

THE HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH IN TAVARD'S THOUGHT

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Abstract

Gereja yang dilukiskan oleh Konsili Vatikan II diyakini sebagai kudus karena pendirinya kudus ada-Nya. Kekudusan Gereja persisnya ada karena pendirinya sungguh kudus yakni Yesus Kristus yang diutus oleh Bapa untuk memanifestasikan kekudusan di dunia seraya bekerja sama dengan seluruh ciptaan. Kekudusan selalu inisiatif Allah, pemberian gratis yang menuntut jawaban dari pihak manusia. Untuk mengerti maksud kekudusan Gereja G.H. Tavard mulai menerangkan relasi antara Gereja dengan Kristus yang dimungkinkan oleh kekuatan Roh Kudus. Setiap orang beriman dipanggil ke kekudusan, ikut berpartisipasi sesuai dengan karisma yang diperoleh dari Roh Kudus untuk mengaplikasikan keutamaan teologal, iman harapan dan kasih. Kekudusan diraih melalui bentuk bervariasi dari hidup menurut rahmat dan talenta yang diterima dari Roh Kudus.

Kata-kata kunci: *Kekudusan, inisiatif, gratis, karisma, keutamaan, iman, harapan dan kasih*

Introduction

The secret Synod confirmed that the Church is indefectibly holy. We believe that only God is essentially holy. In the Old Testament God identifies himself as 'The Holy One'. What does mean and how can we understand if we say that the Church is holy? There are many interpretations about the holiness of the Church. Tavard can help us to understand the holiness the Church. Tavard was one of the *periti* of the Vatican Council II. Tavard's theology can be described as participationist,

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historical, ecumenical, Trinitarian and pneumatological¹. To understand the holiness of the Church, Tavad begins to explain the relationship of the Spirit with the Church. The Church is holy because The Church is Christ's containing presence, made possible by the Spirit.

"The Church, whose mystery is proposed by sacred Synod, is believed to be indefectibly holy"² Commenting on this passage Tavad says that indefectible holiness of the Church does not belong to her members, but, properly speaking, to Christ, who is, in the words of the Creed, 'alone holy.' The Church is holy; and holiness may be predicated of her, though only on account of Christ's abiding presence as the Head in the Body, as the groom with the bride, as the vine in the branches, or in any the ways suggest by the biblical metaphors, in which Christ himself is presented as the source, the subject, and even the substance of the Church's holiness³. This holiness consists in the Church being united to Christ, neither as a result of her efforts nor as a reward for merit that she could have gained or that somehow could be attributed to her.⁴

The pastoral purpose and scope of the Council proceeded from the fundamental holiness of the Church (art, 39) to the general call of all the faithful to holiness (art, 40), and to various forms of holiness adapted to the various function of the pastor, priest, clerics, married persons, workers and those who are afflicted with sufferings (art. 41)... Holiness is reached by each 'according to his own gifts and talents by way of a live faith, which inspires hope and works through love' (art. 41). Priests are exhorted to 'ascend to a higher sanctity through their apostolic work, nourishing and fostering their actions with the abundance of their contemplation' (ibid.). Married persons are shown 'following their own way in faithful love, all their love sustaining each other in grace' (ibid). All, in brief, should 'show to all, eve in their temporal service, the love with which god loved the world.'

The sum total of this prospective orientation of Christian holiness appears in this line of the constitution. Citing *Lumen Gentium* our author

¹ M.R.Alexander, *Church and Ministry in the Works of G.H.Tavad*, Leuven, Leuven University Press, 1994, p. 28

² *Lumen Gentium*, 39.

³ G.H. Tavad, *The Church Tomorrow*, New York: Herder and Herder, 1965, p. 94-95.

