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### Build Up and Remain in Unity

- “Do you resolve to build up the Body of Christ, his Church, and to remain in the unity of that Body together with the order of Bishops under the authority of the successor of Saint Peter the Apostle?”
  - During lunch, Archbishop Sheen stressed repeatedly that Christ’s mission was to repair and reverse the work of the devil. While one might argue more precisely that Christ’s work went beyond just healing the damage due to sin, beyond just the work of restoration, because he desired to bring us to a state beyond what was lost, we can certainly affirm that at a minimal level that he wants to make right what the evil one distorted. And at the heart of the work of the *diabolos* is disunity, is division. Since we were created in the image and likeness of God who is a loving communion of Persons, the devil has sought to divide us from each other, to divide us from God, and to divide us within, so that spirit and flesh war against each other. This division is the great sacrilege against our being created a person in communion. Priests and bishops, insofar as we continue Christ’s redemptive labors, are meant to become ministers and signs of this communion, agents of healing division, peacemakers.
  - We recall what Christ prayed for insistently in what’s been dubbed his “great High Priestly prayer.” When he could have easily be preoccupied with what he knew would happen on the morrow in accordance with the Scriptures, his suffering and death like a lamb led to the slaughter, he was instead focused on something else, and prayed with insistence to his Father for it. He prayed for his glorification in giving eternal, the intimate knowledge of Father and Son, to us his disciples, saying that he has ben glorified in us. Then he prayed, “Keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are.” Keeping them in his name was a form of protection, because he added, “When I was with them I protected them in your name that you gave me, and I guarded them, and none of them was lost except the son of destruction.” He asked, “Keep them from the evil one,” whom he would elsewhere call the “father of lies,” and “consecrate them in the truth,” saying that he had consecrated himself for them that they might be consecrated in truth. Then he prayed for all those who would believe in him through them, reiterating, “May all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me.” After saying that we are the Father’s gift to them and that he wants us to be with him, see his glory, see how loved he is, and have that love “be in them and I in them.”
  - Jesus’ prayer asked for something specific and almost incomprehensible: “that they may be all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us” (Jn 17:20-21). Jesus prayed that our unity with each other be as complete as the perfect unity that exists between the persons of the Blessed Trinity. We might be tempted to dismiss Jesus’ prayer as something that, however beautiful, is clearly utopian and unachievable. But Jesus would never have prayed for something intrinsically impossible. Prayer for him was never an exercise in “wishful thinking,” and he was fully aware of what was possible. Moreover, it is inconceivable that God the Father would refuse the prayer of his Son. As Jesus acknowledged before he raised Lazarus from the dead, “I thank you, Father, for having heard me. I know that you always hear me” (Jn 11:42). Therefore, if Jesus were praying that we be one, that we be as united among ourselves as the Persons in the Blessed Trinity are united, then that must mean it is not impossible and that the Father heard that prayer. While it is true that this dual communion will be achieved in heaven — when the communion of saints within the communion-of-persons who is the Blessed Trinity will reach its zenith — it is also clear that Jesus was praying for it in this world. He wasn’t praying that we be taken from the world, because he

wanted us to be “in” it without being “of” it, and gave us the reason why: he wanted our unity in this world to be the greatest sign of all of who God is and how God loves us: “so that ... the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me” (Jn 17:15-23). Christian unity, in other words, will be the greatest testimony of the truth of Christ’s words and deeds as well as of God’s love. Division among Christians, on the contrary, will obscure that truth and love.

