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**THESIS**

**THE HOLY SEE AND THE MIDDLE EAST:  
THE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY OF POPE JOHN PAUL II**

by

Ronald Patrick Stake

March 2006

Thesis Co-Advisers:

Anne Marie Baylouny  
Werner Freistetter

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THE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY OF POPE JOHN PAUL II**

Ronald Patrick Stake  
Lieutenant Commander, Chaplain Corps, U.S. Navy Reserve  
B.A., M.A., J.D., DePaul University, 1970, 1973, 1976  
LL.M., University of Cambridge, 1979  
S.T.B., M.Div., University of Saint Mary of the Lake, 1983, 1985  
Diploma, Naval War College, 2002

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
March 2006**

Author: Ronald Patrick Stake

Approved by: Dr. Anne Marie Baylouny  
Thesis Co-Advisor

Rev. Msgr. Dr. Werner Freistetter  
Thesis Co-Advisor

Professor Douglas Porch  
Chairman, Department of National Security Affairs

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis considers changes in the diplomacy of the Holy See with respect to the Middle East in the period between 1990 and 2003. Policies pursued by these changes were decisions of Pope John Paul II and involved (1) establishing full diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel; (2) convening the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Lebanon, ending in the papal visit to Lebanon in May 1997; and (3) opposing the 1991 and 2003 U.S. led wars against Iraq. Asking whether ideas or interests explain these policies, the thesis argues that new circumstances occasioned a rethinking of the Holy See's interests in light of the development of modern Catholic social teaching. In other words, ideas constituted interests. Principled belief in the dignity of the human person and the principle of solidarity shaped the Holy See's perception of its interests and the substance of the Pope's diplomacy. In making the argument, the thesis considers the Holy See's role in international relations; the development of modern Catholic social teaching since Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*; and case studies of John Paul II's diplomacy with respect to Israel, Lebanon, and the wars with Iraq.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. ASKING THE QUESTION: WHY CHANGE?

This thesis is about change, specifically new directions in the diplomacy of the Holy See with respect to the Middle East in a period beginning about 1990 and concluding in 2003, before the final illness and death of Pope John Paul II in 2005. The central question is whether ideas developed within modern Catholic social teaching or the Church's own interests had the major part in shaping the new directions. The argument developed here will show that new circumstances prompted a rethinking of the Holy See's interests in the Middle East in light of the Church's modern social teaching. Once rethought, these new interests were pursued through diplomacy.

Twenty years ago Lebanese scholar George Irani published *The Papacy and the Middle East*.<sup>1</sup> At that time the Cold War was still the dominant fact of international relations and the political landscape of the Arab Middle East had not been altered by the events of the first Gulf War. Nonetheless, Irani's characterization of the Holy See's interests in the Middle East, from the beginning of the Second Vatican Council (1962) to the sixth year of the pontificate of Pope John Paul II (1984), applies to the past two decades as well. In this regard Irani wrote,

Papal involvement in the Middle East has come to occupy a place of importance on the Holy See's scale of priorities which is essentially motivated by a concern to protect the welfare of Catholic minorities, to promote peaceful coexistence, and to win respect for the human rights of Jews, Christians, and Muslims.<sup>2</sup>

Irani investigated the Holy See's involvement with respect to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, Jerusalem and the Holy Places, and the Lebanese civil war that began in 1975. In doing so he covered an entire range of diplomatic and humanitarian initiatives as well as religious elements involved in each of these issue-areas. This thesis considers events that took place between 1990 and 2003, events marked by the personal intervention of the late Pope John Paul II, and presented here as cases of public

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<sup>1</sup> George Emile Irani, *The Papacy and the Middle East: The Role of the Holy See in the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1962-1984* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

diplomacy. These case-events are (1) the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel; (2) the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Lebanon, ending with the Pope's pilgrimage to Lebanon in 1997; and (3) the papal interventions in 1991 and 2003 to prevent both the first Gulf War and the launch of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Studying these three cases one finds changes in both the substance of the Holy See's policy and in the means used to intervene. For example, establishing diplomatic relations with the State of Israel ran counter to the Holy See's long held policy of not forming such relations with states whose borders were undetermined and in dispute. Moreover, this move went against a traditional option on behalf of the Palestinian-Arab people. Likewise, seeking public results in important and politically contentious matters, putting the moral and personal prestige of the Pope on the line, had not been a hallmark of the modern papacy.

## **B. DEVELOPING THE THESIS**

The first temptation was to understand the changes primarily by reference to the Catholic Church's development of a mature and consolidated social teaching. Here explanation would entail tracing specific policy choices to clear ideas or beliefs. For example, beginning in 1967 the Holy See abandoned a policy primarily concerned with protecting Catholic rights in Jerusalem and the Holy Places, gradually substituting in its place one supporting the full civil and religious rights of all residents of the Holy Land, Israelis and Palestinians—Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Irani demonstrated how this change was guided by doctrinal developments proclaimed by the Second Vatican Council.<sup>3</sup>

A second look at the shift in the Holy See's policy toward Jerusalem and the Holy Places, however, indicated that this change in policy did not follow mechanically from a change in social doctrine. Other factors were involved. Chief among these was the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, resulting in Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

The subsequent Israeli announcement of the annexation of East Jerusalem, proclaiming undivided Jerusalem to be the "eternal capital" of the Jewish State, combined with abandonment of efforts to enforce the provisions of United Nations

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<sup>3</sup> See Irani, *The Papacy and the Middle East*, 79-81.

Security Council Resolution 181 regarding an international status for Jerusalem. These events forced the Holy See to reassess its policy. Pragmatically modified through several steps, but eventually emphasizing spiritual concerns, human rights, and the civil and religious liberty of persons, the policy responded to *realpolitik*.<sup>4</sup> The force of Israeli arms removed from the table the question of an international regime (*corpus separatus*) for Jerusalem, gradually placing the Holy City's final status within the context of a future two state solution.

A similar combination of factors existed with respect to the three case studies reported here. The cases demonstrate that the Holy See's interventions came in response to changing circumstances on the ground. The definitive move to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel came only in the wake of the 1991 Gulf War. Reacting to seemingly favorable conditions for achieving a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, and to the hopeful opening of the Madrid Conference in October 1991, Pope John Paul II agreed to negotiations leading to the 1993 decision to exchange ambassadors with Israel.<sup>5</sup>

The Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Lebanon was first announced on June 12, 1991. Meeting for three weeks at the Vatican in late autumn 1995, and concluding in Beirut on May 10-11, 1997, the Synod was the Pope's ultimate response to the 1975-1990 civil wars. Such an undertaking was impossible to contemplate while the violence still raged. Only when some normalcy returned to the country was the project launched. This was after the 1989 Taif accords and Syrian military intervention to halt the mainly intra-Christian violence that erupted in 1990.<sup>6</sup>

Finally, the Pope's diplomatic initiatives to prevent the 1991 Gulf War and the American-led invasion of Iraq begun in March 2003 were obvious reactions to changing international circumstances. In both instances the Holy See was intervening on the world stage and publicly opposing United States policy. The major issue uncovered by the Iraq interventions concerns the moral principles of the just war theory. Both the Holy See and the United States used the just war tradition to defend their positions. However, different

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<sup>4</sup> See Irani, *The Papacy and the Middle East*, 81-96.

<sup>5</sup> See Thomas Patrick Melady, *The Ambassador's Story: The United States and the Vatican in World Affairs* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1994), 124-136.

<sup>6</sup> See Carole H. Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls: Lebanon's Post-War Challenge* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 91-121, 181-199.

aspects of the tradition were emphasized, resulting in conflicting results. At the beginning of the twenty-first century there is division regarding the theory in Catholic circles and suspicion about its utility for shaping decisions about the legitimate use of force.<sup>7</sup>

Papal diplomacy in the Middle East was shaped by changing political realities and pragmatically timed to respond to change. Therefore, one should not exclude from analysis the ordinary concerns of traditional realism.<sup>8</sup> Each of the following case studies entails consideration of the interests the Holy See was attempting to advance.

Returning to Irani's broad description of these interests, one finds that they had been expanded to encompass more than the Catholic Church's own ecclesial concerns. Indeed, aware of its many interventions on behalf of Catholic interests throughout the twentieth century and before, the Holy See determined that a narrow championing of Catholic rights was not legitimate in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council, nor possible in the changing political landscapes. As Irani's book makes clear, this determination was made before the cases reported here. The protection of Arab Christian communities, the promotion of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, and the fostering of human rights were linked together before the outbreak of the first Gulf War. This triad of interests resembles the marriage of interests and values that often characterizes the foreign policy of the United States.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, the case studies reveal more than lip service paid to values.

Given these findings, the thesis defended here is stated as follows: *The diplomatic initiatives of the Holy See in the Middle East were in response to changing political circumstances and required new policies to promote expanding interests—interests rethought within a social teaching maturing in the second half of the twentieth century.* The case studies that follow provide evidence to sustain the thesis.

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<sup>7</sup> See Melady, *The Ambassador's Story*, 95-123; see also Alan Cooperman, "Vatican Weighs In Against War," *The Washington Post*, March 6, 2003, sec. A, p. 20.

<sup>8</sup> See Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* (New York: Scribner's, 1932, 1960).

<sup>9</sup> See, e.g., *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002; Walter A. McDougall, "Back to Bedrock: The Eight Traditions of American Statecraft," *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 2 (March/April 1997): 134-146.



### C. IDEAS IN FOREIGN POLICY: THE THEORETICAL UNDERSTANDING

As evidence for significant changes in the Holy See's foreign policy in the Middle East, the case studies reveal the linkage of modern Catholic social teaching to expanding interests in response to political change. At the core of this thesis is an understanding of how ideas (values, beliefs) shape changes in policy. In contemporary form, realism discounts the role of values in international relations, arguing that national interests and the ability to project power determine the policies that states pursue.<sup>10</sup> This is a pessimistic view premised on "fear, self-help, and power maximization," within which power is measured by material capacity and military strength.<sup>11</sup>

The Holy See is the institutional embodiment of the Pope's authority within the Catholic Church. No longer endowed with significant temporal power, the Holy See lacks the material capacity to compel respect for its interests. Consequently, the only power it wields is spiritual, dependent upon the moral authority of its witness and the ability to persuade. As Chapter III demonstrates, the Holy See was marginalized by the international community in the first decades of the twentieth century. During the Second World War, Pope Pius XII was hesitant in responding to the horrors of the Third Reich, significantly threatening the Church's ability to address the modern world. In 1962, Pope John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council, through which the Church sought to reposition itself as a moral voice with global reach. Speaking before the General Assembly for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, Pope John Paul II recognized the moral dimension of his role as he approached the end of his address:

I come before you, as did my predecessor Pope Paul VI exactly thirty years ago, not as one who exercises temporal power—these are his words—nor as a religious leader seeking special privileges for his community. I come before you as a witness: a witness to human dignity, a witness to hope, a witness to the conviction that the destiny of all nations lies in the hands of a merciful Providence.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See, e.g., John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>12</sup> Pope John Paul II, Address of His Holiness John Paul II to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations Organization, New York, October 5, 1995, no. 17. This address and other references to speeches and documents of the Holy See may be accessed online by search through the official website of the Holy See, online at [http://www.vatican.va/phome\\_en.htm](http://www.vatican.va/phome_en.htm) (accessed February 2006).

Ideas, values, beliefs, and the persuasive power of moral discourse stock the arsenal the Holy See has to advance its interests within the international community. As noted, these interests were identified, in large measure, by the modern development of Church social teaching. Put another way, interests are constituted by ideas.

Judith Goldstein, Robert O. Keohane, and their colleagues share this view even while they distinguish between interests and ideas in describing how the latter help to explain foreign policy decisions.<sup>13</sup> From their work, the category of *principled beliefs* is best able to account for how the Holy See's diplomacy in the Middle East was formulated.<sup>14</sup> Ideas in the form of principled beliefs serve as "road maps" in uncertain environments, providing moral direction when interests are shifting and material power is little or no use.<sup>15</sup>

The pillars of modern Catholic social teaching are belief in the *dignity of the human person* and commitment to the *principle of solidarity*, the latter being a moral requirement of the unity of the human family. As articulated by Pope John XXIII, these commitments gave rise to the Church's full embrace of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.<sup>16</sup> Proclaimed by the Council and applied in the practice of the Church, these beliefs have been reinforced, providing at least two pathways through which ideas shaped policy. Modern Catholic social teaching provides a road map, directions for use in times of change. Moreover, it has additional force by means of *institutional persistence*.<sup>17</sup>

#### **D. UPCOMING CHAPTERS**

To provide some understanding of the role the Pope plays in world politics, the history of this role and the status of the Holy See in the international community are considered in the second chapter. The discussion entails both the bilateral relations the Holy See enjoys with states and its unique status in the United Nations.

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<sup>13</sup> See Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).

<sup>14</sup> See Goldstein and Keohane, *Ideas and Foreign Policy*, 9.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 13-17.

<sup>16</sup> Usually the commitments of modern Catholic social teaching are presented in philosophical discourse, using the language of natural law theory. The biblical and remote theological basis for belief in the dignity and social nature of human existence is grounded in the creation story, culminating in Genesis 1: 27: "God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them."

<sup>17</sup> See Goldstein and Keohane, *Ideas and Foreign Policy*, 20-24.

Chapter III presents a brief sketch of Pope John Paul II and traces the development of modern Catholic social teaching, highlighting some of the principal elements. The hope is to foster understanding of both the man and the ideas he represented.

The fourth chapter reports the case studies. They show how the late Pope addressed Jewish, Christian, and Muslim populations through his diplomacy in the Middle East, attempting to foster the protection of human rights and concern for the common good. For Israel, the engagement brought about a dramatic reversal in the relationship between the Jewish state and Holy See, resulting in full diplomatic relations between the two. In Lebanon the Pope's intervention was aimed at correcting the extreme sectarian positions that characterized Lebanese politics and prevented reconciliation of the various Christian and Muslim communities. In order to do this, he helped forge among the several Catholic churches of the country a common agenda for a way forward, inviting the input of both the non-Catholic Christians of Lebanon and the Lebanese Muslims. Finally, in Iraq, where the aim was the peaceful resolution of international conflict and the norms of international law, John Paul II was interlocutor within the United Nations and personally engaged with the United States and Iraq—challenging all to abandon war as a means of settling disputes.

The fifth and concluding chapter recapitulates and concludes the argument begun with this introduction.

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## II. THE HOLY SEE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### A. DEFINING “HOLY SEE”

The Holy See is the institutional embodiment of the papal ministry, the Pope’s authority within the Catholic Church. The term includes both the Pope and the Roman Curia, the Church’s central administration. By the Lateran Treaty of 1929, the Vatican City State, where the Pope is temporal ruler, was established as a territorial endowment and the headquarters for the Holy See. Sometimes “the Vatican” is used as a shorthand reference to the Holy See. This is especially true in the popular media when referring to the Pope or the Roman Curia. However, this is understood analogously, in the same way one refers to an ambassador from the United States as the ambassador from “Washington” or an ambassador to the United Kingdom as the ambassador to the “Court of St. James’s.”<sup>18</sup> It is important to keep in mind that the Holy See (spiritual entity) and not the Vatican City State (temporal entity) engages the international community and establishes diplomatic relations with international organizations and individual states.

Originally, Holy See meant merely the diocese or see of Rome, the ultimate seat of Saint Peter the Apostle. Only as bishop of Rome and successor to Saint Peter does the Pope have special significance for the Catholic Church. The *Code of Canon Law* provides a specific institutional and juridical definition of the term:

In this Code, the term Apostolic See or Holy See refers not only to the Roman Pontiff but also to the Secretariat of State, the Council for the Public Affairs of the Church, and other institutes of the Roman Curia, unless it is otherwise apparent from the nature of the matter or the context of the words.<sup>19</sup>

At present, neither the Holy See nor the Vatican City State is a sovereign nation state within the meaning of international law. The Holy See is a special case, an international spiritual sovereignty existing prior to and apart from territorial possessions. If deprived of territory, as was the case from 1870 to 1929, the Holy See would still exist. Unlike other mini-states such as Monaco or San Marino, Vatican City State is not a

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<sup>18</sup> See George Weigel, *God’s Choice: Pope Benedict XVI and the Future of the Catholic Church* (New York: Harper Collins, 2005), 227, wherein this point also is made.

<sup>19</sup> Canon 361, *Code of Canon Law* (1983), in John P. Beal, James A. Coriden, and Thomas J. Green, (eds.), *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2000), 475.

sovereign territorial entity, but a territorial possession or dependency of the Holy See itself.<sup>20</sup> If it is not a nation state, by what right does the Holy See play its unique role in international relations?<sup>21</sup>

## **B. PERMANENT SUBJECT OF INTERNATIONAL LAW**

The activity of the Pope in international affairs has its origins in the ancient Roman world and in the legal concept of agency. Indeed, one of the first instances of a papal legation occurred during the Council of Nicaea in the year 325.<sup>22</sup> There, summoned by the Emperor Constantine, the Church held the first ecumenical council. At this council Pope Sylvester I was represented by his legates or papal agents, the Roman priests Vitus and Vicentius.<sup>23</sup>

Throughout the early centuries of Christianity it became common practice for clergy to be dispatched from Rome in order to represent the Pope not only to the local churches, but also to the courts of temporal rulers. Later, it became common for the local churches and princes also to send their representatives to Rome. Both the representatives of the Holy See and the ambassadors of the princes were received as agents, *ministers plenipotentiary*, ready and able to conduct business on behalf of their principals.

In medieval Europe political theorists used the idea of *respublica christiana* (Christian commonwealth, Christendom) to describe the international community of their time. This international community was headed by two powers, a spiritual and a temporal sovereign—Pope and Holy Roman Emperor.<sup>24</sup> By the mid-fifteenth century need for more frequent contact arose between and among the European centers of power. Consequently, resident embassies were established at the principal courts of Europe. The

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<sup>20</sup> The Vatican City State, however, does belong to the Universal Postal Union and other specialized international bodies in its own capacity, see Joseph L. Kunz, “The Status of the Holy See in International Law,” *The American Journal of International Law* 46, no. 2 (April 1952): 308-314, 313.

<sup>21</sup> For an authoritative Catholic answer to the question see Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, “The Unique Role of the Holy See in the International Community,” in Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations, *Paths to Peace: A Contribution: Documents of the Holy See to the International Community* (New York: Liturgical Publications, 1987), xxvii-xxxvii.

<sup>22</sup> Vatican Information Service (VIS), “Vatican Diplomacy,” released via E-Mail 11 April 1997, online at <http://www.catholic-pages.com/vatican/diplomacy.asp> (accessed October 2005).

<sup>23</sup> Norman P. Tanner, S.J. (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils: Volume One, Nicaea I to Lateran V* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 1-2.

<sup>24</sup> See Brian Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State, 1050-1300*, reprint ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988); Kunz, “The Status of the Holy See in International Law,” 309.

