

***From Conflict to Communion:  
Going Home to Rome***

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## ***The Scope of the Problem***

*From Conflict to Communion* (C2C) is an LWF/Vatican guide to commemorating the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017.<sup>1</sup>

C2C, however, is not a candid look at the Reformation divide; it has an agenda. In short: **C2C directs Lutherans to be PC so that in time they can be RC.**

C2C's politically correct (PC) agenda can be seen in its first of five imperatives:

“Catholics and Lutherans should **always begin from the perspective of unity** and not from the point of view of division in order to strengthen what is held in common even though the differences are more easily seen and experienced” (§239. Emphasis added).

This imperative sounds courteous but hides a slick trick: Presupposing unity is more than a perspective; it is a pretext to censor discussion of real differences.

C2C insists: “[T]he struggle of the sixteenth century is over. The reasons for mutually condemning each other’s faith have fallen by the wayside” (§238).

**But: Rome still condemns Lutheran teaching.** In fact, *The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (JDDJ),<sup>2</sup> upon which C2C is based, subtly limits Catholic approval of Lutheran doctrine: “The teaching of the Lutheran Churches **presented in this Declaration** does not fall under the condemnations of the Council of Trent.”<sup>3</sup>

This limited approval prompts the question: How **is** Lutheranism presented in JDDJ? A petition by German Protestant theology professors states:

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<sup>1</sup> *From Conflict to Communion. Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017.* Report of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity (Leipzig: Bonifatius, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> The official texts of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (JDDJ), the Official Common Statement (OCS), and the Annex are available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va) and [www.lutheranworld.org](http://www.lutheranworld.org). The Eerdmans edition of these three documents: *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (Grand Rapids, MI and London: Eerdmans and CTS, 2000/2001), cited hereafter as JDDJ Eerdmans.

The term “JDDJ” is often used as an acronym for all three documents, which obscures the interpretative authority of the Official Common Statement and the Annex over against JDDJ. In short, JDDJ is **only authoritative** when interpreted through the lens of the Official Common Statement and the Annex. See Issue #2 below: “C2C declares JDDJ has the highest level of authority (§ 97),” and Issue #3: “Justification must decrease so that unity may increase.”

See also Cardinal Edward Cassidy, President of the *Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity* (PCPCU) (1989-2001), for further clarification of the Vatican’s official reaction to JDDJ: 1) *The Response of the Catholic Church to JDDJ* (June 25, 1998)(This official response, signed by Cardinal Cassidy, was prepared by common agreement between the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the PCPCU); 2) “Presentation to the Vatican *Sala Stampa*, of His Eminence Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy” (June 25, 1998); 3) Cardinal Edward Cassidy’s “Letter to the Lutheran World Federation Concerning the Joint Declaration” (July 30, 1998); and 4) Cardinal Cassidy address: “The Meaning of the Joint Declaration on Justification” (September 17, 1999). Items 1 & 2 available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va). Items 3 & 4 available at [www.catholicculture.org](http://www.catholicculture.org).

<sup>3</sup> JDDJ Official Common Statement ¶1; JDDJ Eerdmans 41. Emphasis added.

‘To be sure, the OCS [the Official Common Statement of JDDJ] does include a few Lutheran formulations, for example ‘*simul iustus et peccator*’ or ‘by faith alone,’ but it interprets these statements in **a Roman Catholic sense against their Reformation meaning.**”<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, the Vatican does not even accept the weak formulation of *simul iustus et peccator* as presented in JDDJ’s Annex. Cardinal Edward Cassidy, then head of the *Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity* (PCPCU), the Vatican office responsible for JDDJ, clarified: “The Catholic Church cannot without further study and clarifications affirm categorically that the doctrine on *simul iustus et peccator* no longer incurs the condemnation.”<sup>5</sup>

Cardinal Kurt Koch, current head of the PCPCU, has added in his address to the LWF concerning C2C: “**A complete consensus** on the doctrine of justification itself has **not yet been reached** and, **what is more**, nor has it on the consequences of this doctrine, **above all** for an understanding of the Church and the question of ministerial offices.”<sup>6</sup>

C2C, in contrast, is willfully ambiguous: “[JDDJ] offers a differentiating consensus comprised of common statements along with different emphases of each side, with the claim that these differences do not invalidate the commonalities” (§123).

C2C’s ambiguous consensus is about control, about making people think a certain way. What is not tolerated is frank talk about differences. What is politically incorrect is clarifying differences for the sake of genuine communication. As Gerhard Forde wrote:

“We seem somehow to be afraid that serious investigation of differences will impede or even throw the [ecumenical] movement into reverse, perhaps foster a return to the era of hostile polemics. One who wants to talk about such differences is usually regarded as something of a pariah. But surely that is myopic. If the ecumenical movement has accomplished anything in our time, it certainly ought to be that we have come to know and trust one another enough to speak honestly, and that it ought to be possible to find ways to live together nevertheless.”<sup>7</sup>

It’s 2017 after all. What better way to commemorate, celebrate, and continue the Reformation than to talk respectfully and frankly about where we agree and disagree. In that spirit, consider the following Issues:

### **1. Lutherans and Catholics agree/disagree on baptism.**

C2C says that through baptism Lutherans and Catholics “recognize each other mutually as Christians” (§239). To be sure, Lutherans and Catholics agree that baptism is a sacrament through which God acts and saves sinners. Both traditions use water and baptize in the name

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<sup>4</sup> “German Professors Protest JDDJ.” This is the second of two petitions by German Lutheran professors against JDDJ. Hereafter this document will be identified as “German Professors Protest [2/1999].” It has been translated by Mark Menacher and is available at [www.wordalone.org/docs](http://www.wordalone.org/docs). Emphasis added.

<sup>5</sup> Cardinal Edward Cassidy, “Letter to the Lutheran World Federation,” 3. See footnote 2 above.

<sup>6</sup> Cardinal Kurt Koch, “‘From Conflict to Communion.’ Principles and Possibilities for the Ongoing Ecumenical Process.” Address to the Lutheran World Federation Council, June 17, 2013. Emphasis added. Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>7</sup> Gerhard O. Forde, “The Catholic Impasse: Reflections on Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue Today,” *Promoting Unity*. Eds. H. George Anderson and James R. Crumley Jr. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989) 67.

of the Triune God. These sacramental commonalities are key links in Lutheran-Catholic fellowship. Yet vital differences remain:

- a. **Lutherans and Catholics disagree on the “why” of infant baptism.** Lutherans and Catholics hold to infant baptism for different reasons. For Catholics infant baptism is an irreversible development of tradition. For Lutherans infant baptism is the perfect expression of the gospel.
- b. **Lutherans and Catholics disagree whether or not real sin remains after baptism.** For Catholics baptism eliminates original sin; what is left (intentions, desires) is weakness (*fomes*, concupiscence), but not sin.<sup>8</sup> For Lutherans original sin remains in the one baptized as a total state (*simul totus iustus et totus peccator*).<sup>9</sup>
- c. **Lutherans and Catholics disagree on the depth of sin (*totus peccator*).** For Catholics sin is a willful action violating God’s law. For Lutherans sin is not limited to willful acts but is transpersonal, a pervasive state of being which includes rebellion against God and the desire to be God.<sup>10</sup>
- d. **Lutherans and Catholics disagree on baptismal grace plus reward (*totus iustus*).** For Catholics baptism gives a clean slate so that a person’s cooperation with God can

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<sup>8</sup> *The Response of the Catholic Church to JDDJ* (See footnote 2 above.) clarifies Catholic doctrine on concupiscence and *simul iustus et peccator*:

“According, indeed, to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, in baptism everything that is really sin is taken away, and so, in those who are born anew there is nothing that is hateful to God. It follows that the concupiscence that remains in the baptized is not, properly speaking, sin. **For Catholics, therefore, the formula “at the same time righteous and sinner,”** as it is explained at the beginning of n. 29 [JDDJ Eerdmans 21] (“*Believers are totally righteous, in that God forgives their sins through Word and Sacrament ... Looking at themselves ... however, they recognize that they remain also totally sinners. Sin still lives in them...*”) **is not acceptable.**” Emphasis added.

<sup>9</sup> On baptism as a total exchange: “To put it most simply, the power, effect, benefit, fruit, and purpose of Baptism is to save.” Large Catechism (LC) IV:24-25; *Book of Concord* (Tappert) (BC) 439. See also LC IV:44-46; BC 442: “Through Baptism we obtain perfect holiness and salvation.”

In C2C the *totus/totus* is lost: “The image [the joyful exchange] shows that something external, namely Christ’s righteousness, becomes something internal. It becomes the property of the soul” (§108). To the contrary, Christ’s righteousness becomes the believer’s own but in such a way that it remains the righteousness of Jesus Christ, grounded outside of the believer (*extra nos*) and thus alien to him (*iustitia aliena*). The believer is taken outside of himself and transplanted into Christ.

<sup>10</sup> The Apology on concupiscence: “[Luther] taught that the remnants of original sin in man are not in their nature neutral, but they need the grace of Christ to be forgiven and the Holy Spirit to be mortified.” Apology (Ap) II 45; BC 106. See also Ap II:35-41; BC 104-106.