- This year’s 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protestant Reformation makes obvious that we — Christians and Catholics — do not have the type of union in the world sought by Christ. It gives us a chance for us to ponder the reality of schism and disunity in the Church, to do reparation for it, to learn from it, and to seek to repair it. But that type of disunity, caused by sins Jesus came to die for, affects much smaller realities as well. Take any three members of the same parish or even of the same Christian family and we would be hard-pressed to find an image of the communion of love that exists between Father, Son and Holy Spirit that Jesus wants to exist among his disciples throughout the world. Hence it is obvious why the unity of Christians is such a priority for Jesus and for all those who really will what he wills.
- It is not as if this type of unity has never been approximated. The first disciples approached it. The members of the Church in Jerusalem “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers,” as we read in the Acts of the Apostles. “All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people.” And the impact of their loving union was dramatic, obtaining the results Jesus prayed such union would bring about: “Day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved” (Acts 2:42-47).
- The chronicle of division that has happened in the Church since then — from the Great Schism with the Orthodox in 1054 to the Protestant Reformation in the 1500s, to so many other separations through the centuries — is not a sign that Jesus’ prayer was ineffectual or had an expiration date. Jesus’ prayer was heard and God the Father will certainly not withhold the graces necessary for this communion. The reason for division rests in our rejecting those graces, in the actions various Christians have committed over the course of the centuries against communion, and in the various things we have failed to do in order to keep communion. Every sin ruptures communion. Every genuine act of Christian love begins to repair it. If this communion with God and with each other meant so much to the Lord that he poured out his very soul praying for it to the Father, then each of us who loves him, each of us who seeks to serve him, each of us who has been called to be with him and to be sent out by him, must make it our life’s mission to try to bring about that union of love.
- At a superficial, but nevertheless important, level, the resolution “to build up the Body of Christ, his Church, and to remain in the unity of that Body together with the order of Bishops under the authority of the successor of Saint Peter the Apostle” means that we’re committed not to wound the Church and lead others into schism. At a much deeper level, it means that we’re going to be anabolic influences in the Church, seeking to cooperate with the Holy Spirit to bring more and more into deeper and deeper communion with God, with the Church Jesus Christ founded, with each other, so that we and they both might have the chance to live forever in the communion of saints within the communion of the most Blessed Trinity. It means that we’re going to use everything at our disposal, prayer, talents, elbow grease, to bring about what Jesus said in his Good Shepherd discourse “one flock, one shepherd,” or what St. Paul described in his Letter to the Ephesians, “to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”
- Such unity is not a least common denominator or even a highest common factor. Such unity is based on true communion with God, something that we are trying to maximize.
- Spirituality of Communion
  - In *Pastores Gregis*, Pope John Paul II focused on the Bishop as a source of communion. I think one

could legitimately say that the whole apostolic exhortation was based on the theme of communion. It's useful to recall several of his insights:

- He emphasized (PG 64), “The Lord Jesus' prayer for unity between his disciples (*ut unum sint*: Jn 17:21) is for every Bishop a pressing summons to a specific apostolic duty. This unity is not to be looked for as the fruit of our own efforts; it is first and foremost a gift of the Holy Trinity to the Church. This however does not dispense Christians from making every effort, beginning with prayer itself, to hasten the journey towards full unity. In response to the Lord's prayers and his will and to the offering he made on the Cross in order to gather together the scattered children of God (cf. Jn 11:52), the Catholic Church is irrevocably committed to the ecumenical dialogue, which is crucial for the effectiveness of her witness before the world. It is essential to persevere on the path of the dialogue of truth and love. ... The scandal of division between Christians is felt by all to be a sign which contradicts Christian hope. The practical means for promoting ecumenical dialogue have been shown to consist in a better mutual understanding between the Catholic Church and the other Churches and Ecclesial Communities which are not in full communion with her, in suitable meetings and initiatives, and above all in the witness of charity. Indeed, there exists an ecumenism of daily life, made up of mutual acceptance, listening and cooperation, the last of which is singularly effective. ... The inner life of the Church must offer a witness of unity in respect and a greater openness to the acceptance and growth of the great treasure represented by the different theological, spiritual, liturgical and disciplinary traditions.”
- “A Bishop can be considered a **genuine minister of communion and hope** for God's holy **people only when he walks in the presence of the Lord**. ... **The spirituality of the Bishop will thus be a spirituality of communion**, lived in harmony with the other baptized faithful who with him are children of one Father in heaven and one Mother on earth, Holy Church (13). It will be based on “taking on these very human features of Jesus, the Bishop also becomes the model and promoter of a spirituality of communion, carefully and vigilantly working to build up the Church” (19)
- He stressed that “the unity of the Church is grounded in the unity of the episcopate, which, in order to be one, requires that there be a Head of the College” (56) and that the *communio episcoporum* must be marked by an *affectus collegialis* (8).
- The Church herself must be “the home and the school of communion,” if we truly wish to respond to the expectations of the world.” (73) This was taken from NMI, where he stressed the need to “**make the Church the home and the school of communion**”. He commented at length: “Obviously the Bishop, in his own spiritual journey, has the primary duty of promoting and encouraging a spirituality of communion, and tirelessly working to make it a basic educational principle wherever human and Christian formation takes place: in parishes, Catholic associations, ecclesial movements, Catholic schools and youth groups. The Bishop will be particularly concerned to ensure that the spirituality of communion takes root and grows wherever future priests are trained, that is to say, in seminaries and in religious novitiates, in religious houses, in institutes and faculties of theology. In that same Apostolic Letter I indicated the broad outlines of this promotion of a spirituality of communion. Here it will suffice to add that a Bishop must encourage this spirituality especially among his presbyterate, as well as among deacons and men and women religious. He will do so in personal dialogue and encounters, but also in community meetings. To this end he will make an effort to provide in his own particular Church special occasions which facilitate listening, especially to the Spirit “who speaks to the Churches” (Acts 2:7, 11 et al.). Examples of the latter would be retreats, spiritual exercises and days of spirituality, and also a prudent use of new communications media, should this prove useful and effective. For a Bishop, fostering a spirituality of communion also means **nurturing his communion** with the Roman Pontiff and with his brother Bishops, especially within the same Episcopal Conference and Ecclesiastical Province. Here too, as an important means of overcoming the risk of a sense of isolation and discouragement in the face of the immensity of the problems and the time spent in dealing with them, the Bishop, in addition to prayer, should readily avail himself of