Holy See established the first permanent apostolic nunciature (papal embassy) at Venice in 1500.<sup>25</sup>

Shortly after the turn of the sixteenth century the medieval *respublica christiana* was mortally attacked. The spiritual and cultural unity of Europe, which already had begun to fragment through consolidation of royal power, collapsed completely in the wake of the Protestant Reformation. Curiously, the patterns and participants of the modern international system were already in place as nation states began to emerge from the medieval feudal order. The Roman Pontiff, the Holy Roman Emperor, kings, reigning dukes and princes, and the various city states of northern Italy and the empire were “the original members of our international community.”<sup>26</sup>

By the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, the single European Christian commonwealth had been undermined by more than a century of domestic strife, civil and international war, and religious intolerance. The diarchy of Pope and emperor had been supplanted by the devolution and evolution of sovereignty. Slogans like *rex in regno suo est imperator* (“the king is emperor in his own kingdom”) and *cuius regio, eius religio* (“whose realm, his religion”), provided, from the ancient Roman law, legal theories to match and defend the reality of emerging national sovereignty.<sup>27</sup>

The immediate consequence of the mid-seventeenth century settlements was the multiplication of states as sovereign entities and the expanding membership of the international community. The many states of the Holy Roman Empire were set free from imperial policy in religious and other matters. Increasingly, they were free to go their own way while the emperor’s authority was gradually restricted to the Habsburg lands of Austria and those outside the empire. Meanwhile, apart from the Papal States of central Italy, where he remained temporal sovereign, the Pope’s authority was reduced to that of a distant spiritual leader in Catholic states and excluded altogether from Protestant ones.

Ultimately the façade of the old regime toppled altogether in the aftermath of the French Revolution. By 1806 the Holy Roman Empire was dissolved, its emperor recast as

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<sup>25</sup> VIS, “Vatican Diplomacy.”

<sup>26</sup> Kunz, “The Status of the Holy See in International Law,” 309.

<sup>27</sup> See Walter Ullmann, *Principles of Government and Politics in the Middle Ages* (London: Methuen, 1961); Malcolm D. Evans, *Religious Liberty and International Law in Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 45-59.

a secular ruler of several realms and united only by the person of the Habsburg monarch. A single locus of temporal power in Europe ceased to exist until resurrected by the European projects of the late twentieth century, projects now notably embodied in the institutions of the Council of Europe and those of the European Union.

In the Protocol of March 19, 1815, the Congress of Vienna confirmed the status of the Holy See, at that time the oldest continually existing agent of international diplomacy, as a “*permanent* subject of *general* customary international law *vis-à-vis* all states, Catholic or not.”<sup>28</sup> This status of the Holy See was confirmed more recently through the United Nations in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations adopted on April 14, 1961, and which came into force on April 24, 1964.<sup>29</sup>

### **C. THE HOLY SEE’S BILATERAL RELATIONS**

According to the Holy See’s website, the Holy See has full diplomatic relations with the European Communities and with most states, including the United States, almost all Arab and Islamic countries, Israel, and all former Soviet Republics except Russia. However, the Holy See does have “relations of a special nature” with the Russian Federation, a form of contact also maintained with respect to the Organization for the Liberation of Palestine (PLO).<sup>30</sup>

Absent from the Holy See’s list of bilateral partners are the People’s Republic of China and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. China refuses to enter into diplomatic relations with the Holy See; nonetheless, reflecting a readiness to engage, a papal mission to China is still maintained in Taipei. The Saudis do not allow religious freedom in the kingdom; however, contacts are available through the Holy See’s delegation to the Arab League at Cairo. Reflecting the activist foreign policy of John Paul II, the number of states now having full diplomatic relations with the Holy See is 174, an increase of 76 over the 98 countries at the beginning of his pontificate.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Kunz, “The Status of the Holy See in International Law,” 310.

<sup>29</sup> United Nations, Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), art. 14, sec. 1, and art. 16, sec. 3, online at <http://www.un.org/law/ilc/texts/dipfra.htm> (accessed October 2005).

<sup>30</sup> Data obtained from link off the Website of the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations, online at <http://www.holyseemission.org> (accessed October 2005).

<sup>31</sup> See George Weigel, *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 845.



#### **D. THE HOLY SEE AT THE UNITED NATIONS**

The Holy See has participated in the United Nations since 1964. However, this participation has not been without controversy. As the only existing *permanent observer non-member state*, the Holy See has the right to participate without vote in the meetings of the General Assembly and the Security Council. It also has a right to participate fully in all international conferences and other meetings organized under UN auspices.<sup>32</sup>

Because the Holy See's status at the UN allows participation and access not available to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other religious bodies, attempts were made to end it in the aftermath of the UN Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in September 1994.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, a campaign to end the Holy See's non-member state status was launched publicly at the next UN conference, held at Beijing in September 1995. There, a petition seeking to relegate the Holy See to NGO status circulated at the Fourth World Conference on Women, receiving initially more than a thousand signatures.<sup>34</sup> However, the effort gained no support from the governments of UN member states. On July 1, 2003, the member states of the UN General Assembly settled the matter by passing, apparently without opposition, a resolution reaffirming the permanent observer non-member state status of the Holy See.<sup>35</sup>

#### **E. HOLY SEE DIPLOMACY**

Typically the diplomatic activity of the Holy See is conducted through the Secretariat of State by diplomats known as apostolic nuncios. However, the case studies reported below involved the Pope personally, and for these interventions he sometimes involved personnel, institutions, and means not part of the normal diplomatic service.

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<sup>32</sup> In recent years the only other permanent observer non-member state has been Switzerland, which became a member of the UN on September 12, 2002.

<sup>33</sup> For review of this conference and Pope John Paul II's success in blocking adoption of a pro-abortion agenda of the West, see C. Alison McIntosh and Jason L. Finkle, "The Cairo Conference on Population and Development," *Population and Development Review* 21, no. 2 (June 1995): 223-260. For the late Pope's views on population and development, see "Pope John Paul II on Human Rights and Population," *Population and Development Review* 5, no. 4 (December 1979): 747-754 (excerpts from the Pope's Address to the UN 34<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, October 2, 1979); "Pope John Paul II on Contemporary Development," *Population and Development Review* 17, no. 3 (September 1991): 553-561 (excerpts from the Encyclical on the 100th Anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, *Centesimus Annus*, (1991)). See also Pope Paul VI, Encyclical on the Development of Peoples, *Populorum Progressio*, (1967).

<sup>34</sup> See Yasmin Abdullah, "The Holy See at United Nations Conferences: State or Church," *Columbia Law Review* 96, no. 7 (November 1996): 1835-1875.

<sup>35</sup> UN General Assembly, Resolution 58/314, Fifty-eighth Session, Agenda item 59 (A/58/L.64), July 1, 2003.

Consequently, this thesis does not consider the day-to-day diplomacy on behalf of the Holy See. The cases studied here are examples of the personal diplomacy of the Pope, directed not only to political leaders, but also to the entire Catholic Church as well as the peoples and nations of the international community. In this sense, they are cases of public diplomacy.

### III. JOHN PAUL II AND THE IDEAS THAT SHAPED HIM

#### A. A SNAP SHOT OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

Karol Jozef Wojtyla was born May 18, 1920, in Wadowice, a Catholic town with a large Jewish minority in the newly formed Polish Republic. He was the third child and second son of a former non-commissioned officer of the Habsburg army who would retire from the Polish army in 1927 with the rank of captain.<sup>36</sup> By 1938 Wojtyla was a university student in Kracow, the sole surviving child of the widowed father with whom he shared an apartment until the latter's death in 1941. His student days were interrupted by the Nazi invasion in 1939, and he was forced to work as a manual labor. Under German occupation, Wojtyla secretly continued his study of the Polish theater and was a leader in an underground movement to preserve Polish culture, risking his life to take part in a theater of resistance.<sup>37</sup> In 1942 he entered the underground seminary set up by the archbishop of Kracow in defiance of the occupation. If discovered, not at his place of work, but preparing for the Catholic priesthood, he faced death.<sup>38</sup>

After the Second World War, Karol Wojtyla was ordained priest November 1, 1946, and began a life of service to the Archdiocese of Kracow, now under Soviet domination. This life would take him to Rome for further studies in theology, to a small town parish, to completion of a second doctorate in philosophy, and ultimately back to Kracow. From there he spent his days doing pastoral work with university students and their families, teaching ethics in both Kracow and Lublin, and writing.<sup>39</sup>

In 1958 Wojtyla was consecrated auxiliary bishop of Kracow, a position that gave him public responsibility vis-à-vis the communist government of Poland. In contrast to other religious communities within the Soviet bloc, the Catholic Church in Poland had

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<sup>36</sup> Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 24, 26-28.

For other English biographies of the late Pope see Carl Bernstein and Marco Politi, *His Holiness: John Paul II and the History of Our Time* (New York: Penguin Books, 1997); Ray Flynn, *John Paul II: A Personal Portrait of the Pope and the Man* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2001); Garry O'Connor, *Universal Father: A Life of John Paul II* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2005); Tad Szulc, *Pope John Paul II: The Biography* (New York: Pocket Books, 1996, 2003).

<sup>37</sup> For Wojtyla's love of the theater and the resistance theater see, Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 35-38, 62-66, 112-119.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 67-72.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 93-144.

retained the loyalty of most Poles as well as a good measure of institutional integrity, providing a national, cultural, and spiritual alternative to the uniformity of the state ideology. As auxiliary bishop, and later as archbishop of Krakow from 1964, Wojtyla exploited this integrity, using the space provided within the Church to maximize its significance and challenge the government through educational and pastoral programs aimed at empowering the Poles through their faith. Chief among these endeavors was the careful implementation, throughout the archdiocese of Krakow, of the decisions of the Second Vatican Council.<sup>40</sup>

In October 1978 the College of Cardinals gathered for a second time to elect a successor to Pope Paul VI who died on August 6. Their first choice had produced the 33 day pontificate of John Paul I, ending with his death during the night of September 28-29. The second conclave chose a non-Italian, the first in 455 years. The Polish archbishop of Krakow, Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, was elected October 16, taking the name John Paul II. He immediately upset Vatican protocol when he addressed the crowd gathered in Saint Peter's Square in Italian. Using his own words, rather than simply imparting the traditional apostolic blessing in Latin, he won them over saying "I don't know if I can make myself clear in your ... *our* Italian language. If I make a mistake, you will correct me ...."<sup>41</sup>

Pope John Paul II died April 2, 2005, after serving more than 26 years as bishop of Rome, the third longest pontificate in history. Surviving an assassination attempt in 1981, witnessing changes in the geopolitical structure of the world following the end of the Cold War, leading the Catholic Church through change and controversy, and making 104 visits outside Italy, the late Pope produced a legacy that will take generations of research and thought to decode.<sup>42</sup> Part of that legacy includes understanding John Paul's appropriation of the Church's social teaching, his own contributions to it, and the influence of that teaching in conducting his diplomacy.

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<sup>40</sup> Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 181-234.

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, 256.

<sup>42</sup> For an early attempt at this effort see, Weigel, *God's Choice*, 21-74.

## B. DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

By 1870 Europe and Western civilization had been long fractured by the demise of the *respublica christiana* (Christian commonwealth). Marked by the nationalization of sovereignty, the proliferation of nation states, and the secularization of politics, the leadership of the Catholic Church would slowly discover the benefits of having been forced to the margins of secular power.<sup>43</sup> Return to pre-Constantinian conditions, when the Church played a purely moral and spiritual role in an often hostile political environment, was neither planned nor expected. Paradoxically, the new situation presented opportunities for the gradual emergence of a reformed, strengthened, and modern papacy, one having truly global reach and significance.<sup>44</sup>

At the very moment the temporal power of the Pope was extinguished by the forces of the Italian *risorgimento*, Pope Pius IX had already succeeded in promulgating the decrees of the First Vatican Council (1869-1870). Therein, the *First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ* defined for Catholic faith the primacy and infallibility of the Roman Pontiff. In defining the primacy, the Council solemnly affirmed the Pope's universal jurisdiction over the whole Church as well as his immediate jurisdiction over all the local churches. By affirming papal infallibility the Council enhanced the Pope's significance in the teaching of faith and morals.<sup>45</sup>

With the Pope at the height of ecclesiastical power, response to the loss of the Papal States was reactionary. In the face of changed circumstances, Pius IX and his immediate successors considered themselves to be "prisoners of the Vatican." This remained the case until Mussolini and Pope Pius XI agreed to the Lateran Treaty, establishing the Vatican City State in 1929.<sup>46</sup> The development of modern Catholic social teaching and its application to politics and international relations starts from the middle years of this "imprisonment," in the pontificate of Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903), the first successor to Pius IX.

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<sup>43</sup> For a survey of how this effected development of church-state relations in Europe, see Rene Remond, *Religion and Society in Modern Europe* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999).

<sup>44</sup> See Gene Burns, "The Politics of Ideology: The Papal Struggle with Liberalism," *The American Journal of Sociology* 95, no. 5 (March 1990): 1123-1152.

<sup>45</sup> Norman P. Tanner, S.J. (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils: Volume Two, Trent to Vatican II* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 811-816.

<sup>46</sup> Burns, "The Politics of Ideology," 1130, 1138.

## 1. *Leo XIII and Rerum Novarum*

The most liberal and sustained strand of contemporary Catholic theology had its origins in one of the more theologically and politically conservative popes of modern times. He who championed the alliance of throne and altar, condemned the separation of church and state, and suppressed innovation by requiring Thomistic metaphysics and epistemology to be the only rational basis for Catholic scholarship, is considered today an innovator.<sup>47</sup> Leo XIII is best remembered for the encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum* (1891), initiating therein what is now commonly referred to as modern Catholic “social doctrine” or “social teaching.”<sup>48</sup>

Catholic social teaching is a branch of moral theology, covering politics and economics insofar as these relate to the moral dimensions of human society. Because these disciplines require their own expertise, the Church’s teachings regarding these areas are not intended as precise policy prescriptions but given in order to specify the moral dimensions inherent in social life. Consequently, social teaching articulates moral principles that limit the exercise of political and economic power. These limits are believed necessary for safeguarding the innate value of human life.<sup>49</sup>

Articulation of social teaching requires a first step, an analysis of actually existing societies. Consequently, the Catholic Church began its modern social teaching by recognizing an historical dimension in the analysis of moral issues, signaling later acceptance of the idea of the development of doctrine. As history unfolds, new situations shed light on the meaning of revelation, meaning undetected or not required in earlier

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<sup>47</sup> See Burns, “The Politics of Ideology,” 1133-1134, for a brief summary of Leo XIII’s conservative tendencies.

<sup>48</sup> Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical on Capital and Labor, *Rerum Novarum* (1891). Hereinafter, encyclicals and other papal documents will be cited according to this form.

As statements of Catholic teaching, papal encyclicals are the highest expression of the Pope’s magisterium (teaching office), ranking next to the documents of ecumenical councils in respect to their importance. Like documents of ecumenical councils, encyclicals sometimes restate matters of Catholic faith and morals already considered settled, even infallible. However, according to Catholic faith, the infallibility of the Pope’s teaching is never assumed from the type of document in which it is presented. It must be clear that the intention to teach infallibly is present, and stated in the most precise language. Consequently, the teaching of papal encyclicals is not considered infallible *per se*; however, such teaching is given due respect and never lightly dismissed. Whether an encyclical binds one’s conscience in matters of social teaching is a matter of theological controversy beyond the scope of this thesis. The difficulties associated with such a question are seen even in the realm of personal morals, as in the case of artificial means of contraception. See Pope Paul VI, Encyclical on the Regulation of Birth, *Humane Vitae* (1968).

<sup>49</sup> See Kenneth R. Himes, O.F.M., ed., “Introduction,” in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 1-6.

times. At the end of the nineteenth century the conditions of the new working classes presented a prime source for social disruption within societies marked by the industrial revolution. With this in mind, Pope Leo XIII chose to confront the political ideology of socialism by addressing the subjects of capital and labor. The encyclical *Rerum Novarum* is simultaneously a defense of private property and the rights of the working classes, duly noting the role of the state in regulating economic affairs and the limits of its authority to intervene in individual and associational rights.<sup>50</sup>

For guidance in these matters, the Pope compared the inequalities and social dislocations of his day to the medieval past, to a world of guilds, charitable collectives, and greater direct involvement of the Church in alleviating poverty, providing education, and regulating economic life. However, Leo did not argue for restoration of the economic order of the old regime. In making the comparison, he noted the modern state had assumed roles previously played by the Church and other institutions no longer existing or no longer positioned to act effectively. A novelty appeared with respect to the individual within the state, prompting an emphasis on individual rights grounded in the biblical vision of the person made in the image of God.<sup>51</sup> In the new circumstances of liberal capitalism challenged by socialism, individuals were left to fend for themselves and attracted by the idea of social revolution. Stressing economic justice, *Rerum Novarum* championed the rights of the worker, including the right to a just wage and the right to unionize. These rights correspond to the duties of the employer: “The following duties bind the wealthy owner and the employer: not to look upon their work people as their bondsmen, but to respect in every man his dignity as a person ennobled by Christian character.”<sup>52</sup>

Leo did not confine recognition and protection of workers’ rights to the understanding and subjective decisions of employers, he made reference to the responsibility of the state to intervene on the workers’ behalf.

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<sup>50</sup> *Rerum Novarum*.

<sup>51</sup> See Genesis 1: 27.

<sup>52</sup> *Rerum Novarum*, no. 20. Addressed to Catholic bishops and pastors, the encyclical’s reference to the ennobling effects of “Christian character” does not limit the duties of employers to Christian workers, but indicates Leo XIII was addressing only the Catholic community.

Rights must be religiously respected wherever they exist, and it is the duty of the public authority to prevent and punish injury, and to protect every one in the possession of his own. Still, when there is question of defending the rights of individuals, the poor and badly off have claim to special consideration.<sup>53</sup>

Workers rights must receive protection in the juridical order. Here is the first foundation stone of modern Catholic social teaching—the *dignity of the human person* is the source of all individual human rights, rights that must be recognized and protected in the constitutional order of the state.

Leo XIII's two immediate successors were capable and pious men. Pius X paid most attention to reform within the Church. He was unoriginal in teaching the social doctrine of Leo XIII, and he retained the hostility of his predecessors to the modern world and its ideas. He was the last Pope to treat the loss of the Papal States as a disaster and the last whose election was interfered with by exercise of veto by a Catholic monarch.<sup>54</sup> In 1907 he condemned 65 propositions that he labeled “modernist” or “relativist” in the decree *Lamentabile*. Later, in his encyclical letter *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, he condemned modernism as “the synthesis of all heresies.” One consequence of the condemnation was a requirement that all newly ordained priests and other Church officials swear an oath against modernism.<sup>55</sup>

## **2. *Benedict XV and the First World War***

Pope Benedict XV (1914-1922) had the misfortune of being elected to the chair of Peter in September 1914, shortly after the beginning of the First World War. Prior to becoming archbishop of Bologna, he had served in the Holy See's diplomatic service and for many years in the Secretariat of State. He used that experience to seek a Christmas cease fire in 1914. He did not succeed. However, he never gave up, and he involved the Holy See in wartime humanitarian activities. He called for peace many times during the course of the Great War, and he is remembered today for the “Papal Peace Note,” a

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<sup>53</sup> *Rerum Novarum*, no 37.

<sup>54</sup> Robert John Araujo, S.J., and John A. Lucal, S.J., *Papal Diplomacy and the Quest for Peace: The Vatican and International Organization from the Early Years to the League of Nations* (Naples, FL: Sapientia Press, 2004), 76.