⁴ G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, New York: Herder and Herder, 1970, p. 107.

writes, "All the faithful of Christ are invited to strive for the holiness and perfection of their proper state... let them heed the admonition of the apostle to those who have used this world; let them not come to terms with this world; for the world as we see it is passing away."⁵ Thus the faithful are on the way, pilgrims on a transient stage, toward a city not made with hands, to which they already belong, and the shape of which they anticipate in the insights of loving contemplation.⁶

Aspect of the Holiness in the Liturgy

By communicating his Spirit, Christ made his Brother, called together from all nations, mystically the components of his own body. The Church is the Body of Christ. The constitution associates this scriptural representation of the Church with the exercise of the priesthood of Christ⁷. Citing this, *Lumen Gentium* 7, Tavad says that "rightly the liturgy is held to be the performance of the priestly office of Jesus Christ, in which the sanctification of man is signified by perceptible signs and the whole public worship is performed by the mystical body of Jesus Christ, in its Head and members." The Liturgical celebration is described as "the work of Christ the priest and of his body which is the Church."⁸

The Church has a specific function to fulfill in relation to the salvation of mankind. Citing and commenting on art. 9 of *Lumen Gentium* write that we therefore are invited to view the church's action from a spiritual, dynamic or pneumatological angle rather than merely from the standpoint of its institutional structure and the specific responsibilities of the magisterium. The Church's task, "before men can come to the liturgy" (art. 9), is that of "announcing to non-believers the good tidings of salvation." It includes the Kerygma concerning "the only true God and the one whom he sent, Jesus Christ"; it also includes a call to penance and conversion. But the Church's mission of preaching the Gospel does not end once men have received

⁵ *Lumen Gentium* 42

⁶ G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, 112

⁷ *Lumen Gentium* 7

⁸ G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, 172

Baptism. Faith and receive the sacraments, taught all that Christ commanded, called to the works of love, of piety, of apostolate.⁹

All Christian activity reaches its peak when 'all, being children of God by faith and Baptism, gather into one, praise God in the midst of the assembly, partake of the sacrifice and eat the Lord's Supper'¹⁰. The liturgy, in which the Covenant is passed and the death and resurrection of Christ is mystically present, is therefore the source of all Christian virtue, which draws the faithful to show in themselves the eager love felt by Christ for mankind.¹¹

Tavard holds that the liturgical function indicates our journey as pilgrims on earth which is associated to heaven. "The liturgical function of praise, by which the Church on earth is associated to heaven, brings us to the double aspect of the Church. On the one hand she is on earth. Locally materialized in parishes or local communities" which spread throughout the world; and on the other hand the Church is also the heavenly Jerusalem. This earthly, visible aspect of the Church in her pilgrim state on earth corresponds of the heavenly liturgy celebrated in the heavenly Jerusalem to which we journey as pilgrims, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, a minister of the Holies and the true Tabernacle."¹²

Aspect of the Holiness in the Religion Order:

The Council's Decree

To understand the aspect of the holiness in the Religious Orders, Tavard focuses his argument on the Council's Decree. But He also says that it is not enough to read *Perfectae Caritatis*. "The Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of the Religious Life is to be read in the light of the doctrinal constitutions which embody the fundamental doctrine of Vatican II, and especially of the constitution *De Ecclesia*." Chapter VI on Religious, of the constitution on the church, "is set between a chapter on the universal call to sanctity and one of the eschatological natures of the pilgrim church and her

⁹ *Lumen Gentium* 9

¹⁰ *Lumen Gentium* 10

¹¹ G.H. Tavard, *Pilgrim Church*, 173- 174

¹² G.H. Tavard, *Pilgrim Church*, 175

union with the Church in Heaven. The chapter on the religious life proceeds from a consideration of the vows or other links of religious institutes¹³, then to the more practical and detailed organization of religious Orders, in which the charismatic hierarchy is controlled by the functional hierarchy, and finally to the religious life as helping the Christian personality to reach fruition."¹⁴

Consideration of the religion life: Charism, Beauty, and Liberty

The religious life is the faithful of Christ who are called by God from both these states of life so that they might enjoy this particular gift in the life of the Church and thus each in one's own way, may be of some advantage of the salvific mission of the Church.¹⁵ Tavad finds "that three notions are central to a consideration of religious life: charism (free gift of the Spirit), beauty, and liberty, notions that are reflected in the Decree on Religious Life.

