

# THE BODY, THE FAMILY, AND THE ORDER OF LOVE: THE INTERPRETIVE KEY TO VATICAN II<sup>1</sup>

• José Granados •

“It is through the family that the Church bestows form to a world that otherwise risks losing its symbolism and, therefore, its ordered unity.”



In his book *Sources of Renewal*, written to implement Vatican II in the diocese of Krakow, Cardinal Karol Wojtyła left us his first interpretation of the council.<sup>2</sup> Vatican II’s key point was not the dialogue between the Church and the world; nor the proposal of a definition of the Church that our modern society could understand. These aspects, while certainly important, were based upon a more foundational one: Vatican II was, in Karol Wojtyła’s understanding, a council about Christian faith; its key purpose was the *enrichment of faith*.

The fact that the council was about the enrichment of faith, this faith “handed down once for all to the holy ones” (Jd 1:3), assures the continuity of the council’s effort with the rest of the

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<sup>2</sup>Cf. Karol Wojtyła, *Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980).

tradition. The center of Vatican II is the constant center of the Church's reflection throughout the centuries: her faith in the Risen Lord.

What was then its novelty? According to Wojtyła, at Vatican II the enrichment of faith did not refer mainly to the objective side of faith (the enrichment of the contents of the Creed or the declaration of new dogmas), but to its experiential dimension. In other words, it was a question of deploying the existential potential of faith; of enabling the Christian to see how faith enriches one's life. What is crucial in this approach is that faith is not seen as an object placed before us, nor merely the isolated experience of the individual, but as an environment in which to enter, as a place to dwell in, in order to understand ourselves and the rest of the world.

Incidentally, herein lies for Wojtyła the *pastoral* nature of the council: *pastoral* does not mean "of practical consequences for Christian action in the world," as if this were in opposition to a dogmatic theoretical view. *Pastoral* refers to the enrichment of faith inasmuch as it touches the center of the human experience by offering it a dwelling place. Every pastoral effort thus implies a dogmatic effort, just as every dogmatic effort implies a pastoral one.

It was by understanding faith in this way that the council could answer the question of modernity,<sup>3</sup> determined by the separation between object and subject and by the desire for autonomy, which had as its consequence what has been called the homelessness of the modern mind.<sup>4</sup>

In fact, as Wojtyła knew well, in modernity human consciousness has shrunk. Separated from the world, apart from the realm of nature, far from becoming more universal, it is now less universal, enclosed in particularity. We find an illustration of this shrinking in C. S. Lewis' *The Great Divorce*, where the human alienated condition is described as an existence that expands away

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<sup>3</sup>Cf. Benedict XVI, *Speech to the Roman Curia*, 22 December 2005 (AAS 98 [2006], 40–53). According to Benedict's reading, dialogue with the world was possible at the time of the council and not before, not simply because the Church changed toward a renewed understanding of modernity, but also because modernity itself experienced its limitation and was receptive in a different way to the Christian vision (48).

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Peter Berger, *The Homeless Mind: Modernization and Consciousness* (New York: Vintage, 1974).

from the others, always at greater distance from them, looking for autonomous freedom without limits; but whose space becomes paradoxically, at the same time, smaller, able to fit in a very small particle of dust: “Hell—all that infinite empty town . . . is smaller than one pebble of your earthly world.”<sup>5</sup>

A passage from Augustine’s *Confessions* can further illuminate this point. When Augustine tells us of the conversion of Marius Victorinus, we learn that this Roman Senator was afraid of confessing his faith in public, for fear of being laughed at by his colleagues. When urged to go to the Church he used to give this reply: “Do walls make Christians?” “*Ergo parietes faciunt Christianos?*”<sup>6</sup> A subjective and private confession of faith was in fact in accordance with the principles of the Roman way of dealing with religion.<sup>7</sup> Is not a faith without walls more authentic and at the same time more tolerant of the vision of others?

The truth, however, that Victorinus learned, when he finally decided to make a public confession of the Creed and experienced the fruitfulness of his witness, is that “walls do make Christians” indeed. Walls—the walls that symbolize the concrete interaction with others, the concrete community (common *moenia—communio*) of the faithful—are not a limitation of our being, but the enlargement of our life, in which we find ourselves by receiving the others. Without walls, that is, without a home, without a space of belonging, freedom is impossible, or it becomes only “the freedom of a runaway” (*fugitiva libertas: Conf. III, 3, 5*). Augustine himself learned this message during his life, and saw his *Confessions* as the account of his return to the Church, to his fathers and mothers, brothers and

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<sup>5</sup>Cf. C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*, in *The Complete C.S. Lewis*, Signature Classics (San Francisco: Harper, 2002). According to Lewis, on the one hand, hell is so wide that people are “millions of miles away from you and from one another. Every now and then they move further still. That’s one of the disappointments. I thought you’d meet interesting historical characters. But you don’t. They are far away” (318); on the other hand, this extension is just an illusion, for hell is infinitely small: “Do you mean then that Hell—all that infinite empty town—is down in some little crack like this? Yes. All Hell is smaller than one pebble of your earthly world” (359).

<sup>6</sup>Cf. St. Augustine, *Confessiones* VIII, II, 4; on this text, cf. P. Courcelle, “Parietes faciunt Christianos?” in *Mélanges J. Carcopino* (Paris, 1966), 241–48.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Joseph Ratzinger, *Glaube, Wahrheit, Toleranz: Das Christentum und die Weltreligionen* (Freiburg: Herder, 2005), 133–37.

sisters, sons and daughters, to which he belonged and before whom he could reveal himself (cf. *Conf.* X, 4, 5). The walls that limit the Church, as a title of a recent book has put it, are charity; the Church's borders consist of an embrace that allows others to enter into her.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, according to Wojtyła, to enlarge consciousness is to offer it an environment. If modernity has based its certainty on the Cartesian motto, "*cogito ergo sum*," and has tried to deduce relationship from this original experience, the Christian is certain of itself in another way, precisely thanks to an original relationship that is foundational to consciousness. The Christian *cogito* is the one expressed by St. Augustine, who was also looking for the experience that offers total certainty about who we are: "I love you, Lord, not with an uncertain, but with an assured consciousness. You pierced my heart with your word, and I loved you."<sup>9</sup> The answer refers to God's foundational love and to Augustine's response to this love.