<sup>55</sup> See Pope Pius X, Encyclical on the Doctrines of the Modernists, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (1907). The Oath against Modernism was in effect from 1910 until rescinded by Pope Paul VI in 1967. For text of the oath see, online at <http://www.memorare.com/reform/oath.html> (accessed December 2005).



seven-point peace proposal offered, rejected, and vilified in 1917.<sup>56</sup> Benedict XV wrote no social encyclicals; nonetheless, he influenced the evolution of the Holy See's international position through an activism not again seen until the pontificate of John XXIII.

Italy entered the war in 1915 on the side of the Triple Entente. Annoyed by the neutrality of Benedict XV, the Italian government secured from the British an exclusion of the Holy See from any peace conference to end the war. This exclusion, marking the low point of the Holy See's influence in the international community, was part of the secret Treaty of London.<sup>57</sup> Rebuffed by the victorious powers, Benedict XV supported the League of Nations. Nonetheless, he ultimately thought it incapable of preserving the peace, most notably because of its purely secular foundation and its exclusiveness. He was particularly discouraged by the penal provisions imposed upon Germany and Austria by the victors of the First World War.<sup>58</sup>

Pope Benedict XV also was concerned about the reorganization of the Middle East brought about by the collapse and dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Mandate system under British and French control. This concern was expressed with respect to the Holy Places of Palestine and the fate of Arab Christians in the new lands divided between the two major European victors of the war. Most troubling for Rome in this pre-ecumenical period of inter-church rivalry were Russian ambitions for extending dominion to Constantinople.<sup>59</sup> These problems were overcome through British objection and the events of the Russian revolution.<sup>60</sup> The emergence of a new Byzantine empire on the Bosphorus was not to be; however, equally problematic for the Holy See, and the more enduring problem, was the British Mandate in Palestine.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> See John F. Pollard, *The Unknown Pope: Benedict XV (1914-1922) and the Pursuit of Peace* (New York: Geoffrey Chapman, 2000), 123-128. The Papal Peace Note foreshadowed some of the provisions of President Wilson's Fourteen Points; however, Wilson's rejection of the Peace Note, for its willingness to trust an undefeated Germany, led to the Note's ultimate failure.

<sup>57</sup> Araujo and Lucal, *Papal Diplomacy and the Quest for Peace*, 104-105

<sup>58</sup> See *Ibid.*, 121, 150.

<sup>59</sup> "Ecumenism," from which comes the adjective "ecumenical," refers to the twentieth century movement to abandon inter-church rivalry and work for the co-operation and unity of all Christians.

<sup>60</sup> Pollard, *The Unknown Pope*, 196-198.

<sup>61</sup> See Araujo and Lucal, *Papal Diplomacy and the Quest for Peace*, 161-190.

Two features of the British Mandate were directly opposed to the Holy See's interests in the Middle East. The first was British policy regarding the terms under which the custody and control of the many Holy Places were to be divided and shared among the several Christian churches. The British policy was more favorable to the Eastern Orthodox Churches and open to enlargement of Protestant participation due to the interests of Britain's own established Protestant churches. Secondly, the Holy See was opposed to the terms of the Balfour Declaration which, incorporated in the League of Nations mandates, opened Palestine to increased Jewish immigration, directly contradicting British commitment to Arab allies, including the Christian Arabs of the Holy Land. Fear that the Holy Land, its Holy Places, and Arab Christian communities would come under the exclusive control of Jewish interests shaped a dimension of the Holy See's policies in Palestine well into the pontificate of John Paul II.<sup>62</sup>

The Holy See's preferred disposition for Palestine was one in which the territory would be granted its own international persona. A similar position was later incorporated in the UN's decision to partition Palestine into a Jewish state, an Arab state, and an international zone encompassing the most significant Holy Places in and around Jerusalem. The response of the Arab states to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and Israeli military successes in 1967 resulted in the Holy Places of the West Bank and Jerusalem coming under Israeli control. To this day the Holy See's policy emphasizes an internationally guaranteed status for Jerusalem and the Holy Places, and the rights and spiritual interests of each of the three monotheistic faiths in the Holy Land.<sup>63</sup>

The immediate post-war period provided some limited diplomatic successes for Benedict XV. He was able to reestablish diplomatic relations with France, severed since 1905 because of Catholic opposition to the separation of church and state, and he initiated relations with many of the newly emerging states. After the war, the Pope's wartime humanitarian activity and pursuit of peace would be applauded by the very people who

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<sup>62</sup> Pollard, *The Unknown Pope*, 151.

<sup>63</sup> See Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, Discorso di S.E. Mons. Jean-Louis Tauran sui Rapporti tra la Santa Sede e Gerusalemme, given at Jerusalem, October 26, 1998.

dismissed him because of his wartime neutrality. Over time, his wartime policy enhanced the Holy See's international reputation and significance.<sup>64</sup>

### 3. *Pius XI and the Principle of Subsidiarity*

With the election of Pope Pius XI (1922-1939) the Holy See began to distance itself for a time from the political activism of Benedict XV. However, Catholic social teaching continued to advance the thought begun by Leo XIII. Building upon Leo's treatment of the associational rights of workers, Pius XI elaborated a universal *principle of subsidiarity*. This principle set forth the Catholic position on the value of "civil society" by limiting the important role of the state and stressing the way small groups and associations provide help (*subsidium*) to society.<sup>65</sup>

In *Quadragesimo Anno*, the encyclical written for the fortieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, Pius introduced the principle of subsidiarity by teaching that neither the individual nor the state thrive when the civil order leaves no intermediate institutions between these two poles of political life. Indeed, the institutions of family and civil society establish the conditions for the possibility of liberty and justice. The encyclical envisioned a thriving society built upon individuals freely coming together in pursuit of common interests, lightly regulated for the protection of the overall common good:

As history abundantly proves, it is true that on account of changed conditions many things which were done by small associations in former times cannot be done now save by large associations. Still, that most weighty principle, which cannot be set aside or changed, remains fixed and unshaken in social philosophy: Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so it is also an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do. For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them. <sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> See Araujo and Lucal, *Papal Diplomacy and the Quest for Peace*, 157-160.

<sup>65</sup> See Christine Firer Hinze, "Commentary on *Quadragesimo Anno* (After Forty Years)," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 151-174, 160-161.

<sup>66</sup> Pope Pius XI, Encyclical on the Reconstruction of the Social Order, *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), no. 79. For theological-ethical analysis of the implications of the principle of subsidiarity, suggesting the priority of civil society over the state, and the similar conclusion drawn from secular academic research, see David Hollenbach, S.J., *The Common Good and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 100-103. See, e.g., Robert Putman, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000).

Modern Catholic social teaching supports the idea of a limited role for government and the priority of individuals, families, and freely formed associations. The state exists only for the common good, in order to regulate and protect the preexisting ordering of human society. Through this teaching Pius XI condemned fascism, National Socialism, and communism.

Some have faulted the pontificate of Pius XI for willingness to conclude a concordat with Hitler's Third Reich. This arrangement, a bilateral treaty under the norms of international law, was signed and ratified in the summer of 1933, very early in Hitler's regime. The Holy See's desire for the concordat was motivated by memories of the *Kulturkampf* when Bismarck attempted to reduce Catholic influence by restricting Catholic cultural expressions in German society. Therefore, the prime concern was protection for the liberties of the Catholic Church, especially in education. In return, the Church recognized Hitler's government, surrendered the Church's institutional participation in politics, and allowed the German bishops to swear an oath of loyalty to the Reich.<sup>67</sup>

The Church discovered it surrendered too much, sacrificing legitimate rights to a regime that ignored all requirements of the principles of the common good. The Catholic Church lost a clear public moral voice. In return it received little protection for its institutional interests. Recognizing this, Pius XI issued his encyclical letter *Mit Brennender Sorge*, dated March 14, 1937, and smuggled it into Germany.<sup>68</sup> There it was read from the pulpit in Catholic churches throughout the country. The encyclical denounced the totalitarian nature of the German Reich giving moral support to those Catholic prelates who had been the most public critics of the regime, especially Clemens

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<sup>67</sup> See Robert A. Krieg, "The Vatican Concordat with Hitler's Reich," *America*, September 1, 2003, online at <http://www.americamagazine.org/gettext.cfm?articleTypeID=1&textID=3131&issueID=448#> (accessed December 2005). The 1933 Concordat was negotiated by Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli (later Pope Pius XII), Secretary of State for the Holy See, and the German Vice-Chancellor, Franz von Papen. Krieg notes that the concordat was flawed by the prevailing ecclesiology of the day, stressing the Church's nature as a "perfect society" (having within itself all the means necessary to conduct its mission) while ignoring its responsibilities to society as a whole, including the duty to speak truth to power, even at the price of the Church's institutional interests.

<sup>68</sup> Pope Pius XI, Encyclical on the Church and the German Reich, *Mit Brennender Sorge* (1937).

August von Galen, the bishop of Munster.<sup>69</sup> However, this was too late to effectively challenge Hitler. Neither the encyclical nor other official statements of the Holy See during the Second World War gave effective condemnation of the anti-Semitic policies of the Third Reich even when the measures taken against the Jews were known by officials of the Holy See.<sup>70</sup>

Recent critics have taken the opportunity to tar Pius XI's Secretary of State, Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli (later Pope Pius XII), with anti-Semitism and, consequently, some responsibility for the Holocaust.<sup>71</sup> The Holy See's reluctance to denounce more clearly and consistently the anti-Semitic activities of the Nazi regime was influenced by concern for diplomatic neutrality, fear of subjecting the Church to total persecution in Germany and elsewhere, and, according to recent scholarship, belief that public condemnation might make things worse for the Jews.<sup>72</sup>

Pius XI's encyclical condemning communism, *Divini Redemptoris*, was published five days after the encyclical on the Church and the German Reich, *Mit Brennender Sorge*.<sup>73</sup> Soviet communism had already been destroying humane religious and civic life in the Soviet Union, and had viciously persecuted the Catholic communities under its control. Of special concern were the Greek Catholic churches of the Ukraine, which had been dissolved and absorbed into the Russian Orthodox Church. The Church saw communism as more threatening than Hitler's Nazis, and this colored the Church's

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<sup>69</sup> Created Cardinal after the war in 1946, Bishop von Galen died a month later in Munster. He was beatified (last step before canonization of a saint) by decree of Pope Benedict XVI on October 9, 2005. Vatican Information Service (VIS), "Blessed von Galen: Defended Rights against the Nazis," released via E-Mail October 10, 2005.

<sup>70</sup> For Pius XII's comments during the war see John P. Langan, S.J., "The Christmas Messages of Pius XII," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 175-190.

<sup>71</sup> See, e.g., John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII* (New York: Penguin, 2000), for a scathing attack on Pope Pius XII.

For a contrary argument by a Jewish scholar see David G. Dalin, *The Myth of Hitler's Pope: How Pope Pius XII Rescued Jews from the Nazis* (Washington: Regnery, 2005). Dalin argues that the real "Hitler's Pope" was Haj Amin al-Huseini (1893-1974), the exiled Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, guest of the Third Reich throughout the Second World War, and later founder and President of the World Islamic Congress. Some, including Dalin, credit al-Huseini with bringing into Islamist ideologies a ferocious anti-Semitism, one borrowed from the European Nazis and forged by Arab resistance to Zionism and the State of Israel. Al-Huseini was a mentor to many leaders in the Arab world, especially the late leader of the PLO and the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat.

<sup>72</sup> See Jose M. Sanchez, *Pius XII and the Holocaust. Understanding the Controversy* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2002).

<sup>73</sup> Pope Pius XI, Encyclical on Atheistic Communism, *Divini Redemptoris* (1937).

decisions regarding the Third Reich. Pius XI's condemnation of communism was adopted by Pope Pius XII. It would influence the Holy See's foreign policy through two decades of the Cold War.

#### 4. *Pius XII and the Second World War*

Elected in March 1939, Pope Pius XII (1939-1958) was immediately involved in the crises that led to the Second World War. Shortly after the German armed forces invaded Poland, the new Pope published on October 20, 1939, the first encyclical of his pontificate, outlining his concerns for the international situation and the Church's role in restoring peace.<sup>74</sup> *Summi Pontificatus* was rooted in the regal Christology of the times and addressed the theme of "the Unity of Human Society." Pius XII sought to summon Catholics and other Christians to obedience to the Gospel; however, he also attempted to address others through secondary use of the philosophical language of the natural law:

The present age, Venerable Brethren, by adding new errors to the doctrinal aberrations of the past, has pushed these to extremes which lead inevitably to a drift towards chaos. Before all else, it is certain that the radical and ultimate cause of the evils which We deplore in modern society is the denial and rejection of a universal norm of morality as well for individual and social life as for international relations; We mean the disregard, so common nowadays, and the forgetfulness of the natural law itself, which has its foundation in God, Almighty Creator and Father of all, supreme and absolute Lawgiver, all-wise and just Judge of human actions.<sup>75</sup>

Pius XII diagnosed the "new errors," naming two. He stated that "[t]he first of these pernicious errors, widespread today, is the forgetfulness of that law of human solidarity and charity which is dictated and imposed by our common origin and by the equality of rational nature in all men, to whatever people they belong, and by the redeeming Sacrifice offered by Jesus Christ on the Altar of the Cross to His Heavenly Father on behalf of sinful mankind."<sup>76</sup> This error, opposed to the principle of *solidarity*, was detected in the extreme nationalist, racist, and class base ideologies of his time. As a counter, the Pope offered a vision of unity in the diversity of nations and peoples, and

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<sup>74</sup> Pope Pius XII, Encyclical on the Unity of Human Society, *Summi Pontificatus* (1939). While the encyclical did not condemn by name the aggressor states aligned in efforts to again dismember Poland, it made clear that Poland was the victim. *Ibid.*, no. 106.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 28.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 35.

pledged to promote native clergy and bishops in order to disconnect Christian evangelization from colonial enterprises.<sup>77</sup>

The second error addressed by *Summi Pontificatus* was the ideology of unlimited state power:

But there is yet another error no less pernicious to the well-being of the nations and to the prosperity of that great human society which gathers together and embraces within its confines all races. It is the error contained in those ideas which do not hesitate to divorce civil authority from every kind of dependence upon the Supreme Being - First Source and absolute Master of man and of society - and from every restraint of a Higher Law derived from God as from its First Source. Thus they accord the civil authority an unrestricted field of action that is at the mercy of the changeful tide of human will, or of the dictates of casual historical claims, and of the interests of a few.<sup>78</sup>

Pius believed that when states are unrestrained by higher authority the entire basis of the international order is undermined, and war made inevitable. In this analysis, the Pope was anticipating the subordination of state sovereignty to the principles of international law. In his day, this was an idea resting on trust that governments would adhere to their treaty obligations. Implicit in his analysis, however, was an idea of international law having its foundation in universal moral principles. Consequently, Pius XII condemned not only the breach of treaty obligations but also the unjust and unequal treaties imposed on the vanquished through victory in war.<sup>79</sup> Throughout the pontificate of Pius XII, the themes of the encyclical would reappear, guiding an approach to world politics and repeated attention to the affairs of the Middle East and Eastern Europe.<sup>80</sup> In the Middle East his concern was that the boundaries of states not be determined by the outcome of war. In Eastern Europe he was making plain his alliance with the West against the ambitions of

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<sup>77</sup> *Summi Pontificatus*., nos. 42-43, 47-48.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 52.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 71-77, 80-82.

<sup>80</sup> See Pope Pius XII, Encyclical on Public Prayers for World Peace and Solution of the Problems of Palestine, *Auspicia Quaedam* (1948); Pope Pius XII, Encyclical on Prayers for Peace in Palestine, *In Multiplicibus Curis* (1948); Pope Pius XII, Encyclical on the Holy Places in Palestine, *Redemptoris Nostri Cruciatu* (1949); Pope Pius XII, Encyclical Urging Public Prayers for Peace and Freedom for the People of Hungary, *Luctuosissimi Eventus* (1956); Pope Pius XII, Encyclical Renewing Exhortation for Prayers for Peace for Poland, Hungary, and the Middle East, *Laetamur Admodum* (1956); Pope Pius XII, Encyclical Lamenting the Sorrowful Events in Hungary and Condemning the Ruthless Use of Force, *Datis Nuperrime* (1956); Pope Pius XII, Encyclical on Prayers for the Persecuted Church, *Meminessi Iuvat* (1958).

Soviet communism, condemning the persecution of religion and the enslavement of whole societies.

### **5. *John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council***

Following the death of Pius XII in 1958, the social teaching of the Catholic Church developed at an unprecedented pace. Crucial to this development was Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, patriarch of Venice, who became Pope John XXIII (1958-1963). Prior to serving in Venice, Roncalli had been a military chaplain in the First World War and a career diplomat for the Holy See. He served in Bulgaria (1925-1934) and personally witnessed the Second World War from postings in Turkey, Greece (1934-1944), and France (1944-1953), gaining ecumenical, inter-faith, and UNESCO experience and working to relieve the sufferings caused by the war.<sup>81</sup> Influenced by these experiences Pope John was well suited to undertake the task he set for himself as Pope, the introduction of the Catholic Church to the modern world and its challenges. His encyclicals, *Mater et Magistra* and *Pacem in Terris*, and the convening of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) are his lasting contributions to the task of updating the Church.<sup>82</sup>

John XXIII's major encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, was published in spring 1963, after the first session of the Second Vatican Council and following John XXIII's encounter with American and Soviet leaders during the previous October. At that time he contributed to resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis by responding to signals from both sides welcoming his intervention.<sup>83</sup> This encounter prompted him to speak to the "signs of the times" on his own authority and while the Council was in adjournment. *Pacem in Terris* was addressed not only to the hierarchy of the Catholic Church but "to all men of good will."<sup>84</sup> Consequently, the language of the document was philosophical rather than theological, reasoned discourse in the natural law tradition. The encyclical was a

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<sup>81</sup> Marvin L. Mich, "Commentary on *Mater et magistra (Christianity and Social Progress)*," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 191-216, 192-193.

<sup>82</sup> See Pope John XXIII, Encyclical on Christianity and Social Progress, *Mater et Magistra* (1961); Pope John XXIII, Encyclical on Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity, and Liberty, *Pacem in Terris* (1963). All documents of the Second Vatican Council are cited from Austin Flannery, O.P., (ed.), *Vatican Council II, The Basic Sixteen Documents: Constitutions Decrees Declarations*, rev. trans. (New York: Costello, 1996).

<sup>83</sup> See J. Bryan Hehir, "Papal Foreign Policy," *Foreign Policy*, no. 78 (Spring 1990): 26-48, 30.

<sup>84</sup> *Pacem in Terris*, greeting.



synthesis of the social teaching of all the popes since Leo XIII, but its audience was a modern world in need of hope, not another utopian ideology. Pope John based individual and political life in the dignity of the human person, emphasizing both rights and duties and the proper ordering of the state.<sup>85</sup> He stressed the equality of persons and nations within the worldwide human family.<sup>86</sup> However, he recognized that the actual state of international relations, based on the balance of power among sovereign states, never had more than a few powers at the helm. Consequently, the danger posed by the Cold War and the nuclear arms race encompassed the whole world in the bi-polar contest. To remedy the existing state, the Pope proposed an agenda of universal human rights and effective international political institutions, recognizing the UN and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as positive signs of the times.<sup>87</sup> To this end the encyclical stated,

It is therefore Our earnest wish that the United Nations Organization may be able progressively to adapt its structure and methods of operation to the magnitude and nobility of its tasks. May the day be not long delayed when every human being can find in this organization an effective safeguard of his personal rights; those rights, that is, which derive directly from his dignity as a human person, and which are therefore universal, inviolable and inalienable. This is all the more desirable in that men today are taking an ever more active part in the public life of their own nations, and in doing so they are showing an increased interest in the affairs of all peoples. They are becoming more and more conscious of being living members of the universal family of mankind.<sup>88</sup>

During the last year of John XXIII's pontificate the Holy See initiated its own *Ostpolitik*, an early form of détente.<sup>89</sup> Vatican officials took the first steps toward dialogue with the governments of the Soviet bloc, abandoning the purely anti-Soviet policies championed by Pius XII and following the logic of Pope John's encyclical:

Again it is perfectly legitimate to make a clear distinction between a false philosophy of the nature, origin and purpose of men and the world, and economic, social, cultural, and political undertakings, even when such

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<sup>85</sup> *Pacem in Terris*, nos. 60-61.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 132.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 142-144.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 145.

