

SECRETARIAT FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY

(Note: The Latin text of the Directory is the only official text. The following translation is being distributed by the Secretariat as a service to those who consult it.)

DIRECTORY FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE DECISION OF THE SECOND ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF THE VATICAN CONCERNING ECUMENICAL MATTERS

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. "The concern for restoring unity involves the whole Church, faithful and clergy alike. It extends to everyone, according to the talent of each..." (Decree on Ecumenism *Restoration of Unity* n. 5) The Ecumenical directory is being published to encourage and guide this concern for unity, so that what was promulgated in this field by the decrees of the Second Vatican Council may be better put into practice throughout the Catholic Church. This must be done in a manner faithful to the mind of the Church. "Ecumenical activity cannot be other than fully and sincerely Catholic, that is loyal to the truth we have received from the Apostles and the Fathers, and in harmony with the faith which the Catholic Church has always professed, and at the same time tending towards that fullness in which Our Lord wants His Body to grow in the course of time." (Decree on Ecumenism n. 24)

2. The Decree on Ecumenism insists in a number of places that it is the business of the Apostolic See and the bishops, with due regard for the rights of Patriarchs and their synods, to decide ecumenical policy after taking all circumstances into account (cf. n. 4, n. 8, n. 9). Proper care must be taken in these matters so that the ecumenical movement itself is not impeded and the faithful do not suffer harm due to the danger of false irenicism or indifferentism. This is a pastoral care, which will be the more effective as the faithful become more solidly and fully instructed in the teaching and authentic tradition both of the Catholic Church and of the Churches and Communities

separated from her. Against the dangers and harm that may arise, this accurate knowledge of teachings and traditions will be a better safeguard than the kind of ignorance which is often reinforced by false fear: fear of those adjustments which, in accordance with the spirit and decisions of the Second Vatican Council, are necessary to any genuine renewal of the Church.

Ecumenical movement begins with the renewal by which the Church expresses more fully and perfectly the truth and holiness which comes from Christ Our Lord. Everyone of the faithful, as a member of the Church, should share in this renewal in truth and charity so as to grow in faith, hope and charity and bear witness in the Church to God and our Saviour Jesus Christ by his own Christian life.

Since this movement has been set on foot by the Holy Spirit, what follows here is put forward with the intention and in a manner to be of service to the bishops in putting into effect the Decree on Ecumenism, "without obstructing the ways of divine Providence, and without prejudging the future inspirations of the Holy Spirit". (Decree on Ecumenism n. 24)

1. *THE SETTING UP OF ECUMENICAL COMMISSIONS*

A) The Diocesan Commission.

3. It seems very suitable to set up a council, commission or secretariat, either for several dioceses grouped together or, where circumstances call for it, in each diocese, charged to promote ecumenical activity by the Episcopal Conference or of the local Ordinary. In those dioceses which cannot have their own commission there should at least be one person delegated by the bishop for these duties.

4. This commission should cooperate with such ecumenical institutions or enterprises as already exist or may be launched, making use of their help where occasion offers. It should also be prompt to help other diocesan work and individual initiative, by exchanging information and ideas with those concerned, to mutual advantage. This should all be done in harmony with the principles and general norms already existing in this matter.

5. To make clearer and foster better the concern for unity which belongs to the Church as a whole, where possible the commission should include among its members not only diocesan clergy but also religious of both sexes and suitable laymen and women.