To sum up what we have said so far, the enrichment of faith brings about an enrichment of consciousness that takes place, not by freeing consciousness from the world, but by a deepening into the web of relationships to which the human being belongs. Human consciousness, we can say, is enlarged in the openness of communion. This reading was given an authoritative seal by the 1985 Synod, which identified in the concept of "*communio*" a key to interpret the council's ecclesiology.

Fifty years after the council we can receive inspiration from Wojtyła's reading as we approach the conciliar text in order to grasp the center of its proposal. If Wojtyła is right in his analysis, if the council offered a dwelling place to human consciousness that enlarges and enriches it, then a good starting point to verify his claim and to understand all of its potential, is the council's doctrine regarding marriage and the family. For here we see clearly that the enrichment of faith means an enrichment of consciousness, the finding of a place to dwell in and, with it, the unity our world is looking for. It is precisely here that topics such as love and corporeality, the person and communion, are continually brought together and are seen as a sacrament, that is, as openness of a path toward

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<sup>8</sup>Cf. Alexandra Diriar, *Ses frontières sont la charité: l'Église corps du Christ et Lumen Gentium* (Paris: Léthielleux, 2011).

<sup>9</sup>Cf. St. Augustine, *Confessions* X, VI, 8.

God. I will start by studying the section of *Gaudium et spes* [GS] that speaks about marriage and family (47–52) and move from there to interpret the whole of the council’s proposal.

1. *The question of love at Vatican II: Gaudium et spes, 47–52*

*Gaudium et spes*, 47–52 could seem marginal in the overall architecture of the council, but the passion with which it was discussed and the debate that followed in the postconciliar years are indicative of its importance. In fact, a more careful look reveals its strategic position in *Gaudium et spes*, for it appears as the first point of connection between the Church and the modern world (a section that starts in GS, 46), a topic that, as we have noted, is at the core of the council’s concerns.<sup>10</sup>

As they attempted to give a definition of marriage and family, the council fathers discussed whether love should have a place in it. If we make love an essential part of marriage, aren’t we approaching it too much from the subjective side? What happens, for example, if love disappears? Should we say, then, that marriage disappears as well?<sup>11</sup>

When we pay attention to this discussion we soon understand that an important question lies in the background: what is love and how can we relate it to the objectivity, stability, and social significance of marriage? Is there a truth in love that allows us to distinguish between destructive and fulfilling kinds of love? The council itself attempted an answer in *Gaudium et spes*, 49, a paragraph which can be entitled “a phenomenology of love.” The text

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<sup>10</sup>The chapter on marriage and family was included in the council from the beginning of the discussions; it belonged initially to *schema* XVII (later *schema* XIII), the last of the first proposal of outlines, which was devoted to the dialogue with society and entrusted to the Congregation for the Apostolate of the Laity. On this text, cf. Francisco Gil Hellín, “Los ‘bona matrimonii’ en la constitución pastoral *Gaudium et Spes* del concilio Vaticano II,” *Scripta theologica* 11 (1979): 127–78.

<sup>11</sup>Cf. *Acta Synodalia S. Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II*, IV/7, 471: “Alius observat in toto hoc capite *amorem* tantum sublineari ut si deficiat matrimonium cessare videatur.” The answer of the commission reads: “Textus ipse nulla modo insinuat matrimonium, deficiente amore, dissolvi posse” (472). Later on, a father asks “ut revideatur loquendo modo claro de validitate matrimonii etiam ubi amor deest” (472).

speaks of “true love” and describes it as directed “from person to person” by “the affect of the will” (*voluntatis affectus*), thus embracing the whole of the person, both body and soul, as essential to conjugal friendship.<sup>12</sup>

The text makes clear the personalistic contribution to the debate on marriage, which attempted to describe it not only as a contract between man and woman, but as a covenant of love in accordance with the person’s dignity and call. The move was crucial in order to bring the doctrine on marriage closer to biblical revelation. At the same time, by introducing the language of the person, of freedom, love, and responsibility, the council’s proposal was closer to the language of modernity and to the understanding of modern man.

However, those who opposed the introduction of love into the definition of marriage were right in pointing out some of the problems involved. The idea of love that some personalist theologians had developed in the years preceding the council risked absolutizing the union of the two lovers, forgetting their mutual openness toward something greater. Two elements were of special importance in this criticism to the personalist vision. First, the connection of love with nature, its integration in the whole of the cosmos, seemed difficult to assume from a personalist perspective.<sup>13</sup> The discussions regarding the connection between the generative end of the sexual union and the love of the spouses bore witness to the lack of maturity the question had reached at this point. Second, the relevance of personal love for the building up of society was not sufficiently evident. The institutional aspect of marriage seemed to some to be opposed to the personalist perspective. The real question was to offer a vision of personal love that could integrate nature and society, by seeing them not as opposed to the person but as an integral dimension of his identity.

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<sup>12</sup>Cf. Livio Melina, “Perché l’amore?” (forthcoming in *Anthropotes* 2012).

<sup>13</sup>Cf. the difficulties expressed by the young Joseph Ratzinger just after the council was finished, in *Highlights of Vatican II* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1966), 236–39. According to Ratzinger, the first draft of *Gaudium et spes*, mainly written by Bernhard Häring, introduced a novelty: “Instead of social utility, personal values needed emphasis; instead of the familiar theological nature of abstract nature, there had to be a revaluation of the concrete realities of man and his history” (215).

Even while the conciliar text did not provide a finished synthesis, it was able to offer the essential elements for a renewed answer, elements taken up later on by John Paul II in his magisterium on the family. These are, in my view, the most important points of the council's contribution to the question of the truth of love.

*a) The primacy of God and the order of love*

What is love and what is its truth has been always linked in Christianity with the understanding of its order. The question, raised by Origen in his commentary to the Song of Songs 2:4 (in which the Bride says: "do order love in me"), attempts to distinguish between different kinds of love. Given that love is seen as a force with many aspects and dimensions (the council says: *multiformis*),<sup>14</sup> able to hold together the multiplicity of the human person's world and being, the question of its truth is linked to the meaning of its order.

As we have said, one risk of the personalist vision was to isolate the love of the spouses, thus turning human love into an absolute and not posing the question of its order. The council avoided this danger from the outset, for it started by placing marriage in the context of God's action, prior to any initiative of man (cf. GS, 48). The text thus insists on God as the origin of marriage, as the first love that precedes any human response. The union of love is not achieved by an effort of the man and woman's will, nor is it a result of their commitment. Jesus did not respond to the Pharisees who asked him about the possibility of divorce with an invitation to constancy and authenticity—"what you have united do not separate"—but by affirming that Love starts from God and in him receives its stability (cf. Mt 19:6).