<sup>89</sup> Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 227-234; Hehir, "Papal Foreign Policy," 30-33.

undertakings draw their origin and inspiration from that philosophy. True, the philosophic formula does not change once it has been set down in precise terms, but the undertakings clearly cannot avoid being influenced to a certain extent by the changing conditions in which they have to operate. Besides, who can deny the possible existence of good and commendable elements in these undertakings, elements which do indeed conform to the dictates of right reason, and are an expression of man's lawful aspirations?<sup>90</sup>

The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Guadium et Spes*, and the Declaration on Religious Liberty, *Dignitatis Humanae*, were promulgated on December 7, 1965, the next to last day of the Second Vatican Council.<sup>91</sup> *Guadium et Spes* formulated a role for the Church in the promotion of human rights and launched a new agenda for peace and justice ministries throughout the Catholic world. In the field of international relations, the document stated a duty for the Church and all nations to work toward establishing an effective world authority for the prevention of war:

It is our clear duty to spare no effort to achieve the complete outlawing of war by international agreement. This goal, of course, requires the establishment of a universally acknowledged public authority vested with the effective power to ensure security for all, regard for justice, and respect for law.<sup>92</sup>

With respect to the use of force, the Council followed the just war tradition, limiting the use of force to last resort and legitimate self-defense, restraining that use to proportionate means, and carefully assuring the immunity of non-combatants.<sup>93</sup> Within these limits, “[a]ll those who enter the military service in loyalty to their country should look upon themselves as the custodians of the security and freedom of their people; and when they carry out their duty properly, they are contributing to the maintenance of peace.”<sup>94</sup>

*Dignitatis Humanae* brought about a fundamental shift in Catholic moral theology. The document addressed the subject of religious liberty and placed the Church

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<sup>90</sup> *Pacem in Terris*, no. 159.

<sup>91</sup> Vatican II, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Guadium et Spes* (1965); Vatican II, Declaration on Religious Liberty, *Dignitatis Humanae* (1965).

<sup>92</sup> *Guadium et Spes*, no. 82.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 79.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

irrevocably on the side of the human rights movement. Before the Council, the common Catholic teaching held that one could only claim a right to adhere to the true religion. The accepted *thesis* required Catholic political authorities to establish the Catholic faith as the state religion wherever it was possible, allowing only private adherence to other beliefs. However, the events of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had forced the Church to accommodate to secular toleration. Consequently, Catholic moral theology developed a *synthesis* position. The synthesis permitted toleration of religious diversity as a matter of prudence required by the common good. Under this thesis-synthesis approach, a *right* to religious liberty was, strictly speaking, impossible, for “error has no rights.”<sup>95</sup>

Armed with the experience of the Catholic Church in the United States, where the traditions of a secular state were not hostile to religion, the American bishops and others challenged the status quo. With the assistance of Jesuit theologian John Courtney Murray, they managed a reassessment of the thesis-synthesis position and presented an argument based not on the abstract opposition of truth and error, but on an analysis of what was required by the dignity of the human person.<sup>96</sup> This position prevailed:

The council further declares that the right to religious freedom is based on the very dignity of the human person as known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself. This right of the human person to religious freedom must be given such recognition in the constitutional order of society as will make it a civil right ....

... the right to religious freedom is based not on subjective attitude but on the very nature of the individual person. For this reason, the right to such immunity continues to exist even in those who do not live up to their obligation of seeking the truth and adhering to it. The exercise of this right cannot be interfered with as long as the just requirements of public order are observed.<sup>97</sup>

The Council could not have discussed coherently the issue of religious liberty if it had not also taken up three issues of a purely theological nature. These dealt with intra-church, ecumenical, and interfaith matters. The Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches,

<sup>95</sup> See Herminio Rico, S.J., *John Paul II and the Legacy of Dignitatis Humanae* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2002).

<sup>96</sup> See John Courtney Murray, S.J., *We Hold these Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition* (Lanham, MD: Sheed & Ward, 1960, 1988); John Courtney Murray, *Religious Liberty: Catholic Struggles with Pluralism*, ed. J. Leon Hooper, S.J., (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993).

<sup>97</sup> *Dignitatis Humanae*, no. 2.

*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, addressed the long neglected status of the majority of Catholics living in the Middle East and in certain parts of Eastern Europe.<sup>98</sup> In this document the Council made clear that the hierarchies and faithful of the twenty-one Eastern Catholic churches have the right and responsibility of restoring, preserving, and organically developing the ancient rites, privileges, and disciplines pertaining to their own traditions. This measure was corrective of a long history of Westernizing influences and the suppression of oriental traditions by overzealous members of the Latin Church.<sup>99</sup>

The Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, inaugurated the Catholic Church's participation in the ecumenical movement, charting a new course of dialogue and cooperation with the Orthodox churches of the East and the Protestant communities derived from the Reformation.<sup>100</sup> Here the Council rooted ecumenism in a theological vision that seeks Christian unity through serious dialogue and efforts toward full visible communion of all Christians. The hallmark of Catholic ecumenism is that it enshrines the ecumenical project as a necessary and permanent commitment of the Church, not a mere policy preference. Underlying the commitment is recognition of an invisible bond existing already among all the followers of Jesus by virtue of common faith in Christ and his baptism.

The Council was not content with Catholics fostering dialogue and new relationships only with other Christians. In the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, *Nostra Aetate*, a desire for shared understanding and solidarity with all the world's religious traditions was announced.<sup>101</sup> Addressing non-Christian religions in general, the Council noted that the Catholic Church "rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions," while defending the Church's duty to proclaim Christ."<sup>102</sup> However, the most significant dimensions of the document pertain to

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<sup>98</sup> Vatican II, Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* (1965).

<sup>99</sup> The influence of this decree can be found in the 1990 publication of the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium*. See *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches: Latin-English Edition*, Canon Law Society of America, trans. (Washington: Canon Law Society of America, 1992).

<sup>100</sup> Vatican II, Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio* (1964).

<sup>101</sup> Vatican II, Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, *Nostra Aetate* (1965).

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 2.

Jews and Muslims, who are, with Christians, witnesses to monotheism and, in various ways, bearers of the faith of Abraham.

Regarding the Jewish faith, the document noted the “common spiritual heritage” that links Christianity with Judaism and reversed centuries of Christian prejudice. Through *Nostra Aetate*, the Church, reflecting on the Holocaust, definitively denounced any continuing attribution of the death of Christ to the Jewish people, and reproved “all hatreds, persecutions, [and] displays of anti-semitism leveled at any time and from any source against the Jews.”<sup>103</sup> This document would provide the basis for a renewed Jewish-Christian dialogue, resumed after nineteenth centuries of harsh division.<sup>104</sup>

In commenting on Islam the Council stated:

The church has also a high regard for the Muslims. They worship God, who is one, living and subsistent, merciful and almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has also spoken to humanity. They endeavor to submit themselves without reserve to the hidden decrees of God, just as Abraham submitted himself to God’s plan, to whose faith Muslims eagerly link their own. Although not acknowledging him as God, they venerate Jesus as a prophet; his virgin Mother they also honor, and even at times devoutly invoke. Further, they await the day of judgment and the reward of God following the resurrection of the dead. For this reason they highly esteem an upright life and worship God, especially by way of prayer, alms-giving and fasting.<sup>105</sup>

On the basis of these similarities and differences, the Council offered dialogue with Islam and cooperation in the moral and political spheres.

#### **6. *Paul VI: Pope of Dialogue***

It fell to Pope Paul VI (1963-1978) to complete the work of the Second Vatican Council and to promulgate its decrees. However, his pontificate also inaugurated the Holy See’s participation in the United Nations. On October 4, 1965, he addressed the UN General Assembly in New York, stating,

There is no need for a long talk to proclaim the main purpose of your institution. It is enough to recall that the blood of millions, countless unheard-of sufferings, useless massacres and frightening ruins have

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<sup>103</sup> *Nostra Aetate*, no. 4.

<sup>104</sup> See Yona Metzger, “Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow: Catholic-Jewish Relations 40 Years after *Nostra Aetate*,” *America*, 193, no. 12 (October 24, 2005): 13-15; “Roundtable: Transforming Our Time,” *Ibid.*, 17-19.

<sup>105</sup> *Nostra Aetate*, no. 3.

sanctioned the agreement that unites you with an oath that ought to change the future history of the world: *never again war, never again war!* It is peace, peace, that has to guide the destiny of the nations of all mankind.<sup>106</sup>

With this emphasis, Paul VI devoted his papacy to all the nations, becoming the first Pope in modern times to travel outside Italy in order to deliver his message. With these travels he prefigured John Paul II, who would make the pastoral visit the hallmark of his public diplomacy. Through seven pilgrimages to all the continents, Paul VI visited Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, India, the United States, Portugal, Turkey, Bermuda, Columbia, Uganda, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Australia, West Samoa, the Philippines, Pakistan, and Iran. In each place he met with government officials, religious authorities, and ordinary people. In six of these countries the majority of the population was Muslim; in four others Muslims constituted significant minorities. During the 1964 visit to the Holy Land, however, he refrained from mentioning the name of the State of Israel, keeping with the Holy See's diplomatic posture of the time.

Two documents stand out in reference to Paul VI's personal contributions to Catholic social teaching, the encyclical, *Populorum Progressio*, and the apostolic letter, *Octogesima Adveniens*.<sup>107</sup> Paul VI had institutionalized and augmented the policy of *Ostpolitik* begun in the last days of his predecessor, but in *Populorum Progressio* he shifted the focus away from the East-West division and addressed the effects of the Cold War, neo-colonialism, and unbridled global free trade on the developing nations.<sup>108</sup> He emphasized the call to dialogue made in his first encyclical, *Ecclesiam Suam*.<sup>109</sup> On the one hand, he highlighted the North-South dialogue, insisting that the wealthier nations of the world recognize and assume a duty to the poorer ones:

This duty concerns first and foremost the wealthier nations. Their obligations stem from the human and supernatural brotherhood of man, and present a three-fold obligation: 1) mutual solidarity—the aid that the richer nations must give to developing nations; 2) social justice—the

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<sup>106</sup> Pope Paul VI, Address of His Holiness Paul VI to the Twentieth General Assembly of the United Nations Organization, New York, October 4, 1965, no. 8 (italics added).

<sup>107</sup> Pope Paul VI, Encyclical on the Development of Peoples, *Populorum Progressio* (1967); Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Letter on the Occasion of the Eightieth Anniversary of the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971).

<sup>108</sup> See J. Bryan Hehir, "Papal Foreign Policy," 33-34.

<sup>109</sup> Pope Paul VI, Encyclical on the Church, *Ecclesiam Suam* (1964).

rectification of trade relations between strong and weak nations; 3) universal charity—the effort to build a more humane world community, where all can give and receive, and where the progress of some is not bought at the expense of others. The matter is urgent, for on it depends the future of world civilization.<sup>110</sup>

On the other hand, Paul VI encouraged local initiatives and supported grass roots efforts to address economic and social problems according to principles first taught by the Belgian priest, Cardinal Joseph Cardijn—“observe, judge, act.” This method had been supported by John XXIII, but now it was used to give priority to reflection by the local Christian community. As noted by a recent analysis, “The pope dared to suggest that Catholic social teaching could only emerge out of specific, regionally situated dialogue with specific concerns.”<sup>111</sup> This suggestion, along with the work of the Latin American bishops at Medellin in 1968 and the Synod of Bishops in 1971, gave support to the theology of liberation that would face criticism for its Marxist stress on class conflict under John Paul II.<sup>112</sup>

*Octogesima Adveniens* brought about another shift in papal social teaching by focusing specifically on the use of political power, calling for discernment of new ways to assure participation based upon the inherent dignity of the person.<sup>113</sup> For Paul VI, participation implied some form of democracy, something absent from countries under communist systems. However, the mere transfer of the West’s liberal democratic system to the diverse nations and peoples of the world was also called into question, as its application failed to do justice to the needs of the poor, the dispossessed, and society itself.

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<sup>110</sup> *Popularum Progressio*, no 44.

<sup>111</sup> Richard R. Gaillardetz, “The Ecclesiological Foundations of Modern Catholic Social Teaching,” in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 72-98, 76.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*; see also Kenneth R. Himes, O.F.M., “Commentary on *Justitia in mundo* (Justice in the World),” in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 333-362.

The Synod of Bishops held in Rome in 1971 published *Justitia in mundo* at the conclusion of its meeting. The document declared in its introduction that, “action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as constitutive dimensions of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of the Church’s mission of the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation.” Quoted in Gaillardetz, “The Ecclesiological Foundations of Modern Catholic Social Teaching,” 76.

<sup>113</sup> See Christine E. Gudorf, “Commentary on *Octogesima adveniens* (*A Call to Action on the Eightieth Anniversary of Rerum novarum*),” in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 315-332.

Therefore the Christian who wishes to live his faith in a political activity which he thinks of as service cannot without contradicting himself adhere to ideological systems which radically or substantially go against his faith and his concept of man. He cannot adhere to the Marxist ideology, to its atheistic materialism, to its dialectic of violence and to the way it absorbs individual freedom in the collectivity, at the same time denying all transcendence to man and his personal and collective history; nor can he adhere to the liberal ideology which believes it exalts individual freedom by withdrawing it from every limitation, by stimulating it through exclusive seeking of interest and power, and by considering social solidarities as more or less automatic consequences of individual initiatives, not as an aim and a major criterion of the value of the social organization.<sup>114</sup>

Paul VI called for new approaches. For the first time a pope allowed cooperation with those committed to socialism, provided they were removed from the atheism, materialism, and utopian ideals of socialism's ideological formulation.<sup>115</sup> Commitment to the poor may never be an excuse for class struggle, denial of individual liberties, or the subordination of all life to politics. In the final analysis, politics must allow participation by all for the common good, but it cannot infringe on the rights of the individual. The shape of politics in each instance should reflect the diversity of peoples and cultures.

In concrete situations, and taking account of solidarity in each person's life, one must recognize a legitimate variety of possible options. The same Christian faith can lead to different commitments. The Church invites all Christians to take up a double task of inspiring and of innovating, in order to make structures evolve, so as to adapt them to the real needs of today. From Christians who at first sight seem to be in opposition, as a result of starting from differing options, she asks an effort at mutual understanding of the other's positions and motives; a loyal examination of one's behavior and its correctness will suggest to each one an attitude of more profound charity which, while recognizing the differences, believes nonetheless in the possibility of convergence and unity. "The bonds which unite the faithful are mightier than anything which divides them."<sup>116</sup>

## **7. *John Paul II: Human Dignity and Global Solidarity***

When Pope John Paul II assumed the papacy in 1978, he inherited a tradition of Catholic social teaching that he appropriated and adapted to the new realities of his time.

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<sup>114</sup> *Octogesima Adveniens*, no. 26.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 31. Paul VI was thinking of the social democratic parties of Western Europe as legitimate partners with Christian democrats, as often happened in Italy and Germany.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 50.



Reading the first encyclical of his pontificate as a mission statement, one finds a Christian humanism that informs the whole of his pontificate.<sup>117</sup> The late Pope's contributions can only be understood in light of his core belief that the truth of every human life is revealed in the mystery of Christ, "Human nature, by the very fact that it was assumed, not absorbed, in him [Christ], has been raised in us also to a dignity beyond compare."<sup>118</sup> From this tenet of Christian faith, John Paul II elevated human rights to fundamental importance in the conduct of foreign policy. In his view, this was the necessary consequence of the high dignity of the human person.

The practical implications of this belief were first seen in his reversal of the Holy See's *Ostpolitik*, manifested by a blunt defense of religious freedom behind the iron curtain. Believing that truth could confront power and prevail, he abandoned the delicate realism through which his predecessors and Vatican diplomats had engaged the Soviet bloc. He insisted on the full agenda of human rights.<sup>119</sup> Not long after his election, he participated in events that would contribute to the formation of the Solidarity movement in Poland. Beginning with the first papal pilgrimage to Poland, June 2-10, 1979, and continuing with later pilgrimages in 1983 and 1987, the Pope's presence among his countrymen and his support for realization of their liberties encouraged freedom within both the Church and a growing civil society. From these cultural communities a direct rebuke to the lies of communism would emerge. In time, the power of this rebuke would spread, and, combined with other factors, yield the successful non-violent challenge to the communist regime of Poland. Yale University historian John Lewis Gaddis goes further, recently writing, "When John Paul II kissed the ground at the Warsaw airport on June 2, 1979, he began the process by which communism in Poland—and ultimately everywhere else in Europe—would come to an end."<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> See Pope John Paul II, Encyclical at the Beginning of His Papal Ministry, *Redemptor Hominis* (1979), no. 1.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 8.

<sup>119</sup> See Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 295-299.

<sup>120</sup> Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 193. Gaddis compares John Paul II with Ronald Reagan, both confronting the "evil empire" with the conviction of their ideas and the skill of actors. *Ibid.*, 217. Of course, President Reagan had the economic and military power of the United States to back him. In the end, the use of force was unnecessary. Gorbachev refused to crush the revolutions within the Soviet bloc, but why? Gaddis says that, in the end, "He chose love over fear ...." *Ibid.*, 257.

In 1987, before the collapse of the Soviet bloc, John Paul published *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, an encyclical that critiqued the failure of both superpowers to promote peace and contribute to the proper development of the Third World.<sup>121</sup> Noting the lack of substantial progress since Paul VI called attention to the problem of development, John Paul wrote:

In the light of these considerations, we easily arrive at a clearer picture of the last twenty years and a better understanding of the conflicts in the northern hemisphere, namely between East and West, as an important cause of the retardation or stagnation of the South.

The developing countries, instead of becoming autonomous nations concerned with their own progress towards a just sharing in the goods and services meant for all, become parts of a machine, cogs on a gigantic wheel. This is often true also in the field of social communications, which, being run by centers mostly in the northern hemisphere, do not always give due consideration to the priorities and problems of such countries or respect their cultural make-up. They frequently impose a distorted vision of life and of man and thus fail to respond to the demands of true development.

Each of the two blocs harbors in its own way a tendency towards imperialism, as it is usually called, or towards forms of new-colonialism: an easy temptation to which they frequently succumb, as history, including recent history, teaches.<sup>122</sup>

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See also, George Weigel, "Roman Catholicism in the Age of John Paul II," in Peter L. Berger, ed., *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), 19-35. See also John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), 192-197.

