

## The Church and the Other: Mediation and Friendship in Post-Vatican II Roman Catholic Ecclesiology\*

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**Abstract:** This essay proposes a development in Roman Catholic ecclesiology following the paradigmatic shift in its self-understanding that occurred at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). The Council represented a major shift in the Roman Catholic Church's attitudes towards other religions, Christian traditions, and cultures (including secular culture) from a previous defensive stance to a more positive one. In an unprecedented manner, the Council officials acknowledged that its Church's own self-understanding is enriched by its interactions with these various faith traditions and cultures. Forty years after the Council, however, there remains a need to account for this shift theologically in terms of what was going forward in the Roman Catholic Church's self-understanding.

THIS ESSAY ARGUES THAT THE NOTION OF MUTUAL SELF-MEDIATION as developed by Bernard Lonergan can provide the technical theological language to account for the different types of differences between the Church and the Other. Moreover, the notion of mutual self-mediation provides an ecclesiological hermeneutic key and foundation for developing an ecclesiology of friendship. The seeds for an ecclesiology of friendship were planted at Vatican II and can complement the ecclesiology of Communion, the latter which has been recognised by ecclesiastical authorities as the principal ecclesiology arising from the Council.

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was unprecedented for Roman Catholic ecclesiology in the positive attitude it took towards the Other. Recent European philosophy especially of a post-modern deconstructionist type (following, say, Heidegger and Levinas) has resisted the notion of the self as an all-absorbing ego, and stressed the constitution of the self in its self-transcending relation to what is Other.

The authentic self is never a self-possessed “self” but one that is beholden to the Other. Consequently, the Church’s self is constituted in relation not only to God, but also as this affects its relationship to other Christian traditions, religions, cultures, including secular culture. According to the ecclesiologist Joseph Komonchak, the Council represented a “historic moment in the Church’s self-constitution” and “an expression of the Church’s reflective self-consciousness”.<sup>1</sup> Heretofore the Roman Catholic Church had often operated in a defensive stance towards the Other. In contrast, Vatican II marks a paradigm shift in its self-understanding with respect to its relationship with the Other.

On the eve of the Council, Pope John XXIII criticised “Catholic catastrophism” espoused by “prophets of doom” who construed the Church’s relationship with the “world” strictly in dialectical terms; they possessed a nostalgia for medieval Christendom.<sup>2</sup> This conception of Church is encapsulated in Avery Dulles’ description of the institutional model of Church as clericalist, juridicist, and triumphalistic.<sup>3</sup> Methodologically, the assumptions of this ecclesiology were classicist, presupposing a set of first principles (scripture, dogma, etc.), while conclusions were simply deduced from the principles without regard for context; its principles were normative with no account of historical-mindedness. In turn, this methodology reflected what Bernard Lonergan terms a classicist notion of culture which is a normative, universal and permanent notion.<sup>4</sup> Among other things, this conception of culture meant that missionary activity, especially as it accompanied the exploration of the New World and the period of colonisation, became what Karl Rahner describes as that of European export.<sup>5</sup>

Admittedly, this conception of the Church on the eve of Vatican II can be simplistic and pejorative. Hence, one must also keep in mind the tendency of the new regime to overstate its case while depicting the old regime as “monstrous”.<sup>6</sup> Still, the post-Vatican II Church, as with many Christian churches, continues to struggle with issues of identity in the face of vast pluralism. When it operated in a defensive ecclesiastical

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1. Joseph Komonchak, “The Significance of Vatican II for Ecclesiology”, in Peter Phan (ed.), *The Gift of the Church: A Textbook on Ecclesiology* (Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier, 2000) 70.

2. Komonchak, “Significance of Vatican II”, 70-1. John XXIII, “Opening Speech to the Council” in Walter Abbot (ed.), *Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966) 712.

3. Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church*, Expanded Edition, (New York: Image Books, 1987) 39-40; see J. Komonchak, “Significance of Vatican II for Ecclesiology”, 72-73.

4. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) xi.

5. See Karl Rahner, “Towards a Fundamental Interpretation of Vatican II”, *TS* 40 (1979) 716-27.

6. Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study in Human Understanding*, CWL 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988) 265.

stance, it was easy to articulate the difference from the Other simply in terms of dialectical (contradictory) differences. However, with Vatican II's positive affirmation of the Other and an increasingly pluralistic context, the Roman Catholic Church is now challenged to articulate its relationship with the Other anew, in a way that accounts for positive differences as well.

The Church has yet to explicate the technical theological language that will sufficiently account for this new understanding of its relationship with the Other; one that will respect the integral identity of both its own and that of the Other. I argue the proper articulation of the relationship between the Church and the Other lies in the notion of *mutual self-mediation*, and that this notion will be an essential element of any future Roman Catholic systematic theology. However, what has yet to be worked out more precisely is how this mediation occurs in terms of the different types of differences: dialectical (contradictory), complementary, and genetic.<sup>7</sup>

I shall argue that mutual-self mediation is a heuristic structure for understanding the Roman Catholic Church in its relations to other denominations, religions, cultures, and secular culture. As a technical language, mutual-self mediation has a role to play in ecclesiology specifically when articulating the relationship between the Church and the Other. The seeds of such an understanding were sown in ideas from the Vatican II documents. Moreover, although Communion ecclesiology has been formally recognised as the principal ecclesiology of Vatican II, I argue that this understanding of the Church, while representing the identity of the Church as *self-mediating*, is not sufficient to account for the range of *mutual self-mediating* relations with the Other. In other words, if I could apply a distinction made by the Council Fathers, Communion ecclesiology accounts for the Church's self-understanding *ad intra*, but there is an additional understanding of Church emerging from Vatican II, namely, the Church's self-understanding *ad extra*.<sup>8</sup> Such

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7. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 236; Lonergan's notion of mutual self-mediation and his distinction of the different types of differences are philosophically neutral categories. For the purpose of this paper, when I speak of mutually self-mediating relations, I am speaking of relations that are *graced*, guided and directed by the Holy Spirit.