From the very beginning of the Church, men and women have set about following Christ with greater freedom and imitating him more closely through the practice of the evangelical counsels, each in his own way leading a life dedicated to God... So it that in accordance with the divine plan a wonderful variety of religious communities has grown up, which has made it easier for the Church, not only to be equipped for every good work and ready for the work of the ministry, the building up of the Body of Christ, but also to appear adorned with the various gifts of the children like a bride adorned for her husband, and for the manifold wisdom of God to be revealed through her.¹⁶

Two aspects of beauty are present here, namely, "simplicity and variety." Simplicity is found in the one focus, Jesus Christ, while variety is expressed in the diversity of gifts. Commenting this passage Tavad says that on the one hand, it shows forth the simplicity of the Gospel. On the other, it inspires and created a multiplicity of vocations, forms of life and

¹³ *Lumen Gentium* 44.

¹⁴ *Lumen Gentium* 45-47 in G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, 131-133.

¹⁵ *Code of Canon Law*, can. 487 and 488, part 4; Pius XII, *Allocution Annus Sacer* (Des. 8, 1950: AAS 43 (1951), 27 f.; Pius XII, *Apostolic Constitution Provida Mater* (Feb. 2, 1947): AAS 39 (1947), 120 ff.

¹⁶ *Perfectae Caritatis*. 5 in G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, 133.

ways in which the gospel is spread and applied. There is "a great variety of the gifts," yet one focus of religious life, the Lord Jesus. The Spirit attracts men in many varied ways, shows himself under many forms and speaks through many voices. Yet he leads to throne center of Christian life, the Redeemer, in the one Church which is the ark of salvation.¹⁷

Tavard sees that the renewal of the religious life needs to keep two points in view together. These are 'the freedom of the Spirit' and 'the uniqueness of the center.' He explains that the freedom of the spirit has its counterpart in the freedom of men and women whom he calls and endows with his gifts, and which is destined to end up in a rainbow of talents, charisms, initiatives, inspirations, achievements, spiritual traditions and perspectives. The uniqueness of the center is reflected in the ascetic and mystical dimension of the Gospel, especially through what we call the counsel of perfection.

Contemplation, the Soul of All Religion Life

Tavard reads *Perfectae Caritatis*, especially art.5¹⁸ as clearly indicating that contemplation is the soul of every religious community. "This contemplation, this vision, this guiding light, is entirely relative of God, since it's the medium in which the religious mind adheres to Him. Adhesion to God being achieved through the theological virtues, the fundamental principle of a religious Order should lie in an oriented understanding and practice of faith, hope and love."¹⁹

"This contemplation will be joined to apostolic love, that is, to some commitment to public witness for the Kingdom of God, according to the requirements of time and place and to the particular needs of one's neighbors." Tavard's own explanation of their intrinsic relationship is concise and clear that contemplation inspires the type of action to be

¹⁷ G.H.Tavard, *Pilgrim Church*, 135.

¹⁸ Referring to the last sentences of *Perfectae Caritatis* (PC) Art, 5, Tavard writes: "The members of every community, seeking God solely and before all else, must join contemplation, by which they adhere to him with their mind and their heart, to apostolic love, by which they will seek to be associated to the work of redemption and to spread the Kingdom of God." *Pilgrim Church*, 136.

¹⁹ G.H. Tavard, *Pilgrim Church*, 136.

undertaken. Action collects, as it were, the overflow of one's personal vision of the supernatural world. Is to say, contemplation, which results from the free gifts of the spirit and which introduces further into the liberty of the children of God, does not usually create conformity to a given pattern, even if this has been endorsed canonically by the Church's authorities. It will create originality, in the proper sense of the word: it will inspire strong personalities, able to carry out in practice what the spirit will reveal to them in their inner vision and what he will suggest in his interior promptings.²⁰

Two Poles: Word and Sacrament

The primary sources of the spiritual life which make of community possible are the same for all religious orders: Scripture and Eucharist.