JDDJ’s Annex (2b) on concupiscence: “In the Catholic understanding concupiscence is an inclination.... [I]t can be recognized from a Lutheran perspective that “desire [concupiscence] can become the opening through which sin attacks... the tendency to oppose God.... Sin has a personal character.” Contrary to the Annex, the difference has not been solved. For Lutherans sin has a transpersonal character; it is the power determining persons even before they agree and even determines them to agree to sin, as Wilfred Härle explains in “Roma Locuta,” *Deutsches Pfarrerblatt* 99 (1999) 407-409, reprinted in *epd Dokumentation* (Sept 20, 1999) 11-15.

be called “merit.”<sup>11</sup> For Lutherans baptism gives Christ who has fulfilled all things: “The law says, ‘do this,’ and it is never done. Grace says, ‘believe in this,’ and everything is already done.”<sup>12</sup> Thus Lutherans teach that good works following baptism do not contribute to salvation.<sup>13</sup>

- e. **Lutherans and Catholics disagree on baptism and penance.** For Lutherans life is a daily baptism and repentance is a return to baptism. <sup>14</sup> For Catholics another sacrament is added, the sacrament of penance, to absolve and make satisfaction for sins committed after the purity of baptism is lost.
- f. **Lutherans and Catholics disagree on who can be a sponsor at baptism.** A Lutheran can only be a witness, not a godparent or sponsor at a Catholic baptism.<sup>15</sup> A Catholic can be a godparent or sponsor at a Lutheran baptism.
- g. **Lutherans and Catholics disagree on prayer to Mary at baptisms.** Catholics **require** prayer to Mary at baptism (and ordination). Lutherans pray to Christ alone.

By papering over the above differences, C2C misleads readers about the scope and significance of Lutheran-Catholic unity in baptism. As one Lutheran ecumenist notes: “The churches [Lutheran, Catholic, and others] do, in fact, fiercely disagree with each other on practically any important point of baptismal theology. What really leaps to the eye is **not unity but disunity in the area of baptism.**”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> See *The Response of the Catholic Church to JDDJ*, Clarification #3:

“The Catholic Church maintains...that the good works of the justified are always the fruit of grace. But at the same time, and without in any way diminishing the totally divine initiative, they are also the fruit of man, justified and interiorly transformed. We can therefore say that **eternal life is, at one and the same time, grace and the reward given by God for good works and merits.**”  
Emphasis added.

C2C avoids clear language and precise distinctions. For example, C2C acknowledges that “each side does not understand exactly the same thing by the words “sin,” “concupiscence,” and “righteousness” (¶135) but insists that JDDJ has achieved “a consensus in the basic truths of the doctrine of justification” (¶138) and remaining differences are “acceptable” (¶139). See C2C ¶¶135-39. On C2C’s ambiguous language, see also Issue #4 below: “Justification must decrease so that unity may increase.”

<sup>12</sup> “Heidelberg Disputation” (Thesis 26) 1518; *Luther’s Works (LW)* 31:56.

<sup>13</sup> “No consensus has been reached concerning the importance of good works for salvation.” *No Consensus on the “Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification”? A Critical Evaluation by Professors of Protestant Theology.*” Trans. Oliver K. Olson, *dialog* 38:1 (1999) 71-72, here 72. This is the first of two petitions against JDDJ by German Professors of Protestant Theology.

<sup>14</sup> LC IV:65-67, 86; *BC* 444-46.

<sup>15</sup> Code of Canon Law ¶874.2: “A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community is not to participate except together with a Catholic sponsor and then only as a witness of the baptism.”

<sup>16</sup> Peder Nørgaard-Højen, “Baptism and the Foundations of Communion,” *Baptism and the Unity of the Church*. Eds. Michael Root and Risto Saarinen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 69. Emphasis added.

## 2. C2C declares JDDJ has the “highest level of authority” (§97).

JDDJ modestly claims it “is not a new, independent presentation alongside the dialogue reports and documents to date, let alone a replacement of them.”<sup>17</sup> But C2C elevates JDDJ to be the “highest level of authority”:

“It is important to note that not all dialogue statements between Lutherans and Catholics carry the same weight of consensus, nor have they all been equally received by Catholics and Lutherans. The **highest level of authority** lies with the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, signed by representatives of the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church in Augsburg, Germany, on 31 October 1999 and affirmed by the World Methodist Council in 2006.”<sup>18</sup>

But JDDJ itself was **not** signed that October day; it had become too controversial. What was signed was an Official Common Statement and its Annex, texts which were added to win Vatican support by giving the Vatican control over the interpretation of JDDJ.<sup>19</sup>

This discrepancy between what was actually signed and what is claimed – that JDDJ has achieved “a consensus in the basic truths of the doctrine of justification” (JDDJ §5) – indicates that the claimed consensus is doubtful at best. Consider the following:

- a. The 1997 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted JDDJ by a vote of 958-25 without debate and without information about the critiques of JDDJ from ELCA seminary faculties and other Lutherans around the world.<sup>20</sup>
- b. In January 1998 over 165 German professors of Protestant theology issued a critical evaluation of JDDJ urging rejection of JDDJ and that “at least Lutheran churches have to deny that the JDDJ represents ‘a consensus in the basic truths of justification.’”<sup>21</sup>
- c. In 1999, 250-300 German professors of Protestant theology issued a second petition against JDDJ after its Official Common Statement and Annex were added. This petition concludes:

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<sup>17</sup> JDDJ Eerdmans 11 (§6). See footnote 2 above.

<sup>18</sup> §97. Emphasis added. See also the *Study Guide. From Conflict to Communion*, The Planning Committee of the Diocese of Pittsburgh and the Diocese of Greensburg, The Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod ELCA (2015) 29: “...[T]he **authority** of the ecumenical statements varies, with the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* having a **higher authority than statements from the dialogues themselves** (par.97).” Emphasis added. The World Communion of Reformed Churches “associated themselves” with JDDJ in 2017.

<sup>19</sup> For a detailed account of how JDDJ was drafted and promoted, see Mark Menacher, “Ten Years After JDDJ the Ecumenical Pelagianism Continues,” *Logia* 18:3 (2009) 27-45. Available also at [www.ccmverax.org](http://www.ccmverax.org), under Educational Resources.

<sup>20</sup> See “JDDJ Adopted Without Debate,” *Lutheran Commentator* (March/April 1998) 7-8. Available at [crossalone.us](http://crossalone.us), under 2017 Lutheran Reformation.

<sup>21</sup> *Lutheran Quarterly* 12:2 (1998) 193-96. Also *dialog* 38:1 (1999) 71-72.

“Because the Official Common Statement [of JDDJ]...

- In the content of its statements fundamentally calls the Lutheran doctrine of Justification into question,
- Presupposes an ecumenical notion of purpose which is irreconcilable with Reformation criteria,
- Has not received the consent of those responsible for doctrinal questions,
- Results in no practical consequences for ecumenical togetherness on the ground,

The undersigned theological instructors in higher education...warn against its signing.”<sup>22</sup>

The Vatican also strongly objected to JDDJ. As mentioned above, the Vatican only agreed to continue in the process after the Official Common Statement and Annex were added.<sup>23</sup> Even then only second level Vatican officials participated in the signing of the Official Common Statement.<sup>24</sup>

Cardinal Edward Cassidy, then head of the PCPCU, assured fellow Catholics that JDDJ is not a “compromise document,”<sup>25</sup> that is, it **does not compromise Catholic doctrine**, and as the added OCS states, the condemnations of Trent will continue to strike all Lutherans who do not consent to the “teaching of the Lutheran Churches presented in this declaration” (JDDJ, OCS ¶1).

Cardinal Cassidy identified the key difference: “They [Lutherans] consider justification by faith to be a criterion or corrective for all church practices, structure, and theology.”<sup>26</sup>

But not Catholics. The doctrine of justification is not decisive for Catholics. Justification by grace alone (but not the “alone” in faith alone) is for Catholics merely a criterion which is subsumed within the “overall context of the church’s fundamental Trinitarian confession of faith” (JDDJ, Annex ¶3).

In spite of the trenchant critiques of JDDJ by Lutheran scholars and the Vatican control of the meaning of JDDJ through the Official Common Statement and Annex, the LWF according to C2C nevertheless declares that JDDJ is “the highest level of authority” (¶97).

By claiming JDDJ is “the highest level of authority,” C2C is also implicitly claiming that the LWF itself is the highest authoritative body for LWF member churches.

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<sup>22</sup> “German Professors Protest JDDJ [2/1999].” Available online at [www.wordalone.org/docs](http://www.wordalone.org/docs).

<sup>23</sup> See footnote 2 above.

<sup>24</sup> See “JDDJ Annex: The theological impact of its doctored text.” Available at [www.crossalone.us](http://www.crossalone.us), under Lutheran Reformation 2017.

<sup>25</sup> Cardinal Edward Cassidy, “The Meaning of the Joint Declaration on Justification,” 2. See footnote 2 above.

<sup>26</sup> Cardinal Edward Cassidy, “The Meaning of the Joint Declaration,” 1.

### 3. Justification must decrease so that unity may increase.

The 1999 petition of the German Lutheran professors warning against signing JDDJ addresses its failure to present the Lutheran doctrine of justification adequately:

“The OCS together with its Annex does not remove the critical objections which have been raised against the JDDJ on the part of theological instructors in higher education and which have been put forth by many synods in their position statements to the JDDJ. Above all, the criticism related to the lack of consensus in the JDDJ on the meaning of **word and faith** for justification, on the **certainty of salvation**, on the nature of the **justified human being as sinner**, on the meaning of **good works** for salvation as well as on the  **criteriological function** of the doctrine of justification; further, the criticism related to the still **insufficient consensus** on the relationship between **law and gospel**; finally, the criticism related to the lack of consideration of the Old Testament. None of these points of criticism has actually been refuted by the OCS.”