The point is well made by a document prepared by Karol Wojtyła together with other Polish scholars in the wake of the council. It affirms that marriage does not consist only in a reciprocal gift, for "the reciprocity of marriage is fulfilled only when based objectively and essentially on all that is really communitarian, trans-

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<sup>14</sup>Cf. *Acta Synodalia* IV/7, 482: "16 Patres petunt ut deleatur adiectivum: 'multiformem,' quia sensum obscurat et infra fusius hac de re sermo fit." Answer: "Adiectivum divitias huius dilectionis ostendere intendit; stet ergo textus" (483).

individual, and not only the purely subjective intention. The true community of the two exists only because of its relation to a Third (a relation which is lived in common, interiorly, in a transcendent way).<sup>15</sup>

b) *Love and nature*

A second problem in the personalist vision was the difficulty of integrating nature. Nature was seen as an anonymous force, in opposition to the freedom and responsibility proper to love. In order to make this connection between love and nature, a reflection on the bodily character of love was needed. For it is through the body that man perceives an original language, a language he has not created but is nonetheless interior to him, and that allows him to love. Thanks to the recovery of the language of the body he perceives that nature is not external to human action, but is a dimension of human action: man's primordial receptivity.<sup>16</sup> In the body the human being understands that love has a cosmic dimension, witnessed in these lines from Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*: "They loved each other not because it was unavoidable, nor because they had fallen prey to the flame of passion. . . . They loved because everything around them willed it, the trees and the skies and the clouds over their heads and the earth under their feet. . . . They breathed only by that oneness. And therefore the exaltation of man over the rest of nature . . . never appealed to them."<sup>17</sup> It is through

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<sup>15</sup>K. Wojtyła, et al., "Les fondements de la doctrine de l'Église concernant les principes de la vie conjugale," *Analecta cracoviensia* (1969): 194–230. In this document we find Wojtyła's continuous reference to *Gaudium et spes*, precisely in order to show the connection between the person and his body, in the context of the person's relationship to God and to others: cf. p. 206: "Le droit matrimonial n'est nullement la 'somme des droits individuels' et ne consiste pas exclusivement dans le 'don réciproque.' La 'réciprocité' du mariage se réalise vraiment alors seulement, lorsqu'elle se base objectivement et essentiellement sur ce qui est réellement communautaire, trans-individuel, et non pas seulement sur 'l'intention' purement subjective. La vraie communauté en deux existe uniquement par sa relation 'ad Tertium' (relation commune, intérieure, transcendante)."

<sup>16</sup>Cf. *Acta Synodalia* IV/6, 474ff.; cf. *textus denuo recognitus*: IV/7, 329ff.; modi: IV/7, 471ff.

<sup>17</sup>Cf. Boris Pasternak, *Doctor Zhivago*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa



the consideration of the body that human love is open from itself to a transcendent dimension, and God can join together without becoming oppressive, for he does so by the same action in which man and woman join together.

How was the topic of the body present in the council? Bernanos described the process of modernity as a progressive disincarnation of human life.<sup>18</sup> Since the council's background was precisely the Church's position vis-à-vis the modern world, it is clear that bodiliness had to play a crucial role.<sup>19</sup> *Gaudium et spes*, 14 had already insisted on the unity of man in body and soul. The human being summarizes in himself the whole of the material creation and is called to glorify God in his body. However, in his commentary on the council's text, Joseph Ratzinger noticed the lack of development of what he called an initial "theology of the body."<sup>20</sup> He regretted in particular the absence of some contemporary philosophical proposals, mentioning how Gabriel Marcel saw the body as the first place of encounter between the human being and reality, and as the departure point for all philosophical questioning ("to have" a body as *implication* with the world). The human being is his body and, precisely because of this identification with a reality that points beyond itself, is much more than his body.<sup>21</sup>

If there is a place to look for such a vision of the body as presence to the world and others, it is the section on marriage, in which we find a vision of bodiliness in the light of interpersonal

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Volokhonsky (New York: Random House, 2011), ch. XV, n. 16, 668.

<sup>18</sup>Cf. Georges Bernanos, *La France contre les Robots* (Paris: Laffont, 1947), 167.

<sup>19</sup>In fact, in the years preceding the council, Catholic theology had seen a surge of studies regarding the body and corporeality. This tendency was connected with the importance granted to earthly realities. Cf., for example, Gustave Thils, *Théologie des réalités terrestres* (Louvain: Desclée de Brouwer, 1946).

<sup>20</sup>Cf. Joseph Ratzinger, "Das zweite Vatikanische Konzil III," in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 322–23.

<sup>21</sup>Cf. Karol Wojtyła et al., "Les fondements de la doctrine de l'Église concernant les principes de la vie conjugale," 202, note 20: "Il semble que certains théologiens commettent l'erreur fondamentale d'envisager le corps humain comme appartenant à la 'nature'—par quoi ils entendent les êtres infra-humains, dont l'homme peut disposer à son gré, et comme entité inférieure à la personne et en dépendante. Or, l'âme et le corps forment ensemble l'unité de la personne. Traiter le corps, c'est traiter soi-même, se diriger soi-même. Le corps humain participe à la dignité et aux droits de la personne . . . ."

love.<sup>22</sup> In fact, the difficult debate on the two ends of marriage that took place at this moment had much to do with the body and its language. It is interesting to notice how the whole discussion on marriage during the council did not foresee the subsequent developments of gender ideology, with its attempt to redefine what is human by insisting on the plasticity of the body. John Paul II's Theology of the Body can be seen as the necessary development regarding these important questions.<sup>23</sup>

*c) Love and society*

This vision of love in connection with nature, in openness toward the generation and education of children, toward a fecundity that transcends the couple, places the dynamism of marriage at the center of society. The personalist vision tended to insist on the values of interpersonal love as opposed to the apparently anonymous realm of society. This approach, however, leads in the end to an isolation of the family from the public sphere. A tacit way of undermining the family consists of depriving it of this vivifying role. In other words, it is not enough to shield the family from the control of the state, for the family is called to inspire the very structure of society. In fact, if society seems to depersonalize the human being, this is in the first place because the public realm has been separated from the family, the only entity that is able to link person and community together. This is why the council justly insists that the family is a school where a richer humanity flourishes (GS, 50: “*schola uberioris humanitatis*”). By the same token, the council highlights the ecclesial nature of the family (cf. LG,11), endowed with the mission of building up the People of God.