Let those who make profession of the evangelical counsels seek and love above all else God who has first loved us; and let them strive to foster in all circumstances a life hidden with Christ in God (...) Drawing upon the authentic source of Christian spirituality, members of religious communities should resolutely cultivate both the spirit and the practice of prayer. In the first place, they should have recourse daily to the Holy Scriptures, in order that, by reading and meditating on Holy Writ, they may learn 'the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ.' They should celebrate the sacred liturgy, especially the Holy sacrifice of the mass, with both lips and heart, as the Church desires, and so nourish their spiritual life from the richest of sources.²¹

Tvard sees that this paragraph applies not only to the religious life but also to the life of all Christians. Our author says that "love of God, life hidden with Christ in God, the Scriptures, liturgical participation in the sacrifice of Christ are by no means reserved to, or specific to, any religious

²⁰ G.H. Tvard, *Pilgrim Church*, 137.

²¹ *Perfectae Caritatis* 6 in Tvard, *Pilgrim Church*, 138.

Order. They belong to the common stock of the Church and are available and recommended to all the People of God."²²

Each order embraces the spirit of its founder, and thus has a different ordering of the elements of the spiritual life, which are nevertheless, common to all. We add Tavard's own words for further clarity: Yet in remains that ordinary Christian life and spirituality predominate, and that all that may be distinctive of one religious Order in the area of spiritual contemplation is a special ordering of the elements common to the whole Church, with the provision that personal attractions may vary considerably from the accepted norm of the Order. Here again, the focus on the ordinary means of Christian life rather than on the distinctive features of each spirituality helps to maintain the principle of freedom: the freedom of the Spirit, who distributes his charisms without being implied by rules and regulations, and who does creates beauty where men would only have put order.²³

The spiritual life has two poles. These are Word and the Sacraments. Tavard invites Religious Orders and the Church in general to become more spiritual in their thinking and their piety, and more liturgical in their participation in the sacraments.

Incarnated Body is the Way

The freedom of the Spirit has its sole center in the Incarnate Lord as he presents himself in the Gospel²⁴. Christ, the Incarnate Lord, as a master who shows the way, because he is a way, who teaches all that he has heard from the Father, who, having been raised on the cross, draws all men unto himself, who brings about the coming of the Kingdom of God through the utter simplicity of his spiritual doctrine.²⁵

As we have seen above, the Spirit attracts men in varied ways. For this reason Tavard says that the religious life is a way of life, not in so far as

²² G.H. Tavard, *Pilgrim Church*, 138. Cf. D.J. Harrington, S.J., *The Church: According to the New Testament*, Chicago: Sheed & Yard Franklin, Wisconsin, 2001, p.70

²³ G.H. Tavard, *Pilgrim Church*, 139

²⁴ G.H. Tavard, *The Church, Community of Salvation: An Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, New Theology Series 1, Collegeville, Liturgical Tress, 1992, p.102

²⁵ G.H. Tavard, *Pilgrim Church*, 140

it distinguishes some persons from others, but in as much as it penetrates the life of all. Although the members of a religious community have officially pronounced the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, these vows cannot be separate from the lives of other Christians. Tvard's says that they are points of view from which the Gospel makes better sense. They are way of life, not in so far as they distinguish some persons from others, but in as much as they penetrate the life of all. They are principles which inspire ascetic practices and throw light of the meaning of life with Christ. They are incentives to self-transformation are called to practice for the kingdom of God and to self-dedication to the service of men. All Christians are called to practice them in their life, according to their circumstances and moral obligations, and in keeping with their sacramental graces and the gifts of the Spirit. They do not mark out one group of the faithful as being already "in a state of perfection," but all the faithful as seeking perfection together.