“To be sure, the OCS does include a few Lutheran formulations, for example ‘*simul justus et peccator*’ or ‘by faith alone,’ but it interprets these statements in a **Roman Catholic sense against their Reformation meaning**. The declaration of the OCS that the condemnations of the Council of Trent no longer apply to **the Lutheran church is only valid with the condition of this** [the OCS and Annex’s] **interpretation.**”<sup>27</sup>

As noted above, C2C presents a paraphrase of JDDJ, citing it 25 times between ¶123 and ¶139. C2C does a masterfully deceptive job of papering over differences. Briefly, this obfuscation can be seen by noting the following:

- a. Obfuscating terms like “differentiating consensus” (¶¶123, 138), “significant convergence” (¶119), “organic coherence” (¶129), and “different thought forms” (¶137) convey the message: This is too technical for you; trust the LWF experts.
- b. Words like “but,” “even though,” and “however” are used to reinterpret Lutheran statements in a Roman Catholic sense: “Thus, our righteousness is external insofar as is Christ’s righteousness **but** it must become internal, by faith in Christ’s promise” (¶112). (Faith is here our work, something we do to contribute to salvation.)
- c. Words like “stress” and “emphasize” relativize the position of one side, implying that position can be balanced by other equal emphases from the other side. For example: “Catholics **stressed** that the justified should be involved in the unfolding of grace in their lives” (¶120. Emphasis added.).
- d. Phrases like “do not deny” (¶126), “do not invalidate” (¶127), “does not exclude” (¶134) obscure basic differences on “faith alone” versus “faith and works.”
- e. Phrases like “process of being renewed” (¶116), “process of continual renewal” (¶117), “transform” (¶121), and “transforming power of grace” (¶113) reinforce how

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<sup>27</sup> “German Professors Protest JDDJ [2/1999],” ¶3. See footnote 22 above. See also “JDDJ Annex: The theological impact of its doctored text.” See footnote 24 above.

C2C promotes the Catholic position that salvation is a process in which works are required.

Catholic officials also have noted that the claimed consensus on the doctrine of justification is an overstatement. As Cardinal Kurt Koch, head of the Vatican office (PCPCU) responsible for C2C, said in an address on C2C to the LWF:

“As is conveyed however by the formula used at the time “consensus on the fundamental truths of the doctrine of justification,” **a complete consensus** on the doctrine of justification itself **has not yet been reached** and, **what is more**, nor has it on the consequences of this doctrine, **above all** for an understanding of **the Church** and the question of **ministerial offices**.”<sup>28</sup>

The Vatican view: There is no “complete consensus” on justification and its consequences for church and ministry. The C2C view: JDDJ has achieved “a Catholic-Lutheran consensus on the basic truths of the doctrine of justification” (§194). “[T]he struggle of the sixteenth century is over” (§238).

#### 4. C2C conceals the Catholic rejection of “faith alone.”

The neuralgic issue between Lutherans and Catholics has always been justification **by faith alone**. C2C claims JDDJ achieved consensus on “faith alone” and points to the use of this phrase in JDDJ §25 and the added Annex §2C, as C2C states below:

“Since faith is understood not only as affirmative knowledge, but also as the trust of the heart that bases itself on the Word of God, it can further be said jointly: ‘Justification takes place “by grace alone” (JD nos 15 and 16), **by faith alone** [Aquinas, *Sth* II/II 4, 4 ad 3]; the person is justified “apart from works” (Rom. 3:28, cf. JD no. 25)’ (JDDJ, Annex 2C).”<sup>29</sup>

The wording above gives the false impression that Catholics accept “faith alone” in a Lutheran sense.<sup>30</sup> But they do not. In fact, the Vatican responded to the ambiguity in JDDJ by affirming the possibility and necessity of human cooperation with justifying grace:

“It must also be affirmed that ... there is also in the justified person a new capacity to adhere to the divine will, a capacity rightly called ‘*cooperatio*.’ This new capacity given

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<sup>28</sup> Cardinal Kurt Koch, “From Conflict to Communion” 6. Emphasis added. See footnote 6 above.

<sup>29</sup> C2C §128. Emphasis added. See also, *Study Guide: From Conflict to Communion*: “In 1999, the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification was adopted by the Vatican and the Lutheran World Federation. Both communions insisted upon God’s grace alone ‘the forgiving and renewing mercy that God imparts as a gift’ (paragraph 124) as the cause of justification. Both communions agree that this takes place **by faith alone**, understood as the trust based on God’s Word” p. 30, 1B. Emphasis added. See footnote 16 above.

<sup>30</sup> As Wilfred Härle, an expert in Aquinas, has noted, the Annex §2C refers to Thomas Aquinas’ use of “by faith alone,” in which Aquinas refers to *fides informis* and *fides (charitate) formata*, not the *fiducia* meant by Lutherans and condemned by Trent. See Härle, “Roma Locuta,” *Deutsches Pfarrerblatt* 99 (1999) 407-409.

in the new creation does not allow us to use in this context the expression ‘mere passive’ (n.21).”<sup>31</sup>

C2C omits any mention of the emphatic Vatican response to JDDJ reaffirming its traditional position on good works and merit:

“The Catholic Church maintains...that the good works of the justified are always the fruit of grace. But at the same time, and without in any way diminishing the totally divine initiative, they are also the fruit of man, justified and **interiorly transformed**. We can therefore say that eternal life is, at one and the same time, **grace and the reward** given by God for **good works and merits**.”<sup>32</sup>

By hiding the Catholic rejection of “faith alone,” and by omitting Catholic insistence on “merit,” C2C gives the false impression that Lutherans and Catholics agree on the basics of salvation.

## 5. C2C’s focus on “Luther’s theology” disguises a caricature of Luther.

### a. C2C deviates from standard methodology.

One of the ground rules for ecumenical dialogue is that decisions are made on the basis of official documents. The Lutheran Confessions are primary for Lutherans, as C2C itself states:

“It is important to distinguish between Luther’s theology and Lutheran theology and, above all, between Luther’s theology and the doctrine of the Lutheran churches as expressed in their **confessional writings**. This doctrine is the **primary reference point for the ecumenical dialogues**” (§93). Emphasis added.

But C2C rejects standard practice and deftly makes “Luther’s theology” its focus: “Still, it is appropriate here to concentrate on Luther’s theology because of the anniversary commemoration of 31 October 1517” (§93).

The problems with such a broad approach, however, are well documented by the history of Luther research.<sup>33</sup> Luther’s works are massive, about 60,000 pages. He was not a systematician; his writings are often occasional and span several decades and many crises. By not limiting the project to official documents, the end-product is likely to be a caricature that suits a predetermined agenda.

In contrast to C2C’s decision to deviate from standard methodology, the Lutheran co-chair for the C2C Commission, Bishop Eero Huovinen, boldly contends for Luther’s ecumenical significance on the basis of official documents in the *Book of Concord*.

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<sup>31</sup> *The Response of the Catholic Church to JDDJ*, Clarification #3. Regarding “mere passive,” see JDDJ ¶ 21: “When [Lutherans] emphasize that a person can only receive (mere passive [*sic*: passiv]) justification, they mean thereby to exclude any possibility of contributing to one’s own justification....”

<sup>32</sup> *The Response of the Catholic Church to JDDJ*, Clarification #3. Emphasis added. See footnote 2 above.

<sup>33</sup> For a succinct summary of modern Luther research and methodological pitfalls, see Bernhard Lohse, *Martin Luther’s Theology. Its History and Systematic Development*. Trans. Roy A. Harrisville (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999) 3-10.

Huovinen even claims the classic Roman Catholic honorific for Luther, “*doctor communis*”:

“In summary, may I **dare to contend** that Martin Luther, in his *Catechisms* and his writings on Holy Sacraments, speaks as *doctor communis*, not attempting to develop new doctrine but rather striving to express and interpret the common faith of the undivided Christendom.”<sup>34</sup>

**b. The role of a Catholic convert (Michael Root) in creating the caricature of Luther.**

Michael Root began as a Lutheran member of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity, but he converted to Roman Catholicism in 2010.<sup>35</sup> As a member of the C2C drafting team, he played a role in the decision to deal broadly with “Luther’s theology,” a decision which resulted in C2C’s caricature of Luther as a mystical biblicist and an individualist.<sup>36</sup>

Root, a C2C enthusiast, has even proposed that the split in Western Christendom might have been avoided if Luther could have read C2C:

“I think Luther would be delighted by *From Conflict to Communion*. If at a crucial early moment Luther could have been shown this text, then the Reformation might have taken a different direction, one that might not have divided Western Christendom.”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Eero Huovinen, “*Doctor communis?* The ecumenical significance of Martin Luther’s Theology,” 12<sup>th</sup> International Congress for Luther Research, August 5, 2012. *Lutherjahrbuch* 80 (2013) 13-30. Available online at [www.helsinghiippakunta](http://www.helsinghiippakunta). Emphasis added. Regarding the term “*doctor communis*,” Huovinen writes:

“The title Cardinal Willebrands used of Luther, *doctor communis*, is one of the honorifics of St Thomas Aquinas. According to Cardinal Willebrands, St. Thomas and Luther, the Middle Ages and the Reformation, belong together. Luther represents and continues a common tradition. Nevertheless, *doctor communis* is not simply a historical title, pointing to the past. With this title, the Cardinal wishes to show us that Luther has something to say jointly to the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches.”