6. Besides the other functions assigned to it, the commission should

- a) put into practice, according to local situations, the decisions of Vatican II on ecumenical affairs;
- b) foster spiritual ecumenism according to the principles laid down in the Decree on Ecumenism (see especially n. 8) about public and private prayer for the unity of Christians;
- c) promote friendliness, cooperation and charity between Catholics and their brothers who are not in their communion;
- d) initiate and guide dialogue with them, bearing in mind the adaptation to be made to the types of participants according to nn. 9 and 11 of the Decree on Ecumenism;
- e) promote in common with our separated brethren joint witness to the Christian faith as well as cooperation in such areas as e.g. in education, morality, social and cultural matters, learning and the arts. (cf. Decree on Ecumenism n. 12, also the Decree *Ad Gentes* n. 12);
- f) appoint experts to undertake discussions and consultations with the other churches and communities in the diocese;
- g) offer help and encouragement for the instruction and education to be given to clergy and laity and for conducting one's life in an ecumenical spirit, with special emphasis being given to preparing seminary students, to preaching, catechetics and other kinds of teaching dealt with in the Decree on Ecumenism, n. 10;
- h) maintain relations with the territorial ecumenical commission (see below), adapting the latter's advice and recommendations to local diocesan conditions, and, in addition, when circumstances suggest, useful information should be sent to the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity in Rome, which can help the latter in carrying on its own work.

B) The Territorial Commission

7. Each National Episcopal Conference¹ and also those which according to circumstances, include more than one nation — should establish in accordance with their own statutes a commission of bishops for ecumenical affairs assisted by experts. This commission should have a mandate from the Episcopal Conference of the territory to give guidance in ecumenical affairs and determine

¹References in this directory to "Episcopal Conference" also apply, *servatis de jure servandis* with due consideration for the requirements of law, to the patriarchial synods and synods of major archbishops in the Catholic Eastern Churches.

concrete ways of acting in accordance with the Decree on Ecumenism and with other ordinances and legitimate customs, taking account of the time, place and persons they are concerned with but also of the good of the universal Church. If possible, this commission should be assisted by a permanent secretariat.

8. The functions of this commission will include all those listed under n. 6 insofar as they enter into the competence of a territorial Episcopal Conference. In addition let it carry out other tasks, of which some examples are given here:

- a) putting into practice the rule and instructions issued by the apostolic see in these matters;
- b) giving advice and assistance to the bishops who are setting up an ecumenical commission in their own dioceses;
- c) giving spiritual and material help where possible to both existing ecumenical institutions and to ecumenical enterprises to be promoted either in the field of instruction and research or in that of pastoral care and the promotion of Christian life according to the principles set out in the Decree on Ecumenism nn. 9 to 11;
- d) establishing dialogue and consultation with the leaders and with ecumenical councils of the other churches and communities which exist on a national or territorial (as distinct from diocesan) scale;
- e) appointing of those experts who, by a public mandate of the Church, are designated for the conversations and consultations with experts of the Communities referred to under (d) above;
- f) setting up, if need be, a special subcommission for ecumenical relations with the Easterns;
- g) maintaining relations between the territorial hierarchy and the Holy See.

II. *THE VALIDITY OF BAPTISM CONFERRED BY MINISTERS OF CHURCHES AND ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES SEPARATED FROM US*

9. The Church's practice in this matter is governed by two principles: that baptism is necessary for salvation, and that it can be conferred only once.

10. The ecumenical importance of baptism is clear from documents of the Second Vatican Council: "He Himself (Jesus Christ) in explicit terms affirmed the necessity of faith and baptism (cf. Mk. 16:16, Jn. 3:5), and

thereby affirmed also the necessity of the Church, for through baptism as through a door men enter the Church." (Dogm. Const. on the Church n. 14)

"The Church recognizes that in many ways she is linked with those who, being baptized, are honoured with the name of Christian, though they do not profess the faith in its entirety or do not preserve unity of communion with the successor of Peter." (Ibid. n. 15)

"For men who believe in Christ and have been properly baptized are brought into a certain, though imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church ... all who have been justified by faith in baptism are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers by the children of the Catholic Church." (Decree on Ecumenism n. 3)

"On the other hand, Catholics must gladly acknowledge and esteem the truly christian endowments from our common heritage which are to be found among our separated brethren." (Ibid. n. 4)

11. Baptism is, then, the sacramental bond of unity, indeed the foundation of communion among all Christians. Hence its dignity and the manner of administering it are matters of great importance to all Christ's disciples. Yet a just evaluation of the sacrament and the mutual recognition of each other's baptisms by different Communities is sometimes hindered because of a reasonable doubt about the baptism conferred in some particular case. To avoid difficulties which may arise when some Christian separated from us, led by the grace of the Holy Spirit and by his conscience, seeks full communion with the Catholic Church, the following guiding principles are put forward.