8. This refers to a distinction made by Cardinal Suenens at the Vatican Council deliberations. *Ecclesia ad intra* refers to the "Church's own sense of identity or consciousness of its inner nature". *Ecclesia ad extra* refers to how the Church "conceived its relation to the world today". Donald R. Campion, S.J., "Introduction to *Gaudium et Spes*" in Walter Abbott (ed.), *The Documents of Vatican II*, 184; admittedly, with Joseph Komonchak I agree this is "not an entirely happy distinction", and by positing this distinction I do not intend a dichotomy between the two conceptions of Church or to juxtapose a theological vision against a sociological-historical understanding of Church. In my application of this distinction, both of the conceptions of Church *ad intra* and *ad extra* are principally

an understanding would take into account not just the Roman Catholic Church's self-constitution as self-mediating, but also its mutually self-mediating relations with the Other.

In addition, one can speak of *friendship* as an appropriate condition for understanding mutually self-mediating relations. Friendship can account for dialectical as well as complementary relationships with the Other. At Vatican II something fresh and irrevocable regarding the Roman Catholic Church's self-understanding in relationship with the Other occurs. One could say at a formal and explicit level, it *befriends* the Other; in this way, the seeds are planted for an ecclesiology of friendship.

I will argue in this paper: (1) that mutual-self mediation is the way of articulating the Roman Catholic Church's relationship with the Other, and that it is a useful heuristic structure to be invoked in contemporary systematic theology; and (2) it represents a paradigmatic emergence of a new ecclesiological understanding of the Church's relationship with the Other, a seventh model of Church if you will (in addition to Dulles' six models), *the Church as Friend*.

## 1. MUTUAL SELF-MEDIATION

"A theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of religion within that matrix."<sup>9</sup> This mediation occurs as a methodical process through eight functional specialties within two phases of theology, a mediating phase (research, interpretation, history, dialectic), and a mediated phase (foundations, doctrines, systematics, communications).

In an article titled "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer", Bernard Lonergan identifies several types of mediation: simple mediation, mutual mediation, self-mediation, and mutual self-mediation.<sup>10</sup> In this paper, we are concerned with *self mediation* and *mutual self-mediation*. Lonergan refers to communities under his discussion of *self-mediation*. The "community mediates itself in history".<sup>11</sup> With respect to the Church, its self-understanding as *self-mediating* pertains to its origin, nature, mission, and goal in history. In contrast, *mutual self-mediation*

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theological conceptions, albeit with different emphases. See Komonchak, "Vatican Council II for Ecclesiology", 90.

9. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, xi.

10. Bernard Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ in Prayer", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, 160-82.

11. Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ in Prayer", 172.

includes more than just the individual or community's self-constitution, but also the influence of one upon another.<sup>12</sup> Robert Doran explains:

Mutual self-mediation occurs between two human beings when one reveals one's own self-discovery and commitment to another and receives the self revelation of the other; one opens oneself to be influenced at the depth of one's being, and others open themselves to be influenced by us.<sup>13</sup>

Accordingly, for Doran the mediation of theology between a religion and a culture is one of mutual self-mediation: "The mediation of religion and culture that theology performs is not simply a self-mediation of Christian constitutive meaning, a mediation that moves from the data on revelation through their ongoing consequences in history to the contemporary faith of the church."<sup>14</sup> Doran argues that this mutual self-mediation pertains to communities as well: "At the end of his discussion of self-mediation Lonergan says that communities perform self-mediation in history, and a similar comment could well have been appended to the discussion of mutual self-mediation."<sup>15</sup> I agree with Doran, and would go even further to suggest that the post-Vatican II Roman Catholic ecclesiology has yet to develop an explicit self-understanding that reflects its mutually self-mediating relations with the Other.

Traditionally, its self-understanding in relating to the Other has been principally explicated in terms of self-mediation (mediating *to* the Other, salvation, grace, the Good News). However, following Vatican II, the Church's self-understanding as it pertains to the Other begins to recognise, at least formally and explicitly, a mutually self-mediating relationship with the Other.<sup>16</sup> That is, the *explicit* recognition not only that the Church enriches the Other but also that it is enriched by the Other. Again, the need remains, however, for a theological language and a new conception of Church to articulate this "new" way of relating to the Other.

The seeds of such an understanding of Church were sown at Vatican II. This new era in the Church's self-understanding is signified principally in the documents' recognition that the Church is enriched by its encounter with the Other.

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12. Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ in Prayer", 175.

13. Robert Doran, "Reflections on Method in Systematic Theology", *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, 17 (2002) 45.

14. Doran, "Reflections on Method in Systematic Theology", 45.

15. Doran, "Reflections on Method in Systematic Theology", 45.

16. Doran, "Reflections on Method in Systematic Theology", 45.

*The Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes)* represents the Church's attempt to move beyond construing other cultures strictly in terms of dialectical differences. As Komonchak states:

Following Pope John's lead, the council largely refrained from the suspicious, negative, and defensive posture that had marked the Catholic subculture before; instead, it adopted a method of dialogue reflecting its judgment that the Spirit of God is not absent from modern developments (see GS 26) and enabling it to describe in paragraph 44 what the Church can learn from the world.<sup>17</sup>

The document recognises this type of relationship most clearly when it refers to human cultures. It speaks of "the treasures hidden in the various forms of human culture" (GS, 44). This indicates that there are aspects of other cultures that could literally *enrich* the Church. The statement that these treasures are hidden indicates a need to actively look for them, to discover the riches contained within the Other.

