

## **Editorial**

### **Diversity and Communion**

The Catholic Church is a communion of twenty three Churches *sui iuris*, twenty two Eastern Churches and the Latin Church. We can note many differences in the ecclesial life, liturgical practices, and other aspects of these Churches. These diversities do not affect the ecclesial unity of faith, sacraments, and governance fundamental to the Church. These differences do not harm but contribute to and enrich the beauty of the entire Church. Vatican II teaches that “the diversity of the Churches united together demonstrates in a very clear fashion the catholicity of the undivided Church” (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, n. 2).

This ecclesiological and theological vision of communion is given juridic form in the Codes of Canon Law of the Catholic Church.

Whatever is new, different or particular in an individual Church does not belong to that Church itself but to the common heritage of the Universal Church. Thus, individual parts contribute to the enrichment of the universal Church. Vatican II “declares that all this heritage of spirituality and liturgy, of discipline and theology, in its various traditions, belongs to the full catholic and apostolic character of the church” (UR 17). For Example, the concept of Ecclesial Assembly of the Christian Faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church, which had a key role in administration of the parishes, is that Church’s unique contribution to the entire Catholic Church.

In the apostolic constitution promulgating the Eastern Code, John Paul II quoted Leo XIII, stating that “the legally approved diversity of Eastern liturgical forms and discipline” is “an ornament for the whole Church and a confirmation of the divine unity of the Catholic faith” (Leo XIII, ap. Letter *Orientalium dignitas*, 30 Nov. 1894, proem).

Vatican II praises this variety of cultures, traditions and other aspects of the individual Churches as something very precious. Hence, it advocates all to hold fast to them, to maintain them and to restore to them whatever has been lost in the course of history. *Lumen Gentium* 23 says that “this diversity of the Churches united together

demonstrates in a very clear fashion the catholicity of the undivided Church.”

The diversity existing in the individual Churches thus demonstrates the Church’s true catholicity. In the words of Pope Leo XIII, quoted by Pope John Paul II, this diversity “is possibly more wonderful in illustrating the note of catholicity in the Church of God” (Leo XIII, ap. Letter *Orientalium dignitas*, 30 Nov. 1894, prooem).

Communion exists not only among the Churches *sui iuris* but between all members of the Church. Beginning with the Holy Father, all individual members are to establish and maintain communion with the Church and among themselves in accordance with his or her state in life. For example, CCEO 45 §2 states that “in fulfilling the office (*munus*) of the supreme pastor of the entire Church, the Roman Pontiff is always united in communion with the other bishops and with the entire Church.” The members of the college of bishops are to have “hierarchical communion” with the head of the college – the Roman Pontiff – and among the bishops themselves (CCEO c. 49) or “bond of communion among themselves and with the successor of Peter” (CCEO c. 597 § 2). CCEO c. 324 speaks of the “hierarchical communion” of clerics among themselves ... who participate in various ways in the one divinely instituted ecclesiastical ministry.” Similarly the “Christian faithful are bound by the obligation in the manner of their conduct to maintain always communion with the Church” (CCEO, c. 12.)

Communion is a fundamental, two-dimensional reality at the heart of the Church. The hierarchs and faithful exist in vertical communion with the triune God and in horizontal, hierarchical communion in the Church of Christ.

The observance of the week of prayer for unity, from 18 to 25 January, indicates the desire of all Christian faithful worldwide to realize the Lord’s prayer for Christian unity - “so that they may be one.”

John D. Faris, in his article “God and Church: Communion of One and Many,” praises the communion that is present in the Catholic Communion of Churches and discusses how it can be further fostered in the entire Church of Christ. From an Eastern perspective, he affirms that certain institutions like the patriarchal assembly and structures unique to the Eastern Catholic Churches can contribute and foster Communion in the Church of Christ. He affirms that in the synodal governance structure of the Eastern Churches, one can

encounter the interplay of the one (e.g., patriarch) and the many (synod of bishops) without either claiming superiority. “Like God, the *Church is a communion*: on the one hand, it is a communion between God and the Christian faithful; on the other hand, there is a communion among the individuals and communities in the Church of Christ” (p. 18). He also expresses his sadness about the fact that “we Christians have failed to maintain the unity for which Jesus so fervently prayed. Despite the fact that the Lord pleaded that we may be one, there are now more than 40,000 Churches and communities, each claiming to be a true heir to the message of Jesus and accusing the others of being in error” (p. 11).