The Specific Element of the Religion Life is Community

Tvard believes that the counsels of perfection are not specific to the religious vocation. Because of this Tvard raises the question: What is proper to religious Orders as such? Tvard sees the specific element of religious life in the concept of the community. Community life does not describe the religious life; but simply the Christian life lived according to the Gospel. There recurs now the same law of identification with the whole Church and with the life of the People of God which we have already met. What specifies the religious community is therefore not that it is a community, but that it is their particular concrete community, the association of such and such, with their peculiar vocation and gifts, their understanding of their function, their spiritual and natural individualities and personalities, their past, their dreams and their future, their qualities and their short-comings²⁶

The common life does not essentially consist in living together under one roof and from one purse, but, on the image of the apostolic Church, in union of heart and soul, in prayer and the communion of the same for all, it

²⁶ G.H. Tvard, *Pilgrim Church*, 144-145.

must always be focused on the manifestation of the Spirit, the common life can not be the same for all, it must always be focused on the manifestation of love for one another in the Lord. The religious life is not to be seen as separate from the People of God, but as one of its living cells. Tavad writes that it would be seen, then, in ultimate analysis, the religious life should be destined to merge into the wider religious life of the People of God and the wider community of the Church. Certainly there will always be smaller units within the larger one, icons and images of the Body at a less than universal level. Yet the predominance of the elements that belong at the same time to the People of God and to the religious communities would tend to impose the conclusion that, the less different they appear to be, the better they will be able to fulfill their vocation. The ultimate point of spirituality is not to be isolated from the crowd, but to be a leaven in the crowd, sharing its hopes and its virtues and its problems and its sufferings.²⁷

If the religious life is not to be seen as separate from the People of God, but as one of its living cells and if their way of life is simply that of the Gospel, the way of life of all Christians, this raises again the question of the existence of a specific element of religious life. Tavad answers in this way: Whether religious Orders will last will depend on their power of renewal. There is no justification for their continuance, if this means barely surviving like a sick body, artificially prolonging their existence by catching young people who could find the same or a better thing elsewhere. It will also depend on the imagination and their grouping. There is no reason to multiply distinct Orders if the difference between them is only one of name and of religion. It will finally depend on their fidelity to the freedom of the Spirit and the centrality of the Word.

The vows

The question now arises about the three vows of obedience, chastity and poverty. "Now all religious pronounce vows, but all are pursuing the virtues; not all Christians are bound by vows, but all are bound by the corresponding virtues. The three virtues that are central to Christian life and

²⁷ G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, 145-146. Cf. B. Willems, "Who Belong to the Church", in *Concilium* 1, Glen Rock, N.J.: Paulist, 1965, 62-63.

perfection are therefore not chastity, poverty and obedience, but the traditional theological virtues by which ... man is directly oriented to God. Love, hope and faith, as they are described in the New Testament and understood in theology, effect man's transformation from a natural likeness to a supernatural image of God. Christian perfection is the perfection of love, hope and faith. And if chastity, poverty and obedience make any sense in relation to the quest for perfection, this can only be insofar as they are nothing but love, hope and faith."²⁸

The three theological virtues are not absolute, but radically relative to God as he has revealed himself in Christ. It is possible to see them (the three theological virtues) as affecting a special unity with the three divine Persons. Tvard explains that The three divine Persons are reached through love, hope and faith. In the love of the Spirit, the Father and the Word are known. In hope the Father anticipates our eternal encounter with him, so that in him we already meet the Word and the *Paraclete*. Faith makes us hear the Word from the Father and keep it under guidance of the Holy Spirit. Thus the substance of chastity, poverty and obedience is the Spirit, the Father and the Son. Tvard sees the vows as only a different form of the commitment to the life which all Christians, by virtues of their baptism, have already committed themselves.²⁹

Chastity in the Prospective of Love

Tvard holds that chastity really means love. It is freedom, not restriction; relationship, not absence of relationship; affection, not stifling of affection, openness, not closing up of oneself. Chastity is the proper relationship of oneself to the world and especially to men. It is the practical application of love. Love regulates man's relationship to other men.

The only difference between the celibate's chastity and the married person's chastity is the expression. The sacramentality of marriage implies that the most profound relationship between human beings, that of man and woman in marriage, is a source of mutual sanctification, to the point that each partner becomes a sacramental channel of grace for the other, speaks the Word of God to the other, hears the Word from the other,

²⁸ G.H. Tvard, *Pilgrim Church*, 149-150.