Weigel, Gaddis, and others, including political scientist Robert Keohane, found in John Paul II's interventions in Poland an example of how ideas can transform world politics and have an important role in foreign policy. In this regard Keohane wrote, "The end of the Cold War shattered a whole set of beliefs about world politics. Theories of international politics during the Cold War were overwhelmingly materialistic, reflecting a view of the world in which states pursued "national interests" shaped by geopolitical and economic realities. As Stalin once famously quipped about the pope: "How many divisions does he have?" Not only did an unarmed Pope John Paul II prevail in the contest for the allegiance of the Polish people, but after the failed 1991 coup against Gorbachev, the Soviet Union broke into its constituent parts on the basis of the norm of "self-determination," rather than along lines of military power or economic resources. State interests now depend in part on how people define their identities—as Serbs or Croats, Russians or Chechens. They also depend on the political and religious values to which their publics are committed." Robert O. Keohane, "International Institutions: Can Interdependence Work?" *Foreign Policy*, no. 110 (Spring 1998): 82-96+194, 90.

<sup>121</sup> Pope John Paul II, Encyclical for the Twentieth Anniversary of *Populorum Progressio*, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987).

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 22.

*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* drew criticism from certain conservative and neo-conservative voices in the United States and other parts of the West. They claimed the Pope had drawn a moral equivalence between the Soviet Union and the United States.<sup>123</sup> There was also criticism from the left, claiming the Pope had abandoned the emphasis that Paul VI had placed on local initiative in favor of a centralized grand vision presented as moral exhortation rather than critical analysis.<sup>124</sup> Whatever the shortcomings, John Paul's challenge was premised upon a view of international politics seen from the perspective of the developing world, from the North-South axis, rather than the East-West axis so important to the bi-polar world of the Cold War. The Pope was siding with the South, insisting that the developing nations be allowed and assume a place of equal importance in international relations.<sup>125</sup> Before the Cold War ended, John Paul II was insisting on a new world order, calling upon both East and West to cease involving the rest of the world in the ideological battle between communism and liberal capitalism. To replace the battle, he prescribed what had already been the watchword of his interventions in Poland, and the name of the movement that would break the Soviet bloc in 1989. He prescribed global *solidarity*, the moral requirement of the unity of the human family:

It is above all a question of interdependence, sensed as a system determining relationships in the contemporary world, in its economic, cultural, political and religious elements, and accepted as a moral category. *When interdependence becomes recognized in this way, the correlative response as a moral and social attitude, as a "virtue," is solidarity.* This then is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.<sup>126</sup>

Following the revolutions in Eastern Europe and the collapse of the "Soviet bloc," John Paul reflected on these events in the encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, published in

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<sup>123</sup> See Charles E. Curran, Kenneth R. Himes, O.F.M., and Thomas A. Shannon, "Commentary on *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (*On Social Concern*)," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 415-435, 430-432.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 432-433.

<sup>125</sup> *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, no. 33.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 38 (italics added).

celebration of the centenary of Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*.<sup>127</sup> In this document he restated the need for solidarity, insisting that it had been an essential element of modern Catholic social teaching from the beginning:

In this way what we nowadays call the principle of solidarity, the validity of which both in the internal order of each nation and in the international order I have discussed in the Encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, is clearly seen to be one of the fundamental principles of the Christian view of social and political organization. This principle is frequently stated by Pope Leo XIII, who uses the term "friendship", a concept already found in Greek philosophy. Pope Pius XI refers to it with the equally meaningful term "social charity". Pope Paul VI, expanding the concept to cover the many modern aspects of the social question, speaks of a "civilization of love."<sup>128</sup>

The Pope believed that solidarity among the workers of Poland, their rejection of class struggle in favor of non-violent protest, had successfully highlighted the priority of culture over politics as well as the economic and spiritual bankruptcy of Marxism. With the support of the Church, these factors led to a dialogue with the state authorities and resulted in the peaceful settlement.<sup>129</sup>

As if answering the conservative critics of *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, John Paul gave qualified support to the political and economic systems of the West, approving both democracy and free markets and calling for “a society of free work, of enterprise and of participation” over a system of “State capitalism.”<sup>130</sup> However, neither democracy nor market economics would serve the common good unless they were constrained by a rule of law grounded in universal moral principles and particularly concerned with the needs of the poor.<sup>131</sup>

The Pope did not hesitate to note new problems in the new world order, highlighting the need for continuing attention to development, both in Eastern Europe and the Southern Hemisphere, and linking the lack of development to the failure of the international community to find peaceful means to prevent the “recent tragic war in the

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<sup>127</sup> Pope John Paul II, Encyclical on the Hundredth Anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, *Centesimus Annus* (1991).

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 10.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 23-26.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 34-35, 42, 44, 46-47.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

Persian Gulf.”<sup>132</sup> Moreover, he stressed the dangers of fanaticism and religious fundamentalism:

Nor does the Church close her eyes to the danger of fanaticism or fundamentalism among those who, in the name of an ideology which purports to be scientific or religious, claim the right to impose on others their own concept of what is true and good. Christian truth is not of this kind. Since it is not an ideology, the Christian faith does not presume to imprison changing socio-political realities in a rigid schema, and it recognizes that human life is realized in history in conditions that are diverse and imperfect. Furthermore, in constantly reaffirming the transcendent dignity of the person, the Church's method is always that of respect for freedom.<sup>133</sup>

*Centesimus Annus* was John Paul II's last encyclical addressing specifically the moral dimensions of political and economic life. The document crowned an extensive papal contribution to modern Catholic social teaching. However, this last social encyclical came at the time the events presented in the next chapter were beginning to take shape. The aftermath of the Cold War and the first Gulf War had only recently illuminated new challenges and opportunities. In presenting the case studies, the intent is to show how these new developments, assessed in the light of the Church's social teaching, shaped recent practical interventions of the Holy See in the Middle East.

Finally, it is worth noting that the one hundred year movement from Leo XIII to John Paul II reveals a certain trajectory—from resistance to political change to an embrace of the autonomy of politics:

The Church respects *the legitimate autonomy of the democratic order* and is not entitled to express preferences for this or that institutional or constitutional solution. Her contribution to the political order is precisely her vision of the dignity of the person revealed in all its fullness in the mystery of the Incarnate Word.<sup>134</sup>

The *dignity of the human person* and commitment to the *principle of solidarity* are the foundation of the Church's social teaching. From this foundation, the Holy See's role in the international community had been reformed and refocused through the changing circumstances of recent history.

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<sup>132</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, no. 52.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 46.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 47.

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#### **IV. JOHN PAUL II: HIS DIPLOMACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

Pope John Paul II was focused on the Middle East from the beginning of his pontificate. Evidence of his concern was prominent in an address to the UN General Assembly on October 2, 1979:

It is my fervent hope that a solution also to the Middle East crises may draw nearer. While being prepared to recognize the value of any concrete step or attempt made to settle the conflict, I want to recall that it would have no value if it did not truly represent the “first stone” of a general overall peace in the area, a peace that, being necessarily based on equitable recognition of the rights of all, cannot fail to include the consideration and just settlement of the Palestinian question. Connected with this question is that of the tranquility, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon within the formula that has made it an example of peaceful and mutually fruitful coexistence between distinct communities, a formula that I hope will, in the common interest, be maintained, with the adjustments required by the developments of the situation. I also hope for a special statute that, under international guarantees—as my predecessor Paul VI indicated—would respect the particular nature of Jerusalem, a heritage sacred to the veneration of millions of believers of the three great monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.<sup>135</sup>

He spoke of “the Middle East crises,” showing awareness of a plurality of issues facing the region. He referred to the “rights of all,” the “Palestinian question,” the “integrity of Lebanon,” a “special statute” for Jerusalem, and the Holy City’s sacred heritage for Jews, Christians, and Muslims. In keeping with the Holy See’s diplomatic posture, he did not mention Israel.

On November 12, 1979, forty-one days after the UN address, the Pope received a reply to his plea for release of the Americans held hostage in the United States embassy in Tehran. The leader of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, in an address to Archbishop Annibale Bugnini, Apostolic Pro Nuncio to Iran, refused the Pope’s request. Instead, he suggested John Paul would make better use of his time “by giving all the superpowers fatherly advice or by summoning them to account for their

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<sup>135</sup> Pope John Paul II, Address of His Holiness John Paul II to the Thirty-fourth General Assembly of the United Nations Organization, New York, October 2, 1979, no. 10.

deeds.”<sup>136</sup> The coincidence of the election of Pope John Paul II with Iran’s Islamic Revolution highlights the resurgence of religion as a political force in the final decades of the Twentieth Century.<sup>137</sup>

The following case studies concern the late Pope’s diplomacy in the Middle East. In looking at the Holy See’s interventions in Israel, Lebanon, and Iraq, a comparison between contemporary Catholic social teaching and that of resurgent Islam should be kept in mind. However, as the development traced in Chapter III reveals, it was not long ago that official teaching sanctioned establishing a Catholic political order wherever possible. It was only forty years ago that the Catholic Church fully acknowledged the legitimacy of the secular state and the human right to freedom of religion and conscience. That was the achievement of *Dignitatis Humanae*, the Second Vatican Council’s Declaration on Religious Liberty.

#### **A. ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL**

Yona Metzger, one of the two chief rabbis of Israel, relates the following story of a conversation between Theodore Herzl and Pope Pius X:

The conversation held between Theodore Herzl, founder of the Zionist movement, and Pope Pius X not long before Herzl’s death in 1904 gives some evidence of where we used to be. Herzl came to Pius seeking support for his vision of re-establishment of Jewish independence in the Land of Israel. The pope’s response was far from supportive. According to Herzl, Pius stated the “the Jews have not recognized our Lord; therefore, we cannot recognize the Jewish people. Thus while we cannot prevent the Jews from going to Jerusalem, we could never sanction it.”<sup>138</sup>

Whatever was said during the Herzl-Pius conversation, it is evident that the Holy See opposed Jewish immigration to Palestine after the First World War, opposed the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, and has resisted exclusive Jewish control of Jerusalem to this day.

As noted in the introduction, the Holy See’s resistance to Jewish settlement in Palestine and refusal to establish diplomatic relations with the State of Israel were first

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<sup>136</sup> Imam Khomeini, “Address to Monsignor Bugnini, Papal Nuncio, November 12, 1979,” in *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*, trans. Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981), 278-285, 285.

<sup>137</sup> See Berger, *The Desecularization of the World*.

<sup>138</sup> Metzger, “Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow,” 13.



the reflection of the Holy See's desire to protect the Catholic Church's own ecclesial interests. Later the policy was justified as support for Christians in their struggle to maintain a presence in the Holy Land.<sup>139</sup> Because almost all these Christians were Arabs, the Holy See's policies had an express preference for the Palestinian cause. In these circumstances diplomatic recognition of Israel was considered off the table.

As George Irani demonstrated, the Holy See's position vis-à-vis Israel had evolved in response to doctrinal development, changes on the ground, and the failure of settlement in the aftermath of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.<sup>140</sup> By 1984, the sixth year of the pontificate of John Paul II, the Holy See had been forced, by the logic of the Church's own teaching and the reality of politics, to reformulate its own interests. Having begun dialogue with non-Christian religions, recognized the imperative of improved relations with Jews and Muslims, set out on the ecumenical path with non-Catholic Christians, and embraced the full agenda of human rights, much more was at stake in the Holy Land than the rights and privileges of the Catholic Church. These purely ecclesial interests had been subordinated to a broader vision that saw the Church's true interests as encompassing three priorities in the Middle East: (1) protection of the welfare of Christian minorities; (2) promotion of peaceful coexistence; and (3) winning respect for the human rights of Jews, Christians, and Muslims.<sup>141</sup> These priorities have particular significance with respect to the status of Jerusalem. However, despite the broader vision of its interests, the Holy See would not establish diplomatic relations with Israel until 1993.

All theological objections to Catholic recognition of the "Jewish people" were abandoned and suppressed by the Second Vatican Council in the document *Nostra Aetate*. By the mid-1980s there were also no other principled reasons for the Holy See to remain diplomatically estranged from the State of Israel. In 1983, the then under secretary of the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace, noted:

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<sup>139</sup> See Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 69: "In 1948, the Christian population of the Holy Land was over 18 percent. In 1999, less than 2 percent of Palestinian Christians remained in Palestine. And in Jerusalem, less than 4000 Christians (2 percent) still live there, while they amounted to 21 percent of the population in 1922." According to the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, the total number of Christians in Israel/Palestine in 1999 was 170,000. *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>140</sup> See Irani, *The Papacy and the Middle East*, 81-96

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 79-81.

The Holy See recognizes the factual existence of Israel, its right to exist, its right to secure borders and to all other rights that a sovereign nation possesses. The Holy See would have no problem in principle with establishing diplomatic relations. However, there are certain difficulties and problems that the Holy See would first want to have resolved. I might add that it is the common custom of the Holy See not to be the initiator of diplomatic relations with any country, although it welcomes and appreciates diplomatic relations.<sup>142</sup>

The “difficulties and problems” were several. According to Irani they included: (1) Israel’s invasion of Lebanon in 1982; (2) continuing Jewish settlement in the occupied territories; (3) the fate of Palestinians, both refugees and those in the occupied territories; (4) the status of Jerusalem and the Holy Places; (5) Israel’s lack of recognized borders; (6) the views of Arab Christians (Catholics and others); and (7) Israel’s regulation of Catholic teaching and presence, a matter of concern to Jews worried about Christian missionary activities.<sup>143</sup>

In his biography of John Paul II, George Weigel argues that the Holy See’s successful conclusion of diplomatic relations with Israel was simply the result of the Pope’s decision.<sup>144</sup> According to Weigel, the decision resulted from a combination of the need to defend the Church’s historic interests in the Holy Land and the Pope’s “intuition of Jewish pain and his theological commitment to getting the long-delayed theological dialogue between Jews and Christians under way again.”<sup>145</sup> Weigel is correct to note John Paul’s personal role in the matter. Indeed, only a Pope deeply influenced by experience, personal friendships with Jews since childhood, and common struggle against the Nazis, would have the intuition and commitment necessary to drive the policy change.<sup>146</sup> For John Paul, the matter was a necessary Christian response to the Holocaust and the logical fruit of *Nostra Aetate*—experience and doctrine had moral consequences. The Pope was seeking ways to promote the dignity of the human person and deepen the

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<sup>142</sup> Monsignor William Murphy, *The Pilot*, May 6, 1983; quoted in Irani, *The Papacy in the Middle East*, 22.

<sup>143</sup> Irani, *The Papacy and the Middle East*, 22-23.

<sup>144</sup> Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 711-713.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 712-713.

<sup>146</sup> See Metzger, “Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow,” 15. For a profile of Jerzy Kluger, John Paul II’s childhood classmate and lifelong friend, see Paula Butturini, “Boyhood Pal Offers Pope a Link to Jews,” *The Washington Post*, December 10, 1994, sec. A, p. 15. For the Pope’s backdoor channel to the State of Israel through Kluger, beginning as early as 1981, see Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 700-701.

Catholic Church's solidarity with the international Jewish community. However, that community did not appreciate the gap between the Church's desire to improve relations with Judaism and the Holy See's continuing policy of distancing itself from the Jewish state.

The better view is that the Pope's role was necessary, but not sufficient. His desire did not eliminate other factors from the equation. Moreover, the Church's historic interests in the Holy Land were no longer the principal consideration. The interests had been reformulated to encompass broader concerns. These entailed the rights of Palestinians in general and those of Arab Christians in particular. John Paul was constrained from moving forward until satisfied that these rights were capable of being addressed within a framework of diplomatic relations with Israel. As circumstances presented themselves, no real opportunity to establish diplomatic relations with Israel, while preserving solidarity with the Arabs, arose until the conclusion of the 1991 Gulf War. Only when Israelis and Arabs began to discuss a peaceful resolution of the Palestinian issue and only after Israel and the PLO recognized each other could the Pope's desire to normalize relations be met. Israel's recognition of a Palestinian partner was the quid pro quo for the Holy See's diplomatic recognition of Israel.

Weigel disputes the explanation for the Holy See's change in policy given by Thomas Patrick Melady, United States Ambassador to the Holy See under the first President Bush, as well as that of Ray Flynn, Melady's successor under President Clinton.<sup>147</sup> Melady's instructions from Secretary of State James Baker included the sentence, "You should also urge the Holy See to recognize the State of Israel."<sup>148</sup> Moreover, in his confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Melady was pressed by Senator Joseph Biden to advance the cause of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Israel.<sup>149</sup> Melady described how he promoted the American agenda and how he witnessed the start of negotiations between the Vatican and

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<sup>147</sup> Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 711-712. For accounts of their tenure at the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See, see Melady, *The Ambassador's Story*; Ray Flynn, *John Paul II*.

<sup>148</sup> Melady, *The Ambassador's Story*, 124.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 202-209.

Tel Aviv during his tenure. However, he was out of office before public announcement of the signing of the Fundamental Agreement between the Holy See and the State of Israel on December 30, 1993.<sup>150</sup>

Melady's argument was not that American pressure influenced the Holy See to change its policy, but that necessary conditions came together only at the conclusion of the Gulf War. The resulting Madrid Conference provided the opportunity for real progress. Melady noted "There was no real movement for change in diplomatic status on the part of the Holy See until the start of the Middle East Peace Conference in October 1991."<sup>151</sup> In support of this position, he described a meeting on July 29, 1992, with Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, Secretary for Relations with States (Holy See's "foreign minister").

Archbishop Tauran ... was emphatic when he pointed out to the diplomats at the meeting that the "Holy See is taking advantage of the fact that Israel and the Arab countries are talking." He said that Israel and the Holy See had decided to work together to "find solutions to the problems of their bilateral relations."

In response to my question, Archbishop Tauran told me that the Holy See "had not changed its conditions for normalization" but that "the international framework had changed." He stressed the importance of the ongoing Middle East peace discussions. He repeated to me what he had previously said: Beginning with the Madrid conference, there was a "new context."<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Fundamental Agreement between the Holy See and the State of Israel, December 30, 1993, online at [http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/1990\\_1999/1993/12/Fundamental+Agreement+-+Israel-Holy+See.htm](http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/1990_1999/1993/12/Fundamental+Agreement+-+Israel-Holy+See.htm) (accessed February 2006).

<sup>151</sup> Melady, *The Ambassador's Story*, 127.

Weigel wrote that, "With a full agenda agreed upon, the bilateral commission was announced on July 29, 1992, and the serious work of negotiation began." Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 704. This, too, was after the Madrid Conference began; however, Weigel says the Bilateral Permanent Working Commission of the Holy See and the State of Israel was the work of the apostolic delegate in Jerusalem, Archbishop Andrea Cordero Lanza di Montezemolo, and Father David-Maria Jaeger, O.F.M., an Israeli Jew who had converted to Catholicism and become a Franciscan, a canon lawyer, and an expert on the legal history of the Holy Land. Weigel says these efforts began in August 1991, before the Madrid Conference, but still after the Gulf War. *Ibid.*, 702-703. Father Jaeger and Israeli diplomat Shlomo Gur would play the crucial roles in bringing the Fundamental Agreement to conclusion through secret back channel negotiations. Other members of the bilateral commission were unaware of the back channel. *Ibid.*, 706-708.

<sup>152</sup> Melady, *The Ambassador's Story*, 132-133.

Change could now be considered because negotiations were finally underway between Arabs and Israelis, with Palestinians participating, albeit as part of a Jordanian delegation.