In her article, “Some Current Latin Practices Concerning the Sacrament of Confirmation: An Occasion for Rapprochement of the Latin and Eastern Traditions,” Astrid Kaptijn briefly presents the “different practices” formerly prevalent in both the Eastern and Western Churches regarding the sacraments of initiation. She focuses on the Sacrament of Confirmation in a special way, highlighting the order of its administration, the proper age of *confirmandi*, etc. She also evaluates to what extent the “restored order” of the administration of these sacraments, introduced mainly by Vatican II, functions as an “ecumenical rapprochement” (p. 24) between the East and the West. She states that “... celebrating confirmation between baptism and Eucharist more closely safeguards the connection between baptism and confirmation... At the same time, the connection between confirmation and Eucharist is also clear: the gift of the Holy Spirit, given in all its fullness at confirmation, best prepares one to receive Eucharist and to be fully joined to the Body of Christ” (p. 39). She concludes by presenting the “theological arguments” that justify the introduction of new changes.

According to *PB*, the Roman Curia is the complex of dicasteries and institutes which help the Roman Pontiff in the exercise of his supreme pastoral office for the good and service of the whole Church and of the particular churches. Today, the functioning and reform of the Roman Curia are topics of serious discussion and deliberation. In his article, “The Apostolic See and the Structure and Functioning of the Roman Curia,” Joseph Ammaikunnel addresses the Roman Curia’s structure, nature, and functioning, and the competence of various dicasteries, categories of personnel, etc. It highlights, based on *PB*, how this organism strengthens the unity of the faith and the communion of the people of God while promoting the mission proper to the Church in the World. He says that the Apostolic See “is

an ecclesiastical institution whose end is unity of faith, whose authority is for the pastoral service of the Church, and whose means are indefectibility, infallibility, and universal power of Holy Orders and pastoral jurisdiction” (49) With regard to the pastoral nature of the Curia he comments: “The activity of the Roman Curia and other institutes of the Holy See is a true ecclesial service marked with a pastoral character” (p. 50).

2014 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Ivan Žužek, S.J., the real architect of the Eastern Code of 1990. George Nedungatt pays glorious tribute to him with the article “From Particular Churches to Churches *Sui iuris*.” It concerns problems with the term “rite,” which historically referred not only to the Latin and Eastern Catholic Churches, but also to their liturgical, theological, spiritual, and canonical patrimonies. The author exposes critically how the expression “Church *sui iuris*” emerged from the term “rite.” He elaborates on the importance of such names, terms and terminologies in general and especially in law. He affirms that CCEO succeeded in clarifying the confusions that even Vatican II left unresolved, such as the ambiguous expression “particular churches”: “... the Second Vatican Council does *not* speak of “individual Churches,” which is an English rendering of “ecclesia particularis” used by the council to refer to Patriarchal churches and their canonical equivalents consisting of a community of particular Churches (dioceses/eparchies)” (56).

John Bosco, in his article, “Typology of the Institutes of Consecrated Life (LCL) and Societies of Apostolic Life” (SAL) in *CIC* and *CCEO*” presents the various forms of consecrated life found in the two Codes of Canon Law today. With a view to dispelling confusion and clarifying misunderstandings about these structures, the author presents the typical and non-typical forms of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. He notes that “Community life in a religious institute is different from common life in a society of apostolic life” (p. 97).

Mathew John makes a detailed study of the office of the diocesan finance officer in his article “The Role of Diocesan Finance Officer: A Comparative Study of the Eastern and Latin Codes.” The author addresses all aspects of the office, including the obligation to appoint a finance officer, the manner of appointment, qualifications, responsibilities, term of office, and procedure for removing the officeholder. The article enumerates the differences between *CCEO*

and *CIC* in this regard. The author also deals with the advantages of appointing a lay person as the diocesan finance officer.

Dr. Cherian Thunduparampil CMI,  
Chief Editor, *Iustitia*