the friendship and fraternal communion of his brother Bishops. Communion, in its Trinitarian source and model, is always expressed in mission. Mission is the fruit and the logical consequence of communion. The dynamic process of communion is favoured by openness to the horizons and demands of mission, always ensuring the witness of unity so that the world may believe and making ever greater room for love, so that all people may attain to the Trinitarian unity from which they have come forth and to which they are destined. The more intense communion is, the more mission is fostered, especially when it is lived out in the poverty of love, which is the ability to go forth to meet any person or group or culture with the power of the Cross, our spes unica and the supreme witness to the love of God, which is also manifested as a universal love of our brothers and sisters.

- This communion presupposes the work of “every category of the faithful (44), according to their charisms: “Ecclesial communion in its organic structure calls for personal responsibility on the part of the Bishop, but it also presupposes the participation of every category of the faithful, inasmuch as they share responsibility for the good of the particular Church which they themselves form. What guarantees the authenticity of this organic communion is the working of the Spirit, who is at work both in the Bishop's personal responsibility and in the sharing of the faithful in that responsibility. It is the Spirit who, as the basis of both the baptismal equality of all the faithful and the diversity in charism and mission of each believer, is capable of effectively bringing about communion. ... Although every Christian receives the love of God in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Baptism, the Bishop – as the Synodal Assembly appropriately recalled – receives in his heart through the sacrament of Holy Orders the pastoral charity of Christ. The purpose of this pastoral charity is to create communion.<sup>175</sup> Before translating this love-communion into plans of action, the Bishop must commit himself to making it present in his own heart and in the heart of the Church by means of an authentically spiritual life. If communion expresses the Church's essence, then it is normal that the spirituality of communion will tend to manifest itself in both the personal and community spheres, awakening ever new forms of participation and shared responsibility in the faithful of every category. Consequently, the Bishop will make every effort to develop, within his particular Church, structures of communion and participation which make it possible to listen to the Spirit who lives and speaks in the faithful, in order to guide them in carrying out whatever the same Spirit suggests for the true good of the Church. (44)
- It needs to be the great anxiety of the bishop: “Writing to the Christians of Corinth, the Apostle Paul recalls everything he suffered for the Gospel: "frequent journeys, danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from the Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brethren, in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure upon me of my anxiety for all the Churches" (2 Cor 11:26-28). Paul concludes with an impassioned question: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?" (2 Cor 11:29). This same question is asked of the conscience of every Bishop, as a member of the College of Bishops. Each Bishop is simultaneously in relation with his particular Church and with the universal Church. The Bishop, who himself is the visible principle and foundation of unity in his own particular Church, is also the visible bond of ecclesiastical communion between his particular Church and the universal Church. All the Bishops, residing in their particular Churches throughout the world, yet always preserving hierarchical communion with the Head of the College of Bishops and the College itself, thus give consistency and expression to the Church's catholicity, while at the same time conferring this mark of catholicity upon their own particular Church. Each Bishop is consequently a kind of meeting-point between his particular Church and the universal Church, and a visible witness of the presence of the one Church of Christ within his particular Church. In the communion of the Churches the Bishop thus represents his particular Church and in it he represents the communion of the Churches. Through the episcopal ministry the portiones Ecclesiae

