handmaid of the Lord took on a universal dimension. ... Mary's cooperation shares, in its subordinate character, in the universality of the mediation of the Redeemer, the one Mediator.”¹²⁰

11. The Father has made us his children in that he redeemed us through the human will of Christ. In that Christ obeyed the Father's will and gave his life for many,¹²¹ his person and his work of redemption in our world acquire a meaning and a dignity that are unique and beyond comparison. Christ's being-from-the-Father continues in his surrender-for-us. This unique relationship, of its very nature, cannot be theologically integrated into any other religion, even though the work of redemption is accessible to all. The fact that Christ's human will as Redeemer is historically conditioned does not of itself exclude the possibility that it is humanly *sui generis* which is perhaps what Hebrews refers to as “learning obedience”, an obedience that Christ will radically fulfill in the Easter mystery. Because this human will of Christ as Redeemer is totally in agreement with the divine will (“Not my will, but thy will, be done”) Christ is, as incarnate mediator, also our advocate in the heavenly sanctuary.¹²²

12. The notion of the self-giving of the Redeemer for all is undoubtedly dependent on the Easter mystery, but it is no less dependent on the mystery of the incarnation and the mysteries of the life of Christ which are for Christians invitation and example in living their lives as “*fili in Filio*”.¹²³ Here it becomes clear that the Christian life has a Trinitarian dimension. In the course of the justification that the believer can receive in the Church, Christian experience passes over with the Redeemer into a sanctification of the redeemed life which is guided and perfected—more intensively than in justification—by the Holy Spirit. This means that we are invited through Christ in the Holy Spirit to share, already now, in the divine life of the Trinity. The Father's gift, namely the person of his Son and the sharing in the Holy Spirit, thus forbids a Pelagianism that would attempt to justify human nature through its own resources—and likewise excludes a quietism that would involve the human person too little.

13. The Christian life is correctly seen in the tradition as a preparation for eternal fellowship with God. In this sense we are journeying “in the flesh” towards our one and only Lord, the Redeemer, in order, one day, to be more fully united with him. However, the uniqueness of the Redeemer is revealed in the life of believers here and now. In this world, marked as it is both by the goodness of creation and the sinfulness of the Fall, Christians try, by their imitation of Christ, to live out and to propagate the redemption. Their virtuous living and the example of a Christian lifestyle make it possible for people in every epoch to come to know who the one and only Redeemer of this world is. Evangelization is precisely this.

B. Humanity Fallen and Redeemed

14. Christian faith in the redemption is first of all faith in God. In Jesus Christ, his own and only incarnate Son, “the one whom men call God” (Saint Thomas) reveals himself in revealing himself as the one and true Savior in whom all can trust. At the same time, however, we must note that this God-Savior also reveals *mankind* to itself: its own condition is therefore radically situated and constantly called to define itself, in relation to the salvation which is offered.

15. How is the human condition enlightened by the salvation which God offers it in Jesus Christ? How does humanity appear in the face of redemption? The answer could enlighten the human historic situation, but as we have noted in Chapter I, it is also marked by important contrasts.

16. It could be said that in face of the redemption that Jesus Christ offers, humanity discovers that it is fundamentally oriented towards salvation (1) and profoundly marked by sin (2).

Humanity for Salvation

17. The first light that Christ's redemption throws on humanity is that he reveals it to itself as at one and the same time *destined* for salvation and *capable* of accepting it.

18. The entire biblical tradition is full of situations in which the people of Israel—or the groups of poor people who are called to become the people of Israel—were led to search for and to confess their God through interventions by which God rescues them from distress and perdition. From the Exodus adventures where Yahweh intervened with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, to the pardon given to the broken and repentant heart, it is

clear that for God's people and for every believer, it is to the extent to which God appears to bring *salvation*, that God reveals himself.

19. But correlatively it is clear that God intervenes and thus reveals himself in relation to a *need* for salvation clearly manifested in its true dimensions to those who benefit from the salvation which God gives them. This general characteristic of biblical revelation will be highlighted in the New Testament.

20. God was so faithful to his “commitment” to humanity, to his plan for a covenant with humanity that “at the appointed time” he sent them his only Son. In other words, God was not simply satisfied to intervene “from outside”, by means of intermediaries, that is to say, remaining at a distance from those whom he wished to save. In Jesus Christ, God came among them, God became one of them. The Father sent his only Son, in the Holy Spirit, to share the human condition (in all things except sin), so as to establish communication with mankind. This was done to allow them to return fully to God's favor and to enter fully into the divine life. The result is that the human condition sees itself in a completely new perspective.

21. The human condition appears first of all as *the object of love* which can go “to the extreme”: the proof that God loves us is that Christ, while we were still sinners, “died for us” (Rom 5:8) and “if God is for us, who will be against us. He who did not spare his only Son, but delivered him up for us all, will not refuse us any favors” (Rom 8:31-32).