²⁹ G.H. Tvard, *Pilgrim Church*, 151-152.

embodies the guidance of the Spirit. The chastity of the marriage manifests the exclusive character of this love-relationship. On the contrary, the chastity of consecrated celibacy is related, not to the exclusive depth of a unique relationship, but to the all-embracing scope of universal relationship. At the conclusion of this reflection on chastity Tavad writes that the religious has vowed chastity. This means that he has vowed love. He has vowed to love all men, not in their abstraction as mankind, but in the consecrate personalities of the men whom he would meet. He has vowed to enter into a spiritual relationship with every man and every woman. In so doing, he is led by the Spirit, who is the Spirit of love.³⁰

Poverty in the Prospective of Hope

Tavad says that the poverty must be seen in the perspective of hope. For this reason we would like to explain what hope means according to our author. Tavad sees hope in the perspective of eschatology. "Hope implies that we look forward to the eschatological consummation of all things, when finally God will be all in all, when the transparency of the created world to his presence will be unimpaired, when no screen will separate man from the One from whom he comes and to whom he goes, when the beginning will coincide with the end."³¹

Poverty is related to hope because to be poor means to rely only on the Father, to hope and to trust in his providence alone. He says that only in prayer can we present ourselves destitute before God. In prayer we take our littleness and place it at the disposal of Father to do what he likes with it; we renounce what we think we are in order to become what we truly are; we abandon our human self-appreciation to rely on the appreciation of God, which we cannot know; we give up being oneself in order to reach the state of being-with-God; our personality finds stability in not being, in becoming the pilgrimage of man toward the perfection of the unknowable God. Prayer should be manifest in the liturgical and contemplation. "The purpose of liturgical prayer is to open ourselves so that we may participate totally in the Church's abundant life ... Liturgical prayer should occasion an opening

³⁰ G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, 157.

³¹ G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, 157

ourselves to God in contemplation, this word being taken in a broad sense..”³²

Tavard says that to be poor means to expect nothing, therefore to ask for nothing. Marc Alexander propounds the Tavard's aim saying “Ultimately, to be poor to acknowledge our total dependence upon God, to cling to nothing at all, not even our needs or desires. Only in prayer can one stand in true nakedness before God. Only in prayer can God fill one up.”³³ And at the end of his reflection about poverty Tavard says: “This is the ultimate of object of the virtues of poverty: to be poor so that God may make us rich.”³⁴

Obedience in the Prospective of Faith

Tavard connected obedience with faith and with the Word of God. He seeks a more profound meaning of obedience especially in relation to ecclesiology. Obedience is the virtue of faith in practice, for it is nothing else than an awareness of the Word of God speaking to us through human media. If indeed God, through the Holy Spirit, may communicate with us directly in the depths of our being, he also uses human society and the circumstances of our life to make his will known to us, to attract us, to direct and orient our thoughts and our actions. In the context of the Catholic hierarchical concept of the Church, obedience takes on a universal meaning and has universal application. For the entire People of God willingly recognize the authority of the hierarchy; and the hierarchy in turn, in the collegial understanding of its function, recognizes the charismatic authority wielded by the People and occasionally manifested through the prophetic personalities of the saints.³⁵

Commenting on what Tavard has written, Marc Alexander finds that obedience has two dimensions. Those are sacrifice and responsibility.³⁶ The Sacrificial notion of obedience is well represented by the following text:

³² G.H. Tavard, *Pilgrim Church*, 162.

³³ M.R. Alexander, *Church and Ministry in the Work of G.H. Tavard*, Leuven, Leuven University Press, 1994, p.75.

³⁴ G.H. Tavard, *Pilgrim Church*, 163.

³⁵ G.H. Tavard, *Pilgrim Church*, 163.

³⁶ CF. M.R. Alexander, *Church and Ministry*, 76.