participate in the totality of the Una Sancta, while the latter, again through their ministry, is made present in each individual Ecclesiae portio” (55)

- And it must inform all of the intraecclesial relationships: “The reality of communion, which is the basis of all intraecclesial relationships<sup>224</sup> and which was also emphasized in the Synod discussions, is a relation of reciprocity between the Roman Pontiff and the Bishops. Indeed, if on the one hand the Bishop, in order to express fully his own office and to establish the catholicity of his Church, must exercise the power of governance proper to him (munus regendi) in hierarchical communion with the Roman Pontiff and with the College of Bishops, on the other hand the Roman Pontiff, the Head of the College, in the exercise of his ministry as Supreme Pastor of the Church (munus supremi Ecclesiae pastoris) must always act in communion with all the other Bishops and indeed with the whole Church.<sup>225</sup> Consequently, in the communion of the Church, just as the Bishop is never alone but always related to the College and its Head and sustained by them, so also the Roman Pontiff is never alone but is always related to the Bishops and sustained by them. This is yet another reason why the exercise of the supreme power of the Roman Pontiff does not destroy, but affirms, strengthens and vindicates the ordinary, proper and immediate power of each Bishop in his particular Church. ... From the earliest centuries the ultimate reference of communion is to the Church of Rome, where Peter and Paul gave their testimony of faith. Indeed, by virtue of her pre-eminent position, every Church has to agree with this Church, for she is the ultimate guarantee of the integrity of the tradition handed down by the Apostles.<sup>230</sup> The Church of Rome presides over the universal communion of charity,<sup>231</sup> safeguards legitimate differences and yet is vigilant to ensure that particularity not only does not harm unity but serves it.<sup>232</sup> All this involves the need for communion on the part of the various Churches with the Church of Rome, so that all may remain in the integrity of the Apostolic Tradition and in the unity of canonical discipline for the safeguarding of the faith, the sacraments and the concrete life of holiness. This communion of the Churches is expressed by the hierarchical communion of the individual Bishops and the Roman Pontiff.<sup>233</sup> From the communion cum Petro et sub Petro of all the Bishops, brought about in charity, there emerges the duty for all to cooperate with the Successor of Peter for the good of the whole Church and therefore of every particular Church.”

- Means

- Prayer for Unity
- Sacraments
  - Baptism
  - Confirmation
  - Eucharist, *Hinc Una fides refulget*. Eucharist makes the Church
  - Confession
  - Marriage
  - Holy Orders
  - Anointing
- Teaching
  - The importance of being on the same page. Hermeneutic of continuity.
  - Bishop Connolly High School.
  - Situation of informal schisms and heresies.
  - Lot of work needed here.
- Governance
  - Keeping flock together.
  - Morale
  - Letting everyone know where they stand.
  - Father of a Family

- Saints

- St. Paul, building up the Church and keeping it in communion.