22. Then there is the fullness of destiny which awaits humanity in accordance with the salvific will which God manifested in its regard in his Son who became incarnate, died and rose from the dead. There is also the radical nature of salvation which God destines for humanity in Jesus Christ: it is invited to enter in turn into the dynamism of the paschal mystery of Jesus, the Christ. On the one hand this salvation takes the form of a *sonship*, in the Spirit of Christ the Son. Drawn and supported by the Spirit (participants through the sacraments), they are called to live by faith and in hope their condition of sons of the Father who is in heaven, but with the duty of fulfilling his will on earth, by loving and serving their brethren in love.

23. On the other hand if they are not spared the experiences of hope and sadness, indeed the sufferings of this world, they know that the grace of

God—the active presence in them of his love and mercy—will accompany them in all circumstances. And if they must also experience death, they know that it will not seal their destiny, for they have the promise of the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.

24. Although humanity may appear to be impoverished and unworthy, we must not conclude that it is totally worthless in the eyes of God. On the contrary, the Bible constantly reminds us that if God intervenes on behalf of humanity, it is precisely because God considers human beings worthy of his intervention. We should note for instance the assurance given to Israel in the depth of its suffering: “because you are precious in my eyes, because you are honored and I love you” (Is 43:4).

25. In other words, according to the biblical and Christian faith, despite all that is negative in humanity, there remains there something that is “*capable of being saved*”, because it is *capable of being loved* by God himself and is consequently *loved by him*. How can this be and how does the human person become aware of it?

26. The biblical and Christian response is given in the doctrine of creation. According to this doctrine humanity and the world have no right to exist, and yet they are not the result of “chance or necessity”. They exist because they have been and are called. They were called when they were not in existence but so that they might come into being. They are called from non-being to be given to themselves and thus to exist in themselves.

27. But if such is man's native condition in this world—a condition which defines him precisely as a preacher of this message—there are important consequences which faith makes explicit.

28. God does not create humanity without having an intention. He creates it for the very reason that the divine interventions in history reveal: out of love for humanity and for its good. To put it more precisely, he creates the human person to make a covenant with it, with a view to making it a participant in God's own life. In other words if there is creation it is *for grace*, for the life of God, with God and for God.

29. If God calls us to a destiny which clearly surpasses our human powers, since it can only be pure grace, it is nevertheless true that this destiny should *correspond to what the human person is as such*. Otherwise it would

be a person other than the one who is called to be saved who would receive the gift of God, and who would be the beneficiary of grace. In this sense, while respecting the gratuity of grace, human nature is orientated towards the supernatural, and fulfills itself in and through it in such a way that the nature of humanity is open to the supernatural (*capax Dei*).

30. However, as this is only meaningful in the context of a covenant, it must also be noticed that God does not impose his grace on humanity; he simply offers it. However, *this involves a risk*. Using the freedom which God has given, the human being may not always act in harmony with God's intentions but may misuse the talents which God has given for its own ends and its own glory.

31. God has given these gifts so that the desire which would lead mankind to seek and to find God as the only fulfillment should come from the human person itself. But the human person can always re-orientate the dynamism of his nature and the movement of his heart. It nevertheless remains true that the human being has been constituted and will remain so for the love of God: for the grace and salvation that God intends for it.

Humanity in Sin

32. Christ's redemption gives us a second viewpoint on humanity in its historical condition: the negative aspects which mark it (1) are also the result of human sin (2), but this does not cast in doubt God's faithfulness to his creative and saving love.

33. As in the case of any common experience, faith must take note of the negative aspects of the human condition. It cannot ignore that, in history, everything does not take place in accordance with the intentions of God the Creator. This however does not invalidate faith: the God in whom faith is professed can be trusted. Not only did God not renounce his first intention, but he took means of restoring, in a most admirable manner, what was compromised. Intervening in Jesus Christ, he showed himself to be faithful to himself, despite the infidelity of the human person, his partner.

34. In sending his own Son in human form, God the Creator of the world and Savior, removed every justification for doubting the divine plan for a saving covenant.

35. This manifestation of God's faithfulness to his covenant shows up the negative aspects of the human condition and consequently the extent and

depth of the need for salvation among the human race.

36. If indeed God had to send his only Son to *restore* his plan of salvation founded in the very act of creation, it is because this plan had been radically compromised. His success has to do with this “rebeginning” which Irenaeus called “recapitulation”. If the Son became incarnate to reestablish God's covenant, it is because the covenant was broken not by the will of God, but by the will of human beings. And if in order to reestablish it, the incarnate Son had to do the will of the Father, if he had to become *obedient unto death* even to death on the Cross, it is because the true source of human misfortune is in its disobedience, its sin, its refusal to walk in the ways of the covenant offered by God.

37. Thus the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of God's own Son, as well as revealing the love of God the Savior, at the same time reveal the human condition to itself.