12. There can be no doubt cast upon the validity of baptism as conferred among separated Eastern Christians.² It is enough therefore to establish the fact that baptism was administered. Since in the Eastern Churches the sacrament of Confirmation (Chrism) is always lawfully administered by the priest at the same time as baptism, it often happens that no mention is made of the confirmation in the canonical testimony of baptism. This does not give grounds for doubting that the sacrament was conferred.

13. In respect of other Christians a doubt can sometimes arise:

- a) concerning *matter and form*. Baptism by immersion, pouring or sprinkling, together with the Trinitarian formula is of itself valid. (Cf. CIC canon 758). Therefore if the rituals and liturgical books or established customs of a Church or community prescribe one

²With regard to all Christians, consideration should be given to the danger of invalidity when baptism is administered by sprinkling, especially of several people at once.

of these ways of baptising, doubt can only arise if it happens that the minister does not observe the regulations of his own community or church. What is necessary and sufficient, therefore, is evidence that the minister of baptism was faithful to the norms of his own Community or Church.

For this purpose generally one should obtain a written baptismal certificate with the name of the minister. In many cases the other community may be asked to cooperate in establishing whether or not, in general or in a particular case, a minister is to be considered as having baptised according to the approved ritual.

- b) Concerning *faith and intention*. Because some consider that insufficiency of faith or intention in the minister can create a doubt about baptism, these points should be noted:
- (1) The minister's insufficient faith never of itself makes baptism invalid.
 - (2) Sufficient intention in a baptising minister is to be presumed unless there is serious ground for doubting that he intends to do what Christians do. (Cf. Response of the Holy Office, Jan. 30, 1833. "It is sufficient to do what Christians do"; Sacred Congregation of The Council. Decrees approved by Pius V, June 19, 1570, cited by the Provincial Council of Evreux, France, 1576.)
- c) Concerning the *application of the matter*. Where doubt arises about the application of the matter, both reverence for the sacrament and respect for the ecclesial nature of the other communities demand that a serious investigation of the community's practice and of the circumstances of the particular baptism be made before any judgement is passed on the validity of a baptism by reason of its manner of administration (cf. CIC canon 737, 1).

14. Indiscriminate conditional baptism of all who desire full communion with the Catholic Church cannot be approved. The sacrament of baptism cannot be repeated (cf. Code of Canon Law, can. 732,1) and therefore to baptise again conditionally is not allowed unless there is prudent doubt of the fact, or of the validity of a baptism already administered. (Cf. Council of Trent, S. VII, can. 4; Code of Canon Law, can. 732, 2.)

15. If after serious investigation as to whether the baptism was properly administered, a reasonable doubt persists, and it is necessary to baptise conditionally, the minister should maintain proper regard for the doctrine that baptism is unique by a) suitably explaining both why he is in this case baptising

conditionally and what is the significance of the rite of conditional baptism; b) carrying out the rite according to the private form (cf. CIC can. 737, 52).

16. The whole question of the theology and practice of baptism should be brought up in dialogue between the Catholic Church and the other separated Churches or communities. It is recommended that ecumenical commissions should hold such discussions with Churches or Councils of Churches in various regions and, where convenient, come to a common agreement in this matter.

17. Out of reverence for the sacrament of initiation which the Lord instituted for the New Covenant, and in order to clarify what is necessary for its proper administration, it is most desirable that dialogue with our separated brethren be not restricted to the sole question of what elements are absolutely necessary for valid baptism. Attention should also be given to the fullness of the sacramental sign and of the reality signified (or "*res sacramenti*"), as these emerges from The New Testament; this will make it easier for Churches to reach an agreement on mutual recognition of baptism.

18. Placing a proper value on the baptism conferred by ministers of the Churches and ecclesial communities separated from us has ecumenical importance; baptism is thereby really revealed as the "sacramental bond of unity binding all who are regenerated by it". (Decree on Ecumenism n. 22: Dogm. Const. on the Church, n. 15.)³ Therefore it is to be hoped that all Christians will grow continually more reverent and faithful in their regard for what the Lord instituted concerning its celebration.