- St. Paul described himself in his first letter to the Corinthians as a “wise master builder” building on the foundation of Jesus Christ.
      - 1Cor. 3:10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care how he builds upon it. 11 For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
    - But merely founding a communion of believers was not enough for St. Paul. He repeatedly said that he must also nourish that community and he did this personally like a loving mother:
      - 1 Thess 2: 7 But we were gentle among you, like a nurse taking care of her children. 8 So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.
    - He saw his role not only in generating communities, but raising them; not merely planting, but cultivating.
    - He described this as and this is his “daily pressure ... of my anxiety for all the churches” (2 Cor 11:28) which he implied weighed on him even more than all his many sufferings. he mentions in 2Cor 11:28.
  - St. Paul’s role in the early Church was not just to preach, therefore, but to establish places where that preaching was put into practice, where it was lived. What I’d like to do is first describe St. Paul’s understanding of what the Church is and why it is so important, and then apply some of his insights to the way each of you is called to live out your vocation and mission in the Church here at St. Veronica’s.
  - St. Paul’s understanding of the Church — Perhaps the best place to start with a grasp of St. Paul’s understanding of the Church, which is his discovery of what the Church is, could begin with a four terms.
    - Assembly of the Lord — ecclesia (those called out)
      - Continuation of *Qahal Yahweh*, with Gentile as well as Jew, all sons and daughters of Abraham through faith.
      - The Church is not a building, but a people, a real communion.
      - Chosen people, not just chosen individuals.
      - Paul had no thought of Churches as independent foundations, but as different localizations of the one Church of God. “To the Church of God that is in... “
      - There are some immediate applications for us:
        - It’s not about “me and Jesus.” The Church is God’s family.
        - Every Church is meant to see itself as part of the whole. We are a communion of believers stretching throughout the globe and we must seek to remember this. To be united with the pope, to be united with the poor, to have solidarity in the faith.
        - There can be an exaggerated parochialism. Church closings in the northeast because, once upon a time, ethnicity was more important than catholicity, and while there were no “Greek or Jew” there was “Italian, Polish, Irish, French, Portuguese, Lithuanian” and more. Even when the Mass was in Latin, they acted as if they couldn’t worship together. This was something that Paul would have fought hard against.
    - Holy Temple
      - The second image of the Church Paul uses is that of a holy temple. It is a “place” in which God is worshipped. That “place” is not so much a building in his understanding as a series of bodies in communion, a community of believers.
        - 1Cor. 3:16 Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? 17 If any one destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and that temple you are.

- Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; 22 in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.
- This is a natural consequence flowing from the fact that through baptism we become a temple of the Holy Spirit, a temple of God. We're called to give God spiritual worship in communion with others.
- One immediate application for us is to how we look at the Church:
  - It exists fundamentally for the worship of God. Everything else the Church does flows from this. In our love for God, we learn to love all those whom he loves, by preaching the Gospel, caring for their material needs, and so much more.
  - This is an important corrective to all those who look at the Church fundamentally as a social welfare institution. Love of God comes prior. In many places, the Church has lost her way because she's put serving others above serving God. In south America, the Catholic Church has lost many to Protestant Churches, despite building all types of hospitals, clinics, sewage systems and more. They wanted to hear Jesus' revelation even more than receive these social services.
- Christ's Body
  - Paul uses the image of the Church as Christ's body, as an organic whole of members, that needs all the members to be what Jesus founded it to be.
    - Paul discovered the unity between Christ and members of the Church at his conversion: Acts 9:4: Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?
    - He spend the whole rest of his life fleshing out that connection.
      - Col 1:18 He is the head of the body, the church
    - In his 1<sup>st</sup> letter to the Corinthians, he described both the unity and diversity of the Church at great length. .
      - 1Cor. 12:12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and all were made to drink of one Spirit. 4 For the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? 18 But as it is, God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as he chose. 19 If all were a single organ, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30 Do all possess gifts of healing?

Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But earnestly desire the higher gifts.

- This unity in one body flows from baptism and grows through the Eucharist, because each of these sacraments incorporates us into Christ.
  - Rom. 6:3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?
  - 1Cor. 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and all were made to drink of one Spirit.
  - Gal. 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
  - 1 Cor 10:6 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? 17 Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.
- Paul's teaching flows into an important moral lesson about the Church: Each of us has an important role in the Church.
  - Through the sacraments, God the Holy Spirit forms us into one body and helps us to be a functioning body. The Holy Spirit's role shows that the Church is not of human origin.
    - 1Cor. 12:4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.
    - Rom 12:4 For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; 8 he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.
    - Eph. 4:7 But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 ... he gave gifts to men." ... 11 And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.
- Bride