38. If Jesus appears as the only way to salvation, it is because humanity needs him for its salvation, and because without him it will be lost. We must therefore acknowledge that all people, and the entire world, were “enclosed in sin” (Gal 3:22), and that this has been so “from the beginning”. It can therefore be said that Jesus appeared to “restore” the human condition in a radical way, that is to say with a new beginning.

39. It could be said that Christ represents more of a “beginning” than Adam himself. “Originating” *Love* is more important than “Original” *Sin*, since the human race only took full cognizance of the extent and depth of sin which marks its condition at the time when in Jesus Christ the “length, breadth, height, and depth” (Eph 3:18) of God's love for the whole human race was revealed.

40. If God sent his only Son to re-open the gates of salvation to all, it is because he did not change his attitude in their regard; the change was on the part of the human race. The covenant which was willed from the beginning by the God of love was compromised by human sin. Consequently there was a conflict between God's plan on the one hand, and human desires and behavior on the other (Rom 5:12).

41. In refusing God's invitation from the beginning, humanity deviated from its true destiny and the events of history are marked by an alienation from

God and from his plan of love; history is indeed marked by a rejection of God.

42. The coming of God's only Son into the heart of human history reveals the divine will to pursue the application of its plan despite opposition. As well as taking account of the gravity of sin and its consequence on humanity's part—the “mystery” of iniquity—the mystery of Christ, and particularly his Cross, is the clear and definitive revelation of the gratuitous, radically pardoning, and eschatologically victorious nature of the love of God.

43. Here we may note the traditional patristic and Augustinian theme of the two “Adams”. There is no effort to equate them, but their traditional *rapprochement* is nevertheless rich in meaning. The main Pauline passages which make the parallel (Rom 5:12-15 and 1 Cor 15:21-22, 45-47) use it to highlight the universal dimension of sin on the one hand and of salvation on the other. This parallel is in its application dominated by the idea of a “how much the more” which tips the balance in favor of Christ and of salvation: if the first Adam has a universal dimension in the order of the Fall, how much the more has the second acquired this universal dimension *in the order of salvation*: that is to say through the universal dimension of his offer and the eschatological efficacy of his communication.

44. This then is how the human condition appears: divided between two Adams, and this is how the Christian faith interprets this “contrasted” situation which anybody, even outside of the context of faith, can recognize as a characteristic of the historical condition of the human person. Immersed in a history of sin, disobedience and death, as a result of its origins in Adam, humanity is called to enter into the solidarity of the new Adam whom God has sent: his only Son who died for our sins, and who rose again for our justification. Christian faith makes it clear that with the first Adam there has been a proliferation of sin, and with the second Adam a superabundance of grace.¹²⁴

45. The entire course of human history and the heart of each person constitute the stage on which the drama of the salvation and the life of all human beings, as well as the grace and glory of God, is being played out between these two Adams.

C. The World under Redeeming Grace; Humanity under the Sign of Redemption

46. It was primarily to rescue human beings that the Son of God made himself our brother (Heb 2:17), like us in all things except sin (Heb 4:15). In agreement with certain patristic writers (including Irenaeus and Athanasius, as mentioned in Part III above) it may be affirmed that even though there can be no question of a “collective incarnation”, the incarnation of the Logos affects the whole of human nature. Inasmuch as one member of the human family is God's own Son, all others have been raised to the new dignity of being his brothers and sisters. Precisely because the human nature that Christ assumed retained its creaturely identity, human nature itself was raised to a higher status. As we read in the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, “By His incarnation the Son of God has united Himself in some fashion with every man.”¹²⁵ As “second Adam” Christ recapitulates humanity before God, becomes the head of a renewed family, and restores the image of God to its pristine truth. By revealing the mystery of the Father's love, Christ fully reveals humanity to itself and discloses the supreme calling of every individual.¹²⁶

47. In its relation to their final destiny Christ's redemptive work affects all human beings, since all are called to eternal life. By shedding his blood on the Cross, Christ established a new covenant, a regime of grace, that is directed to all humanity. Each of us can say with the apostle, “He loved me and gave himself up for me” (Gal 2:20). Everyone is called to share by adoption in Christ's own Sonship. God does not issue this call without providing the capacity to respond to it. Thus Vatican II can teach that no human being, even one who has never heard of the gospel, is untouched by the grace of Christ.¹²⁷ “We ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery.”¹²⁸ While fully respecting the mysterious ways of divine Providence with regard to the unevangelized, attention is here focused on the revealed plan of salvation which shows forth God's merciful counsels and the manner in which God is fittingly glorified.