“Cardinal Willebrands’ thoughts are continued by Karl Lehmann, then Roman Catholic Bishop of Mainz. Cardinal Lehmann writes of the ecumenical significance of Luther’s *Small Catechism*. Lehmann states that the *Small and Large Catechisms* – in contrast to certain other writings of Luther – are an excellent example of the linkage of the Reformer with earlier tradition.... According to Lehmann, Luther is a ‘Teacher of the Faith’ (*Lehrer des Glaubens*).”

<sup>35</sup> Michael Root was also on the drafting team to revise the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (1995-96). He is a member of the US Lutheran-Catholic dialogue (1998-2010 as a Lutheran; 2013 up to the present as a Catholic). He was a consultant (2001-2002) to the LWF-Vatican Commission on Unity, which produced the study document, *The Apostolicity of the Church* (2006), in addition to his appointment to the LWF-Vatican Commission on Unity in 2009 until his conversion to Roman Catholicism in 2010.

<sup>36</sup> See below Issue #7: “C2C creates a caricature of Luther on scripture by omitting its gospel center.”

<sup>37</sup> Charlotte Hays, “After Five Centuries of Division, Catholics and Lutherans Consider Their Common Heritage,” *National Catholic Register* (August 21, 2013).

Does Root imagine that Luther would have accepted the papacy – including modern, defined dogmas such as the primacy and infallibility of the Pope [1870] as well as the infallibly defined Marian dogmas of the Immaculate Conception [1854] and Assumption [1950] – as Root himself has done?

Of course the C2C project is tainted by Root's conversion. The LWF is also tainted because the LWF leaders who appointed Root were surely aware of his views.

**c. Leading Catholic ecumenists doubt that C2C and JDDJ fairly represent Luther and Lutheranism.**

Cardinal Kurt Koch, Vatican head of the PCPCU, began his 2013 address to the LWF on C2C by questioning C2C's reliability:

**"First of all the question arises** as to whether for a firm declaration of common statements about fundamental questions of faith the theology of Martin Luther can be sufficient in itself as a point of reference, or whether **other Lutheran confessional writings would not in addition form a more reliable basis.**"<sup>38</sup>

In a similar way Cardinal Avery Dulles frankly noted that JDDJ does "less than justice" to Lutheranism:

- [Dulles' Section on Human Cooperation]: "The Annex moves closer to the Catholic position."
- [Dulles' Section on Law and Gospel]: "The *Joint Declaration* proposes a position on law and gospel that comes very close to the standard Catholic doctrine."
- [Dulles' Section on The Resulting Situation]: "[S]ome Lutherans are dissatisfied with the *Joint Declaration*.... I understand why they feel that it has done less than justice to the Lutheran tradition."<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Cardinal Koch, "From Conflict to Communion," 4. Emphasis added. See footnote 6 above.

<sup>39</sup> Cardinal Avery Dulles, "Justification: The Joint Declaration," *Josephinum Journal of Theology* 9:1 (2002) 108-119. Available online. Quotes above identified by the bracketed sections in which they appear. Dulles assesses JDDJ's treatment of seven canons on justification from the Council of Trent and justification as "the criterion." (JDDJ does not deal with all the canons of Trent on justification.) After identifying some unresolved issues for both parties, Dulles notes: "In view of these unsolved questions, it would be too much to claim that the inveterate disagreements between Lutherans and Catholics on justification have been overcome. ...It cannot be denied that Catholics today continue to hold the doctrines of Trent that the editors of the *Book of Concord* cite in footnotes as being contrary to Lutheran teaching, and the Lutherans with whom I have spoken generally take positions contrary to the canons of Trent. **Therefore, I wonder how the *Joint Declaration* could conclude that the condemnations pronounced by Trent and the Lutheran confessions, even on the selected issues treated in the *Joint Declaration*, no longer apply....** Does this mean that the Lutheran teachings may now be preached and taught in Catholic churches and seminaries, and that Lutherans will allow the Catholic positions to be taught as true in their pulpits and theological chairs? I can hardly think so." (7-8 of the online text). Emphasis added.

Roman Catholic leaders recognize that the LWF may declare a consensus, but the validity of that consensus is doubtful because the LWF Council has not been given the constitutional authority to speak definitely in matters of doctrine.<sup>40</sup>

## 6. Why not rescind the 1521 excommunication of Luther?

On June 15, 1520, Pope Leo X issued his bull, *Exsurge Domine* (“Arise, O Lord, and judge your cause....The wild boar from the forest seeks to destroy [the vineyard]”), threatening Luther, “the wild boar,” with excommunication.

The actual bull of excommunication, *Decet Romanum Pontificem*, which denounced Luther as “the slave of a depraved mind” and his followers as “a pernicious and heretical sect,” was issued January 3, 1521.<sup>41</sup>

In 2009 Lutheran ecumenist Günther Gassmann called on the Vatican to rescind its 1521 excommunication of Luther: “It would be a remarkable step and a sign of hope and encouragement,” said Gassmann, former director of the World Council of Churches’ Faith and Order Commission from 1984-1995 and an ardent supporter of JDDJ.<sup>42</sup>

Lutherans, for their part, have long rejected “Luther’s identification of the Pope with the Antichrist,” as C2C acknowledges (§229).<sup>43</sup> If, as C2C declares, “the reasons for mutually condemning each other’s faith have fallen by the wayside” (§238), is it not also time for the Vatican to lift its condemnation of Luther?

The Vatican **could lift** its excommunication of Luther. After all, there are Vatican precedents for lifting **personal condemnations**. In 1054 Pope Leo IX excommunicated personally Michael Cerularius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, who, in turn, excommunicated personally Pope Leo IX, thereby initiating the East-West schism of the church.<sup>44</sup> On December 7, 1965, a *Joint Catholic-Orthodox Declaration* lifting these **personal excommunications** was read

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<sup>40</sup> *The Response of the Catholic Church to JDDJ*, Clarification #6. See footnote 2 above. See also Annex #4.

<sup>41</sup> Pope Leo X, bull of excommunication, *Decet Romanum Pontificem*, January 3, 1521, ¶2. Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>42</sup> “Catholic Church called on to revoke Luther’s excommunication,” *Ecumenical News International* (March, 30, 2009).

<sup>43</sup> “This is a powerful demonstration that the pope is the real Antichrist...;” “...we cannot suffer his [the devil’s] apostle, the pope or Antichrist, to govern us.” (*Smalcald Articles* 2.4:10, 14; Tappert 300-301. Cf. Melancthon in *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope* 39-42; Tappert 327-28; Ap 7-8:24; Tappert 172; Ap 15:18-19; Tappert 217-18.)

See *Teaching Authority and Infallibility in the Church*. Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue VI, Eds. Paul C. Empie, T. Austin Murphy, and Joseph A. Burgess (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1978) 67-68: “Concrete steps need to be taken to right old wrongs and to prepare for new directions at this crucial point in the history of our churches. Thus we recommend to our churches: a) that they officially declare that the Lutheran commitment to the Confessions does not involve the assertion that the pope or the papacy in our day is the antichrist; in this way our churches would publicly affirm that antipapal polemics should be replaced by an attitude of respect and love.”

<sup>44</sup> Carl D. Mirbt, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums and des römischen Katholizismus* (Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr, 1911) §§ 179-180, pp. 95-97.

simultaneously by Pope Paul VI at a closing session of Vatican II in Rome and by Patriarch Athenagoras I, Archbishop of Istanbul, in a special ceremony in Constantinople.<sup>45</sup>

When asked in 1999 about lifting the excommunication of Luther, Cardinal Edward Cassidy, then head of the Vatican's *Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity*, said: "One cannot now do anything for Martin Luther because Martin Luther, wherever he is, is not worried about these condemnations."<sup>46</sup>

But the point of lifting personal excommunications posthumously is not for the repose of the souls of the excommunicated. It is to take away the public rejection of that person and the scandal caused by the condemnation. For example, Joan of Arc was excommunicated in 1431; in 1456 Pope Callixtus III lifted her excommunication, nullifying her condemnation.

**C2C first affirms, then subverts, Luther's status.** Ever so artfully C2C notes: "Implicit rapprochement with Luther's concerns has led to a new evaluation of his catholicity ... a new ecumenical understanding of Luther as a 'witness to the gospel'" (§29). This phrase, "witness to the gospel," conveys less recognition and esteem than do other honorifics.

On the one hand, prominent Catholic leaders have had the highest praise for Luther.<sup>47</sup> A striking example: Cardinal Jan Willebrands, in his speech to the 1970 LWF Assembly, praised Luther with the classic Roman Catholic honorific "*doctor communis*" ("doctor of the church" or "our common doctor"). Catholics reserve this title for those few theologians who have made contributions of far-reaching importance to the church.

On the other hand, C2C does not even mention Willebrands' praise for Luther as *doctor communis* even though C2C **twice** refers to his 1970 address to the LWF Assembly.<sup>48</sup>

By suppressing the high praise Catholic leaders have had for Luther, C2C exposes the pretense of its imperative to "always begin from a perspective of unity" (§239). High praise for Luther from Catholics conflicts with the caricature of Luther C2C creates.

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<sup>45</sup> *Joint Catholic-Orthodox Declaration of His Holiness Pope Paul VI and the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I*. Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>46</sup> Stephen Brown, "Lutherans and Catholics to sign away justification dispute on 31 October," *Ecumenical News International* (June 11, 1999).