19. The Decree on Ecumenism makes clear that the brethren born and baptised outside the visible communion of the Catholic Church should be carefully distinguished from those who, though baptised in the Catholic Church, have knowingly and publicly abjured her faith. According to the Decree (n. 3) "one cannot charge with the sin of separation those who at present are born into these Communities and in them are brought up in the faith of Christ." Hence, in the absence of such blame, if they freely wish to embrace the Catholic faith, they have no need to be absolved from excommunication, but after making profession of their faith according to the regulations set down by the Ordinary of the place they should be admitted to the full communion of the Catholic Church. What canon 2314 prescribes is only applicable to those who, after culpably giving up the Catholic faith or communion, repent and ask to be reconciled with mother Church.

20. What has just been said of absolution from censures obviously applies for the same reason to the abjuring of heresy.

³Cf. also the Report of the Mixed Commission between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches (Oss. Rom. Feb. 20, 1966, p. 7): The Report of the Fourth International Conference on "Faith and Order", Montreal 1963 nn. 111, 113, and 154.

III. FOSTERING SPIRITUAL ECUMENISM IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

21. "This change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and merits the name, 'spiritual ecumenism'." (Decree on Ecumenism n. 8)

In these few words the Decree defines spiritual ecumenism and stresses its importance in order that Christians may, both in prayer and in the celebration of the Eucharist and indeed in their entire daily life, carefully keep in view the aim of unity. Every Christian, even though he does not live among separated brethren, always and everywhere has his part in this ecumenical movement, through restoring the whole Christian life according to the Spirit of the Gospel, as has been taught by The Second Vatican Council — leaving out nothing of the common Christian heritage. (Cf. Decree on Ecumenism n. 6; Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, n. 36.)

22. It is fitting that prayers for unity be offered regularly at fixed times, v.g.

- a) the week from January 18-25, called the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, in which often many churches and communities join in praying to God for unity;
- b) the days from the Ascension to Pentecost, which commemorate the community at Jerusalem waiting and praying for the coming of the Holy Spirit to confirm them in unity and universal mission.

Additional examples are:

- a) the days about the Epiphany, when we commemorate the manifestation of Christ in the world and the link connecting the Church's function with unity;
- b) Maundy Thursday, when we commemorate the institution of the Eucharist, the sacrament of unity, and Christ our Saviour's prayer in the supper room for the Church and for her unity;
- c) Good Friday, or the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, — by which the scattered sons of God are re-united;
- d) Easter, when all Christians share with one another the joy of Our Lord's Resurrection;
- e) on the occasion of meetings or other important events of ecumenical origin or specially likely to serve ecumenical purposes.

23. "It is a recognized custom for Catholics to meet for frequent recourse to prayer for the unity of the Church with which the Saviour himself on the eve of His death so fervently appealed to His Father 'That they may all be one.'" (Decree on Ecumenism n. 8). Therefore, let all pray for unity in a way consonant with Christ's prayer at The Last Supper: that all Christians may achieve "that fullness of unity which Jesus Christ wishes". (Ibid. n. 4)

24. Pastors should see to it that, as circumstances of places and persons suggest, gatherings of Catholic faithful are arranged to pray for unity; and since the Holy Eucharist is that marvellous sacrament "by which the unity of the Church is signified and brought about", (Decree on Ecumenism n. 2) it is very valuable to remind the faithful of its importance; public prayers for Christian unity should be encouraged at mass (v.g. during the Prayer of the Faithful or in the litanies called 'Ecteniae') as well as the celebration of votive masses for Christian Unity. Further those Rites which have special liturgical prayers of petition, like the 'Litia' and 'Moleben' and similar supplications can properly use them to pray for unity.