Obviously, *Gaudium et Spes* does not use the language of mutual self mediation, but the idea is implicit, especially in the Introduction to Chapter IV, which is titled, "The Church and the World as Mutually Related". The chapter speaks about how the Church can enrich the individual and society and then in §44 acknowledges how the Church is enriched by the Other: "Just as it is in the world's interest to acknowledge the Church as a historical reality...the Church herself knows how richly she has profited by the history and development of humanity." There is recognition that historically the Church has been involved in a mutually enriching relationship with the Other. Again, what makes this document and others of Vatican II distinctive is the formal, explicit recognition of this relationship – a development, as Komonchak states, of the Church's self-constitution and reflective self-consciousness.

Moreover, the document advocates a continuing, living exchange between the Church and various cultures (GS, §44). Similarly, in a subsequent chapter, it speaks of a mutual enrichment between the Church and other cultures: "Faithful to her own tradition and at the same time conscious of her universal mission, she can enter into communion with the various civilisations, *to their enrichment and the enrichment of the Church herself*" (GS, §58, emphasis added).

The *Decree on Ecumenism* (UR I §4) emphasises the importance of maintaining "mutual relations" in the dialogue with other Christian

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17. Komonchak, "Significance of Vatican II for Ecclesiology", 89. Pertinent to this quote, Frederick E. Crowe argues that the Church as learner is just as important, if not more so, than the Church as teacher. See his "The Church as Learner: Two Crises, One Kairos", in Michael Vertin (ed.), *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea* (Washington DC: CUA Press, 1989) 370-84.

traditions. The decree advocates a “change of heart” or conversion for those involved (presumably both parties) in the process. “Mutual brotherly [and sisterly] love” is viewed as the fruit of unity (UR II §7). It acknowledges the importance of mutual respect, esteem and mutual understanding. In matters of doctrinal differences, one could say, it encourages the focus on complementary rather than contradictory differences: “In such cases, these various theological expressions are to be considered often as mutually complementary rather than conflicting” (UR III, 1 § 17).

The *Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (Nostra Aetate)* represents a paradigmatic shift in the Church’s relations with other religions. It repeats the call for “mutual understanding” and respect in the dialogue between religions (§3, 4). In his commentary, Walter Abbot clarifies the significance of the Council’s use of *mutual*: “The word ‘mutual’ indicates the Council hopes for two-way communication; the Council Fathers here take an initiative (just as the *Decree on Ecumenism* urges Catholics to take the initiative in proposals for dialogue with other Christians) and hope for a response.”<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the initiative the Council Fathers call for is something new historically in the Church’s relations with other religions and Christian traditions.

The doctrinal presuppositions for such mutual exchange can be found in the *Declaration of Religious Freedom (Dignitatis humanae)*. This document emphasises religious freedom for individuals and communities, rooted in the dignity of every human being. It has been stated that the document represents the Church leaving “the age of Constantine”.<sup>19</sup>

These statements from the Vatican II documents mark something historically unprecedented in the Church’s self-understanding, the formal and explicit recognition that it is enriched by the Other, and the need for mutual relations, and understanding, in order to sustain such relations. In other words, one could say, it is the beginning of a recognition that the Church’s relationship with the Other is not just one of self-mediation but one of mutual self-mediation as well. Moreover, the spirit of this shift of the Church’s self-understanding is paradigmatic and irrevocable. This means we cannot simply fall back on the former dialectical relations with the Other; to do so would go against the spirit of the Council.

Still, such recognition leaves the post-Vatican II Church in a precarious position. Heretofore, almost from its inception, the Roman Church has understood its relation to the Other in terms of self-

18. Abbott, *The Documents of Vatican II*, 665, n. 20.

19. Komonchak, “Significance of Vatican II for Ecclesiology”, 90.

mediation, and then often in an antagonistic (dialectical) relationship. This occurs in a variety of forms: the Church's early polemical relationship with Judaism related in the New Testament (a polemic that continued for centuries, and with the politicisation of Christianity, its irruption into anti-Semitism); in the Eastern schism, the medieval crusades against Islam, the Inquisition against Muslims and Jews, the Counter-Reformation against Protestantism; the resistance to Galileo and to the advances of modern science; the encounter with the Indigenous peoples of the New World; the rejection of Gallicanism by the papacy; and the campaign against Modernism. These are just a few examples. The point is that the relationship with the Other was often construed in terms of dialectical (contradictory) differences. By contrast, Vatican II presents an official recognition by the Church that the Other has something to offer the Church. Again I emphasise that, throughout its history, the Church has recognised the latter, but at Vatican II, she recognises it explicitly and formally. When speaking of the Church's relationship with the "world", Gustavo Gutierrez has this type of shift in mind:

But by the same token the Church must turn to the world, in which Christ and his Spirit are present and active; the Church must allow itself to be inhabited and evangelised by the world. It has been said for this reason that a theology of the Church in the world should be complemented by a "theology of the world in the Church".<sup>20</sup>

The challenge for the Roman Catholic systematic theologians is how to articulate this new relationship, one which can account for the Church's complex relationships with the Other, as complementary as well as dialectical, and as self mediating as well as mutually self-mediating; one which neither compromises the Church's fundamental nature and mission, nor does violence to the Other. There remains a need for a technical language that can account for both *a theology of the Church in the world* and *a theology of the world in the Church*. I argue that such language lies in the notion of mutual self-mediation. However, this notion has to be further filled out in terms of his recognition of different kinds of differences. In this way, mutual self-mediation provides one of the hermeneutic keys to articulate the complex of relations between the Church and the Other.