However, the mere beginning of the Madrid Conference was not enough to secure an agreement. When the formation of a Bilateral Permanent Working Commission of the Holy See and the State of Israel was publicly announced on July 29, 1992, there was more than a year's work ahead. That work began when serious negotiations started on the following November 2. Before agreement was reached, another decisive factor intervened, one that contributed to the final outcome. On September 9, 1993, as a result of the secret talks at Oslo, Yasser Arafat, on behalf of the PLO, recognized the State of Israel's right to exist and agreed to negotiate a settlement with Israel. Equally important, Yitzhak Rabin, Prime Minister of Israel, reciprocated, recognizing the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people.<sup>153</sup> Once the PLO agreed to recognize Israel, and was recognized as the representative of the Palestinians, there should have been no objection from Palestinians to the Holy See establishing diplomatic relations with the Jewish state.<sup>154</sup>

In order to understand better the position of the Palestinian Christians, the Holy See had kept in touch with the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox leaders in the Holy Land, continually briefing them on the progress of the negotiations. Before initialing the Fundamental Agreement, further inquiries were addressed to the three principle Arab Catholic prelates, including the Palestinian Michel Sabbah, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. According to Weigel they were asked, "Is the Fundamental Agreement something to be done in itself? Should it be done now? The answers came back, Do it, and do it now."<sup>155</sup> With these answers, the Pope proceeded to have the agreement signed.<sup>156</sup> All concerns having been met, the Holy See believed it had managed to respect each of the parties,

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<sup>153</sup> "Letters establishing mutual Israel-PLO recognition," *Haaretz* (Israel), September 9, 1993, online at <http://www.haaretzdaily.com> (accessed February 2006).

<sup>154</sup> The Holy See established diplomatic "relations of a special nature" with the PLO on October 26, 1994. "Vatican Establishes Ties with PLO," *The Washington Post*, October 26, 1994, sec. A, p. 26.

<sup>155</sup> Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 708-709.

<sup>156</sup> Linda Gradstein, "Vatican, Israel Set Historic Accord," *The Washington Post*, December 30, 1993, sec. A, p. 1; Gustav Niebuhr, "U.S. Catholic, Jewish Leaders Hail Israeli-Vatican Accord," *The Washington Post*, December 31, 1993, sec. A, p. 23; Editorial, "The Vatican's Change on Israel," *The Washington Post*, December 31, 1993, sec. A, p. 20.

Israelis and Palestinians—Jews, Christians, and Muslims. The Pope’s team quickly discovered that this was not how the Arab Christians really thought. The dissent began when representatives of the Holy See delegation met with the local Catholic bishops on December 31, 1993, the day after the signing.<sup>157</sup> Nonetheless, having signed the agreement, the Holy See could not turn back; ambassadors were exchanged within the year.<sup>158</sup>

Of special significance to the Pope were several provisions of the Fundamental Agreement that pertain to Catholic-Jewish relations, human rights and religious freedom, and the moral voice of the Holy See. The Preamble refers to “the unique nature of the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people,” and “the historic process of reconciliation and growth in mutual understanding and friendship between Catholics and Jews.”<sup>159</sup> Article 1 provides:

1. The State of Israel, recalling its Declaration of Independence, affirms its continuing commitment to uphold and observe the human right to freedom of religion and conscience, as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in other international instruments to which it is a party.
2. The Holy See, recalling the Declaration on Religious Freedom of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Dignitatis humanae*, affirms the Catholic Church's commitment to uphold the human right to freedom of religion and conscience, as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in other international instruments to which it is a party. The Holy See wishes to affirm as well the Catholic Church's respect for other religions and their followers as solemnly stated by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council in its Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, *Nostra aetate*.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 710.

Carole Dagher notes the perception of Arab Christians and Muslims that Israel prefers to sideline Arab Christians in order to present its dealing with Arabs as a Jewish-Muslim matter. This allows Israel to ignore the Christian dimension of the Arab population as it makes its case to the international community. According to the Arab view, diplomatic relations with the Holy See (a distinctly Western institution) allows Israel to keep the local Arab Christians at a distance, particularly those who are members of Catholic churches. In recent years, Arab Christians throughout the Middle East, including Catholics, insist on being in solidarity with Arab Muslims vis-à-vis the State of Israel. The Holy See maintains that being a “third party” to an Arab-Israeli dialogue gives greater voice to the Arab Christian concerns. See Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 204-216.

<sup>158</sup> Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 953, n. 56.

<sup>159</sup> Fundamental Agreement, Preamble.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, art. 1.

Here the human rights agenda is given concrete expression, in keeping with the social teaching of the Church and the decisions of the Second Vatican Council.

Article 2 was of special concern to Israel, but also fully consistent with the social teaching of the Catholic Church and the desire to improve its solidarity with the Jewish people:

1. The Holy See and the State of Israel are committed to appropriate cooperation in combatting all forms of antisemitism and all kinds of racism and of religious intolerance, and in promoting mutual understanding among nations, tolerance among communities and respect for human life and dignity.

2. The Holy See takes this occasion to reiterate its condemnation of hatred, persecution and all other manifestations of antisemitism directed against the Jewish people and individual Jews anywhere, at any time and by anyone. In particular, the Holy See deplures attacks on Jews and desecration of Jewish synagogues and cemeteries, acts which offend the memory of the victims of the Holocaust, especially when they occur in the same places which witnessed it.<sup>161</sup>

The unique role of the Holy See is highlighted in Article 11, preserving its moral voice while removing it from purely political conflicts between Israelis and Arabs.

1. The Holy See and the State of Israel declare their respective commitment to the promotion of the peaceful resolution of conflicts among States and nations, excluding violence and terror from international life.

2. The Holy See, while maintaining in every case the right to exercise its moral and spiritual teaching-office, deems it opportune to recall that, owing to its own character, it is solemnly committed to remaining a stranger to all merely temporal conflicts, which principle applies specifically to disputed territories and unsettled borders.<sup>162</sup>

With a peace process now underway, the Holy See had the freedom to support the process while retaining the right to be critical of abuses and defend the rights of all, especially Palestinians, according to the Church's moral principles.

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<sup>161</sup> Fundamental Agreement, art. 2

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., art. 11.

Articles 4 and 5, without referring to Jerusalem, pertain to the Christian Holy Places and pilgrimages to the Holy Land.<sup>163</sup> Pragmatically aware that Israeli control of the Holy City meant that Israel also controlled the Holy Places throughout the occupied territories, the Holy See accepted Israeli commitment to honor the “Status quo,” a reference to the Ottoman legacy concerning the rights and privileges of the various Christian communities. The important provision states,

The State of Israel affirms its continuing commitment to maintain and respect the “Status quo” in the Christian Holy Places to which it applies and the respective rights of the Christian communities thereunder. The Holy See affirms the Catholic Church’s continuing commitment to respect the aforementioned “Status quo” and the said rights.<sup>164</sup>

With respect to securing the legal status of the Catholic Church and respect for its rights in the State of Israel, the Fundamental Agreement has not had the desired effect. It took almost four years for the parties to conclude the Legal Personality Agreement pursuant to Article 3 of the Fundamental Agreement.<sup>165</sup> Since then, the Knesset has failed to enact legislation giving force to the provisions of either agreement.<sup>166</sup> Moreover, the Israeli Government told the Israeli Supreme Court in 2004 that it did not recognize its obligations under the Fundamental Agreement.<sup>167</sup> Clearly, the Israeli Government has been stalling. It has refused to cooperate in the restoration of confiscated Church properties and has allowed local governments to tax Catholic institutions, thereby putting the financial viability of Catholic churches at risk.<sup>168</sup> Until now the Holy See has resisted any temptation to suspend relations with Israel. The important role lies ahead, if and when a legitimate peace process gets restarted. At that time the Holy See will insist on having its say, particularly with regard to Jerusalem. In the words of Archbishop Tauran:

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<sup>163</sup> Fundamental Agreement, arts. 4-5.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, art. 4, sec. 1.

<sup>165</sup> Legal Personality Agreement—State of Israel-Holy See, November 10, 1997, online at [http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/1990\\_1999/1997/11/Legal+Personality+Agreement+State+of+Israel-Holy.htm](http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/1990_1999/1997/11/Legal+Personality+Agreement+State+of+Israel-Holy.htm) (accessed February 2006).

<sup>166</sup> Bernardo Cervellera, “By 2004, full relations between Israel and Vatican: ambassador gives his word,” *AsiaNews*, July 8, 2004, online at <http://www.asianews.it/main.php?l=en> (accessed February 2006).

<sup>167</sup> Bernardo Cervellera, “Father Jaeger: give substance back to accord between Israel and Holy See,” *AsiaNews*, November 11, 2005, online at <http://www.asianews.it/main.php?l=en> (accessed February 2006).

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*



It is the view of the Holy See that every exclusive claim - be it religious or political - is contrary to the logic proper to the very City itself. I must insist: every citizen of Jerusalem and every person who visits Jerusalem should embody the message of dialogue, coexistence and respect evoked by the City. Exclusive claims cannot be backed up by numerical or historical criteria.

Having said that, I must add that there is nothing to prevent Jerusalem, in its unity and uniqueness, becoming the symbol and the national centre of both the Peoples that claim it as their Capital. But if Jerusalem is sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims, it is also sacred to many people from every part of the world who look to it as their spiritual capital or travel there on pilgrimage, to pray and to meet their brethren in faith. It is the cultural heritage of everybody, including those who visit it simply as tourists.<sup>169</sup>

## **B. A NEW HOPE FOR LEBANON**

From its conception under the French Mandate, Lebanon had been a Christian project, politically dominated by the Maronite Catholic community. After centuries of resisting and enduring minority status in an Islamic polity, the Maronites obtained the leading role in the new state. Critical to formation of the state was the 1943 National Pact of coexistence. Through this unwritten agreement between elites of the Christian and Muslim communities, Lebanon was to be the one place in the Middle East where Christians were a political power. A central provision of the Pact was that Christians would not seek alliances with the West and the Muslims would abstain from seeking political integration in a greater Syria or pan-Arab state.<sup>170</sup>

In Lebanon, the Maronites would reinforce the uniqueness of their state by distinguishing the Lebanese from other Arabs through the historical pretence of Phoenician descent. This, combined with the Francophone orientation of Maronite education, further served to distance them from Lebanese Muslims and other Lebanese Christians.<sup>171</sup> It became clear in the 1970s that a Christian “majority” was no longer real. The desire of Maronite elites to retain a leading position vis-à-vis the growing Muslim majority set the stage for the civil war that erupted in 1975.

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<sup>169</sup> Tauran, Discorso, Jerusalem, October 26, 1998.

<sup>170</sup> “But, as famous journalist Georges Naccache put it then” Two negations do not build a state.” Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 59.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 21, 24-29.

The Lebanese civil war (1975-1990) ended with the political resolution provided by the Taif agreement in October 1989. The agreement was then “enforced” under the blunt guarantee of Syrian military occupation. Taif required amendments to the Lebanese Constitution. These enshrined an Arab identity for the country and the 1943 National Pact. Further, they reduced the powers of the Christian President, locating executive authority in the Council of Ministers led by a Sunni Muslim Prime Minister. Moreover, while Christians lost their dominant role in the Chamber of Deputies (parliament), the confessional division of the Chamber was still maintained. The seats were now divided equally between Christians and Muslims, instead of the six to five ratio Christians previously enjoyed.<sup>172</sup> However, even this overrepresentation in parliament did not satisfy many Christians.

Rejecting arrangements made possible by Taif, the Christian wing of the Lebanese army, led by General Michel Aoun, attempted to repel the Syrian armed forces from Lebanon and establish a military cabinet with Aoun at the head. Intra-Christian conflict became violent when war broke out in 1990 between Aoun’s faction and those of the “Lebanese Forces,” a Maronite militia led by Samir Geagea. Syrian troops crushed Aoun, driving him into exile. Geagea refused to take part in the post-Taif government, preferring instead a federalist territorial division of the country to further safeguard the Christian minority. By 1994, Geagea was jailed and the Lebanese Forces proscribed.

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<sup>172</sup> Lebanon’s last official census was in 1932, at which time Maronites constituted 28.7% of the total population, with other Christians making up another 21.3%, see Elizabeth Picard, *Lebanon: A Shattered Country*, trans. Philip Franklin (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1996), 66.

In 2000 there were 660,000 Maronites in Lebanon, 19% of the total estimated population. The Greek Orthodox Church is the next largest Christian community with 210,000, 6% of the population, followed by Armenian Christians of both Orthodox and Catholic profession, also 210,000 and 6% of the population. The Greek (Melkite) Catholic Church has 175,000 members in Lebanon, 5% of the population. The remainder of Lebanese Christians affiliate with the Syrian Orthodox, Syrian Catholic, Assyrian Orthodox, Chaldean Catholic, Coptic Orthodox, Coptic Catholic, Latin Catholic, and several small Protestant communities. The total number of Christians is 1,325,000, or 38% of a total estimated population of 3,506,000. The Muslim population of Lebanon is 1,921,000, 62% of the total estimate. Shi’ites make up 1,192,000, 34%; followed by 701,000 Sunnis, 20%; and 280,000 Druze, 8%. 2005 estimates from the CIA divide the Lebanese population as follows: Muslims at 59.7%, Christians at 39%, others at 1.3%. Alfred B Prados, *Lebanon: CRS Issue Brief for Congress* (Washington: Congressional Research Service, 2005), 2, 1B89118. According to Carole Dagher there were less than twenty Jewish families in Lebanon in 1995. Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 113.

There are seven distinct Catholic Churches (*sui iuris*) represented in Lebanon. Lebanon is the present seat of two of the six Eastern Catholic Patriarchs: Maronite and Armenian. Two of other four, Chaldean and Coptic, maintain their respective seats in Iraq and Egypt. Two others, Greek (Melkite) and Syrian, have their seats in Syria. The Latin Patriarch is based in Jerusalem. All seven Churches *sui iuris* are in communion with one another and with the Pope, bishop of Rome and Patriarch of the West.

Tried for crimes committed during the civil war and after, Geagea was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment for assassinating Dany Chamoun, his rival for political leadership of the Maronite community. He was the only militia lord not covered by the general amnesty enacted in an exercise of national forgetfulness.<sup>173</sup>

Throughout the civil war the Holy See channeled humanitarian assistance into Lebanon and made several direct attempts to assist the various factions in reconciling their differences. George Irani highlighted four high level fact-finding and mediation missions conducted by the Holy See between 1975 and 1980.<sup>174</sup> Each of these was guided by three principles, which in turn reflected the Holy See's moral assessment of the conflict in light of human dignity and the principle of solidarity. Irani listed the three principles as follows:

(1) no party in Lebanon should jeopardize Christian-Muslim dialogue, (2) the behavior of some elements of the Christian community should not compromise the formula of coexistence sanctioned in the National Covenant of 1943, and (3) the Palestinians, who for years have suffered exile, should not fall victims to a "new injustice in Lebanon."<sup>175</sup>

None of the papal missions was successful while the conflict continued. However, the persistence and extent of the Vatican's concern allowed no one to think that the Holy See was either ignorant of the facts on the ground or unconcerned with the well being and health of Lebanon. Indeed, the special concern of Pope John Paul II had been evident from the beginning of his papacy, especially from his 1979 address to the UN General Assembly, when he said,

Connected with this question [the Palestinian question] is that of the tranquility, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon within the formula that has made it an example of peaceful and mutually fruitful coexistence between distinct communities, a formula that I hope will, in the common interest, be maintained, with the adjustments required by the developments of the situation.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> See Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 8, 70, 91-93, 138, 168-181. For general coverage of the Lebanese civil war see, Robert Fisk, *Pity the Nation: The Abduction of Lebanon*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Thunder's Mouth/Nation Books, 2002).

<sup>174</sup> Irani, *The Papacy and the Middle East*, 126-141.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

<sup>176</sup> John Paul II, Address, October 2, 1979, no. 10.

Public awareness of the Holy See's policy toward Lebanon revealed a deep division between the Pope's priorities and those of large portions of the Maronite Catholic community. Many of the latter, as represented by Auon, Geagea, the Phalangist Party, and members of various orders of Maronite monks, were motivated by a desire to protect the Christians of Lebanon by either maintaining or enhancing Maronite ascendancy or by dividing the country into sectarian enclaves. Some in these groups were among the most ruthless opponents of the Palestinian refugees, whose presence in the country further upset the demographic factor in favor of the Muslims. Leaders of the Phalangist Party and their allies were responsible for welcoming Syrian and later Israeli military intervention into Lebanon. Furthermore, in 1982, the Phalangist militia massacred several hundred Palestinian refugees in their Beirut camps of Sabra and Chatila, while their allies in the Israeli Defense Force turned a blind eye.<sup>177</sup>

The Holy See saw things from an entirely different perspective. For John Paul II the only way out of the cycle of violence, the only way to restore security and prosperity to the Christians of Lebanon, was to save Lebanon itself. This would happen only through sincere commitment of all the religious communities to renewal of the National Pact of coexistence. For this, legitimacy needed to be restored to the institutions of government. Consequently, the Pope decided, on the advice of his Secretary of State and the apostolic nuncio to Lebanon, to recognize the post-Taif government represented by the Syrian installed President, Elias Hrawi. When the nuncio, Archbishop Pablo Puente, presented his credentials in early 1990, he antagonized the Christian mainstream that was then supporting Auon. When he later criticized the Lebanese Forces, he alienated the remainder of the Christian population.<sup>178</sup>

From the Holy See's perspective, resolution of the Lebanese crisis could only take place within a constitutional process derived from the Taif agreement. However, this was not possible as long as the Lebanese Christians felt excluded from the new order and excluded themselves from it—as when they boycotted the 1992 legislative elections and immersed themselves in *al Iibat al Mesihi*, Christian disenchantment.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Fisk, *Pity the Nation*, 359-400.

<sup>178</sup> Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 92.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 137-138.

Compounding the malaise was the continuing emigration of thousands of Lebanese Christians and the internal displacement of thousands more as a result of the civil war.<sup>180</sup> Also troubling to the Christians was the rise of Hezbollah, a militant Shi'ite Islamic party. With connections to Iran and Syrian support, the Hezbollah militia replaced the PLO in conducting military operations against Israel from southern Lebanon. This would win Hezbollah wide public support and exemption from dismantling their armed wing, as required of all other militias by Taif.<sup>181</sup> Making a respectable showing in the 1992 elections, Hezbollah entered the political arena, moderated the call for an Islamic state, agreed to play by the rules, and reached out to the Maronite Patriarch, Cardinal Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir, at his seat at Bkerke.<sup>182</sup>

It was within this context, but in direct response to the intra-Maronite war, that John Paul II announced on June 12, 1991, that he was putting the entire Catholic Church at the service of Lebanon by convening a Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Lebanon.<sup>183</sup> Following a long period of preparation, the Synod took place at the Vatican, lasting for three weeks beginning November 27, 1995. It was ultimately concluded May 10-11, 1997—during the Pope's pastoral visit to Lebanon, his first such pilgrimage to the Middle East.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 66-90.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 2 passim.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

The Synod of Bishops in the Catholic Church is a consultative body, made up of elected or appointed representatives of the episcopacy, other members of the clergy, lay auditors, and, sometimes, observers from non-Catholic Christian communities and non-Christian religions. Its role is to advise the Pope. Instituted in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council, the Synod is meant to be an expression of the collegiality of the college of bishops, united under their head, the bishop of Rome. While there have been Special Assemblies for whole continents, the Synod of Bishops usually meets on a regular basis to study a particular topic of concern to the universal Church. Only one other Special Assembly has met to address the needs of a particular country, the Netherlands. Unlike an ecumenical council, the Synod of Bishops has no legislative authority. See Canons 342-348, *Code of Canon Law* (1983).