IV. SHARING OF SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY AND RESOURCES WITH OUR SEPARATED BRETHEN.

A. Introduction

25. Fraternal charity in the relations of daily life is not enough to foster the restoration of unity among all Christians. It is right and proper that there should be also be allowed a certain '*communicatio in spiritualibus*' -- i.e. that Christians should be able to share that spiritual heritage they have in common, in a manner and to a degree permissible and appropriate in their present divided state. From those elements and endowments which together go to build up and give life to the Church herself, some, even very many, can exist outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church" (Decree on Ecumenism n. 3). These elements "which come from Christ and lead to Him rightly belong to the one Church of Christ" (ibid); they can contribute appropriately to our petitioning for the grace of unity: they can manifest and strengthen the bonds which still bind Catholics to their separated brethren.

26. But these spiritual endowments are found in different ways in the several Christian communities, and sharing in spiritual activity and resources cannot be independent of this diversity; its treatment must vary according to the conditions of the people Churches and communities involved. For present conditions the following guiding principles are offered:

27. There should be regard for a certain give-and-take ('reciprocity') if sharing in spiritual activity and resources, even within defined limits, is to

contribute, in a spirit of mutual goodwill and charity, to the growth of harmony among Christians. Dialogues and consultations on the subject between Catholic local or territorial authorities and those of other Communions are strongly recommended.

28. In some places and with some communities, sects and persons, the ecumenical movement and the wish for peace with the Catholic Church have not yet grown strong (cf. Decree on Ecumenism n. 19), and so this reciprocity and mutual understanding are more difficult; the local Ordinary or, if need be, the episcopal conference may indicate suitable measures for preventing the dangers of indifferentism and proselytism(*) among their faithful in these circumstances. It is to be hoped, however, that through the grace of the Holy Spirit and the prudent pastoral care of the bishops, ecumenical feeling and mutual regard will so increase both among Catholics and among their separated brethren that the need for these special measures will gradually vanish.

29. The term, sharing of spiritual activity and resources (*communicatio in spiritualibus*) is used to cover all prayer offered in common, common use of sacred places and objects, as well as all sharing in liturgical worship (*communicatio in sacris*) in the strict sense.

30. There is '*communicatio in sacris*' when anyone takes part in the liturgical worship or in the sacraments of another Church or ecclesial community.

31. By 'liturgical worship' is meant worship carried out according to the books, prescriptions or customs of a Church or community, celebrated by a minister or delegate of such Church or community, in his capacity as minister of that community.

B. PRAYER IN COMMON.

32. "In certain special circumstances, such as prayer service "for unity" and during ecumenical gatherings, it is allowable, indeed desirable that Catholics should join in prayer with their separated brethren. Such prayers in common are certainly a very effective means of petitioning for the grace of unity, and they are a genuine expression of the ties which still bind Catholics to their separated brethren." (Decree on Ecumenism n. 8) The Decree is dealing with prayers in which members and even ministers of different communities take an "active part." Where Catholics are concerned, this kind of participation is committed to the guidance and encouragement of local ordinaries. The following points should be noted.

* The word "proselytism" is here used to mean a manner of behaving, contrary to the spirit of the gospel, which makes use of dishonest methods to attract men to a community — v.g. by exploiting their ignorance or poverty. (Cf. Declaration on Religious Liberty p. 4).

33. It is to be hoped that Catholics and their other brethren will join in prayer for any common concern in which they can and should cooperate—e.g. peace, social justice, mutual charity among men, the dignity of the family and so on. The same may be said of occasions when according to circumstances a nation or community wishes to make a common act of thanksgiving or petition to God, as on a national feastday, at a time of public disaster or mourning, on a day set aside for remembrance of those who have died for their country. This kind of prayer is also recommended so far as is possible at times when Christians hold meetings for study or common action.

34. However, common prayer should particularly be concerned with the restoration of Christian unity. It can centre on e.g. the mystery of the Church and her unity, baptism as a sacramental bond of unity however incomplete, the renewal of personal and social life as a necessary way to achieving unity and the other themes set out under n. 22.