<sup>47</sup> See Eero Huovinen, "*Doctor Communis*," regarding Cardinal (then Bishop) Karl Lehmann's reference to Luther as "Teacher of the Faith," in footnote 34 above. See also Catholic ecumenist, Peter Manns: "A step beyond Lortz seems first of all to be visible in my move in the last years, to the amazement of not only my Catholic friends, to characterize Luther as a 'father in the faith,'" in "The Catholicity and Theological-Ecumenical Usefulness of the Lortzian Position on the 'Catholic Luther,'" *Luther's Ecumenical Significance. An Interconfessional Consultation*, Eds Peter Manns and Harding Meyer in collaboration with Carter Lindberg and Harry McSorley (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984) 3-26, here 20.

<sup>48</sup> §29. fn 7 and §236.

Furthermore, C2C one-sidedly and specifically identifies “the dark sides of Luther and the Reformation” (§229) while overlooking “the dark sides” of the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century.<sup>49</sup> Note the following inequities in C2C:

- a. **Lutherans and Catholics both persecuted the Jews.** C2C lifts up “the vicious and degrading statements that Martin Luther made against the Jews” (§229) but is silent about vicious statements made by Catholics as well as their persecution, exiling, and execution of Jews under the Spanish, Portuguese, and Roman Inquisitions, which occurred before, during, and after Luther’s lifetime.
- b. **Lutherans and Catholics both persecuted the Anabaptists.** C2C lifts up Lutheran persecution of Anabaptists (§229) but is silent about how Catholics also drowned, burned, and exiled thousands of Anabaptists in the sixteenth century.
- c. **C2C omits Catholic persecution of Luther and Lutherans.** C2C omits Rome’s persecution of Luther and Lutherans and ignores the modern Lutheran concern and request to rescind the excommunication of Luther.<sup>50</sup>

#### 7. C2C creates a caricature of Luther on scripture by omitting its gospel center.

C2C begins well. The introduction lifts up Luther’s rediscovery of the gospel: “The true unity of the church can exist only as unity in **the truth of the gospel** of Jesus Christ” (p. 7).<sup>51</sup> And: “Lutheran Christians associate the word ‘Reformation’ chiefly with the **rediscovery of the gospel**, certainty of faith and freedom” (§9. Emphasis added.). But these Lutheran clarion calls fade away.

Concern for “the truth of the gospel” is quickly supplanted by praise for JDDJ and its claim to have achieved a “consensus in the basic truths of the doctrine of justification” (§25). “The truth of the gospel” is not mentioned after §9.

From §9 on, C2C presents a caricature of Luther as a biblicist: He is said to be focused on “a biblical basis,” “the biblical message,” “the Bible,” “the biblical evidence,” (§53, also §§52, 59, 195-200, 209) but not “the truth of the gospel.” In the indulgence controversy Luther’s concern is said to be “the supremacy of Scripture,” whereas Catholics were concerned about “the proper interpretation of Scripture” (§52)!

Even more pointedly, C2C implies that what was authoritative for Luther was his **personal experience and feelings**: “Luther could regard only Scripture as the ultimate judge because it had shown itself to be an efficacious and powerful authority” (§195); “Through this [meditative] process, Scripture proves its authority by overcoming those afflictions.... In this experiential context....” (§197); “His reading of the Bible was experience-based” (§199).

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<sup>49</sup> C2C indirectly acknowledges Catholic persecution when it lifts up an ambiguous papal apology from 1522: “Pope Hadrian VI complained of abuses and trespasses, sins and errors insofar as church authorities had committed them” (§234).

<sup>50</sup> See C2C “Reasons to regret and lament,” §§ 228, 229.

<sup>51</sup> The introduction to C2C is signed by the co-chairs, Bishop Karlheinz Diez (Catholic) and Bishop Eero Huovinen (Lutheran). Emphasis added.

To be sure, C2C mentions *was Christum treibet* briefly (§198), but it not developed or connected to Luther's thesis of the clarity of scripture (§200), which is itself presented, once again inadequately, as a kind of experience, a mystical immediacy<sup>52</sup> which comes from the inerrant book.

By portraying Luther as a mystical biblicist, C2C revives the old Catholic accusation that Luther was an individualist.

Of course, he was neither a biblicist nor an individualist. Nor was *sola scriptura* Luther's invention. It had been a well-known part of the medieval hermeneutical discussion for several centuries. The C2C caricature of Luther on scripture is equally a caricature of modern Lutheran scholarship on Luther's hermeneutics.<sup>53</sup>

## 8. C2C hides the Vatican view: Lutherans are not really, truly "Church."

The Catholic dogma that the Roman Catholic Church is the only true Church was reaffirmed in the Vatican Declaration, *Dominus Iesus* (2000): "Therefore there exists a single Church of Christ which subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the Successor to Peter and the Bishops in communion with him."<sup>54</sup>

C2C never even mentions *Dominus Iesus*, despite its obvious ecumenical significance, especially the fact that it was affirmed by Pope John Paul II and issued less than a year (August 2000) after JDDJ was signed (October 1999). C2C instead gives the false impression that Catholics regard Lutherans as "Church," which the Vatican specifically rejects in *Dominus Iesus*.

### a. Rome: Only the Orthodox are sister "Churches."

For Catholics only the Orthodox rank as "Church." In fact, Rome regards the Orthodox as "sister Churches" because, apart from Rome, they are the only Christian body with "apostolic succession and a valid Eucharist."<sup>55</sup>

Nevertheless, there is no equality in this sisterhood. As Rome has said: "It must always be clear, when the expression *sister Churches* is used in this proper sense, that the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Universal Church is not sister but *mother* of all the particular Churches."<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> See §§ 99-101, which emphasize Luther's similarity to Bernard of Clairvaux, Tauler, and Staupitz.

<sup>53</sup> In contrast, see *Scripture and Tradition. Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue IX*. Eds. Harold C. Skillrud, J. Francis Stafford, Daniel F. Martensen (Minneapolis, Augsburg, 1995) §20, and Inge Lønning, "No Other Gospel: Luther's Concept of the 'Middle of Scripture,' in Its Significance for Ecumenical Communion and Christian Confession Today," *Luther's Ecumenical Significance*, 229-45. See above footnote 47 above.

<sup>54</sup> *Dominus Iesus* [On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and The Church]. Declaration of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, August 6, 2000, §17. Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>55</sup> *Dominus Iesus* §17. See also "Note on the expression 'sister Churches,'" by the Office of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. A letter to the Presidents of the Congregations of Bishops (June 30, 2000) §12. Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>56</sup> "Note on the expression 'sister churches,'" §10. Italics in the original.

In 1974 the Roman Catholic team of the US Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue V, *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church*, requested the following of the Vatican:

“If, in the expectation of a foreseeable reconciliation, it is ready to acknowledge **the Lutheran churches represented in our dialogue as sister-churches** which are already entitled to some measure of ecclesiastical communion.”<sup>57</sup>

The Vatican ignored the request.

**b. Lutherans are only an “ecclesial community,” not “Church.”**

In the Vatican Declaration, *Dominus Iesus*, Lutherans, Protestants, and other Christians are ranked as “ecclesial communities,” not “Church,” because they lack “apostolic succession and a valid Eucharist”:

“The Catholic people *are required to profess* that there is an historical continuity – rooted in the apostolic succession – between the church founded by Christ and the Catholic Church....This Church ... subsists in [*subsistit in*] the Catholic Church, governed by the Successor to Peter and the Bishops in Communion with him.”<sup>58</sup>

“The Churches which, while not existing in perfect communion with the Catholic Church, remain united to her by means of the **closest bonds, that is, by apostolic succession and a valid Eucharist, are true particular Churches**. Therefore, the Church of Christ is present and operative also in these Churches, even though they lack full communion with the Catholic Church, since **they do not accept the Catholic doctrine of the Primacy, which, according to the will of God, the Bishop of Rome objectively has and exercises over the entire Church**.

“On the other hand, the ecclesial communities which have not preserved the **valid Episcopate and the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic mystery**, are not Churches in the proper sense....they suffer from **defects** [i.e. they lack apostolic succession and thus also a valid Eucharist].”<sup>59</sup>

C2C uses the term “ecclesial community” but never explains its significance to general readers. Two examples:

“The Council also spoke of the ‘many liturgical actions of the Christian religion’ that are used by the divided ‘brethren’ and said, ‘these most

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<sup>57</sup> *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church. Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue V*. Eds. Paul C. Empie and T. Austin Murphy (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1974) 23. Emphasis added.

<sup>58</sup> *Dominus Iesus* ¶16. Italics in the text.

<sup>59</sup> *Dominus Iesus* ¶17. Emphasis added.

certainly can truly engender a life of grace in ways that vary according to the condition of each Church or **Community**” (§27. Emphasis added.).

“If, according to the judgment of the Second Vatican Council, the Holy Spirit uses ‘**ecclesial communities**’ as a means of salvation, it could seem that this work of the Spirit would have implications for some mutual recognition of ministry” (§194). Emphasis added.

By using the term “ecclesial community” but not clarifying its meaning, C2C disguises the fact that the Vatican regards Lutheran Churches as defective and not “Church.”