The Synod of Bishops occasionally publishes a document addressed to the Church; however, its definitive meaning and interpretation is published in a papal message called a post-synodal apostolic exhortation. The authority of this message is considered to be not as great as that of an encyclical; however, the effect of the message will depend on the quality of its text and argument. The post-synodal apostolic exhortation concluding the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Lebanon is entitled *A New Hope for Lebanon*. The official text of the document is available in French and Italian on the Holy See Website. There is also an Arabic translation made for the Lebanese. There is no official English text of the document, and no unofficial English text could be located.

<sup>184</sup> Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 7.

The immediate purpose of the Synod was the spiritual renewal of the Catholic communities in Lebanon. Under the supervision of the apostolic nuncio, Archbishop Puente, the patriarchs and bishops of Lebanon mobilized all resources to prepare for the Synod. Ready to respond in what was becoming an exercise in self-examination, the lay faithful revealed their frustrations. Distrust of all institutions of Lebanese society was obvious, and both government and the leadership of the Church were subjected to great criticism. Frustration was particularly evident among Maronites, whose political leaders were exiled, imprisoned, or dead.<sup>185</sup>

The lay faithful also had been estranged from one another by the intra-Christian violence only recently put down by Syrian force. In surveys distributed throughout the parishes of Lebanon, Catholics denounced the clergy and monastic orders for violation of their vows. They also criticized the disengagement of the clergy from issues of social justice and sought sterner political stands from their religious leaders.<sup>186</sup> These revelations and the results of further research and reflection became the basis for the Synod agenda, one built from the ground up.<sup>187</sup> From the work of preparation a new sense of identity and purpose was emerging.

During the preparatory period, the synodal process was designed so that the Synod would foster solidarity through expanding circles of dialogue.<sup>188</sup> The Maronites and each of the six other Catholic Churches began with the renewal of their own communities. Next, they would expand to involve themselves in dialogue with each other. In this way they would come to experience and model the meaning of unity in diversity. From this point, Catholics together would approach Christians of the Orthodox Churches and other communities in order to promote the ecumenical project. From these

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<sup>185</sup> Following the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in February 2005, and the subsequent withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon in April, Michel Aoun returned from exile in May, and Samir Geagea was released from prison by legislative act in July. "Car bomb kills Lebanon's former Prime Minister," *AsiaNews*, February 14, 2005; "Historic day for Lebanon, Syrian pullout completed and new government in the making," *AsiaNews*, April 26, 2005; "Gen. Aoun back in May, Geagea free ... perhaps," *AsiaNews*, April 11, 2005; Youssef Hourany, "Family thanks Cardinal Sfeir for helping in Samir Geagea's release," *AsiaNews*, July 22, 2005, online at <http://www.asianews.it/main.php?l=en> (accessed February 2006).

<sup>186</sup> Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 102

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, 102-103.

<sup>188</sup> See *Ibid.*, 100, 192.

dialogues would emerge two strengthened institutions: the Assembly of the Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops of Lebanon and the Middle East Council of Churches. The final circle would come together as effective means for engaging with Muslim communities were found. Honest Christian-Muslim dialogue provided the only place from which the Lebanese society could renew a commitment to coexistence.

When the Synod met in Rome in November 1995 it had 120 participants:

seven patriarchs, eleven cardinals, twenty-two archbishops, seventeen bishops, ten heads and members of religious and monastic orders, seventeen “experts” and special assistants to the Secretary of the Synod, twenty-five priests, nuns and lay “auditors,” one representative of the Middle East Council of Churches, and eight “fraternal delegates”: five representing the Greek Orthodox Church and three representing the Lebanese Muslim authorities.<sup>189</sup>

The Muslim delegates, Mohammad Sammak, Seoud el-Mawla, and Abbas Halaby represented their respective Sunni, Shi’ite and Druze communities. The agenda was focused on three major issues, (1) Christian commitment to evangelical values; (2) Christian unity within the diversity of traditions; and (3) Christian-Muslim dialogue.<sup>190</sup>

The three Muslim delegates were frank in their participation. Sammak sought stronger Christian commitment to Arab culture and stressed the necessity for Arab Christians to be included with Muslims in any dialogue between Arabs and Israelis. Mawla spoke of Lebanon as the “unique alternative,” anchored in “Christian-Muslim partnership” based on justice and equality. For Halaby, Christians were “a necessity to the Arab world,” with whom “entente is sometimes difficult, but whose divorce is proscribed.” In the aftermath, they were impressed by the exercise of self-criticism and the Holy See’s commitment to Lebanon. On the other hand, they noticed tensions and were wary.<sup>191</sup>

The major tensions involved three matters: (1) witness to the Church’s social teaching versus involvement of the clergy in political issues; (2) full insertion of Lebanese Christians in their Arab environment; and (3) unity in diversity—how the Lebanese Catholics, particularly the Maronites, saw themselves in relation to their fellow

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<sup>189</sup> Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 107.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, 107-108.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, 113-114.

Catholic and Orthodox believers.<sup>192</sup> These three tensions infected the text of the Synod's Final Message, which, when published, caused an outburst from the Muslim leadership in Beirut.<sup>193</sup>

The problem with the Final Message is that, for some Muslims, it sounded like the Maronite political agenda. Again, three points became the focus of Muslim fury: call for departure of Syrian troops and the references to "cultural pluralism" and "consensual democracy."<sup>194</sup> It would now be the task of John Paul II to enter this fray and put a final spin on the Synod's meaning. The Final Message was not the Pope's document, and it had no authority unless he adopted it as its own. His message would come only when he visited Lebanon in May 1997, to deliver the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *A New Hope for Lebanon*.<sup>195</sup>

Having made the papal pilgrimage the hallmark of his universal ministry, John Paul II was the Holy See's most important public diplomat. The climactic Mass on May 11 drew more than 500,000 people, then the largest human gathering in the history of Lebanon, surpassed only by the million who demonstrated on February 14, 2006, the first anniversary of the assassination of Rafik Hariri.<sup>196</sup> However, the central event of the pilgrimage was the Pope's gathering with 50,000 young people at the Basilica of Our Lady of Harissa on May 10. Dagher describes the defining moment,

The Pope was buoyed by the wild enthusiasm of these young, who were even clutching at the trees like clusters of human grapes. When they chanted "John Paul II, we love you," he calmly observed: "Why don't you say it in Arabic?" The remark was clearly allusive. It did not go unnoticed. The Roman Pontiff called the Christian youth of Lebanon to identify with its Arabic culture.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Dagher, *Bring Down the Wall*, 114-118.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 118-121.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>195</sup> See Sa Saintete Jean-Paul II, Exhortation Apostolique Post-Synodale, *Une Eesperance Nouvelle pour le Liban* (1997). See also John Lancaster, "Beirut's Muslims and Christians Greet Pope, Who Calls for Reconciliation," *The Washington Post*, May 11, 1997, sec. A, p. 24; John Lancaster, "Pope Calls for Lebanon's 'Unambiguous Freedom'," *The Washington Post*, May 12, 1997, sec. A, p. 20.

<sup>196</sup> Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 188-189. See Youssef Hourany and Jihad Issa, "Crowds slam Syria which retorts by calling gathering a 'phoney rally'," *AsiaNews*, February 14, 2006, online at <http://www.asianews.it/main.php?l=en> (accessed February 2006); "Thousands Mark Hariri's Assassination," *New York Times*, February 14, 2006.

<sup>197</sup> Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 187.



At Harissa he signed and promulgated *A New Hope for Lebanon*, entrusting his message to the Lebanese Christians represented by the Maronite Patriarch, Cardinal Sfeir.<sup>198</sup>

*A New Hope for Lebanon* was a composite of spiritual and political themes, the latter framed from the particularity of Lebanon in light of the Church's social teaching. The Pope encouraged a renewal of the Eastern Catholic Churches. Rather than imitate and import Western values, Lebanese Christians should return to the spiritual roots of their traditions found in the ancient church of Antioch, the place where the disciples of Jesus were first called Christians.<sup>199</sup> Their task is to see a Christian future in the Middle East with confidence, and within the context of their Arab culture.

The Pope called upon Christians to initiate "prophetic gestures of reconciliation" in ever widening circles of Lebanese society, including the political sphere. This was important in light of the Lebanese desire for amnesia about the recent past. He elevated human rights, equality, and democracy above particular points of law or specific constitutional provisions, calling for "total independence, complete sovereignty and unambiguous freedom" of Lebanon. Without mentioning either state by name, he said the presence of Israeli and Syrian forces in Lebanon created difficulties that threatened Lebanese democracy.<sup>200</sup>

Finally, John Paul placed emphasis on "diversity," distinguishing it from "pluralism," possibly deferring to Muslim objections to the use of pluralism in the Synod's Final Message.<sup>201</sup> The difference between the two concepts is seen when the words are used to evoke a vision, a goal to be sought. "Pluralism" may well be a matter of fact; alone, however, the word connotes only a sense of many things. "Diversity," on the other hand, lends itself to an evocation of unity, but unity wherein differences are honored and respected. In this case the Pope's document uses diversity when speaking about the essential unity of the Church constituted by different Churches *sui iuris*. However, there is no such unity among communities belonging to different religions. Such communities remain simply many or different from one another unless effort on

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<sup>198</sup> Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 191.

<sup>199</sup> Acts 11: 26.

<sup>200</sup> Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 192-193.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.

behalf of solidarity is made. In the case of Lebanon, the Pope was asking all to see a common Arabic heritage and a common homeland as the way to social and national unity.

In a lecture given at the Cultural Religious Center of Our Lady of Victory-Nesbayh in Ghosta, Lebanon, in November 1997, Antoine Najm, a Lebanese Christian political scientist, presented a vision of Lebanon according to the teaching of *A New Hope for Lebanon*. Regarding the distinction of pluralism and diversity he said, quoting another scholar,

Dr. Henri Kremona, in defining the terms “diversity” and “pluralism,” stated: “Diversity is quite different from pluralism. According to the Apostolic Exhortation, diversity is mentioned in the framework of diversity of spiritual heritage, in which its different components remain committed to five spiritual matters: one faith, the spirit of co-operation, repentance, hope and internal renewal. In this sense, the Apostolic Exhortation appeals to the diverse Patriarchal Churches to institute ‘a new mentality’ confirming the unity of the churches.... Diversity supposes a fundamental unity on the level of spiritual commitment, which exists in the dogma of belief.... Unity in diversity is a spiritual reality that must always be incarnated as a truth. *As for the unity in pluralism, it remains a difficult task*, because it tries to unify elements that are fundamentally and dogmatically different and spiritually separate.... Unity in the Church is realized through ‘spiritual diversity,’ and unity in the nation is realized through ‘religious pluralism.’”<sup>202</sup>

John Paul’s hope for Lebanon begins with a dose of realism. Nonetheless, a Shiite cleric and scholar, Sheikh Hani Fahs, said optimistically, “The visit of the Pope and the release of the Apostolic Exhortation have ushered Lebanon into a new era, an era marked by the final maturing of the idea of Lebanon in Muslims’ minds, and the idea of an Arabic Lebanon in Christians’ minds.”<sup>203</sup>

According to Najm, for optimism to shape the political future of Lebanon, all the confessional communities require security. Two elements from *A New Hope for Lebanon* are essential for this to happen. First, as individuals, Lebanese should not be content to pursue mere “living together,” they should aim for “conviviality.” The aim is high, for it

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<sup>202</sup> Antoine Najm, “Envisioning a Formula for Living Together in Lebanon in Light of the Apostolic Exhortation,” *The Journal of Maronite Studies* 2, no. 2 (April 1998) (italics added). Online at [http://www.mari.org/JMS/april98/Envisioning\\_a\\_Formula.htm](http://www.mari.org/JMS/april98/Envisioning_a_Formula.htm) (accessed February 2006)

<sup>203</sup> *L’Orient-LE JOUR*, June 19, 1997, quoted in Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 195.

requires a real commitment to the “other”—sharing life, not just space. The second element concerns “consensual democracy,” one of the issues that provoked the Muslim uproar over the Final Message, yet was retained in the Pope’s document.<sup>204</sup>

Consensual democracy means a constitutional and parliamentary order that sometimes requires abandonment of rule by majority vote. Consensus rather than the number of votes cast may be required. Each community has a stake and each should have a veto over decisions that significantly touch upon the identity and life of that community. The Pope’s analysis suggested a form of confessional federalism. How that might be worked out in Lebanon is not stated, but it is for the Lebanese to decide.

On October 26, 2000, John Paul II welcomed Fouad Aoun, the new Ambassador of the Republic of Lebanon to the Holy See. In his address to Ambassador Aoun, the Pope said,

I listened attentively to what you told me about developments in the situation in southern Lebanon and of the political changes that have occurred in recent weeks. I hope that the love which all Lebanese have for their homeland will help them to live together, as they look to the future with a burning concern to "meet this challenge of reconciliation and brotherhood, of freedom and solidarity, which is the essential condition for Lebanon's existence and will cement your unity on this land which you love" (Apostolic Exhortation *A New Hope for Lebanon*, n. 120). The temptation to reawaken feelings that had grave consequences in the past can be avoided particularly through the growth of democracy and by giving all citizens the possibility to participate in their country's life, regardless of the religion or community to which they belong.

...To succeed ..., it is up to those who have been given the task of leading the nation to work for the common good with determination, unselfishness and perseverance, and to encourage an equitable sharing of responsibilities, without seeking privileges for oneself or for one's community. However, as I have already had occasion to stress, "this also requires that the country regain its total independence, complete sovereignty and unequivocal freedom" (*A New Hope for Lebanon*, n. 121).<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Najm, “Envisioning a Formula for Living Together in Lebanon.”

<sup>205</sup> Pope John Paul II, Address of the Holy Father to the New Ambassador of the Republic of Lebanon to the Holy See, October 26, 2000, no. 2.

It remains to be seen whether the late Pope's intervention in Lebanon will influence the evolving political settlement. Occasional news reports tell us something is unfolding in Lebanon, hopefully the outcome will be positive.<sup>206</sup>

### C. WAR OR PEACE IN IRAQ

The opposition of Pope John Paul II to United States led military operations against Iraq in 1991 and 2003 derives from a moral analysis of the use of force known as the just war tradition. Derived from classical sources, Catholic formulation of the tradition began with St. Augustine in the fifth century and reached a definitive form in the thirteenth century in the political theology of St. Thomas Aquinas.<sup>207</sup> Later, the just war tradition obtained secular sanction through the work of international lawyers led by Grotius.<sup>208</sup> Mostly absent from political debate and public considerations in modern times, the just war tradition was revived in the post-Second World War era. It regained considerable currency beginning in the 1960s as a result of Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, the war in Vietnam, and the nuclear arms race that characterized the Cold War.

The 1983 pastoral letter of the Catholic bishops of the United States, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*, brought the just war theory into the mainstream of Western discourse on war and peace.<sup>209</sup> The pastoral letter was framed to address the specific questions raised by the Cold War and nuclear deterrence; however, the letter called attention to two traditions of Christian witness and response to the issue of war and peace: the just war tradition and pacifism. While noting the validity of both positions for individuals, the American bishops recognized the responsibility of government for the security and safety of the state. Consequently, the principles of the just war tradition were viewed as the appropriate moral measures for political decisions regarding the use of force.

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<sup>206</sup> See, e.g., Samir Khalik Samir, "Lebanon becomes once again a model for the Middle East," *AsiaNews*, March 4, 2005, online at <http://www.asianews.it/main.php?l=en> (accessed February 2006).

<sup>207</sup> See Todd D. Whitmore, "The Reception of Catholic Approaches to Peace and War in the United States," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 493-521, 494.

<sup>208</sup> See Stephen J. Pope, "Natural Law in Catholic Social Teachings," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 41-71, 46-47.

<sup>209</sup> National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response* (Washington: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1983).

*The Challenge of Peace* presents a complete statement of the modern Catholic formulation of the principles of the just war tradition. As noted by Catholic theologian Todd Whitmore, “The principles are divided into those that must be met in order to engage in war in the first place (*jus ad bellum*) and those that must be met in the conduct of war itself (*jus in bello*).”<sup>210</sup> There are six *jus ad bellum* principles, stated here as distilled from Whitmore’s commentary on the bishops’ letter:

1. *Just cause*—restricted in the modern era to self-defense and humanitarian intervention, wars of retribution are no longer permitted.
2. *Declaration by legitimate or competent authority*—war declared by private individuals and groups are illegitimate.
3. *Right intention*—the objective purpose of the war must be directed toward the just cause.
4. *Last resort*—all reasonable nonviolent means of resolution must be exhausted.
5. *Reasonable chance or probability of success*—measured not only by military victory, but by the restoration of proximate peace.
6. *Proportionality*—the destruction caused by war may not outweigh the good the war seeks to achieve.<sup>211</sup>

The *jus in bello* criteria are two: (1) *proportionality*—applied to the tactics used in combat operations; and (2) *noncombatant immunity* or *discrimination*—those not involved in fighting are not legitimate targets of violence, raising the problem of avoiding “collateral damage” to persons and property.<sup>212</sup>

Today, no one expects the Pope to sanction a particular war as done on many occasions prior to the nineteenth century. The papacy has typically responded to war in the recent modern period through mediation and quiet diplomacy conducted from a position of neutrality. The interventions of Benedict XV and Pius XII conformed to that pattern during the two world wars. In the post-war period, the Holy See generally confined its involvement to humanitarian measures, general principles, irenic commentary, and moral condemnation concerning conduct used in wars underway. John

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<sup>210</sup> Whitmore, “The Reception of Catholic Approaches to Peace and War in the United States,” 494.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

Paul's 1991 public attempt to forestall the first Gulf War was an exercise of the papal office without precedent. While he did not take sides, the Pope's intervention in 1991 was, in effect, a prudential judgment that the United States was wrong.

As seen in Chapter III, developments arising from the Cold War influenced the Church's social teaching under Paul VI and John Paul II. They also shaped the position of the Holy See with respect to its diplomacy and judgment concerning American military intervention in Iraq. Since *Pacem in Terris*, the Holy See placed important emphasis on the United Nations and the responsibility of the international community to respect the legitimacy of the Security Council as the institutional locus for preserving peace and sanctioning the use of force in international conflicts. While the UN had not lived up to the promise envisioned by its founding, the Holy See had maintained and deepened its internationalism. Secondly, the bi-polar conflict of the Cold War brought a heightened suspicion of super power intervention in the developing world. This suspicion was highlighted first in Paul VI's encyclical *Populorum Progressio* and sharpened by John Paul II in *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*.

Thirdly, as related in *Centesimus Annus*, John Paul had witnessed the power of nonviolent methods to produce peaceful change in Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Moreover, his efforts toward peace in the Middle East suggested the futility of armed conflict in resolving the problems of that region. Finally, he feared that Western military intervention in the heart of the Middle East would provoke an Islamic backlash, lending credence to the "clash of civilization" argument stemming from post-Cold War theories about the shape of the new world order.<sup>213</sup> As a proponent of peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Arab conflict, Jewish-Christian dialogue, and Christian-Muslim coexistence in the Arab world, especially in Lebanon, John Paul, the leader of the world's largest Christian community, had to consider not only the welfare of the Christian minority in Iraq, but also that of Arab Christians throughout the region.<sup>214</sup> He also considered the international implications of an adventure exploited as Western crusade meets global jihad.