35. The form of the Service.

- a) Representatives of the Churches or communities concerned should agree and cooperate in arranging such prayer—in deciding who should take part, what themes, hymns, scripture readings, prayers and the like should be used.
- b) In such a service there is room for any reading, prayer and hymn which manifests the faith or spiritual life shared by all Christians. There is a place for an exhortation, address or biblical meditation drawing on the common Christian inheritance which may lead to mutual good will and promote unity among Christians.
- c) It is desirable that the structure of services of this kind, whether confined to Catholics or held in common with our separated brethren, should conform to the pattern of community prayer recommended by the liturgical revival. (Cf. Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, v.gr. nn. 30, 34, 35.)
- d) When services are arranged to take place in an Eastern Church, it should be borne in mind that an official liturgical form is considered among Orientals as particularly well adapted to prayer of petition; particular consideration should therefore be given to the liturgical order of this Church.

36. The Place.

- a) A place should be chosen which is acceptable to all those taking part. Care should be taken that everything is properly prepared and conducive to devotion.
- b) Although a church building is the place in which a community is normally accustomed to celebrating its own liturgy, there is

nothing which in itself prevents holding the common services mentioned in nn. 32-35, in the church of one or other of the communities concerned if there is need for this and the local Ordinary approves. In fact the situation may make this the suitable thing.

- c) It should be remembered, when arranging prayer services with the Eastern Orthodox brethren, that all Eastern Christians regard the Church as far and away the most suitable place for public prayer.

37. Dress. There is nothing against the use of choir dress, where circumstances may indicate this and there is common agreement among the participants.

C. SHARING IN LITURGICAL WORSHIP.

38. "Yet sharing in liturgical worship (*communicatio in sacris*) is not to be considered as a means to be used indiscriminately for the restoration of unity among Christians. There are two main principles upon which the practice of such common worship depends: first, that of the unity of the Church which ought to be expressed; and second, that of the sharing in means of grace. The expression of unity very generally forbids common worship. Grace to be obtained sometimes commends it." (Decree on Ecumenism n. 8)

1) *Sharing in liturgical worship with our separated Eastern brothers.*

39. "Although these (Eastern) Churches are separated from us, yet they possess true sacraments, above all—by apostolic succession—the priesthood and the Eucharist, whereby they are still joined to us in closest intimacy. Therefore some sharing in liturgical worship (*communicatio in sacris*), given suitable circumstances and the approval of church authority, is not merely possible but is encouraged. (Ibid. n. 15; cf. also the decree on The Eastern Catholic Churches, nn. 24-29.)

40. Between the Catholic Church and the Eastern Churches separated from us there is still a very close communion in matters of faith (cf. Decree on Ecumenism n. 44); moreover, "through the celebration of the Eucharist of the Lord in each of these Churches, the Church of God is built up and grows in stature" and "although separated from us, yet these Churches possess true sacraments, above all—by apostolic succession—the priesthood and the Eucharist".... (Ibid. n. 15)

This offers ecclesiological and sacramental grounds for allowing and even encouraging some sharing in liturgical worship—even eucharistic—with these churches "given suitable circumstances and the approval of church authority". (Decree on Ecumenism n. 15)

Pastors should carefully instruct the faithful so that they will be clearly aware of the proper reasons for this kind of sharing in liturgical worship.

41. The principles governing this sharing set out in the Decree on Eastern Churches (cf. nn. 26-29) should be observed with the prudence that the decree recommends; the norms which apply to oriental Catholics apply equally to the faithful of any rite, including the Latin.

42. It is particularly opportune that the Catholic authority, whether the local one, the synod or the episcopal conference, does not extend permission for sharing in the reception or administration of the sacraments of penance, Holy Eucharist or Anointing the Sick except after satisfactory consultations with the competent authorities (at least local ones) of the separated oriental church.

43. In granting permission for sharing in the sacraments it is fitting that the greatest possible attention be given to "reciprocity".

44. Besides cases of necessity, there would be reasonable ground for encouraging sacramental sharing if special circumstances make it materially or morally impossible over a long period for one of the faithful to receive the sacraments in his own Church, so that in effect he would be deprived without legitimate reason, of the spiritual fruit of the sacraments.