## 9. C2C assumes papal primacy and infallibility are inevitable.

### a. The papacy: The article by which the Roman Catholic Church stands or falls.<sup>60</sup>

The dogma of papal primacy and infallibility is for Catholics what justification by faith alone is for Lutherans. Papal primacy and infallibility is the defining dogma of Catholicism and the principal obstacle to Christian unity:

Pope Paul VI (1967): “The pope – as we all know – is undoubtedly **the gravest obstacle** in the path of ecumenism.”<sup>61</sup>

Pope John Paul II (1995): Before “a true consensus in faith can be achieved [agreement is needed on] 4) the Magisterium of the Church, entrusted to the Pope and the Bishops in communion with him ... for teaching and safeguarding the faith.”<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Martin Luther: *quia isto articulo stante stat Ecclesia, ruente ruit Ecclesia*--“Because if this article [of justification] stands, the church stands; if this article collapses, the church collapses” (*Weimar Ausgabe [WA]* 40/3:352). See also *Smalcald Articles* II.1.5: “Nothing in this article can be given up or compromised...” *BC* 292 (Tappert).

<sup>61</sup> Pope Paul VI, “Address to the general meeting of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity,” April 28, 1967. *SPCU Information Service*, no. 2 (1967) 4. English translation in E. J. Yarnold, *They Are in Earnest* (Middlegreen, England: Slough St. Paul, 1982) 66. Emphasis added.

<sup>62</sup> C2C §235 quotes a statement from Pope John Paul II in his Encyclical, *Ut Unum Sint* [That They May Be One] §88 (May 25, 1995), which, as an isolated statement, minimizes the difficulty of the papacy by calling it “a” difficulty, rather than “the” difficulty. Moreover, C2C fails to point out John Paul II’s list in *Ut Unum Sint*, §79, of the five major Catholic dogmas on which Rome requires agreement, including the papacy:

“It is already possible to identify the areas in need of fuller study **before a true consensus of faith can be achieved**: 1) the relationship between Sacred Scripture, as the highest authority in matters of faith, and Sacred Tradition, as indispensable to the interpretation of the Word of God; 2) the Eucharist, as the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, an offering of praise to the Father, the sacrificial memorial and Real Presence of Christ and the sanctifying outpouring of the Holy Spirit; 3) Ordination, as a Sacrament, to the threefold ministry of the episcopate, presbyterate and diaconate; 4) **the Magisterium of the Church, entrusted to the Pope and the Bishops in communion with him, understood as a responsibility and an authority exercised in the name of Christ for teaching and safeguarding the faith**; 5) the Virgin Mary, as Mother of God and Icon of the Church, the spiritual Mother who intercedes for Christ’s disciples and for all humanity.” Emphasis added.

Bishop [later Cardinal] Karl Lehmann (2001): The papacy is “**the principal obstacle**” to progress toward Christian unity.<sup>63</sup>

C2C ¶192 quotes Vatican II on papal primacy: “For Catholics, the Roman Pontiff has ‘full, supreme, and universal power over the church’ (LG 22).”<sup>64</sup>

But the titanic significance of a papal office with “full, supreme, and universal power over the church” is never addressed or discussed. Apart from this single statement, C2C uses circumlocutions to hide the decisive, “full, supreme, and universal power” of the papacy.

**b. C2C hides the papacy in half-truths.**

One way C2C misleads readers about the power of the papacy is by half-truths. For example, C2C ¶203 quotes from Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, the Dogmatic Constitution of Divine Revelation: “In DV 10, a magisterial text affirms for the first time that the teaching office of the church is ‘not above the Word of God but stands at its service.’”

This sentence, isolated from its context, gives the impression that Vatican II came close to a Lutheran view that church authorities are always proximate authorities. Not so.

What immediately follows in *Dei Verbum* ¶10 is the assertion of the papacy as the decisive, active authority: “It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, sacred scripture, and **the teaching authority of the Church** ... are so linked together that one cannot stand without the others....”<sup>65</sup>

R. A. F. MacKensie, S.J., Rector of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, in his introduction to *Dei Verbum*, draws out the implications of how sacred tradition, sacred scripture, and the teaching authority of the Church (the magisterium) are preserved from error:

“On the other hand, a written record is a dead letter, needing constant interpretation and commentary in succeeding ages. It cannot of itself answer new questions, or explain what was once clear and has now become obscure. But the writings transmitted in a living community, from one generation to another, are accompanied by a continuous tradition of understanding and explanation, which preserves and re-expresses their meaning, and which applies them, from time to time, to the solving of new problems. **If this tradition were only human, it would be liable to grave error.** But such a consequence is avoided by **the Church’s magisterium**, which, however much exposed to human vagaries and mistakes in secondary matters, **is**

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<sup>63</sup> George Weigel, “Obstacles to Christian Unity,” in his syndicated column, *The Catholic Difference* (July 5, 2001). Emphasis added. Available at [www.eppc.org](http://www.eppc.org).

<sup>64</sup> ¶192. LG 22 = *Lumen Gentium* [The Church] ¶22.

<sup>65</sup> Vatican II, *Dei Verbum* [Revelation] ¶10, *The Documents of Vatican II*, Ed. Walter M Abbott (New York: Guild Press, 1966) 118. Emphasis added.

**preserved from going wrong in essentials by the indwelling presence of Christ's Spirit."**<sup>66</sup>

Thus Vatican II reaffirmed Vatican I: The papacy is the binding, final authority with "full, supreme, and universal power over the church."

To be sure, Melanchthon noted when he signed the *Smalcald Articles*, that Lutherans would accept a papacy as a human institution (*iure humano*), but not as divine (*iure divino*).<sup>67</sup> The Vatican, however, would never accept a papacy as a human, fallible institution (*iure humano*). Nor would the Vatican participate in an ecumenical council unless the Pope would preside over that council with "full, supreme, and universal power." As *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, states:

"A council is never ecumenical unless it is confirmed or at least accepted as such by the successor of Peter. It is the prerogative of the Roman Pontiff to convoke these councils, to preside over them, and to confirm them."<sup>68</sup>

Even the Orthodox Churches, which rank as "sister Churches" to Rome, are absolutely opposed to Rome's claim to primacy and infallibility.

**c. C2C hides the papacy in euphemisms.**

C2C's path to unity in the Catholic sense of the term "unity" culminates in the declaration in ¶216: "In the Lutheran-Roman Catholic conversations **a clear consensus** has emerged that **the doctrine of justification** and **the doctrine of the church** belong together."<sup>69</sup>

By using the innocuous phrase "the doctrine of the church," C2C disguises the fact that for Catholics the whole of doctrine is controlled by the Roman Pontiff who has "full, supreme, and universal power over the church."

Two paragraphs later in ¶218, C2C disguises the papacy in another innocuous phrase, "the relation between the universal and the local church." Moreover, C2C is using this phrase in a list of future topics on which Lutherans and Catholics need to find agreement. The list is a veiled description of the Roman Catholic "doctrine of the church":

"...[F]urther ecumenical conversation is still needed on: the relation between the visibility and invisibility of the church, **the relation between the universal and local church**, the church as sacrament, the necessity of sacramental ordination in the life of the church, and the sacramental character of episcopal ordination." (Emphasis added.)

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<sup>66</sup> R. A. F. MacKenzie, S. J., "Introduction to *Dei Verbum*," *The Documents of Vatican II*, 109. Emphasis added.

<sup>67</sup> *Smalcald Articles* XV:5; BC 316-17 (Tappert).

<sup>68</sup> *Lumen Gentium* ¶22. *The Documents of Vatican II* (Abbott) 44.

<sup>69</sup> Emphasis added. See below Issue #9d for the Lutheran sense of the term "unity."

Ecumenical technicians would recognize the phrase, “the relation between the universal and local church” as a euphemism for the papacy, but the average Lutheran bishop, pastor, or layperson would not.

**d. C2C subverts the Lutheran doctrine of the church.**

C2C ¶213: “In the Lutheran tradition, the church is understood as ‘the assembly of saints in which the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly’ (CA VII).” C2C masks the revolution that was CA VII with the banal comment: “This means that the spiritual life is centered in the local congregation gathered around pulpit and altar fellowship.”

What CA VII really “means” is redefining the church in light of justification by faith alone. What CA VII really “means” includes, but is not limited to the following:

- The church as the body of Christ is the assembly of believers not bound to a particular time, place, or particular persons, including Rome and the papacy. (CA VII:1)
- The marks of the true church are baptism, the Lord’s Supper and the gospel.<sup>70</sup> The office of bishop is not necessary nor does its absence deprive the church of anything essential. The office of public ministry is the highest office in the church. (CA VII:2)
- To proclaim the gospel purely is to overthrow all authorities that appeal to something else besides faith alone in Christ alone. (CA VII:2)
- For the true unity of the church it is enough (*satis est*) to agree on proclaiming the gospel purely and administering the sacrament rightly. Everything else is a matter of freedom and thus a variety of structures and ceremonies does not threaten Christian unity. (CA VII:2,3)
- The church and its unity is an object both of faith and sight. The church has “visible means” (Word and sacraments), but the church itself is always hidden under the cross and revealed through the cross (Ap 7-8:18).
- The church has no other head than Christ himself. (CA VII:4)

C2C misrepresents the Lutheran Confessional tradition by ignoring the edges implicit in the Augsburg Confession, specifically in CA VII, which C2C quotes only partially. Furthermore, C2C omits Lutheran consensus statements (including representatives from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod) from the US Lutheran/Catholic dialogue which explicate the Lutheran doctrine of the church for today. For example:

“It goes almost without saying, therefore, that the sole mediatorship of Christ does not exclude but rather impels to further “mediation” in the sense of a transmitting through word and sacrament. But Lutherans rarely speak of “mediation” in this connection and prefer rather to speak of the ministry

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<sup>70</sup> “Not Rome, or this or that place, but baptism, the sacrament, and the gospel are the signs by which the existence of the church in the world can be noticed externally. Wherever there is baptism and the gospel no one should doubt the presence of the saints—even if they were only children in the cradle.” (“On the Papacy in Rome,” 1520; *LW* 39:75).

of word and sacrament, the actual doing of the deed in the living present. ...Salvation is thus **“mediated” or communicated through the gospel, preached and heard as well as sacramentally enacted. Thus the word and the sacraments are sometimes spoken of as “means”** (*Mittel, instrumenta*) **through which the Holy Spirit gives faith to those who receive the gospel (CA 5).**”<sup>71</sup>

C2C claims that its own “presentation harvests the results of these dialogues” (¶94). But the Lutheran doctrine of the church, as stated above, is not presented in C2C.