The Response of Faith

48. The first condition of entering the new covenant of grace is to have a faith modelled on that of Abraham (Rom 4:1-25). Faith is the fundamental

response to the good news of the gospel. No one can be saved without faith, which is the foundation and root of all justification.¹²⁹

49. For the life of faith it is not sufficient to assent with one's mind to the contents of the gospel or to place one's trust in the divine mercy. Redemption takes hold of us only when we acquire a new existence grounded in loving obedience.¹³⁰ Such an existence corresponds to the classical conception of faith enlivened by charity.¹³¹

50. By Baptism, the sacrament of faith, the believer is inserted into the body of Christ, freed from original sin, and assured of redemptive grace. The believer “puts on” Christ and walks in newness of life (Rom 4:6). A renewed consciousness of the mystery of Baptism, as death to sin and resurrection to true life in Christ, can enable Christians to experience the actuality of redemption and gain the joy and freedom of life in the Holy Spirit.

Liberation

51. Baptism is the sacrament of liberation from sin and rebirth in the freedom newly chosen. Freed from sin by the grace of God, which arouses the response of faith, the believer begins the journey of the Christian life. Through the faith aroused by grace, the believer is liberated from the domination of evil and is entrusted to Jesus Christ, the master who bestows interior freedom. This is not a mere liberty of indifference that authorizes every possible choice, but a freedom of conscience that invites people, enlightened by the grace of Christ, to obey the deepest law of their being and observe the rule of the gospel.

52. It is only with the light of the gospel that conscience can be formed to follow the will of God without any constraint upon its freedom. As Vatican II teaches, “All men are bound to seek the truth, especially in what concerns God and His Church, and to embrace the truth they come to know, and to hold fast to it. This Vatican Council likewise professes its belief that it is upon the human conscience that these obligations fall and exert their binding force. The truth cannot impose itself except by virtue of its own truth, as it makes its entrance into the mind at once quietly and with power.”¹³²

53. Living members of the Body of Christ are made friends of God and heirs in hope of eternal life.¹³³ They receive the first fruits of the Holy

Spirit (Rom 8:23), whose charity is poured forth into their hearts.¹³⁴ Such charity, overflowing into obedience and good works,¹³⁵ renews believers from within, rendering them capable of freely adhering to the new law of the gospel.¹³⁶ The grace of the Holy Spirit gives interior peace and supplies joy and ease in believing and observing the commandments.

Reconciliation

54. Liberation from sin by redemption in Christ reconciles a person with God, with neighbor, and with all creation. Since original and actual sin are essentially rebellion against God and the divine will, redemption re-establishes peace and communication between the human being and the Creator: God is experienced as the Father who pardons and receives back his child. Saint Paul eloquently dwells on the aspect of reconciliation: “If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ ... that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us [the ministers]. We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God” (2 Cor 5:17-20).

55. The word of the gospel reconciles those who have rebelled against the law of God and points out a new path of obedience to the depths of a conscience enlightened by Christ. Christians are to be reconciled with their neighbors before presenting themselves at the altar.¹³⁷

56. The sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation permits a sanctifying return to the mystery of Baptism and constitutes the sacramental form of reconciliation with God and the actuality of his pardon thanks to the redemption given in Christ.

57. Within the Church Christians continually experience the mystery of reconciliation. Re-established in peace with God and obeying the commandments of the gospel, they carry on a reconciled life with others with whom they are called into community. Reconciled with the world, they no longer violate its beauties or fear its powers. Rather they seek to protect and contemplate its wonders.

Communion

58. Freedom from sin, fortified by reconciliation with God, neighbor, and creation, permits Christians to find true communion with their Creator who

has become their Savior. In this communion they realize their latent potentialities. However great are the intellectual and creative powers of human nature, they cannot bring about the fulfillment that is made possible by communion with God. Communion with the person of the Redeemer becomes communion with the body of Christ, that is to say, the communion of all the baptized in Christ. Redemption therefore has a social character: it is in and by the Church, the Body of Christ, that the individual is saved and finds communion with God.

59. United with baptized believers of all times and places, the Christian lives in the communion of the saints, which is a communion of sanctified persons (*sancti*) through the reception of holy things (*sancta*): the word of God and the sacraments of the presence and action of Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Striving and Suffering

60. All who live in Christ are summoned to become active participants in the continuing process of redemption. Incorporated into the Body of Christ, they carry his work forward and thereby enter into closer union with him. Just as he was a sign of contradiction, so the individual Christian and the whole Church become signs of contradiction as they struggle against the forces of sin and destruction, amidst suffering and temptation. The faithful are united with the Lord by their prayers (2 Cor 1:11; 1 Tim 2:1-4), their works (1 Cor 3:9-14), and their sufferings,¹³⁸ all of which have redemptive value when united with, and taken up into, the action of Christ himself. Since every meritorious human action is inspired and directed by divine grace, Augustine was able to declare that God wills that his gifts should become our merits.¹³⁹

61. The communion of the saints involves an exchange of sufferings, honors and joys, prayers and intercession, among all the members of the Body of Christ, including those who have passed before us into glory. "If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it" (1 Cor 12:26-27).