- Then, the new Bishop receives the **Episcopal ring**, the sign that he is married to God and His Holy Church, and thus the flock he is entrusted to. **English** : Receive this ring, the seal of fidelity : adorned with undefiled faith, preserve unblemished the bride of God, the holy Church
- Scriptural Texts:
  - 2Cor. 11:2 I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I betrothed you to Christ to present you as a pure bride to her one husband.
  - Eph. 5:22 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. 25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. 28 Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” 32 This mystery is a profound one, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church; 33 however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband
- Unity of the Church
  - 1Cor. 1:10 I appeal to you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. 11 For it has been reported to me by Chloe’s people that there is quarreling among you, my brethren. 12 What I mean is that each one of you says, “I belong to Paul,” or “I belong to Apollos,” or “I belong to Cephas,” or “I belong to Christ.” 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I am thankful that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius; 15 lest any one should say that you were baptized in my name. 16 (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any one else.) 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.
  - “They were one heart and one soul” (Acts 4:32).
  - Applications
    - Don’t play favorites.
    - Against parochialism
  - St. Francis de Sales, a great apostle of Church unity.
    - St. Francis de Sales came from a noble family in southeastern France. His father had given him a tremendous education and he graduated with his doctorate in law at the age of 20. By the time he returned home his father had already arranged for him to marry an heiress and become a senator. When Francis told him he had made a promise of chastity and wanted to become a priest, the Father was outraged thinking his son had lost his mind. A difficult struggle ensued, with Francis trusting in God to find a solution. Eventually the Bishop of Geneva, at the intercession of one of Francis’ maternal uncles who was a priest, obtained for Francis the appointment as second in charge of the Diocese of Geneva, which placated Francis’ father’s sense of pride. Francis was ordained a priest and took up his duties. In addition to the administrative tasks for which he was responsible, he quickly became a much sought confessor and friend of the poor. The diocese of Geneva, however, was in shambles.

Decades of scandals among the clergy had made it very easy for Calvinism to spread throughout the region of the Chablais. The people were so poorly catechized that they were not able to respond to Calvinist arguments. They were, moreover, so angry at the hypocrisy of their local churchmen that they were easily incited to turn on the Catholic faith, run their priests out of town and take up a form of Christianity that at least seemed to be moral. The bishop of Geneva even had to flee the see city and take up residence in Annecy. Some reports said that there were only about 20 Catholics left in the vast region. Nine months after Francis' ordination, the bishop held a meeting with all his priests, seeking volunteers to send to the region to try to win the people back. He didn't hide the dangers or the difficulties. The people were not only ill-disposed but hostile: the first priest who had been sent had been attacked and driven from the region. None of the clergy at the meeting stepped forward for what minimally was a tough assignment, but could be a fatal one. Finally, Francis stood up and said, "If you think I am capable of undertaking the mission, tell me to go. I am ready to obey and should be happy to be chosen." The bishop accepted the proposal, over the fierce objections of Francis' father, who thought his son was signing up for a suicide assignment — and according to worldly logic, his father was absolutely right. At 27 years old, Francis, traveling by foot, set out to try to win back the vast geographic area. The work was rough and dangerous. For his protection, he was ordered to sleep at night in a military garrison. On two occasions, assassins ambushed him along the way, but both times, seemingly miraculously, he survived. On another occasion, he was attacked by wolves and had to spend a glacial night in a tree. But he labored on, despite having little to show for all his effort. He wrote in a letter to a friend, "We are but making a beginning. I shall go on in good courage, and I hope in God against all human hope." Through meekness, forgiveness and the publication of many tracts, he patiently set forth Catholic teaching, charitably explaining the errors of Calvinism, and tackling head on controversial issues. To those who still harbored anger toward the clerics who committed "spiritual murder" through scandalous behavior, Francis plainly acknowledged the evil and harm done, but warned his readers not to commit "spiritual suicide," by using those scandals as a means to cut themselves off from the sacraments and the Church. Within the span of five years, the holy "Apostle of the Chablais" had reconciled and evangelized almost the entire region. He helped them all to return to the loving obedience of faith in which he excelled.

- "Do you resolve to build up the Body of Christ, his Church, and to remain in the unity of that Body together with the order of Bishops under the authority of the successor of Saint Peter the Apostle?" We ask the Lord, who is our source of unity here, to send the Holy Spirit anew to bring about what he prayed for when he gave himself to us in the Eucharist!