The lack of this hermeneutic key led the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church to revert to defensive postures in its relationship with the Other. The final report of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod admits as

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<sup>20</sup> Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*, Rev. edn. (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1988) 260-61.

much: "We are probably not immune from all responsibility for the fact that especially the young critically consider the Church a pure institution...From time to time there has also been a *lack of the discernment of spirits, with the failure to correctly distinguish between a legitimate openness of the Council to the world and the acceptance of a secularised world's mentality and order of values.*"<sup>21</sup> This failure to distinguish correctly between a legitimate openness to the secularised world's values indicates a need for a technical language that explicitly distinguishes the different types of differences, and that these differences are part of the graced mutually self-mediating relationship between the Church and the Other.

Lonergan lays these differences out in *Method in Theology*: dialectical, complementary differences, and genetic differences.<sup>22</sup> What has yet to be articulated is a more precise understanding of how the mutually self-mediating relationship between the Church and the Other occurs in terms of these different types of differences. In other words, I would combine the distinction of the different types of differences with mutual self-mediation in order to "flesh out" the multifarious nature of the relationship between the Church and the Other. In order to demonstrate this, I will first summarise the different types of differences and, second, attempt to show how these differences are worked out in terms of the Church's relationship with secular culture, as addressed by Lonergan in his 1968 lecture titled, "Sacralization and Secularization".<sup>23</sup> Together, I believe these give us a snapshot of the more general, dynamic, mutually self-mediating relationship between the Church and the Other.

#### Different types of Differences

One can distinguish three types of differences with respect to personal horizons: complementary differences, genetic differences, and dialectical (contradictory) differences. The differing horizons to some extent can include one another. A college curriculum varies. It includes facets from the various academic disciplines. In this way, the differences across disciplines (philosophy, math, etc.) *complement* each other in order to round off the curriculum.

Horizons can differ *genetically* as "successive stages in some process of development. Each later stage presupposes earlier stages, partly to include them, and partly to transform them".<sup>24</sup> In terms of biological

21. Extraordinary Synod of 1985, "The Final Report", I, 4, emphasis added.

22. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 236.

23. Bernard Lonergan, "Sacralization and Secularization", *Collected Works*, Vol. 17 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) 259-82.

24. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 236.

development, the difference between an individual as an infant and the same individual as a toddler is a genetic difference.

Horizons may also differ *dialectically*, that is, there can be contradictory differences between horizons: “What in one is found intelligible, in another is unintelligible. What for one is true, for another is false. What for one is good, for another is evil.”<sup>25</sup> Dialectical differences may be “attributed in part to wishful thinking, to an acceptance of myth, to ignorance or fallacy, to blindness or illusion, to backwardness or immaturity, to infidelity, to bad will, to a refusal of God’s grace.”<sup>26</sup> When there are contradictory differences between horizons, one or both parties are challenged to conversion – to overcome any biases that are obstacles to God’s grace.

**DIFFERENCES AND MEDIATION**

	Secular Culture		
	DIALECTICAL	COMPLEMENTARY	GENETIC
CHURCH	<b>Sacralization to be Dropped:</b> Church challenged to conversion	<b>Secularization to be Welcomed:</b> Church is enriched (technology, plurality, etc.)	<b>New Sacralization to be Fostered:</b> <i>Religion:</i> higher integration of inter-religious relating (fundamentalism transcended)
	<b>Secularization to be resisted:</b> Church challenges culture to conversion	Culture is enriched (by Gospel values)	<i>Culture:</i> World Cultural humanity
			Prefigures Reign of God on Earth

In a lecture titled “Sacralization and Secularization” Lonergan articulates the possible relations between the Church and secular culture by making a four-fold distinction: *a sacralization to be dropped, a secularization to be welcomed, a secularization to be resisted, and a new sacralization to be fostered.*<sup>27</sup> One of the reasons I believe this four-fold distinction to be significant is that it contains the range of possible relationships

25 . Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 236.

26. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 236-7.

27. See Lonergan, “Sacralization and Secularization”, 264.

between the Church and secular culture in terms of the three types of differences distinguished in *Method in Theology*. Moreover, this four-fold distinction reflects the range of possibilities that flow from a mutual self-mediating relationship between the Church and secular culture. The following diagram illustrates the various aspects of mutual self-mediation that articulate the range of relationships between the Church and (secular) culture.

Insofar as there are dialectical (contradictory) differences in horizons between the Church and secular culture, one or the other (or both) parties are being challenged to change, to become more authentic expressions of their divine potentiality. The sacralization to be dropped refers to the need for the Church to change. It refers to the remnants of ecclesial aberrations stemming from the era in Christian history that is distinctively marked by "a fateful alliance of church and state that for centuries, despite changing circumstances and profoundly altered situations, despite quarrels and enmities and violence, nevertheless did define a basic state of affairs, a dyarchy of *imperium* and *sacerdotium*, of throne and altar".<sup>28</sup>

In addition, one could say the sacralization to be dropped includes those negative ecclesial aspects characterised by what Avery Dulles describes as the *institutional model* of Church insofar as it fostered a culture of juridicism, triumphalism and clericalism. The aberrations that flow from this conception of Church stem from a sacralization of the Church's organisational structures and hierarchy, or in other words, thinking of the Church merely as an institution. Vatican II specifically sought to address and overcome these ecclesiological extremes.