"In professing obedience, religious offer the full surrender of their own will as a sacrifice of themselves to God, and are so permanently and securely united to God's salvific will".³⁷ The responsibility dimension of obedience refers to authority and its exercise. "The nature and qualities of obedience depend on the nature and qualities of authority." An exercise of authority which would pay no attention to these would be an abuse, and therefore would be in itself morally unjustified and undeserving of obedience. Obedience therefore cannot mean doing something without incurring the responsibility of its consequences, this responsibility being attached only to the one who gave the order and not to the executor of the proposed action.³⁸

The act of authority and the act of obedience are both acts of faith.³⁹ They are acts of faith because of the particular object in consideration, but because of the inner dimension which they represent and to which they are directed. Consequently, acts of authority and obedience must be undertaken with particular care since they are acts of faith.⁴⁰

Aspect of Holiness in the Mariology

One can read the theme of the Virgin Mary in the last chapter of the constitution of the Church, *Lumen Gentium*. This chapter indicates the relevance of Mary to a theology of the Church. Tavad gives us this indication when he writes that Mary is "a type and a excellent exemplar" of the Church "in faith and in love" (art. 53; she is, "for all the community of the elect, the model of virtues" (art. 65); she us "a type of the Church in the order of faith, of love, and of perfect union with Christ" (art.63); "in the mystery of the Church, who is rightly called mother and virgin," she is "eminently and singularly the exemplar of the mother and the virgin" (art.63).⁴¹

From this passage Tavad comes to the conclusion that "Mary is a sign of salvation, an icon representing the Church at her best for our hope and

³⁷ *Perfectae Caritatis* 14. Cited in G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim and Ministry*, 76.

³⁸ G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, 165.

³⁹ M.R. Alexander, *Church and Ministry*, 77

⁴⁰ M.R. Alexander, *Church and Ministry*, 77. See G. H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, 166-167.

⁴¹ G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, 128

our consolation, an anticipation of what not only the Church as a whole, but all Christian souls, are also destined to be at the consummation of the Kingdom of God."⁴² He quotes *Lumen Gentium* directly, saying that the Church, contemplation her hidden holiness, imitating her love, faithfully fulfilling the Father's will, is also made mother by the word of God which she faithfully receives: by preaching and baptism she begets children, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of God, to the new and immortal life. And she also is virgin, who keeps faith with her Spouse in integrity and purity (art. 64). He concludes, the Church, and Mary, and each of the faithful, is sister and mother to Christ. The Church universally, Mary historically and typically, all Christians singularly and mystically, constitute the meeting point of the earthly and the heavenly, the human and the divine, the historical and the eternal, mankind on pilgrimage and mankind in the new heaven and the new earth. This is the mystery of the Church and of the sacramental anticipation of its fulfillment, before which we must ultimately retire into the wondering silence of contemplation.⁴³

Conclusion

The Church is indefectibly holy. So the faithful of Christ are invited to strive for the holiness and perfection their proper state. The Church is holy and holiness may be predicated of her though only on account of Christ's abiding presence as the Head in the Body, in which Christ himself is presented as the source, the Subject and even the substance of the Church's holiness. The holiness is, in and for the Church, an eschatological reality. For catholic thought future and realized eschatology are neither contradictory nor exclusive. All the People of God are called to the fullness of Christian life and the perfection of the love. And this perfection occurs according to his own gifts and talent. It is affected by participation.

In the schema of the *Lumen Gentium* chapter VI on Religious Order is set between Chapter on the universal call to sanctity and one of the eschatological natures of pilgrim Church and her union with the Church in heaven. All Christians are called to practice them in their life, according to their circumstances and moral obligations, and keeping with their

⁴² G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, 128

⁴³ G.H. Tavad, *Pilgrim Church*, 129-130.

sacramental graces and the gifts of the Spirit. For this reason the Religious life that is presented as radically contemplation and has two poles that of the Word and sacrament is a way of life. The member of the religion life has officially pronounced the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Mary is a sign of salvation, an icon representing the Church at her best for our hope and our consolation, an anticipation of what not only the Church as a whole, but all Christian souls are also destined to be at the consummation of the Kingdom of God.

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