62. In view of the mutual reconciliation of Christians in the Body of Christ, the suffering of each is a participation in the redemptive suffering of Christ. By suffering in the service of the gospel the Christian completes what is

lacking in his flesh of Christ's afflictions “for the sake of the body of Christ, that is, the Church” (Col 1:24). The faithful do not flee from suffering but find in it an effective means of union with the Cross of Christ. It becomes for them an intercession through Christ and the Church. Redemption involves an acceptance of suffering with the Crucified. External trials are alleviated by the consolation of God's promises and by a foretaste of the eternal blessings.

Ecclesial Solidarity

63. Redemption has an ecclesial aspect inasmuch as the Church was instituted by Christ “to perpetuate the saving work of redemption”.¹⁴⁰ Christ loved the Church as his bride and delivered himself up that he might sanctify it (Eph 5:25-26). Through the Holy Spirit Christ makes himself present in the Church, which is “on earth, the initial budding forth of that kingdom [of God].”¹⁴¹ Although marred by the sinfulness and divisions of its members, who frequently fail to reflect the true countenance of Christ,¹⁴² the Church remains, in its deeper reality, the holy temple of which the faithful are “living stones”.¹⁴³ It continually seeks to purify itself so that it may manifestly appear as the “universal sacrament” of salvation,¹⁴⁴ the sign and instrument of the union of human beings with one another and with God.¹⁴⁵ The Church has the task of proclaiming the saving message and actualizing the saving event by sacramental celebration.

64. The different stages of redemption unfold within the Church in which the liberation, reconciliation, and communion already described are to be attained. Life in the Holy Church, the Body of the Redeemer, permits Christians to achieve progressive healing of their nature, wounded by sin. In solidarity with fellow believers in the Church the Christian experiences progressive liberation from all the alienating slaveries and finds a true community that overcomes isolation.

65. The life of faith fortifies Christians in the assurance that God has pardoned their sins and that they have found communion and peace with one another. The spiritual life of the individual is enriched by the exchange of faith and prayer in the communion of saints.

66. In the celebration of the Eucharist the Christian finds the fullness of ecclesial life and communion with the Redeemer. In this sacrament the faithful give thanks for God's gifts, unite themselves to the self-offering of

Jesus, and participate in the salutary movement of his life and death. In the Eucharist the community is freed from the weight of sin and revived at the very source of its existence. “As often as the sacrifice of the cross in which Christ our Passover was sacrificed (1 Cor 5:7), is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemption is carried on”.¹⁴⁶ By partaking of the Eucharist the individual Christian is nourished and transformed into the Body of Christ, being inserted more deeply into the liberating communion of the Church.

67. Eucharistic communion grants forgiveness of sins in the blood of Christ. As the medicine of immortality, this sacrament removes the effects of sin and imparts the grace of a higher life.¹⁴⁷

68. The Eucharist as sacrifice and communion is an anticipation of the Kingdom of God and the happiness of eternal life. This joy is expressed in the Eucharistic liturgy, which enables the Christian to live, at the level of the sacramental memorial, the mysteries of the Redeemer who liberates, pardons, and unites the members of the Church.

Sanctification

69. Freed from sin, reconciled and living in communion with God and the Church, the faithful undergo a process of sanctification that begins with baptism into death from sin and into new life with the risen Christ. By hearing the word of God and participating in the sacraments and life of the Church, the Christian is gradually transformed according to the will of God and configured to the image of Christ to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.

70. Sanctification is a sharing in the holiness of God who, through grace received in faith, progressively modifies human existence to shape it according to the pattern of Christ. This transfiguration can undergo heights and depths according to whether the individual obeys the promptings of the Spirit or submits again to the seductions of sin. Even after sin the Christian is raised up again by the grace of the sacraments and directed to go forward in sanctification.

71. The whole Christian life is comprised and summed up in charity, unselfish love for God and neighbor. Saint Paul calls charity the “fruit of the Holy Spirit” (Gal 5:22) and then indicates the many implications of this charity, both in his list of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-23) and in his hymn to charity (1 Cor 13:4-7).

Society and Cosmos

72. Redemption has effects that extend beyond the inner lives and mutual relations of Christians in the Church. It spreads its influence outward insofar as the grace of Christ tends to alleviate all that leads to conflict, injustice and oppression, thus contributing to what Pope Paul VI referred to as a “civilization of love”. The “structures of sin” erected by the thirst for personal profit and power cannot be overcome except by “a commitment to the good of one's neighbor with the readiness, in the gospel sense, to lose oneself for the sake of the other”.¹⁴⁸ The selfless love of Christ, transforming the lives of believers, breaks the vicious circle of human violence. True friendship establishes a climate favorable to peace and justice, thus contributing to the redemption of society.

73. It remains true that, as several Popes have warned, redemption cannot be reduced to liberation of the socio-political order.¹⁴⁹ “Such cases of social sin are the result of the accumulation and concentration of many personal sins.”¹⁵⁰ Changes in social structures, while ameliorating the lot of the poor, cannot of themselves overcome sin or instill holiness, which lies at the heart of God's redemptive design and is also, in a sense, its goal.¹⁵¹ Conversely, people who suffer poverty and oppression, evils from which Christ himself was not spared, may receive abundantly of God's redemptive grace, and be numbered among the poor whom Christ called blessed (Mt 5:3).