Instead, C2C is self-referencing; it cites as authoritative only other LWF documents, many of which are written by the same individuals.<sup>72</sup> For example, C2C cites (34 times) its own LWF study, *The Apostolicity of the Church*,<sup>73</sup> which has neither a common statement, nor separate statements by the Lutheran and Catholic participants, nor has it been reviewed by independent Lutheran faculties or scholars.

C2C quotes JDDJ 27 times and never even mentions that JDDJ did not achieve a consensus on “faith alone” and JDDJ does not affirm that justification by faith alone is **the** criterion for doctrine and practice.<sup>74</sup>

**e. C2C misrepresents Luther on the church as “mother.”**

C2C deletes some words and adds an admonition that skews the focus of the original. Compare the following:

Large Catechism II:42: “In the first place, he [the Holy Spirit] has a unique community in the world, which is the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God which the Holy Spirit reveals and proclaims....”<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> “Lutheran Perspectives on Critical Issues,” *The One Mediator, the Saints, and Mary*. Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue VIII. Eds. H George Anderson, J. Francis Stafford, Joseph A. Burgess (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1992) 38. Emphasis added.

<sup>72</sup> Michael Root, who became Roman Catholic in 2010, had been a consultant in the drafting of *The Apostolicity of the Church*. A Study Document of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2006), as well as a member of the drafting teams of JDDJ and C2C. See footnote 35 above.

<sup>73</sup> *The Apostolicity of the Church*. This study has unqualified praise for JDDJ, claiming it “has ascertained the existence of a ‘consensus in basic truths of the doctrine of justification’ ... which shows a high degree of agreement in faith...” (130).

<sup>74</sup> C2C never mentions the irregular procedures by which LWF leaders endorsed JDDJ’s Official Common Statement and Annex without consultation with member churches and in the face of detailed criticisms by large bodies of German Lutheran scholars and widespread controversy among Lutherans worldwide. See footnotes 21 and 22 above.

<sup>75</sup> LC, BC (Tappert) 416.

C2C on LC II:42: “One should keep in mind that Luther in his Large Catechism called the church ‘the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God which the Holy Spirit reveals and proclaims ....”<sup>76</sup>

By deleting the opening words and prefacing the rest with – “One should keep in mind” – C2C directs attention to the word “mother,” falsely implying that Lutherans and Catholics share a similar view of the church as “mother.”

To the contrary, for Luther the church is the daughter of the Word. As Luther asserts in his commentary on Genesis: The church “is the daughter who is born from the Word; she is not the mother of the Word.”<sup>77</sup>

**f. The C2C subtext: Justification is acceptable if limited to the realm of spirituality.**

In 2017 Catholic Charismatic Renewal celebrated its Golden Jubilee in Rome at Pope Francis’ invitation.<sup>78</sup> He opened the four day Golden Jubilee celebration and presided at the closing Mass on Pentecost Sunday, June 4, 2017. Begun in 1967, Catholic Charismatic Renewal today is established in 230 countries with over 160 million members.

Charismatic Catholic Renewal blends Catholic and Pentecostal practices. It promotes spiritual experience as authoritative, that is, having a personal relationship with Jesus, speaking in tongues, healings, and miracles. The Vatican allows charismatics their distinctive spirituality, as long as they, in turn, are obedient to the Magisterium, as Alvaro Soares, Director of Charismatic Renewal Services for the Archdiocese of Boston, describes:

“Charismatics tend to be very obedient to what the church says. So if they say there will be women’s ordination, we will be obedient to that. If the Church says no, we say no. We are committed to social justice because we are aligned with the church.”<sup>79</sup>

One could imagine a scenario in which the Vatican would allow Lutherans their **distinctive spirituality of justification by faith alone**, as long as Lutherans agreed in other matters to hold to the authority of the Magisterium, as charismatics do.

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<sup>76</sup> ¶213: “One should keep in mind that Luther in his Large Catechism called the church ‘the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God which the Holy Spirit reveals and proclaims . . . The Holy Spirit will remain with the holy community [*Gemeine*] or Christian people until the Last Day. Through it he fetches us to Christ, using it to teach and preach the Word.” The ellipses connect sentences several pages apart (LC II 42 and 53).

<sup>77</sup> “Lectures on Genesis” (1536). *LW* 2:101.

<sup>78</sup> “The Charismatic Renewal and the Catholic Church,” *Catholic World Report* (May 18, 2014). Available online.

<sup>79</sup> “Charismatic Catholicism is alive and well.” *Crux. Taking the Catholic Pulse* (September 26, 2014). Available online.

C2C lends credence to such a scenario because it characterizes Luther and the Reformation in terms of a **particular kind of “spiritual experience”**<sup>80</sup>

- “Luther could regard only Scripture as the ultimate judge because it had shown itself to be an **efficacious** and powerful authority, while other authorities merely drew their power from it.” (§195).
- “Through this [meditative] process, Scripture proves its authority by overcoming those afflictions.... In this **experiential context**....” (§197).
- “His reading of the Bible was **experience-based**” (§199).
- “The ecumenical journey enables Lutherans and Catholics to appreciate together **Martin Luther’s insight into and spiritual experience of the gospel** of the righteousness of God, which is also God’s mercy” (§244).

## 10. Mary, Mary, why are they hiding you?

Mary is not mentioned in C2C, **not even once**. She is kept completely out of view.<sup>81</sup>

Is Mary so minor that she is not worth mentioning? Or so monumental that it would be explosive to mention her?

Pope John Paul II affirmed her fundamental importance in *Redemptoris Mater*:

“Now, following the line of the Second Vatican Council, I wish to emphasize the special presence of the Mother of God in the mystery of Christ and his Church. For this is a **fundamental dimension emerging from the Mariology of the Council**....”<sup>82</sup>

As Pope John Paul II asserts above, the Marian dogmas constitute “a fundamental dimension” of Catholic teaching on Church and ministry. C2C deceives Lutherans by keeping Mary out of sight.

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<sup>80</sup> Bolding added in examples below for emphasis.

<sup>81</sup> See John Reumann’s brusque introductory remarks on the German Lutheran-Catholic dialogue report, *Communio Sanctorum. The Church as the Communion of Saints*. He reminds readers that the subject of the Virgin Mary has been dealt with extensively in the US Lutheran-Catholic dialogue:

“They [readers] will read with surprise, ‘Mary has previously scarcely been a subject of ecumenical dialogue’ (258) and may want to compare *The One Mediator, the Saints and Mary, Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue VIII* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1992), which is also pertinent to chap. 7 [The Communion of Saints Beyond Death],” in “A Lutheran Preface by John Reumann,” *Communio Sanctorum. The Church as Communion of Saints*,” Official German Catholic-Lutheran Dialogue. Trans. Mark W. Jeske, Michael Root, and Daniel R. Smith (Collegeville, Liturgical Press, 2004) xv.

<sup>82</sup> Pope John Paul II, Encyclical: *Redemptoris Mater*, March 25, 1987 (§48). Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

For Catholics, Mary and the Church are inextricably together. In 1854 Pope Pius IX preempted the later conciliar action on infallibility at Vatican 1 (1870) by promulgating an infallible dogma without summoning a council:<sup>83</sup> The dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary.<sup>84</sup>

In 1943 Pope Pius XII further developed the theme of Mary and the Church in his Encyclical, *Mystici Corporis Christi*:

“Certainly the loving Mother is spotless in the Sacraments by which she gives birth to and nourishes her children; in the faith which she has always preserved inviolate; in her sacred laws imposed on all; in the evangelical counsels which she recommends; in those heavenly gifts and extraordinary grace through which with inexhaustible fecundity, she generates hosts of martyrs, virgins and confessors. But it cannot be laid to her charge if some members fall, weak or wounded.”<sup>85</sup>

And in the 1950 Pope Pius XII promulgated the dogma of the Bodily Assumption of Mary into heaven.<sup>86</sup>

For Catholics Mary has a “profound relationship”<sup>87</sup> with Church and Eucharist, the subjects of C2C, yet she is kept completely out of view.

Mary, Mary, why are they hiding you? In the Lutheran/Catholic full communion to come, would the Marian dogmas, required for Catholics, be optional for Lutherans?