The culture of clericalism, at least in part, facilitated a context for the abuse of power that culminated in the recent sexual abuse scandals in the Roman Catholic Church. However, it took the legal system of secular culture to force the Church to confront and root out those aspects of secrecy and conspiracy that contributed to the abuse. One wonders how long it would have taken the Church to address this crisis had they not been forced to by the secular civil legal system. In this instance, one can see the painful side of mutual self-mediating relationship. The differences between the secular culture and the Church (at least certain church leaders) in this instance are contradictory; the State forces the Church to face these contradictory differences and therefore to change. As painful as this whole scandal

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28. Lonergan, "Sacralization and Secularization", 264.

has been for the Church, the crisis presents it with an opportunity to learn and grow from these experiences.<sup>29</sup>

As stated before, with its formal recognition that there are differences with secular culture that complement the Church, Vatican II marked a new area in the Church's self-understanding. I say a *formal recognition*, because the idea had been percolating throughout centuries of Christian spirituality, as for example in the spirituality of the Ignatian principle of "finding God in all things", which marked an about-face in a monastic ideal that for centuries had often advocated a literal flight from the world.<sup>30</sup>

The secularization to be welcomed is the recognition that there are developments within the secular culture that are valuable and indispensable to the life of the Church. These are those advances ushered in by the scientific and technological revolutions that continue to make human living more efficient and easier, as well as the political developments of democracy, religious tolerance, and freedom.

Moreover, the acknowledgment of complementary differences presumes that the Gospel values, teachings, etc., can complement secular culture as well. The Church can mediate values, a sense of purpose, and meaning to a global context where corporate identity, practicality and results, and desensitisation prevent people from self-actualisation, goodwill, spiritual development and fulfilment. In such cases, the complementary effect that the Church has on secular culture in this way is not dialectical, in the sense that the Church is necessarily challenging the values of the secular culture, but rather it is meeting a need in a complementary manner. Such complementarity enables secular culture to be more humane and civil, and to move toward fulfilling its divine potentiality. One can think of the recent corporate scandals such as the Enron Corporation. No one in the mainstream financial world would approve (at least publicly) of this unethical conduct. Still, the lack of an appropriately grounded business ethics creates a climate for such conduct. Perhaps an ethics rooted in Gospel principles could meet this need for business ethics and help men and women in business do their business better.

The *secularization to be resisted*, among other things, reflects the Church's prophetic challenge to the secular society that is antagonistic to or indifferent to God or the practice of authentic values. John Paul II's characterisation of the "culture of death" reflects an aspect of this

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29. Whether Vatican II with its spirit of *aggiornamento* sufficiently addressed questions of sexual theology remains a further question.

30. T. M. Gannon and G. W. Traub, *The Desert and the City: An Interpretation of the History of Christian Spirituality* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1969) 172.

relationship where the Church challenges a secular culture.<sup>31</sup> In this way, the Pope's characterisation is a diagnosis and a call to conversion. In popular imagination, this famous phrase "culture of death" is often solely associated with the abortion issue. But in *Evangelium Vitae* the Pope speaks of a range of concerns arising from structures that impinge on individual freedom and facilitate oppression (EV, 12).

Similarly, one of the insights that may be gleaned from the rise in religious fundamentalisms is their resistance to the homogenisation of cultures that accompanies hyperculture.<sup>32</sup> The extent to which the Church challenges this aspect of secularization remains a prophetic witness to the emerging world-church, which Karl Rahner declared as imminent, and that was formally inaugurated at Vatican II.

Of the *new sacralization to be fostered*, Lonergan does not elaborate, but one can speculate that it anticipates a transformation of relations between the Church and secular culture, one that has a two-fold effect, one on *culture*: the hope of issuing in what Robert Doran (borrowing from Louis Mumford) described as a World-Cultural Humanity, and the other on *religion*: the emergence of a theology of theologies (based on Robley Whitson's *Coming Convergence of World's Religions*, which influenced Lonergan).

In terms of genetic relations, the mutual-self mediating relationship between the Church and secular culture, insofar as grace is the operative and guiding principle of the relationship, brings about the historical unfolding of the Reign of God on Earth.

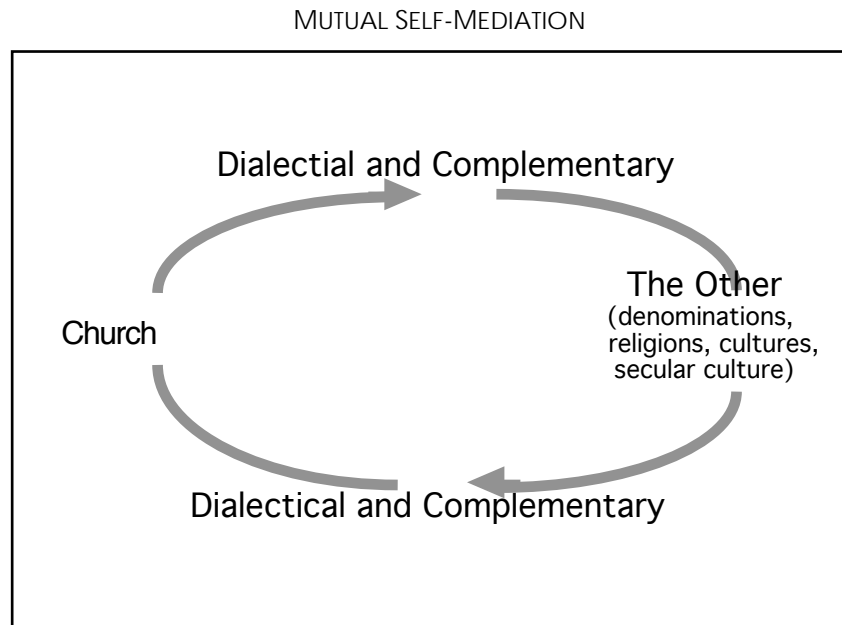
#### Mutual Self-Mediation as Heuristic Structure.