74. Redemption has a cosmic aspect because God is pleased through Christ “to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross” (Col 1:20). Paul can speak of all creation being in travail and groaning inwardly as it waits for a redemption that will set it free to share in the glorious liberty of God's children (Rom 8:19-25). The book of Revelation, following Isaiah, speaks of “a new heaven and a new earth” as the final result of redemption.¹⁵² The Church in its Good Friday liturgy sings of the skies and seas being purified by the blood of Christ (“*terra, pontus, astra, mundus, /quo lavantur flumine*”—*Pange lingua*).

Eschatological Perspectives

75. The reception of redemption in the present life is fragmentary and incomplete. We have the first fruits of the Spirit, but we still groan with all creation “as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For

in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience” (Rom 8:23-25).

76. Although faithful Christians receive the forgiveness of sin and the infusion of grace, so that sin no longer reigns in them,¹⁵³ their sinful tendencies are not fully overcome. The marks of sin, including suffering and death, will remain until the end of time. Those who conform their lives to Christ's in faith are assured that through their own death they will be given a definitive participation in the victory of the risen Savior.

77. Christians must constantly combat the presence of evil and suffering in so many forms in the world and in society, by the promotion of justice, peace and love, in an attempt to secure the happiness and well-being of all.

78. Redemption will attain its completeness only when Christ reappears to establish his final kingdom. Then he will present to the Father the abiding fruits of his struggle. The blessed in heaven will share in the glory of the new creation. The divine presence will permeate all created reality; all things will glow with the splendor of the Eternal, so that “God may be everything to everyone” (1 Cor 15:28).

¹ Cf. “*fides quaerens intellectum*”.

² Cf. 2 Cor 10:5.

³ Cf. the Garden (“Genna”) of supreme bliss.

⁴ Cf. Jn 2:25.

⁵ Cf. for example, Gen 1-11; Mk 13:1-37; Rev 22:20.

⁶ Cf. Ex 21:2, 7; Deut 25:7-10.

⁷ Cf. Deut 25.

⁸ Cf. Lev 25; Num 35:9-34.

⁹ Cf. Ex 21:2; Lev 25; Jer 34:8-22; Deut 15:9-10.

¹⁰ Cf. Ex 21:29-30 (Hebrew: *kofer*; Greek: *lutron*).

¹¹ Cf. Gen 37:26-27; 44:33-34.

¹² Cf. Gen 32:21.

¹³ Cf. Lev 17:10,12.

¹⁴ Cf. Lev 17:11.

- ¹⁵ Cf. Ex 32:7-14, 30-34; 33:12-17; 34:8-9; Num 14:10-19; Deut 9:18-19; Amos 7; Jer 15:1; Is 53:12; 2 Mac 15:12-16.
- ¹⁶ Cf. especially Esther 14:3-19; Ruth 1:15-18.
- ¹⁷ Cf. e.g. Ps 74:2; 77:16.
- ¹⁸ Cf. e.g. Ps 103:4; 106:10; 107; 111:9; 130:7.
- ¹⁹ Cf. Mk 1:5.
- ²⁰ Cf. e.g. Lk 15.
- ²¹ Cf. Mk 14:36.
- ²² Cf. Mk 8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34.
- ²³ Cf. Mk 1:16-20.
- ²⁴ Cf. Mk 2:15-17; 14:17-31; Lk 5:29-38; 7:31-35, 36-50; 11:37-54; 14:1-24; 19:1-10.
- ²⁵ Cf. Mk 2:15-17; Lk 5:27-32; 15:2; 19:7.
- ²⁶ Cf. Mk 14:17-31; Mt 26:20-35; Lk 22:14-34.
- ²⁷ Cf. Jn 19:30, *Consummatum est!*
- ²⁸ Cf. Jn 3:16.
- ²⁹ Cf. 3:14; 8:28; 12:32-33.
- ³⁰ Cf. 11:4; 12:23; 13:1; 17:1-4.
- ³¹ For example, Job 2:4; Eccles 9:4; Is 38:18; Ps 6:5; 16:10-11; 73:27-28.
- ³² Cf. Dan 12:5-13; Wis 3:1-13.
- ³³ Cf. Mt 22:31-32.
- ³⁴ Cf. 1 Cor 1:22-25.
- ³⁵ Cf. 4 Mac.
- ³⁶ Cf. Ex 24; Mt 26:27-28; 1 Cor 11:23-26; Heb 9:18-21.
- ³⁷ Cf. Heb 9:22.
- ³⁸ *Ephapax*: Rom 6:10; Heb 7:27; 9:12; 10:10.
- ³⁹ Cf. Rom 5:8-10.
- ⁴⁰ Cf. Ps 2:8.
- ⁴¹ Cf. Rom 5:13-18; Phil 2:8. Cf. also Heb 10:5.
- ⁴² Cf. also 1 Pet 1:18-20.
- ⁴³ Cf. Mt 1:21; 3:17; 4:1, 10; Lk 1:35; 4:14, 18; Jn 1:32.
- ⁴⁴ Cf. Lk 23:46.
- ⁴⁵ Cf. Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6.
- ⁴⁶ Cf. Gen 1:26-27.