45. Since practice differs between Catholics and other Eastern Christians in the matter of frequent communion, confession before communion and the Eucharistic fast, care must be taken to avoid scandal and suspicion among the Orthodox, created by Catholics not following the Orthodox usage. A Catholic who legitimately communicates with the Orthodox in the cases envisaged here must observe the Orthodox discipline as much as he can.

46. Those Eastern Christians who, in the absence of sufficient confessors of their own church, spontaneously desire to do so may go to a Catholic confessor. In similar circumstances a Catholic may approach a confessor of an Eastern Church which is separated from the Apostolic Roman See. Reciprocity should be maintained here too. Both sides should of course take care to arouse no suspicion of proselytising. (*)

47. A Catholic who occasionally, for reasons set out below (cf. n. 50) attends the Holy Liturgy (Mass) on a Sunday or holiday of obligation in an Orthodox Church is not then bound to assist at Mass in a Catholic Church. It is likewise a good thing if on such days Catholics, who for just reasons cannot go to Mass in their own Church, attend the Holy Liturgy of their separated oriental brethren, if this is possible.

48. Because of the close communion between the Catholic Church and the separated Eastern Churches, as described above (n. 40), it is permissible

* Cf. Note on n. 28.

for a member of one of the latter to act as godparent, together with a Catholic godparent, at the baptism of a Catholic infant or adult so long as there is provision for the Catholic education of the person being baptised, and it is clear that the godparent is a suitable one. A Catholic is not forbidden to stand as godparent in an Orthodox church, if he is so invited. In this case, the duty of providing for the Christian education of the baptised persons binds in the first place the godparent who belongs to the Church in which the child is baptised.

49. Brethren of other churches may act as bridesmaid or best man at a wedding in a Catholic Church. A Catholic too can be best man or bridesmaid at a marriage properly celebrated among separated brethren.

50. Catholics may be allowed to attend Orthodox liturgical services if they have reasonable grounds, e.g. arising out of a public office or function, blood relationships, friendships, desire to be better informed, etc. In such cases there is nothing against their taking part in the common responses, hymns, and actions of the Church in which they are guests. Receiving Holy Communion however, will be governed by what is laid down above, nn. 42 & 44. Because of the close communion referred to earlier (n. 40) local Ordinaries can give permission for a Catholic to read lessons at a liturgical service, if he is invited. These same principles govern the manner in which an Orthodox may assist at services in Catholic churches.

51. Regarding participation in ceremonies which do not call for sacramental sharing the following should be observed:

- a) In ceremonies carried out by Catholics, an oriental clergyman who is representing his Church should have the place and the liturgical honours which Catholics of equal rank and dignity have.
- b) A Catholic clergyman present in an official capacity at an Orthodox service can, if it is acceptable to his hosts, wear choir dress or the insignia of his ecclesiastical rank.
- c) There should be meticulous regard for the outlook of the clergy and faithful of the Eastern churches, as well as for their customs which may vary according to time, place, persons and circumstances.

52. Because sharing in sacred functions, objects and places with all the separated Eastern brethren is allowed for a reasonable cause (cf. Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches n. 28) it is recommended that with the approval of the local Ordinary separated Eastern priests and communities be allowed the use of Catholic churches, buildings and cemeteries and other things necessary for their religious rites, if they ask for this, and have no place in which they can celebrate sacred functions properly and with dignity.

53. The authorities of Catholic schools and institutions should take care to offer orthodox clergy every facility for giving spiritual and sacramental ministrations to their own faithful who attend such schools and institutions. As far as circumstances allow, and with the local Ordinary's permission, these facilities can be offered on the Catholic premises, including the Church.

54. In hospitals and similar institutions conducted by Catholics, the authorities should promptly advise the Orthodox priest of the presence of his faithful and to give him facilities to visit the sick and administer the sacraments to them in dignified and reverent conditions.