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<sup>22</sup>Cf. Wojtyła et al., “Les fondements,” 213: “le système génital est le seul des systèmes organiques qui dans son exercice normal demande la coopération de deux personnes. L’acte sexuel se rapporte au corps humain, mais médiant le corps atteint la personne, laquelle, par ce geste-lien corporel (qui est essentiellement une fonction de la “*vis generativa*”), entre en un lien personnel particulier, avec une autre personne.”

<sup>23</sup>Regarding this awareness about the social vocation of marriage, cf. Ph. Bordeyne, *Éthique du mariage. La vocation sociale de l’amour* (Paris: DDB, 2010).

2. *From Gaudium et spes, 47–52 to other conciliar texts*

In *GS*, 47–52, important questions are raised that will require further development in the years following Vatican II: the meaning of love and bodiliness, the relationship between creation and redemption, the link between human love and the nature of the Church. It is from here that we are allowed to move toward other important aspects of the council, which can be formulated as three essential questions:

a) *How does faith in Christ relate to the understanding of human flourishing?* In *GS*, 22, it is said that Christ, as the last Adam, reveals man to man himself. This connection between the understanding of Christ and the understanding of the human being was crucial for the council's entire proposal. Vatican II makes it clear that the point of departure is Christ, and that the Church does not need to abandon her center in order to talk to the world. The treatment of the sacrament of marriage, described as an encounter of the spouses with Christ, adds a fundamental insight to the debate because it examines both Christianity and the human experience under the unifying light of love.

b) *Who is the Church and how is she present in the world?* *GS*, 48 says that the Christian family illumines “the true nature of the Church.” This statement is not surprising when we consider that the ecclesiology of the council was centered around the concept of *communio*. How the family lives this communion, according to an order revealed in the body through the experience of love, could help clarify important aspects of the nature of the Church.

c) *Who is the Christian God and how can modern man approach him?* The basic question of Vatican II was in the last analysis, as Joseph Ratzinger has noted, the question of God:<sup>24</sup> what is his image and how can he be found in our modern world. This primacy is clear in the section that deals with marriage and family, in which God appears from the beginning as the one who bestows unity (what God has joined) precisely through the free consent of the spouses. Just because in marriage human relationship is the place where the mystery of transcendence opens up in the midst of the

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<sup>24</sup>Cf. Joseph Ratzinger, “Die Ekklesiologie der Konstitution *Lumen Gentium*,” in *Weggemeinschaft des Glaubens: Kirche als Communio* (Augsburg: Sankt Ulrich Verlag, 2002), 107–31.

world, the consideration of the family makes it possible to present an image of God not opposed to human freedom, but necessary for human flourishing and fulfillment.

a) *How does faith in Christ relate to human flourishing?*

Vatican II presents its vision of the human being in the light of Christ, the perfect man. According to *GS*, 22, Christ, the last Adam, makes clear man's supreme vocation, crowning the calling of the first Adam. All the truths about the human being presented in *GS*, 1–17, are thus illumined from the viewpoint of their fulfillment in Jesus. He is the one who measures the definition of all anthropological concepts: life and freedom, reason and love, suffering and joy.

The council, however, does not develop further the way in which it is possible to combine the continuity between Christ and man, and the radical novelty Christ bestows upon history. When encountering Christ one is able to say, first, that here is everything he was looking for in his existence; that one can find in him the consistency of everything that is human. On the other hand, by discovering the radical novelty of Jesus, the way Jesus transforms and judges human existence, he can join the Misfit, one of Flannery O'Connor's characters, when he says: "He thrown everything off balance. If He did what He said, then it's nothing for you to do but throw away everything and follow Him, and if He didn't, then it's nothing for you to do but enjoy the few minutes you got left the best way you can."<sup>25</sup>

The council itself, in the first part of *Gaudium et spes*, falls short of showing the richness of this new vision of the human being in the light of Christ. Joseph Ratzinger complained of the ambiguous definition of freedom (too individualistic) given in *GS*, 17, and of the insufficient explanation of the link between body and soul (the body does not clearly appear as our participation in the world) in *GS*, 13.<sup>26</sup> The principle of the connection between Christ and

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<sup>25</sup>Cf. Flannery O'Connor, *Collected Works*, ed. Sally Fitzgerald (New York: Library of America, 1988), 152.

<sup>26</sup>Cf. Ratzinger, "Das zweite Vatikanische Konzil," 323; 331–33: "Die allgemeine Freiheitslehre, die unser Text entwickelt, kann infolgedessen weder

Adam is clear, but a question remains open: what is the key to joining them together?

It is precisely by considering the section on marriage and family that new light can be shed on our question. The center of the new approach is that it puts love at the center of the understanding of the link between creation and redemption. The sacrament is described as an encounter between Christ and the spouses in GS, 48.<sup>27</sup> In the same article we read that “true conjugal love is assumed in divine love . . . .” What is assumed in human marriage, thanks to the encounter with Christ, is not just the nature of the human being, but the nature of human love. To one council father who wanted to change the text, arguing that it was human nature that needed healing, and not human love, the commission gave the reply that Christ’s grace healed the whole human nature, and thus also human love.<sup>28</sup> *Gaudium et spes*, 49 adds that conjugal love is “healed, perfected and exalted” by Christ into a love that joins together the human and the divine.<sup>29</sup> What is crucial in these texts is that the work of Christ is described as assuming, healing, and perfecting the relationship that joins man and woman.

Thus, the advantage of GS, 48 is that it places the connection between Christ and the human person in the context of love. The consideration of marriage makes it clear that both human nature and Christian revelation are defined in the light of relationship. This is the way in which we can look at them as connected to one another. Christ revealed himself only inasmuch as he revealed the love of the Father to the Son and to all of humanity. In this way he revealed man and woman as relational beings, called to love and capable of a gift of self to the other. The enrichment of Christian consciousness takes place by including the other person in oneself,

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theologischer noch philosophischer Kritik standhalten.”

<sup>27</sup>Cf. Giuseppe Baldanza, *La grazia del Sacramento del Matrimonio: Contributo per la riflessione teologica* (Rome: Centro Liturgico Vincenziano, 1993), 223.