In the mutually self-mediating relationship, each encounters similarity and difference in the Other. Admittedly, our discussion of this dynamic process focuses on the different types of differences between the Church and the Other rather than on the question of similarity and sameness. Furthermore, as I have stated before, the mutually self-mediating relationship consists not just in the Church's encounter with the various cultures, including secular culture, but also with other religions and other Christian traditions. It remains a larger project to articulate more precisely the dynamics of the mutually self-mediating relationship, presupposing of course that grace is the operative and guiding principle in such relations. But we have at least begun to get a view of the provocative feature of this notion: it allows us to articulate more precisely in technical language, the dynamic multifarious

31. John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae (Gospel of Life)* Encyclical, March 25, 1995, 12.

32. On "hyperculture" see Robert J. Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology Between the Global and the Local* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997) 10.

relationship between the Church and the Other by clarifying it in terms of dialectical, complementary, and genetic differences.<sup>33</sup>



**Genetic Relations: Mutual self-mediation between the Church and the Other brings about historical unfolding of the Reign of God on Earth**

For Lonergan, the primary purpose of the functional specialty *systematics* is to understand in a systematic way the various teachings of the Church affirmed in the functional specialty, *doctrines*. Roman Catholic theology does not currently have a systematic theology in this sense, much less anything nearly as synthetic and integral as Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*. Any such endeavour, Doran has pointed out, would be the fruit of a collaborative and cumulative effort of dedicated scholars from the various functional specialties (including especially, history). A systematic ecclesiology would be part of this systematic theology and would include how the Church understands itself as *distinct* from the Other (self-mediation), and how it understands itself as related to the Other (mutual self-mediation).

As a heuristic structure, the notion of graced mutually self-mediating relations enables one to understand how the Church is related to the

33. There can of course be differences without mediation, such as certain transplanted ethnic groups that retain their explicit cultural identity intact within the context of their transplanted environment.

Other, accounting for the multifarious aspects of this relationship in terms of the different types of differences. There can be complementary relations between the Church and the Other, where one or both are mutually enriched by the encounter. There can be dialectical relations between the Church and the Other, where one or both are challenged to a conversion of authenticity, bringing each to proper fulfilment of their own divine potentiality. Finally, the mutually self-mediating relations between the Church and the Other as graced, can help to bring about a genetic unfolding of the Reign of God on Earth.

The understanding of graced mutually self-mediating relations with the different types of differences as a heuristic structure could be deliberately applied when developing a systematic ecclesiology in order to ensure the understanding of the fullest range of relations between the Church and the Other. Likewise, mutual self-mediation could be invoked as a heuristic structure in any future systematic theology specifically (but perhaps not exclusively) when articulating the Church's relationship with the Other (denominations, religions, cultures, secular culture).

Moreover, I am convinced that mutual self-mediation has implications beyond its ability to enrich the Church's understanding of itself in relation to the Other. That is, it has implications for enriching a systematic theology in general, as well as having implications for a new ecclesiology – *an ecclesiology of friendship*.

I have been arguing that mutual self-mediation can function to articulate the Roman Catholic Church's relationship with the Other in terms of a mutual enrichment, mutual challenge, and the potential genetic emergence of something new. There remains a need for an ecclesiological image or conception that can capture this mutually self-mediating relationship. Friendship (assuming it is a relationship guided by grace) can be said to be a condition that facilitates mutual self-mediation because in a friendship, friends encounter the three types of differences in each other. The differences between friends complement and enrich each other, but friends can also challenge each other to continued growth especially with respect to dialectical differences or in degrees of inauthenticity, but they can do so in a loving supportive manner. Finally, the love mediated between friends can flow over as generosity into acts of charity and friendship to others. True friendship can give rise to a genetic unfolding of the realisation of God's presence in community, as when Jesus declares that if two or three are gathered in his name, he is present.

## 2. TOWARD AN ECCLESIOLOGY OF FRIENDSHIP

Since Vatican II, there has been an ongoing hermeneutical discernment in the Roman Catholic Church to identify the principal ecclesiology representative of the Council documents. Formally, the Church recognises the ecclesiology of Communion as the principal ecclesiology. However, while Communion ecclesiology may express the understanding of the Church emerging from the Vatican II documents as self-mediating, there lacks a conception of the Church to account for its mutually self-mediating relations with the Other. As I have said, the seeds of such an understanding were sown at Vatican II but lie further in the development of an ecclesiology of friendship, or in the understanding of the *Church as Friend*.

*Dulles' Models of Church.* Avery Dulles emphasises that there will probably always be a plethora of ecclesiological images, since the fundamental nature of the Church is a mystery. His models of Church are well known: Institution, Sacrament, Herald, Servant, Mystical Communion, and Community of Disciples.

As stated before, the institutional model of Church refers to the conception of Church which the Second Vatican Council was trying to move beyond.<sup>34</sup> In the institutional model, the Church is associated strictly with its visible and hierarchal features. Obviously, this is not a conception of Church that lends itself to mutual self-mediating relations with the Other. On the contrary, this conception of Church is one of self-mediation, but one where the locus of mediation occurs from the hierarchical church. The latter mediates *to* the Other (as well as to the laity) and the mediation is dialectical, or oppositional, without consideration for the complementarity of the Other. Dulles is critical of this model, but he also underscores the need for institutions and structures in the Church.

Dulles views the remaining models of the Church as reflecting the principal ecclesiological emphases coming out of the Vatican II documents, but also acknowledging the need for institutional structures. Three of these models explicitly presuppose a self-mediating relationship with the Other. Again, by "self-mediating" I mean that the Church, so to speak, becomes more herself in functioning according to what is envisaged by the model, but the model does *not* envisage that the Church can become more herself by receiving from the Other (i.e. mutually self-mediating relations).

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34. Dulles, *Models of Church*, 39.

As sacrament, the Church offers a sign of hope and salvation *to* the world, but it is unclear how the “world” might be a sacrament to the Church.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, the Church as servant is self-mediating in that the Church understands itself as servant to the Other in mediating the love of Christ. Third, the model of Church as herald is self-mediating in the sense that the Church understands itself as heralding the good news to the Other and not vice versa.