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<sup>213</sup> See, e.g., Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

<sup>214</sup> About 80% of Iraq's approximately 550,000 Christians belong to the Chaldean Catholic Church united under the Patriarch of Babylon. The smaller Orthodox counter part is the Assyrian Orthodox Church of the East. See Dagher, *Bring Down the Walls*, 67-68.

For Pope John Paul II, the Catholic bishops of the United States, and most Catholic theologians, the just war tradition begins with a presumption against the use of force.<sup>215</sup> From this perspective, war is not merely “the continuation of politics by other means.”<sup>216</sup> Rather, war is an extraordinary measure, taken not simply to achieve legitimate goals, but only when necessary. As early as 1979, John Paul had reiterated the call made by Paul VI in his address to the UN General Assembly, “*never again war, never again war!*” That same year, he spoke to staff and students of the NATO Defense College, asking them to consider their mission as peacemakers, never once mentioning the fact that they were warriors by profession:

Living and studying in a climate of international solidarity, you are able to meditate on the principles of peace: to consolidate ideas and to reinforce attitudes that promote it. Yes, the condition of the edifice of peace depends on the firmness with which the principles of its foundation are embraced. And so I would hope that at the core of your activities there would be a reflection on the great principles related to peace, and a renewed dedication on your part to their application.<sup>217</sup>

A presumption against war trumped all other considerations when the Pope undertook his diplomacy to stop the 1991 Gulf War. He never articulated a full application of the just war criteria to the case. However, in light of Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, he agreed that there was just cause. Moreover, the use of force had been sanctioned by the UN Security Council and, internationalist though he might be, he had no complaint regarding the lack of legitimate authority, nor did he question the intent of those preparing to dislodge the Iraqi forces from Kuwait. His concerns focused on the other aspects of the just war tradition, those related to last resort, the probability of

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<sup>215</sup> George Weigel, John Paul II’s biographer, and other neo-conservatives argue the just war tradition contains no presumption against war, resting on the duty of the ruler to uphold the peace of *tranquillitas ordinis*. See George Weigel, *Tranquillitas Ordinis: The Present Failure and Future Promise of American Catholic Thought on War and Peace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987). The Bush administration sent Michael Novak to argue the neo-conservative Catholic view to officials of the Holy See, hoping he might convince them to abandon the presumption against the use of force. See Michael Novak, “An Argument That War against Iraq Is Just,” *Origins* 32, no. 36 (February 20, 2003): 593, 596.

<sup>216</sup> Whitmore, “The Reception of Catholic Approaches to Peace and War in the United States,” 516, referring to Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. J. J. Graham (New York: Penguin, 1983).

<sup>217</sup> Pope John Paul II, Address to the Staff and Members of the NATO Defense College, February 8, 1979.

success, and proportionality. In a letter sent on January 15, 1991, to President George H. W. Bush, John Paul focused on the latter two of these principles, those that involve one's judgment about the consequences of war. He said,

In recent days, voicing the thoughts and concerns of millions of people, I have stressed the tragic consequences which a war in that area could have. I wish now to restate my firm belief that war is not likely to bring an adequate solution to international problems and that, even though an unjust situation might be momentarily met, the consequences that would possibly derive from war would be devastating and tragic. We cannot pretend that the use of arms, and especially of today's highly sophisticated weaponry, would not give rise, in addition to suffering and destruction, to new and perhaps worse injustices. Mr. President, I am certain that, together with your advisers, you too have clearly weighed all these factors, and will not spare further efforts to avoid decisions which would be irreversible and bring suffering to thousands of families among your fellow citizens and to so many peoples in the Middle East. In these last hours before the deadline laid down by the United Nations Security Council, I truly hope, and I appeal with lively faith to the Lord, that peace can still be saved. I hope that, through a last minute effort at dialogue, sovereignty may be restored to the people of Kuwait and that international order which is the basis for a coexistence between peoples truly worthy of mankind may be re-established in the Gulf area and in the entire Middle East.<sup>218</sup>

In a letter sent the same day to Saddam Hussein, the Pope made similar remarks, hoping to convince the Iraqi leader that it was his duty to leave Kuwait:

No international problem can be adequately and worthily solved by recourse to arms, and experience teaches all humanity that war, besides causing many victims, creates situations of grave injustice which, in their turn, constitute a powerful temptation to further recourse to violence. We can all imagine the tragic consequences which an armed conflict in the Gulf region would have for thousands of your fellow-citizens, for your Country and for the entire area, if not for the whole world. I truly hope and earnestly implore the Merciful God that all the parties involved will yet succeed in discovering, in frank and fruitful dialogue, the path for avoiding such a catastrophe. This path can be taken only if each individual is moved by a true desire for peace and justice. I am confident that you too, Mr. President, will make the most appropriate decisions and will take courageous steps which can be the beginning of a true journey towards

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<sup>218</sup> Pope John Paul II, Message to His Excellency George Bush, President of the United States of America, January 15, 1991.



peace. As I said publicly last Sunday, a demonstration of readiness on your part cannot fail to bring you honour before your beloved Country, the region and the whole world.<sup>219</sup>

The Pope's concerns were that war in the Persian Gulf region would have tragic consequences, perhaps extending to the entire Middle East and the whole world. Moreover, he believed that the war would lead to injustices greater than those already endured by the invasion of Iraq. For him, the choice for war was offset by the apocalyptic vision of the aftermath.

George Weigel claims in his biography of John Paul II that personnel changes in the Vatican and lack of attention to the views of the Holy See by Bush's Secretary of State, James Baker, poisoned the Holy See against the war option.<sup>220</sup> When the Pope received President Bush's reply to his letter of January 15, it indicated the bombing of Iraq would begin on January 17.<sup>221</sup> Weigel then relates the following, citing Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, Secretary for Relations with States ("foreign minister") as his source:

The next day, January 16, John Paul II telephoned President Bush to say that, while he was still praying for a peaceful resolution of the conflict, he hoped the Allies would win and that there would be few casualties if it came to war. With combat imminent, John Paul seemed to be making a plea for restraint in the conduct of the war, while underlying that the Holy See recognized that a gross violation of justice and international law had taken place in the invasion of Kuwait. Evidently, there was some concern that this was getting lost in the Pope's insistent appeals for a negotiated settlement.<sup>222</sup>

Contrary to popular opinion, the Pope never condemned the United States for its leadership in the 1991 Gulf War. The Pope, after all, was not the one morally empowered to make the decision, that role belonged to the UN Security Council and the political leadership of the nations involved. However, John Paul II's efforts to block the launch of Operation Iraqi Freedom in March 2003 present a different case.

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<sup>219</sup> Pope John Paul II, Message to His Excellency Saddam Hussein, President of Iraq, January 15, 1991.

<sup>220</sup> Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 621-6.

<sup>221</sup> For Ambassador Melady's account of his delivery of the President's reply see, Melady, *The Ambassador's Story*, 95.

<sup>222</sup> Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, 620-621.

Immediately after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Pope John Paul sent the following telegram to President George W. Bush:

SHOCKED BY THE UNSPEAKABLE HORROR OF TODAY'S INHUMAN TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST INNOCENT PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE UNITED STATES I HURRY TO EXPRESS TO YOU AND YOUR FELLOW CITIZENS MY PROFOUND SORROW AND MY CLOSENESS IN PRAYER FOR THE NATION AT THIS DARK AND TRAGIC MOMENT. COMMENDING THE VICTIMS TO ALMIGHTY GOD'S ETERNAL MERCY, I IMPLORE HIS STRENGTH UPON ALL INVOLVED IN RESCUE EFFORTS AND IN CARING FOR THE SURVIVORS. I BEG GOD TO SUSTAIN YOU AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IN THIS HOUR OF SUFFERING AND TRIAL.<sup>223</sup>

The next day, in his regular general audience he began by saying, "I cannot begin this audience without expressing my profound sorrow at the terrorist attacks which yesterday brought death and destruction to America, causing thousands of victims and injuring countless people."<sup>224</sup> After military operations were begun in Afghanistan the Pope urged restraint, but he never condemned that mission.<sup>225</sup> Indeed, for New Year's Day 2002, celebrated in the Catholic Church as the World Day of Peace, the Pope released his annual message. In it he addressed the danger of terrorism and said, "*Terrorism is built on contempt for human life. For this reason, not only does it commit intolerable crimes, but because it resorts to terror as a political and military means it is itself a true crime against humanity.*"<sup>226</sup> Immediately, he added,

*There exists therefore a right to defend oneself against terrorism, a right which, as always, must be exercised with respect for moral and legal limits in the choice of ends and means. The guilty must be correctly identified, since criminal culpability is always personal and cannot be extended to the nation, ethnic group or religion to which the terrorists may belong.*<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Telegrama di Cordoglio del Santo Padre per l'Attacco Terroristico contra gli Stati Uniti d'America, September 11, 2001.

<sup>224</sup> Pope John Paul II, Address for General Audience, September 12, 2001.

<sup>225</sup> See Melinda Henneberger, "A Nation Challenged: The Vatican; Pope not Mentioning U.S., Urges Military Restraint," *The New York Times*, December 12, 2001, sec. B, p. 4.

<sup>226</sup> Pope John Paul II, Message for the Celebration of the World Day for Peace, January 1, 2002, no. 4

<sup>227</sup> Ibid, no. 5.

From the first signs that the United States was planning to use force to remove Saddam Hussein from power, however, the Pope raised his voice in opposition and intervened to prevent the American led drive to invade Iraq. When it became clear the UN Security Council was divided and was not going to sanction the invasion, the Pope increased his efforts, seeing that the United States would proceed nonetheless. On February 14, 2003, John Paul II received Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister, Tariq Aziz, a member of the Chaldean Catholic Church and long standing member of Saddam's regime. After the meeting, Aziz told reporters that an American led invasion would be perceived as a crusade against Islam and that there would be dire consequences.<sup>228</sup> Meanwhile, the Pope had sent Cardinal Roger Etchegaray to see the Saddam Hussein in Baghdad. After meeting with the Iraqi leader, Cardinal Etchegaray said, at the conclusion of his diplomatic remarks, "Yes, peace is still possible in Iraq and for Iraq. I depart for Rome crying this out more strongly than ever."<sup>229</sup>

On February 19, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, addressed the UN Security Council. The most important paragraph of the address stated,

[T]he Holy See realizes that the international community is rightly worried and is addressing a just and urgent cause: the disarmament of arsenals of mass destruction, a threat surfacing not just in a single region, but unfortunately in other parts of our world. The Holy See is convinced that in the efforts to draw strength from the wealth of peaceful tools provided by the international law, to resort to force would not be a just one. To the grave consequences for a civilian population that has already been tested long enough, are added the dark prospects of tensions and conflicts between peoples and cultures and the deprecated reintroduction of war as a way to resolve untenable situations.<sup>230</sup>

While Migliore indicated the Holy See favored the matter being resolved through the Security Council, he was stating a position on the merits. In the Pope's view, the invasion of Iraq would be unjust. Given the opposition to the 1991 war, one expected the Holy See

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<sup>228</sup> Frank Bruni, "Threats and Responses: Baghdad's Diplomacy; Iraqi Minister, Visiting Pope, Warns Europe that a War would be Seen as Anti-Muslim," *The New York Times*, February 15, 2003, sec. A, p. 12

<sup>229</sup> Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, Statement of Special Envoy of John Paul II in Baghdad, February 16, 2003.

<sup>230</sup> Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Intervention at the Meeting in the Chamber of the Security Council of the United Nations on the Iraqi Issue, February 19, 2003.

to oppose again in 2003. In this case, however, the judgment was not merely prudential; it was a moral judgment concerning the lack of just cause. John Paul was not persuaded by the Bush administration's argument that *prevention* of a possible future use of weapons of mass destruction constituted a just cause for war, particularly when there were other means available and no weapons had been found by the UN inspectors.

Finally, on Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2003, the Pope's envoy, Cardinal Pio Laghi, the former Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, and friend of the first President Bush, met with the President to discuss the Iraqi matter. Following the meeting the President did not appear to answer questions, but his spokesman, Ari Fleischer, said, "The president thinks that from a moral point of view that the worst thing that could happen is for the American people to be attacked again' ... referring to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks."<sup>231</sup> Cardinal Laghi released a written statement that included the following:

The Holy See is urging those in positions of civil authority to take fully into account all aspects of this crisis. In that regard, the Holy See's position has been two-fold. First, the Iraqi government is obliged to fulfill completely and fully its international obligations regarding human rights and disarmament under the UN resolutions with respect for international norms. Second, these obligations and their fulfillment must continue to be pursued within the framework of the United Nations.

The Holy See maintains that there are still peaceful avenues within the context of the vast patrimony of international law and institutions which exist for that purpose. A decision regarding the use of military force can only be taken within the framework of the United Nations, but always taking into account the grave consequences of such an armed conflict: the suffering of the people of Iraq and those involved in the military operation, a further instability in the region and a new gulf between Islam and Christianity.<sup>232</sup>

On March 16, 2003, the Sunday before the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, John Paul II told the crowd gathered in St. Peter's Square for the Angelus,

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<sup>231</sup> Bob Kemper, "Resolve Iraq in UN, papal aid tells Bush: Unilateral war is 'illegal,' he says," *Chicago Tribune*, March 6, 2003. In comments made to reporters after the meeting with President Bush, Cardinal Laghi said that an invasion of Iraq without UN support would be illegal and unjust, see *Ibid*.

<sup>232</sup> Cardinal Pio Laghi, Statement of Special Envoy of John Paul II to President George Bush, March 5, 2003.

The political leaders of Baghdad certainly have the urgent duty to collaborate fully with the international community to eliminate every reason for armed intervention. To them I direct my urgent appeal: the fate of your fellow-citizens should always have priority.

But I would also like to remind the member countries of the *United Nations*, and especially those who make up the Security Council, that the use of force represents the last recourse, after having exhausted every other peaceful solution, in keeping with the well-known principles of the UN Charter.

That is why, in the face of the *tremendous consequences* that an international military operation would have for the population of Iraq and for the balance of the Middle East region, already sorely tried, and for the extremisms that could stem from it, I say to all: There is still time to negotiate; there is still room for peace, it is never too late to come to an understanding and to continue discussions.<sup>233</sup>

The forcefulness of the Holy See's opposition to Operation Iraqi Freedom and the statement of the bishop heading the Romanian Byzantine Catholic Church in America that participation in the war would be sinful, prompted Edwin F. O'Brien, Roman Catholic Archbishop for the Military Services, U.S.A., to release a statement to Catholic members of the U.S. armed forces on March 25, 2003. In the statement Archbishop O'Brien said, "Given the complexity of factors involved, many of which understandably remain confidential, it is altogether appropriate for members of our armed forces to presume the integrity of our leadership and its judgments, and therefore to carry out their military duties in good conscience."<sup>234</sup> If pressed, the Holy See would join in the Archbishop's statement.

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<sup>233</sup> Pope John Paul II, Angelus, March 16, 2003.

<sup>234</sup> Alan Cooperman, "Prelate Reassures Catholic Soldiers," *The Washington Post*, April 2, 2003, sec. A, p. 28.

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## V. CONCLUSION

The three cases related in Chapter IV are similar to two cases reported in *Ideas and Foreign Policy*, the volume edited by Goldstein and Keohane and referenced in the introduction to this thesis. Those two cases involve decolonization and human rights policies and they demonstrate how ideas in the form of *principled beliefs* shaped international consensus and national policies in the aftermath of the Second World War.<sup>235</sup> The way the movement for decolonization and human rights policies arose from the ashes and confusion of the post-war period had parallels within the Catholic Church, by reason of the Church's experience of the same history. Indeed, religious belief in the dignity of the human person as the source of human rights informed the founding of the UN and the content of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights twenty years before the same belief became the vehicle through which the Second Vatican Council committed the Church to the modern human rights agenda with *Dignitatis Humane*, the Declaration on Religious Liberty.<sup>236</sup>

Through the developmental method of its social teaching, the Church appropriated the lessons of history and read the signs of the times as requiring not only new insights, but also new doctrine. Henceforth, as changes occurred, diplomatic initiatives of the Holy See were filtered through the prism of the new doctrine. This filter required subordination of the Catholic Church's own concern for institutional privileges to a broader vision in which interests are constituted by the agenda of human rights and the common good. This was seen in Israel as well as in Lebanon.

In Israel, the Church gave little or no consideration to the Jewish people who lived in Palestine prior to the Second World War. Indeed, the posture of the Holy See had been solely concerned with maximizing Catholic rights and privileges. By 1967 all that had changed, and an option in favor of the Palestinians shaped the Vatican's concerns. With the election of John Paul II, the Holy See appropriated the theological and moral

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<sup>235</sup> See Robert H. Jackson, "The Weight of Ideas in Decolonization: Normative Change in International Relations, in Goldstein and Keohane, *Ideas in Foreign Policy*, 111-138; Kathryn Sikkink, "The Power of Principled Ideas: Human Rights Policies in the United States and Western Europe, in Goldstein and Keohane, *Ideas and Foreign Policy*, 139-170.

<sup>236</sup> See Sikkink, "The Power of Principled Ideas," 147.

implications of the Holocaust and the necessity of pursuing the Jewish-Christian dialogue. Nonetheless, diplomatic relations with the Jewish state had to await the “new context” provided by the 1991 Gulf War and the Madrid Conference.

Following the First World War, the Holy See was content to champion the Maronite character of the country as it began to shape its future independence. Before the Lebanese civil war, the Holy See’s diplomatic posture with respect to Lebanon had remained supportive of the Maronite hegemony. The civil war, and its 1990 climax in intra-Christian violence, provided the circumstances in which the logic of human rights, intra-Catholic relations, ecumenism, and Christian-Muslim dialogue shaped the Holy See’s interventions. The status quo would no longer serve, so the Pope began to take positions opposed by the Maronite community—to serve them meant serving Lebanon first.

With respect to Iraq, the Holy See’s own ecclesial interests were focused in the small Christian minority, particularly the Chaldean Catholic community. When war became the issue, however, John Paul II argued not on behalf of this small constituency but from an internationalism first articulated by John XXIII and enhanced by Paul VI. The role of the UN as the institutional embodiment of international solidarity, along with the Pope’s interpretation of the events leading to the end of the Cold War, heightened his presumption against the use of force. From this perspective he feared the consequences of war on behalf of the international common good.

As stated in the introduction, the argument defended through the evidence of three case studies is not the simple deduction of diplomatic policy from principled beliefs. Rather, the appropriation of beliefs through the development of the Church’s social teaching effected the Holy See’s perception of its interests, expanding them so that they encompassed much more than the rights and privileges of the Catholic communities of the Middle East. As Robert Jackson said in writing about decolonization, “In other words, ideas, far from merely serving as the handmaidens of military power and economic interests, were the force that defined what those interests could legitimately



be.”<sup>237</sup> What was true for the international community of states was equally true for the Holy See, an institution without military power and little economic interest in the Middle East.

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<sup>237</sup> Jackson, “The Weight of Ideas in Decolonization,” 129.

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