<sup>28</sup>Cf. *Acta Synodalia* IV/7, 489: “Alius vero asserit sanationem afficere concupiscentiam et non amorem. . . . R: Servetur vocabulum ‘sanare,’ quia tota natura (ergo etiam amor) gratia Christi sanatur.”

<sup>29</sup>Cf. GS, 49: “Hunc amorem Dominus, speciali gratiae et caritatis dono, sanare, perficere et elevare dignatus est. Talis amor, humana simul et divina consocians, coniuges ad liberum et mutuum sui ipsius donum, tenero affectu et opere probatum, conducit totamque vitam eorum pervadit.”

by becoming two in one, and marriage is the best illustration of this unity of life.

When human nature is understood in connection with love, then it cannot be seen as something closed in itself, moved only by determined laws and fixed goals. On the contrary, human nature, illumined by the “nature of love,” is always open to an encounter—with man and God—and its horizons are able to receive, from within themselves, what is utterly unexpected and gracious. Through its connection with love, through the search for “the nature of love” and the way “love is rooted in nature,”<sup>30</sup> a new light is offered to our fulfillment in Jesus.

Moreover, by focusing on the assumption of human love by Christ, GS, 48–49 makes clear again the importance of bodiliness. It is because of the connection between body and love, which is essential to marriage and the family, that we can link the first Adam with the last. Since the body is at the same time that which has been received for us to accept, and that which opens life up beyond one’s borders toward an encounter of novelty and surprise, in the body there is no contradiction between continuity and novelty, between the way Christ perfects our nature and the way he brings it beyond itself. Thus, human nature opens up to transcendence not by leaving the body aside, but precisely inasmuch as it is bodily. We understand why, when the council proclaims that Christ “reveals man to man himself” (GS, 22), it adds in a note this quote by Tertullian: “The shape that the slime of the earth was given was intended with a view to Christ, the future man.”<sup>31</sup>

In addition, the indication in the same article of *Gaudium et spes* that Christ, through his Incarnation, has united himself in some way with all men, is to be read against the patristic backdrop of Christ’s assumption of all of humanity by assuming flesh.<sup>32</sup> It is this openness to others, an openness lived out in the body, that allows for the connection between Christ and every single human person. The relational nature of the body, which the sacrament of marriage makes explicit, plays a crucial role in the explanation of the way Christ is united with us.

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<sup>30</sup>Cf. Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Deus Caritas est*, 11.

<sup>31</sup>Cf. Tertullian, *De carnis resurrectione* 6.

<sup>32</sup>Cf. Luis F. Ladaria, *La cristología de Hilario de Poitiers*, *Analecta Gregoriana* (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1989), 87ff.

The way we explain the link between Church and world can gain much from this integrated vision. As is well known, a discussion between an incarnational and an eschatological vision developed during the council. The first insisted on the assumption of the body by Christ in order to highlight Christianity's positive vision of the world and earthly realities. The second focused on Christ's eschatological resurrection and transformation of the world beyond itself. This division is overcome only if we are able to connect the body with the order of love.<sup>33</sup> For when we so do, the Incarnation is not seen as an isolated event that affirms earthly realities in themselves, but as the beginning of a dynamism that leads toward the fulfillment of love, and therefore toward the Cross and Resurrection, toward a final transformation in God.<sup>34</sup> We understand again the importance of marriage, which is the proper place for this covenant between body and love to be experienced. Is it not true that the classical explanation of the sacramentality of marriage included both the significance of the Incarnation, the assumption of the flesh by the Word, and the charity proper to the Cross, as prophesied in the book of Exodus 4:25: "You are a bridegroom of blood to me"?<sup>35</sup>

In this way we can illumine a crucial aspect of Vatican II: the importance given to the signs of the times. As Joseph Ratzinger notes, Cardinal Faulhaber's motto, *vox temporis, vox Dei*, had much success during the conciliar debates. The idea that time was changing, and that it was crucial to adapt the Church's voice to this movement, grew during the debate, and gave birth to the question of the necessary updating ("aggiornamento") of the Church.

In order to judge the course of this debate, one needs to consider Joseph Ratzinger's judgment about the danger of making

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<sup>33</sup>Cf. Joseph Ratzinger, "Das neue Volk Gottes: Entwürfe zur Ekklesiologie" (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1969), 314–17, for a discussion between the incarnational and the eschatological vision during the council discussions.

<sup>34</sup>Cf. Final Report of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod, *Exeunte coetu secundo*, 7 December 1985, in *Enchiridion Vaticanum* 9 (Bologna: Dehoniane 2002), 1811: "in hodiernis difficultatibus Deum velle nos profundum docere valorem momentum et centralitatem crucis Jesu Christi . . . . Cum de cruce loquimur christiani non meremur appellationem pessimismi, sed in realismo christianae spei constituti sumus . . . ."

<sup>35</sup>Cf. Bertrand Marie Perrin, "L'institution du mariage dans le *Scriptum* de Saint Thomas," *Revue thomiste* 108 (2008): 423–66; 599–646.

our time the criterion for understanding the meaning of God's voice, thus forgetting that it is Christ's time that is the measure of our time. It is not, in fact, a question of making Christ our contemporary, but, in the first place, to make our time contemporary to Christ's time of salvation. The 1985 Extraordinary Synod, which reflected on the Second Vatican Council twenty years after its conclusion, reflected in this light on the correct meaning of "aggiornamento."<sup>36</sup>

The viewpoint of communion is helpful in this regard: the Church makes God's love present in the world and, in this way, possesses the key to interpreting the course of history. In this context, a reflection on marriage, inasmuch as it touches on the indissolubility of the union and its openness to the transmission of life, offers a roadmap to understand the continuity of time. The new time of the spouses, on the one hand, is able to embrace the whole of their lives and to structure the time of society through the course of generations. On the other hand, the time of the family is possible as a participation in the time of Christ's offering to the Church. *Dei verbum* [DV], the Constitution on Divine Revelation, when approaching the question of development of doctrine, uses the nuptial image to explain precisely this aspect, the continuous growth of a revelation that has been given to the Church once and for all (cf. DV, 8: "*sicque Deus, qui olim locutus est, sine intermissione cum dilecti Filii sui Sponsa colloquitur . . .*").