- ⁴⁷ Cf. Col 1:15.
- ⁴⁸ Cf. Rom 6:5-11; Heb 9:11-12; 10:10.
- ⁴⁹ Cf. Rom 5:12-21.
- ⁵⁰ Cf. Rom 6:1-21.
- ⁵¹ Cf. Rom 6:10-11.
- ⁵² Cf. Philem, esp. vv. 15-17.
- ⁵³ Cf. Gal 3:28.
- ⁵⁴ Cf. 1 Cor 13; Gal 5:22-26.
- ⁵⁵ Cf. Rom 8:18-23.
- ⁵⁶ Cf. Heb 3:5-6.
- ⁵⁷ Cf. 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:13-14.
- ⁵⁸ Cf. Rom 5:12.
- ⁵⁹ *Ephesians* 7, 2 (CL, trans. K. Lake, *Apostolic Fathers*, 1:181).
- ⁶⁰ Cf. 59, 4.
- ⁶¹ Cf. 9, 6.
- ⁶² Cf. *Contra Celsum* 2, 67 (PG 11, 902B-C).
- ⁶³ Cf. Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho* 30, 3.
- ⁶⁴ *Adversus haereses* 5, 1, 1 (Harvey, 2:314-17).
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 5, praef.: “*uti nos perficeret esse quod est ipse*” (Harvey, 2:314).
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 1, 2, 1 (Harvey, 1:91); 3, 17, 6 (Harvey, 2:87).
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 5, 7, 2 (Harvey, 2:338).
- ⁶⁸ *De Incarnatione Verbi* 7 (ed. and trans. R.W. Thomson [Oxford, 1971], 148-50).
- ⁶⁹ *Orationes contra Arianos* 2, 68-69 (PG 26, 292A and 296A).
- ⁷⁰ *Orationes* 38, 13 (PG 37, 325A-B); *Epistula* 101 (PG 37, 177C).
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 30, 21 (PG 36, 132B).
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, 12, 4 (PG 35, 148B); 30, 6 (PG 36, 109C).
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, 12, 4 (PG 35, 848A-C).
- ⁷⁴ *Adversus Apollinarem* 3, 1 (*Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, ed. Mueller, 151-52).
- ⁷⁵ *In Johannis Evangelium tractatus* 123, 5 (CCSL 36, 678).
- ⁷⁶ Cf., for example, *De incarnationis dominicae sacramento*, *De mysteriis*, *De sacramentis*, *De paenitentia*, *De sacramento regenerationis sive de philosophia*.

- ⁷⁷ *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali* 25 (PL 44, 399).
- ⁷⁸ *De natura et gratia* 23, 5; 30, 34 (PL 44, 259 and 263); *De Trinitate* 14, 15, 21 (PL 40, 246).
- ⁷⁹ *Enchiridion* 10, 33, (PL 40, 248-49).
- ⁸⁰ Latin: *figura*; Greek: *heterosis*.
- ⁸¹ Cf. *Enchiridion* 10, 13; 13, 41 (PL 40, 248-49 and 253).
- ⁸² Cf. *De Trinitate* 14, 18-15, 19.
- ⁸³ *Cur Deus Homo* 2, 18a (S.N. Deane, *Basic Writings of St. Anselm*, 279).
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 2, 18b (Deane, 280).
- ⁸⁵ *Sermo* 9 (PL 178, 447).
- ⁸⁶ *STh* III, 14, 1 ad 1; cf. *Suppl.* 14, 2.
- ⁸⁷ *STh* III, 48, 2c.
- ⁸⁸ *STh* III, 46, 1c and ad 3.
- ⁸⁹ “Select Questions on Christology”, in International Theological Commission: *Texts and Documents, 1969-1985* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 185-205, at 201.
- ⁹⁰ *Commentary on Galatians* (1535) (WA 40/1, 434, 7-9).
- ⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 433, 26-29.
- ⁹² *Ibid.*, 435, 17-19.
- ⁹³ *Ibid.*, 434, 7-9.
- ⁹⁴ *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 11, 16, 6.
- ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 16, 5.
- ⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 16, 10.
- ⁹⁷ *Defensio fidei catholicae de satisfactione Christi* (1617); cf. Sesboüé, *Jésus-Christ l'unique médiateur* (Paris: Desclee, 1988), 1, 71.
- ⁹⁸ Sess. 6, chap. 7.
- ⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, also canon 11.
- ¹⁰⁰ Albrecht Ritschl, *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1902); German original, *Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. 3 (Bonn, 1874).
- ¹⁰¹ *The Christian Faith*, 101; Harper Torchbooks ed., p. 431; German original, *Der christliche Glaube nach der Grundsätzen der evangelischen Kirche im Zusammenhang dargestellt* (1821-1822), 2nd rev. ed., vol. 2 (Berlin, 1960), 97.