2) *Sharing in Liturgical Worship with Other Separated Brethren*

55. Celebration of the Sacraments is an action of the celebrating community, carried out within the Community, signifying the oneness in faith, worship and life of the Community. Where this unity of sacramental faith is deficient, the participation of the separated brethren with Catholics, especially in the sacraments of the Eucharist, Penance and Anointing of the Sick, is forbidden. Nevertheless, since the sacraments are both signs of unity and sources of grace (cf. Decree on Ecumenism n. 8) the Church can for adequate reasons, allow access to those sacraments to a separated brother. This may be permitted in danger of death or in urgent need (during persecution, in prisons) if the separated brother has no access to a minister of his own Communion, and spontaneously asks a Catholic priest for the sacraments—so long as he declares a faith in these sacraments in harmony with that of the Church, and is rightly disposed. In other cases the judge of this urgent necessity must be the diocesan bishop or the Episcopal conference. A Catholic in similar circumstances may not ask for these sacraments except from a minister who has been validly ordained.

56) A separated brother is not to act as a scripture reader or to preach during the celebration of the Eucharist. The same is to be said of a Catholic at the celebration of The Lord's Supper or at the principal liturgical service of the Word held by the Christians who are separated from us. At other services, even liturgical ones, it is allowable to exercise some functions, with the previous permission of the local Ordinary and the consent of the authorities of the Community concerned.

57) With the exception already dealt with above (n. 48) it is not permissible for a member of a separated community to act as godparent in the liturgical and canonical sense at Baptism or Confirmation. The reason is that a godparent is not merely undertaking his responsibility for the Christian education of the person baptised or confirmed as a relation or friend—he is also, as a representative of a community of faith, standing as sponsor for the faith of the candidate. Equally a Catholic cannot fulfill this function

for a member of a separated community. However, because of ties of blood or friendship, a Christian of another communion, since he has faith in Christ, can be admitted with a Catholic godparent as a Christian witness of the baptism. In comparable circumstances a Catholic can do the same for a member of a separated community. In these cases the responsibility for the Christian education of the candidate belongs of itself to the godparent who is a member of the Church in which the candidate is baptised. Pastors should carefully explain to the faithful the evangelical and ecumenical reasons for this regulation, so that all misunderstanding of it may be prevented.

58) The separated brethren may act as 'official' witnesses (bridesmaid or best man) at a Catholic marriage, and Catholics at a marriage which is properly celebrated between our separated brethren.

59) Catholics may be allowed to attend occasionally the liturgical services of other brethren if they have reasonable ground, e.g. arising out of a public office or function, blood relationship or friendship desire to be better informed, an ecumenical gathering etc. In these cases, with due regard to what has been said above — there is nothing against Catholics taking some part in the common responses, hymns and actions of the Community of which they are guests—so long as they are not at variance with Catholic faith. The same principles govern the manner in which our separated brethren may assist at services in Catholic churches. This participation, from which reception of the Eucharist is always excluded, should lead the participants to esteem the spiritual riches we have in common and at the same time makes them more aware of the gravity of our separations.

60) When taking part in services which do not call for sacramental sharing, ministers of other Communions may, by mutual consent, take a place suitable to their dignity. So too Catholic ministers who are present at ceremonies celebrated by other Communions, may, with due regard for local customs, wear choir dress.

61) If the separated brethren have no place in which to carry out their religious rites properly and with dignity, the local Ordinary may allow them the use of a Catholic building, cemetery or church.

62) The authorities of Catholic schools and institutions should take care to offer to ministers of other Communions every facility for giving spiritual and sacramental ministrations to their own communicants who attend Catholic institutions. These ministrations may be given in Catholic buildings, in accordance with the above, nñ 61.

63) In hospitals and similar institutions conducted by Catholics, the authorities in charge should promptly advise ministers of other Communions of

the presence of their communicants and afford them every facility for visiting the sick and giving them spiritual and sacramental ministrations.

* * *

In an audience granted to the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, April 28, 1967, the Sovereign Pontiff, Paul VI, approved this Directory, confirmed it by his authority and ordered that it be published. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Rome, May 14, 1967, Pentecost Sunday.

Augustin Card. Bea
President of the Secretariat
for Promoting Christian Unity

✠ John Willebrands
Tit. Bishop of Mauriana
Secretary