*b) Who is the Church and how is she present in the world?*

The council's section on marriage sees in it a sacrament of Christ's love for the Church. What is interesting is the two ways in which the relationship is understood. On the one hand, and this is obviously the main point, marriage comes forth from the love between Christ and the Church. On the other hand, once based upon this primordial love, the Christian family manifests to all, says the council, "the living presence of the Savior in the world and the true nature of the Church" (GS, 48: "*Familia christiana . . . germanam Ecclesiae naturam omnibus patefaciet*"). The nature of the Church, then, a primary question for Vatican II, is illumined from the viewpoint

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<sup>36</sup>Cf. Final Report of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod, *Exeunte coetu secundo*.



of the family, making clear the implications of *Lumen gentium*, 11, where the council talks about the family as a domestic church. In other words, once we affirm that the family is to be understood in terms of the Church, then it is also true that the Church can be seen in terms of the family, a point which proves crucial for understanding Vatican II's ecclesiology.

*Vatican II: Church as sacrament*

*Lumen gentium* [LG] represents the Church's main attempt to reflect on herself: *Ecclesia, quid dicis de te ipsa?* There are two terms that sum up the council's contribution and the way it incorporated the richness of twentieth-century ecclesiological renewal: *communio* and sacrament. The terms are interrelated and show the importance of the reflection on the body and love for a correct understanding of the Church.

The council refers to the Church using the term "sacrament," as a sign and instrument of salvation. The famous sentence by Guardini, that the Church finally awakens in the souls, means that she is finally lived as a mystery of faith, and not only as an external structure alien to the life of Christians. But this recovery of the Church as mystery does not imply its disappearance into the invisible interiority of the soul. The description of the Church as a sacrament points out the visible presence of salvation that is accomplished in her. The council thus again made reference to the topic of the body, because the sacramental economy, as a visible and efficacious sign of salvation, is based on the Incarnation, which in turn takes into account our corporeal condition.

The council confirmed the broader use of the term sacrament, different from the more traditional one (the seven sacraments), and applied it to the Church. There is a line that goes from Christ as sacrament to the Church as sacrament and then to the seven sacraments as different ways of the Church's activity. This line, however, needs to be completed with a more important one that goes from Christ to the seven sacraments, and from the sacraments to the Church herself, for the Church is born of the sacraments.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Cf. Giuseppe Colombo, "Dove va la teologia sacramentaria?" *La Scuola Cattolica* 102 (1974): 673–717.

The sacraments as bodily, visible, and touchable signs of Christ's presence and action, become the entryway for a correct understanding of the Church.

This sacramental structure of the Church is reflected in *LG*, 8, where an analogy is drawn between the Incarnation and the visibility of the Church: "As the assumed nature inseparably united to Him serves the divine Word as a living organ of salvation, so, in a similar way, does the visible social structure of the Church serve the Spirit of Christ, who vivifies it, in the building up of the body." The Incarnation, with the assumption of human nature as a living organ of salvation, is prolonged in the Church, for she is also a mystery in which the Spirit builds up a visible body in the midst of the world. The parallel between Word of God and human nature is prolonged in the Church as union between the Spirit of God and her visible reality.

The introduction of the Spirit into the analogy, as the bond of love between persons, is crucial, for it avoids a simple continuation of Christ into the Church. The analogy of the Church as body, as we will show later, is not followed simply according to the lines of the organic body, of the head and the members, but includes in it the nuptial analogy, the body that becomes one, in the union of the Spirit-love, with another body. But before exploring the connection between the Church as Body and the Church as Spouse we need to consider another ecclesiological concept, the Church as *communio*.

#### *Vatican II: Church as communio*

What the Church is a sacrament of, what she makes visible and present and active, this is love, the love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit communicated to humanity.<sup>38</sup> This love, which comes from God to us and makes possible our answer to God, is the core of Christian revelation, and has been called *communio* or *koinonía*, in the first Letter of John (cf. 1 Jn 1ff.). As we have noted, the 1985 Synod of Bishops, twenty years after the closing of the council,

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<sup>38</sup>Cf. *LG*, 1.

identified in the term *communio* the summary of Vatican II's view of the Church.<sup>39</sup>

The concept of *communio* is very rich and is thus able to incorporate different perspectives present in the council's texts. It roots the Church's existence in the Trinity, which is a communion of persons; and it derives the structure of the Church from the Eucharist, *communio sanctorum* (notice the connection with the vision of the Church as sacrament, and the common roots in the Eucharist). That the etymology of the word *communio* could be derived from two sources: a common wall that encloses a city (*cum-moenia*) or a common task that unifies those who accomplish it (*cum-munus*), is an indication of how the term grasps both the unity of the Church and its openness in mission to the world.

The evolution of the theological discussion showed, however, that no theological term is free from misunderstandings.<sup>40</sup> As "People of God" had been explained in the postconciliar period in a purely sociological way, forgetting the genitive "of God" and conceiving the Church in terms of modern social democracy, so a similar process occurred with the concept of *communio*. Again, a sociological view alien to the Gospel took hold of the term, no longer now in the context of a modern view of the People, but of the relativism of postmodern society and of the liquid relationships described by Zygmunt Bauman.<sup>41</sup> *Communio* risked being understood as an egalitarian love with no structure or form, based on a "pure" autonomous will. The fact that this *communio* is born from above, based on God's first love for man, and that it has therefore a concrete order, was lost from sight.

To avoid these misunderstandings, the only possibility is to return to the connection between *communio* and form, which is evident in the notion of Body of Christ. The topic appears in the

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<sup>39</sup>Cf. the Final Report of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod, *Exeunte coetu secundo*, II.C.1: "Ecclesiologia communionis idea centralis ac fundamentalis in documentis concilii est... Ecclesiologia communionis est fundamentum pro ordine in Ecclesia et imprimis pro recta relatione inter unitatem et pluriformitatem in Ecclesia."

<sup>40</sup>Cf. José Granados, "The Family, the Body, and Communio Ecclesiology: The Mission of the Family in the Midst of the Church as Communio," *Anthropotes* 23, no. 2 (2007): 175–214.

<sup>41</sup>Cf. Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Love: On the Frailty of Human Bonds* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003).

council (LG, 7) among other images of the Church—it had been the favorite term to talk about the Church as Mystery during the years preceding the council. After the council some theologians proclaimed the lack of importance of this ecclesiology and substituted a more ecumenically sensitive theology of the People of God. However, an analysis of the texts does not justify this exclusion. Instead, we need to ask about the complementarity between the Church as *communio* and the Church as body.