¹⁰² R. Bultmann, “New Testament and Mythology”, in H. W. Bartsch, ed., *Kerygma and Myth* (Harper Torchbooks, 1961), 36; German original, “Neues Testament und Mythologie”, in H.W. Bartsch, ed., *Kerygma und Mythos: Ein theologisches Gespräch* (Hamburg-Berstedt, 1960), 15-48.

¹⁰³ *Systematic Theology*, 2:176.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ The doctrine of redemption in liberation theology may be studied in works such as Gustavo Gutierrez, *Teologia de la liberacion* (1971), Leonardo Boff, *Jesus Cristo Libertador* (1972), and Jon Sobrino, *Cristologia desde america latina* (1976).

¹⁰⁶ Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 194-95; German original, *Grundkurs des Glaubens*, 3rd ed. (Freiburg, 1976), 193-95.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 282; German original, 276f.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 284; German original, 278.

¹⁰⁹ Aloysius Pieris, “The Place of Non-Christian Religions and Cultures in the Evolution of Third World Theology”, in *Irruption of the Third World: Challenge to Theology*, Virginia Fabella and Sergio Torres, eds. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1983), 133.

¹¹⁰ Paul F. Knitter, “Toward a Liberation Theology of Religions”, in *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*, ed. John Hick and Paul F. Knitter, 178-200, at 187.

¹¹¹ Many of these themes are exemplified in the works of Matthew Fox, notably his *Original Blessing: A Primer in Creation Spirituality* (Santa Fe, N.M.: Bear and Co., 1983; expanded edition, 1990).

¹¹² Cf. *Catechisme de l'Église Catholique* (Paris: Mame, 1992), no. 603, pp. 132-33.

¹¹³ *STh* III, 1, 2c.

¹¹⁴ The links between the missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit in the mystery of redemption are explored by John Paul II in his 1986 encyclical [*Dominum et vivificantem*](#), especially nos. 11, 14, 24, 28, and 63.

¹¹⁵ *Mor. praef.* 1, 6, 4; cf. CCC 795 for further references.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in CCC 521; for this whole question cf. CCC 512-70.

¹¹⁷ Cf. *SC* 102-4.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Col 1:2.

¹¹⁹ [*LG*](#) 58.

- 120 [Redemptoris Mater](#) (1987), 40.
- 121 Cf. Mk 14:24; 10:45; International Theological Commission, *Select Themes of Ecclesiology*, thesis 2.
- 122 Hebrews; Eucharistic Prayers.
- 123 Cf. Rom 8:15-17.
- 124 Cf. CCC 412, quoting Rom 5:20 and Aquinas, *STh* III, 1, 3 ad 3.
- 125 [GS](#) 22; cf. [Redemptor hominis](#), 8, 13, and passim.
- 126 [GS](#) 22; [Veritatis splendor](#), 2.
- 127 [LG](#) 16.
- 128 [GS](#) 22.
- 129 Council of Trent, sess. 6, chap. 8 (DS 1532).
- 130 Rom 16:26; cf. [Veritatis splendor](#), 66, 88.
- 131 Cf. Council of Trent, sess. 6, chaps. 7-9 (DS 1530-34).
- 132 [DH](#) 1; cf. 10.
- 133 Council of Trent, sess. 6, chap. 7 (DS 1528-31).
- 134 Rom 5:5; cf. [GS](#) 22.
- 135 Council of Trent, sess. 6, chaps. 7-10 (DS 1530-35).
- 136 *Ibid.*, chap. 11 (DS 1536).
- 137 Cf. Mt 5:24.
- 138 Cf. 2 Cor 4:10-11; Col 1:24.
- 139 Augustine, *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 8, 20 (PL 44, 893); cf. Council of Trent, sess. 6, chap. 16 (DS 1548).
- 140 [Pastor aeternus](#) (DS 3050).
- 141 [LG](#) 5.
- 142 [GS](#) 19.
- 143 1 Pet 2:5; cf. [LG](#) 6.
- 144 [LG](#) 48.
- 145 [LG](#) 1.
- 146 [LG](#) 3.
- 147 Ignatius of Antioch, *Ephesians* 20, 2.
- 148 John Paul II, [Sollicitudo rex socialis](#), 38.
- 149 Paul VI, [Evangelii nuntiandi](#), 32-35.
- 150 John Paul II, [Reconciliatio et paenitentia](#), 16.
- 151 Cf. 1 Thess 4:3; cf. Eph 1:4.

¹⁵² Rev 21:1; cf. Is 65:17; 66:22.

¹⁵³ Rom 5:21; cf. 8:2.