Two of Dulles’ models pertain to *Communion ecclesiology*: Mystical Communion and Community of Disciples. Mystical Communion pertains to the Church’s self-understanding as invisible and visible. This conception was revitalised by Pius XII’s encyclical *Mystici Corporis* (1943) and again in *Lumen Gentium*. The Church’s relationship with the Other is construed in terms of the invisible, mystical nature of her identity. Still, it is primarily a self-mediating understanding of the Church in the sense that the Other is ultimately construed as part of the body of Christ, whether visibly or invisibly. With respect to other Christian communities, there is the possibility of a mutual self-mediating relationship with the universal Church, but it remains to be spelled out specifically in terms of the different types of differences.<sup>36</sup>

Dulles admits that the first five models (institution, sacrament, mystical communion, herald and servant) were defined “narrowly, so as to delineate them as sharply as possible in mutual contrast”. Later, he develops a sixth model, in order to “harmonise the differences” among the previous five, that he claims is a variant of Communion ecclesiology. He borrows a phrase from John Paul II, and calls it Community of Disciples.<sup>37</sup> This model, as outlined by Dulles, has an admitted weakness: it emphasises too much the Church’s dialectical relationship with the “world”. In his words: “it tends to accentuate the features that set Christians apart from their fellow human beings in the world”.<sup>38</sup> To this admitted weakness Dulles retorts: “But the discipleship model has the advantage of calling attention to the radical break with worldly values that is required for fidelity to Jesus.”<sup>39</sup> Hence, it would seem that the model Dulles advocates for harmonising the differences between all

35. Dennis Doyle refers to a sacramentality “that blesses and enhances what the world, through God’s grace already has”. Dennis Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology: Vision and Versions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2000) 22; a mutually self-mediating relationship, would acknowledge more specifically than Doyle does that such sacramentality exists independently of the visible Church and also enriches the Church. In other words, the sacramentality present in the ‘world’ can function as a sign for the Church as well.

36. “...the union among Christian bodies is not to be envisaged as if it was a merger among business corporations...but rather as a mutual rediscovery of brothers [and sisters] who have never lost their kinship.” Dulles, *Models of Church*, 147.

37. Dulles, *Models of Church*, 206.

38. Dulles, *Models of Church*, 224.

39. Dulles, *Models of Church*, 224.

the models in fact re-emphasises the dialectical relationship with the Other, at least in the case of the "world". By doing so, it becomes difficult to consider the mutually self-mediating relations with the Other or even to account for complementary differences.

Dulles acknowledges that a "certain tension between Church and world seems inevitable in a universe deeply scarred by sin and disorder".<sup>40</sup> Yet, lacking in his so-called comprehensive model of church as community of disciples is a recognition of the different types of differences between the Church and the "world" (or at least an explicit recognition of the differences) as not just contradictory (Church against the world) but as complementary. This tension Dulles speaks about can be more properly understood in terms of the heuristic structure of graced mutually self-mediating relations that simultaneously recognises that there are different types of differences between the Church and the Other.<sup>41</sup>

#### Communion Ecclesiology and Vatican II

As stated before, Catholic hierarchy recognises *communion ecclesiology* as the principal ecclesiology representing the spirit of Vatican II: "The ecclesiology of communion is the central and fundamental idea of the Council's documents."<sup>42</sup>

The recognition in the Vatican II documents of the *ecclesia particularis* or particular church (LG, 8) raised subsequent issues concerning the exact relationship between the local and the universal church. The 1985 Synod of bishops and Pope John Paul II have attempted to clarify some of these issues and specify what they mean by communion.<sup>43</sup> In both cases their understanding of Church as Communion is one of self-mediation. That is, it is a conception of church primarily concerned with articulating the origin, nature, mission, and goal of the Church as communion and *not* with the mutually self-mediating relationship with the Other. This does not, however, rule out the possibility of a mutually self-mediating relationship between the Universal Church and the particular Churches (and ecclesial communities).<sup>44</sup>

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40. Dulles, *Models of Church*, 224.

41. Pedro Arrupe emphasises the importance of Ignatian discernment as a necessary attitude for "genuine inculturation". Similarly, this will be a necessary attitude to be applied and further developed for the Church's discernment of genuine mutually self-mediating relations with the Other. "Letter to the Whole Society on Inculturation", in *Studies in the International Apostolate of Jesuits*, 7 (June, 1978) 5.

42. Extraordinary Synod of 1985, *Final Report*, II, C, 1.

43. See, *Final Report*, II, C, 11 and John Paul II *Christifideles laici* §19.

44. The CDF quoting John Paul II talks about the relationship between the universal and particular churches as one of *mutual interiority*, but by this they mean that essential aspects of the universal church are present in a particular Church; it is meant more to

Communion ecclesiology has a special appeal because it de-emphasises the reductive distortions that stem from an over-emphasis of the visible Church and its ecclesial structures.<sup>45</sup> Vatican II sought to overcome these negative aspects that Dulles ascribes to the institutional model of church.

Between the end of Vatican II and now, a range of different aspects of communion ecclesiology have emerged. In his book on the subject, Dennis Doyle identifies at least six versions of communion ecclesiology: a Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) version, a Rahnerian version, a Balthasarian version, a liberation version, a contextual version, and a reforming version.<sup>46</sup> He claims all of these would contribute to a "properly" Catholic vision of communion ecclesiology while none of these versions is complete in itself. He is also aware of the dangers and limitations that he may be casting his net too widely.

While I am sympathetic with Doyle's attempt to bring these various versions together, I am not sure it can work due to the fact that the various versions he identifies have different types of differences among them. Doyle is certainly aware that differences exist, but a deep reckoning with these differences presupposes a mutual conversion among the proponents of the various versions. That is, there may be complementary differences between the six versions of communion ecclesiology, but there are dialectical (contradictory) differences as well. There are aspects of the CDF version of communion ecclesiology that are contradictorily opposed to, say, the priority Leonardo Boff places on basic ecclesial communities; the same can be said for the feminist critiques of ecclesial structures that are dialectically opposed to the CDF version.