### Communio as bodily

The consideration of the Church both as sacrament and as *communio* points toward the need to analyze the concept of the Body of Christ. In the writings of St. Paul, the idea of the Body expresses well the need for order.<sup>42</sup> Not all the members have the same gifts, nor do they accomplish the same task. This coordination, however, is not just extrinsic or machine-like. The image of the organism, in which the parts cooperate, united by a vivifying principle (the Spirit in this case), expresses the idea much better: here each member contains the others and is contained by them, for the same life animates all of them. Yet, this organic view does not fully express the Pauline vision of the Church, for it does not grasp the importance of the body as nuptial, in which “body” also means one’s “wife,” and includes the communion of man and woman in one flesh.<sup>43</sup> Here we find a fruitful interaction of the concepts of body, sacrament, and *communio*: the *una caro* of Adam and Eve points to the union of Christ and the Church, and this connection between the beginning and its fulfillment constitutes a *magnum sacramentum*, a great sacrament, as St. Paul said.

Once the body is seen as nuptial, then its order translates into the proper one of family relationships that are derived from the nuptial union: husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister. The family thus gives us the key to interpreting the relationships that constitute the Church as an ordered sacramental *communio*.

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<sup>42</sup>Cf. J. A. T. Robinson, *The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952).

<sup>43</sup>Cf. Bruno Ognibeni, *Il matrimonio alla luce del Nuovo Testamento* (Rome: Lateran University Press, 2007).

We can now understand better the text of GS, 48, which we have already quoted: “the Christian family, which springs from marriage, an image and a participation of the loving covenant uniting Christ with the Church, will manifest to all Christ’s living presence in the world, and the genuine nature of the Church.”

Let us note that in this way the notion of *communio* is enriched by its new capacity to make the Church present at the heart of society. Whereas the old model of the Church as a perfect society, elaborated during the Counter-Reformation, was successful in making the visible aspects of Christianity relevant, it did so by establishing a parallel between Church and modern society that seemed to oppose the two. After the council, the sociological reading of People of God risked identifying the mission of the Church with that of secular society. The focus on the Church as communion avoided the conflict between Church and world and retained the specificity of the Church’s being, but risked situating her away from the world, unable to inspire a concrete transformation of society. It is only when *communio* is put together with the body, a connection that needs the help of the family relationships to be established, that the Church can concretely inspire a new civilization from within. It is through the family that the Church bestows form to a world that otherwise risks losing its symbolism and, therefore, its ordered unity. This link allows the Church, as we will show in the following section, to make visible in the world an image of God in correspondence with Christian revelation.

*c) Who is the Christian God?*

The central question that the council posed is the question of God, as the title of this conference makes clear. The order in which the documents at the council were issued witnesses to the fact: *Sacrosanctum concilium* on the liturgy and *Dei verbum* on divine revelation come first, as expressing the real center of the council’s reflection; while the document on the Church starts with the words “*Lumen gentium*,” referring to Jesus as revealer of the Father.

According to Jean Guitton, the real religious question of modernity is not whether we believe in God, but what God we believe in. As Guitton puts it: “One is always an atheist of some God. I am also an atheist: an atheist of the God of Nietzsche, of the

God of Marx, of the God of Freud . . . .”<sup>44</sup> It is essential, then, for the Church to convey the adequate image of God and the adequate language to talk about him.

It is a contribution of the council to present God in interpersonal terms, as a God who is love. However, the proclamation that God is love is not able to eliminate the ambiguous way of dealing with him. The question of the truth of love comes again to the fore. As Robert Spaemann has argued, it is not only a question of presenting God’s goodness; one needs to state as well his power, his real capacity to intervene in the world and to guide its concrete events.<sup>45</sup> The point had already been made by Romano Guardini, when he insisted that we need to present God as real, as touchable and able to be sensed in the world.<sup>46</sup> Inasmuch as God is seen as an abstraction, we will continue to live as if God did not exist, even while we call ourselves Christians.

It is here that the connection between communion and body becomes of crucial importance for the question of God. Love, the love God has for us and the love he asks from us, takes on bodily, sacramental form. The council affirmed this link from the very outset, for God’s action appears as liturgical, manifest in concrete signs in the middle of the visible Church. The sacraments suggest the visibility and touchability of God in our world, the fact that he is real enough to generate his own space and time, which then embraces all the space and time of the universe. The council’s constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei verbum* insists also on the concrete way in which God reveals himself in history, with words and deeds intrinsically connected between them (*DV*, 2).

This concrete way in which God manifests himself is possible only if the body has a particular openness toward transcendence.

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<sup>44</sup>Cf. Jean Guitton, *Mon testament philosophique* (Paris: Presses de la Renaissance, 1997) who reports the following conversation with Pascal: “Pascal: ‘Il faut se résigner. On est toujours l’athée de quelque Dieu.’ Guitton: ‘Et aussi le mécréant de quelqu’un. Mais on est toujours trop pieux, alors on ne s’en rend pas compte. Ce qui manque le plus à nos chrétiens, Pascal, c’est d’être athées. Moi, je suis athée du Dieu de Nietzsche, du Dieu de Marx, du Dieu de Freud. Un athée jubilant, un athée impie.’”

<sup>45</sup>Cf. Robert Spaemann, *Der letzte Gottesbeweis* (Munich: Pattloch, 2007).

<sup>46</sup>Cf. Romano Guardini, *Die Sinne und die religiöse Erkenntnis: Drei Versuche* (Würzburg: Werkbund, 1958).

This is precisely what the connection between the body and love tells us: in the experience of love the body is no longer seen as a limit to our autonomy, but as a place of encounter with others, as the beginning of a path toward ever new horizons, and thus as the perfect place for God to appear in our world.<sup>47</sup>

A God that reveals himself in the body is a God that does not separate the human being from the world, but sets him in a deeper relationship with his environment. It is clear in this light that modernity's secularism does not proceed from having elevated matter too much, but from having expected too little from it. And the solution is not to move the spirit away from matter, but to bring it closer to the body. Only by recovering again the openness of the body to mystery can the face of God appear as real in the world. What the council has reminded us is that modernity has been looking for transcendence in the wrong place, in the isolation of the individual, whereas transcendence is to be found in the richness and fecundity of the concrete relationships that tie us together.