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<sup>83</sup> Vatican I, *Pastor Aeternus*, July 18, 1870 (¶4.9): “Faithfully adhering to the tradition received from the beginning of the Christian faith ... we teach and define that it is a dogma **divinely revealed** that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is when in discharge of the office of pastor and teacher of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith and morals to be held by the universal Church, by the divine assistance promised him in Blessed Peter, is possessed of that **infallibility** with which the Divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be endowed for defining doctrine regarding faith and morals; and that, therefore, such definitions of the Roman Pontiffs are irreformable of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church.” Emphasis added. Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>84</sup> Pope Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus*, December 8, 1854 (The Definition): “We declare, pronounce, and define that the doctrine which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, is a doctrine revealed by God and therefore to be believed firmly and constantly by all the faithful.” Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>85</sup> Pope Pius XII, Encyclical: *Mystici Corporis Christi*, June 29, 1943 (¶ 66). Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>86</sup> Pope Pius XII, Apostolic Constitution: *Munificentissimus Deus*, November 1, 1950: “5. Now God has willed that the Blessed Virgin Mary should be exempted from this general rule [the bodies of even the just are corrupted after death]. She, by an entirely unique privilege, completely overcame sin by her Immaculate Conception, and as a result she was not subject to the law of remaining in the corruption of the grave, and she did not have to wait until the end of time for the redemption of her body.” Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>87</sup> Pope John Paul II, Encyclical Letter: *Ecclesia De Eucharista*, April 17, 2003, especially Chapter 6 (¶¶ 53-58): “Mary is present, with the Church and as the Mother of the Church, at each of our celebrations of the Eucharist. If the Church and the Eucharist are inseparably united, the same ought to be said of **Mary and the Eucharist**” (¶57). Emphasis added. Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

The Roman Catholic members of the US Lutheran/Catholic dialogue round VIII, *The One Mediator, The Saints, and Mary* (1991), proposed to their own church that in a future ecclesial communion Lutherans be exempt from holding to the Marian dogmas:

“The second step envisages that Catholic Church authorities agree that in an ecclesial communion Lutheran churches and their members **might be left free not to profess belief** in the Marian dogmas of 1854 and 1950 and not to invoke the saints in their prayer.”<sup>88</sup>

The Vatican answer: In a reunited ecclesial communion the Marian dogmas would be required for Lutherans.

In contrast, the Vatican does not regard dogmatic developments after the schism of 1054 to be binding on their “sister Churches,” the Orthodox Churches. The Orthodox do not hold the dogmas of papal primacy and infallibility (1870) and the dogmas of Mary’s Immaculate Conception (1854) and Bodily Assumption (1950) as defined dogmas.

## 11. C2C glides over the ordination of women.

C2C makes one passing reference to the ordination of women as one of several yet-to-be resolved “differences” (¶176), when in fact the opposite is true: The ordination of women is an insurmountable obstacle.

C2C is deceptive. Pope John Paul II made it clear in his Apostolic Letter, *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* (1994), that restricting ordination to men is not “a merely disciplinary” action, but a doctrine which is unchanging and unchangeable:

“Although the teaching that priestly ordination is to be reserved to men alone has been preserved by the constant and universal Tradition of the Church and firmly taught by the Magisterium in its more recent documents, **at the present time in some places it is nonetheless considered still open to debate**, or the Church’s judgment that women are not to be admitted to ordination is considered to have a **merely disciplinary force.**”

“Wherefore, in order that all doubt may be removed regarding a matter of great importance, a matter which pertains to the Church’s divine constitution itself, in virtue of my ministry of confirming the brethren (cf. Lk 22:32) I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be **definitively held** by all the Church’s faithful.”<sup>89</sup>

The definitive Catholic position is also evident in Cardinal Walter Kasper’s 2006 warning to the Anglicans on the consequences of their upcoming vote to allow women bishops:

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<sup>88</sup> *The One Mediator, the Saints, and Mary*. Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue VIII. 123, ¶20. Emphasis added. See footnote 71 above.

<sup>89</sup> Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter: *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*, May 22, 1994 (¶4). Emphasis added.

“The shared partaking of the one Lord’s table, which we long for so earnestly, would disappear into the far and ultimately unreachable distance. Instead of moving towards one another, we would coexist alongside one another.”<sup>90</sup>

Thus C2C invents a false hope when, after citing ordaining women as a “difference,” it claims: “Together Lutherans and Catholics can work out the relationship...” (§176). Catholics will not share communion with any church that ordains women.

## 12. C2C kicks the can down the road: Lutherans must concede to unity on Rome’s terms.

The real obstacle to Christian unity is the Roman Catholic criterion or article by which the church stands or falls: the papacy. As Pope Paul VI stated: “The pope, as we all know, is undoubtedly **the gravest obstacle** in the path of ecumenism.”<sup>91</sup>

In its climactic flourish C2C slips in this obstacle while deflecting attention elsewhere. C2C does it deftly: “They [Lutherans and Catholics] recite in common the creed...” (§216).

Who could object? In short, look away from “the gravest obstacle”; look instead at how Lutherans and Catholics “recite in common the creed.” This commonality is compelling.

Yet it, too, masks the same old underlying basic difference.

For Catholics the Nicene Creed is authoritative because it is part of the irreversible development of dogma defined by the living Tradition of the teaching magisterium of the Church, that is, the papacy.

For Lutherans what is authoritatively decisive, even regarding the Trinity and the Nicene Creed, is distinguishing law and gospel, that is, justification by faith alone. As Edmund Schlink, describing the situation at the time of the Reformation, states:

“The triune God is not yet known if he is presented without the distinction of law and Gospel. In the Roman church the dreadful fact had become evident that, **in spite of the preservation of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, God was *not* known any more, since the Gospel had been lost.** But to know God’s essence means to know ‘the most profound depths of his fatherly heart, and his sheer, unutterable love’ (Large Catechism II, 64). To know God’s love means to receive his gracious love. However, the love of God the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier is not given through the demands of the law but through the gift of the Gospel. **The triune God therefore is known only in the distinction of the law and Gospel,** that is, by faith in the Gospel.”<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> “Unity impossible if the Anglican Church ordains women bishops, says Cardinal Kasper,” *Catholic News Agency* (February 12, 2012). Emphasis added.

<sup>91</sup> See footnote 61 above.

<sup>92</sup> Edmund Schlink, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1961) 66. Italics in the text; bolding added for emphasis:

“The Triune God is not yet known if he is presented without the distinction of law and Gospel. In the Roman church the dreadful fact had become evident that, **in spite of the preservation of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, God was *not* known any more, since the Gospel had been**

Thus the underlying basic difference is always: What is ultimately authoritative? The papacy? Or justification by faith alone?

C2C ¶217 ducks the conflict and hides the papacy in a paean to “the Church,” which is a quote from the 1995 LWF/Vatican dialogue, *Church and Justification*”:

“Strictly and properly speaking, we do not believe in justification and in **the Church**, but in the Father, who has mercy on us and who gathers us in **the Church** as his people; and in Christ who justifies us and whose body **the Church** is; and in the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us and dwells in **the Church**. Our faith encompasses justification and **the Church** as work (sic) of the triune God which can properly accepted only in faith in him.”<sup>93</sup>

C2C has altered the quote by capitalizing “Church,” in the five places it appears. This change of “church” to “Church” in ¶217 is followed in ¶218 by a list of future dialogue topics which are in fact a thinly veiled description of the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Church:

“...[F]urther ecumenical conversation is still needed on: the relation between the visibility and invisibility of the church, the relation between the universal and local church, the church as sacrament, the necessity of sacramental ordination in the life of the church, and the sacramental character of episcopal ordination.”

As noted above, even the papacy is included in the list, disguised in the phrase “the relation between the universal and local church.”<sup>94</sup>

Thus the C2C path to unity upholds the article by which the Roman Catholic Church stands or falls: the papacy.

The C2C path to unity upholds the canons of the Council of Trent against justification.<sup>95</sup>

The C2C path to unity has been cleared by the JDDJ Annex which limits justification to being merely “measure or touchstone ... an indispensable criterion ... [integrated into] the overall

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**lost.** But to know God’s essence means to know ‘the most profound depth of his fatherly heart, and his sheer, unutterable love’ (L.C. II, 64). To know God’s love means to receive his gracious love. However, the love of God the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier is not given through the demands of the law but through the gift of the Gospel. **The triune God, therefore, is known only in the distinction of law and Gospel, that is, by faith in the Gospel.** The train of thought in this chapter has shown that the Creator is known only in the Gospel. The same holds true of knowing God the Sanctifier, for the Holy Spirit is given only through the Gospel. Of every knowledge of God the statement applies: ‘Thus the entire Holy Trinity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, directs all men to Christ as to the book of life’ (S.D. XI, 66).”

<sup>93</sup> *Church and Justification*. Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity (Frankfurt am Main: Lutheran World Federation, 1994) 14 (¶5). Emphasis added.

<sup>94</sup> See Issue #9c above: “C2C hides the papacy in euphemisms.”

<sup>95</sup> See footnote 39 above.

context of the church's fundamental Trinitarian confession of faith,"<sup>96</sup> but no longer "the" article by which the church stands or falls.

Lutherans have compromised their ultimate criterion. But Catholics have not given an inch on their ultimate criterion. As Cardinal Koch has said:

**"A complete consensus** on the doctrine of justification itself has **not yet been reached** and, **what is more**, nor has it on the consequences of this doctrine, **above all** for an understanding of the Church and the question of ministerial offices."<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> JDDJ Annex #3. See footnote 24 above.

<sup>97</sup> Cardinal Koch, "From Conflict to Communion." See footnote 6 above.