Again, the "limited and particular range of diversity" that Doyle hopes for in his book, in order to avoid relativism and "spineless pluralism", would be more feasible by explicitly distinguishing the different types of differences between the various versions. Otherwise, Communion ecclesiology runs the risk of becoming like the dysfunctional family living in denial that there are serious problems in the home.

There remains another problem with Doyle's proposal. He admits that the Magisterium has a privileged voice within the various versions while at the same time claiming that "no one version of communion ecclesiology has a corner on the market".<sup>47</sup> However, presumably

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insure unity rather than to clarify the different types of differences, and in this sense it is not mutual self-mediation. CDF, *Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion*, 9.

45. Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, 12.

46. Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, 19ff.

47. Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, 20-1.

Cardinal Ratzinger, speaking in his privileged voice as prefect for the CDF, believes his version of Communion ecclesiology has the corner on the market. And theoretically, if the CDF version over-emphasises the institutional and visible aspects of the Church (this is not Doyle's position), then presumably that conception has a privileged position.

Consider the recent document *Dominus Iesus* where the CDF's language toward those Christians who are not in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church is more pointed. The CDF states that those ecclesial communities who have not preserved a valid episcopate or the "genuine and integral substance" of the Eucharist are "not Churches in the proper sense" (D.I., IV, 17). These comments sparked a lot of criticism, including that of the Archbishop of Canterbury, for ignoring the gains in the ecumenical dialogue over the past 30 years.<sup>48</sup> Given this reception, one is at pains to reconcile the language of CDF in *Dominus Iesus* with the Vatican Council II's principles for effecting positive ecumenical relations: "first, every effort to eliminate words, judgments, and actions which do not respond to the condition of the separated brethren [and sisters] with truth and fairness and so make mutual relations between them more difficult" (UR §4). There is the danger of a Communion ecclesiology becoming a velvet glove for triumphalism.

Nevertheless, Communion ecclesiology marks a distinctive development in the Church's self-understanding coming out of Vatican II, especially in its attempt to emphasise the relationship between the universal and the particular church, and to de-emphasise the visible, institutional elements of the universal Church. However, many theological issues remain to be addressed.<sup>49</sup>

The conception of church as communion is one of self-mediation insofar as it emphasises the Church's relationship with the various expressions of the Church of Christ which subsist within it. In other words, Communion ecclesiology is a self-mediating understanding of the Church in the sense that she becomes more herself insofar as she envisages the visible and invisible communion of the People of God within the mystical body of Christ (*Ecclesia ad intra*). However, there is still needed an ecclesiological conception of Church that reflects the Church's mutually self-mediating relations with the Other (*Ecclesia ad extra*). Since friendship is a proper condition for mutually self-mediating relations, an ecclesiology of friendship can meet this need, not to replace the achievements of Communion ecclesiology, but rather to

48. For an analysis of the document from various theological perspectives see S. Pope and C. Hefling (eds.), *Sic et Non: Encountering Dominus Iesus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002).

49. See Susan K Wood, "The Church as Communion" in P. Phan (ed.), *The Gift of the Church: A Textbook on Ecclesiology in Honour of Patrick Granfield, O.S.B.* (Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier, 2000) 159-76.

complement it. In other words, if Communion ecclesiology represents the understanding of the Church as self-mediating (and not as mutually self-mediating) then Communion ecclesiology could be said to be an ecclesiology of family. Hence, the ecclesiology of Communion (family) and of friendship would complement each other and thus account for both the understanding of Church as *ad intra* and *ad extra* respectively.

## The Church as Friend

"Friendship", according to Mary Hunt, "has been discussed rarely in Christian theological literature." This strikes her as "peculiar in a faith tradition where laying down one's life for one's friends is lauded".<sup>50</sup> This statement, of course, is an over-generalisation. For example, the human analogy Aquinas used in his understanding of charity is influenced by Aristotle's treatment of friendship in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.<sup>51</sup> However, her point is taken in the sense that there has not been an explicit integration of friendship within ecclesiology.

The most appropriate conception of the Church that accounts for the Church's mutually self-mediating relations with the Other and the different types of differences is an ecclesiology of friendship. But I do not mean to reduce the Church's understanding to what Dulles describes as "friendly fellowship".<sup>52</sup> Indeed, friendship with the world is hardly envisaged by the New Testament. Nevertheless, the basis for an ecclesiology of friendship is in Scripture. Jesus befriends his disciples ("I have called you friends"). The friends of Jesus follow his commands (John 15:14-15). He proclaims that one can have no greater love than to lay down one's life for a friend (John 15:13). Moreover, he befriends the marginalised of the society in his first-century Palestinian context. He challenges us to love and pray for our enemies.

The Church has yet to realise the implications of a systematic ecclesiology that explicitly takes friendship into account. I say explicitly, but that is not to say that friendship has not been treated implicitly throughout the Church's tradition with its emphasis on charity and love.

Finally, I am inspired by the provocative nature and pastoral implications of an ecclesiology of friendship. As Jesus embraced the marginalised and alienated of his society, I imagine the Church as friend: to the poor, to the repentant, to the scapegoat, and to all marginalised groups. Such a vision of Church captures the spirit of Christ and reflects the advancing Reign of God on Earth.

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50. Mary E. Hunt, *Fierce Tenderness: A Feminist Theology of Friendship* (New York: Crossroad, 1991) 9.

51. Michael Pakaluk (ed.), *Other Selves: Philosophers and Friendship* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Co., 1991) 146-47.

52. Dulles, *Models of Church*, 60.