It is crucial, then, for the question of God, to connect love and the body. And since this connection takes place in the family—the place where relationships always have a concrete bodily foundation—marriage and family have a direct consequence for the preaching of the Gospel. The possibility of God becoming active in the world depends on the recovery of the sacramentality of human love, of the way love, while taking place in the body, opens up to transcendence. Human love can be assumed in divine love, as the council says when speaking of the sacrament of marriage (GS, 48), because it is open from within to this transformation.

In the liturgy “the Christian lives and manifests to others the mystery of Christ and the true nature of the Church,” as the constitution on the liturgy states (*Sacrosanctum concilium*, 2). Notice

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<sup>47</sup>When man is thought of as a pure spirit, we could say, following Pascal, that he ends up being considered just as pure matter. It is in this context—describing the fate of Jews about to be exterminated—that Vassily Grossman wrote: “When a man has no clothes on, he draws closer to himself. There is only one thing a naked man can say as he looks at himself: Yes, here I am. This is me!” An experience, that of being oneself, which is immediately linked by Grossman with this other of feeling in unity with the whole people: “Yes, here I am. This was the naked body of a people: young and old, robust and feeble, with bright curly hair and with pale grey hair” (cf. Vassily Grossman, *Life and Fate*, trans. Robert Chandler [New York: New York Review of Books, 2006], 547).

that in this sentence there is a parallel with GS, 48, which says that the Christian family manifests to the world Christ's presence and the genuine nature of the Church. Isn't there a connection, then, between the liturgy and the sacrament of marriage, both mirrors of the Church's true nature? And does not this parallel consist in the way both reveal the presence of God in the world? By comparing these two texts one is reminded of John Paul II's point that there is a liturgical meaning embedded in the entire life of the spouses.<sup>48</sup> What is important in the document on the liturgy is that the revelation of God's love is not fulfilled outside of the body. The liturgy shows the openness of the body to God and God's power to make himself present and saving in the body. Something similar happens in the sacrament of marriage: the body appears as able to open up to the discovery of the mystery of the other person and—through this relationship—to the mystery of God.<sup>49</sup>

The Church's Temple, the only one she truly needs for her liturgy, is the temple of the body. Christianity does not depend on any concrete area for worship—not Jerusalem, not Rome—but it needs an area which is very real and concrete: the Temple of the body. Marriage and family constitute the environment in which the body is honored as Temple and appears as such in the world. For it is in the family that the body discloses an openness toward the sacred: the body of the spouse, the body of the child, the body of one's parents, all of them illumined by a concrete relationship that opens up to transcendence.

From all we have said we can conclude that the Church's mission today is not just to convince society of the importance of love for human happiness, a point many would easily concede. The real problem regards the nature of this love, which also means: its truth, its capacity to hold human life together, to offer a foundation in which to build up our society. Our reading of the council has

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<sup>48</sup>Cf. John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them*, 117:2.

<sup>49</sup>On the connection between marriage and liturgy, cf. *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 7: "Ad tantum vero opus perficiendum, Christus Ecclesiae suae semper adest, praesertim in actionibus liturgicis . . . Christus Ecclesiam, sponsam suam dilectissimam, sibi semper consociat, quae Dominum suum invocat et per ipsum Aeterno Patri cultum tribuit"; SC, 84: "vox est ipsius Sponsae, quae Sponsum alloquitur, immo etiam oratio Christi cum ipso Corpore ad Patrem"; SC, 85: "summum Sponsae Christi honorem participant, quia laudes Deo persolventes stant ante thronum Dei nomine Matris Ecclesiae."



shown that the family is at the center of the Church's presence in the world, inasmuch as it is in the family that love, true love, sustains its meaning. From this viewpoint it is possible to reestablish a connection between Christian revelation and human experience that shows how the Christian God is not alien to man's existence, but able to illumine it from within and bring it to fulfillment. In this vision the family appears at the center of the Church's capacity to renew human society; at the heart of her new way of proposing the eternal truth of the Gospel to all.

According to Karol Wojtyła's immediate reading of the council in *Sources of Renewal*, Vatican II was about an enrichment of Christian consciousness. To understand faith as a communion offered by God was to enlarge the dimensions of human life, opening it up toward its fullness. For his part, Joseph Ratzinger pointed out right after the council in his intervention at the Katholikentag in Berlin in 1966, that the council had attempted a simplification of faith, thanks to its connection with love. It would be a misinterpretation of the council, he argued, to think that it watered down Christian faith in order to make it acceptable to our modern world. The council's effort was one of making the message of the Church simpler, not by eliminating conflicts with the world, but by pointing out where the real difficulty and the real need of conversion lie. And the answer passed through the question of love. "Faith belongs to the order of love. Whenever it seems complicated, . . . like a mathematical problem difficult to solve, the council has attempted to bring it to its true simplicity: the simplicity of a great love, which is the most difficult thing and the easiest at the same time, because it asks of us nothing less and nothing more than ourselves."<sup>50</sup> By having Christianity speak again the simple language

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<sup>50</sup>Cf. Ratzinger, "Das neue Volk Gottes," 318–19: "Das Konzil hat auf diese Weise christlichen Glauben nicht billiger, wohl aber in jenem sehr tiefen Sinn einfacher machen wollen, der ihm nichts von seiner wahren Schwere nimmt, die den Menschen erst zu seiner wirklichen Größe führt. Es ist unerhört einfach und zugleich unerhört schwer, einen Menschen wahrhaft zu lieben. Es kann ausserordentlich kompliziert sein, eine bestimmte mathematische oder technische Aufgabe zu lösen, aber es ist nicht schwer in jenem Sinn, in dem es schwer ist, dem ganzen Anspruch einer grossen Liebe zu genügen. Der Glaube aber gehört der Ordnung der Liebe zu: Wenn er manchmal ob alles Gestrigen, das er mit sich führte, kompliziert zu werden schien, wie eine schwer durchschaubare geometrische Gleichung, so hat das Konzil versucht, ihm seine wahre Einfachheit

of marriage and the family—the everyday language of the child, the spouse, the father and mother—Christian faith is enriched, and becomes at the same time simpler and deeper. It can now be placed for all to see at the center of the modern world; and by the same token it appears, more than ever, a sign of contradiction. □

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wiederzugeben: die Einfachheit einer grossen Liebe, die das Schwerste und Leichteste zugleich ist, weil sie nicht mehr und nicht weniger als uns selbst verlangt.”