



BISHOP'S RESIDENCE  
15 NORTH McDOWELL STREET  
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

June 12, 1953

NATIONAL CENTER OF HIS EXCELLENCY  
to the

Clergy and Laity of the Diocese of Raleigh

*Newton Dore*

Reverend and dear Father and my dear Brethren:

The celebration of the great feast of the Sacred Heart, the Patronal Feast of our Cathedral, gives me the occasion to write this letter to the clergy and laity of our Diocese.

In the Diocese of Raleigh we fight only one enemy, the arch-enemy of God. No matter under what guise he may present himself or what means he might use, there is only one enemy of mankind, of the Church, and of the individual Catholic; that enemy is Satan, the arch-enemy of Christ and His Church.

The attack of the enemy is directed always against fundamentals of the Church, namely, its Unity, its Authority, its Catholicity. Men may be deceived -- not a fallen angel. He knows wherein lies the strength of the Church. Whether in the entire world, in a nation, in a Diocese or in a Parish, 'Divide and Conquer' has always been his plan. Divide if possible the Apostle from Christ, and from each other. Divide the faithful from the Apostles or from their priests. Divide the faithful from each other. Thus divided and separated in Faith and in Communion they become an easy prey, individually or in groups, for all the other wiles of the enemy; confusion in faith and morals and eternal death is the outcome.

The arch-enemy of the Church does not appear in person. That would frighten those he wishes to deceive. He uses the "spirit of the world", an independent spirit to deceive. Such a spirit dictates not unity but division, not love but hatred, not humility but pride. Such a spirit makes children resist the lawful authority of their parents. Such a spirit makes citizens resist the lawful authority of a rightly constituted State. Such a spirit makes parishioners resist their lawful Pastor, or their Bishop, or the Pope, the Vicar of Christ.

The enemy of God and the Church, and of mankind itself uses the "spirit of division" to break, if possible, the unity of the Mystical Body of Christ. He uses traditional hatreds of nations, of races, of classes, of minorities, of majorities, of localities, of material possessions or the need of them, to foment his divisions among men. This spirit is behind all anti-semitism, all racial tension, all capital-labor friction, all rural-urban disputes or any other religious hatreds which have been allowed to spring up and grow in the human heart.

Opposed to all of these, and a billion times more powerful is that Love represented by the Sacred pierced Heart of Christ. It is the love for all men, who have equal opportunity to share that tremendous Love, and to return it according as they will, for it has first loved them and gone down to death for them singly and collectively.

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Such a love, even more than the common hand of the Creator unites all men before God. Can men be so callous as to remember race-hatred while kneeling around the Cross of the Crucified Christ? How deceptive are the wiles of the devil. How dark are the minds of men, to his snares.

Opposed to this confusion and hatred and division, is the Church Christ founded. One Mystical Body. There can be but one, if it is Christ's as there can be but one God, and one Truth. In that one Body all the members no matter of what race, what nation, what qualities of body or of mind, or with how many or how few possessions, all are in one communion if they belong to that ONE CHURCH. Anything to the contrary is heresy.

This doctrine is the one which made the noble patrician sit down at the Christian table with common plebian, and the Christian master eat with his freed slave. It made the early Christians of senatorial rank open up their homes to the converts of a despised race who were treated in person like Christ Himself being served at table and having their feet washed by their hosts. The Numidian Christian slave was one with the Christian emperor in a Christian community which believed and practiced the teachings of Christ. This doctrine so characterized the early Church, that it became known as the Catholic Church, because it included all, in one communion, in one bond of love.

"A new Commandment I give unto you that you love one another as I have loved you"...."By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another." (John 13,25) "If any man say I love God and hateth his brother he is a liar, For he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not?" (1st Epistle St. John 4,20)

Neither the Lord nor His Church has said that His teaching would be easy. It was never promised that the road to heaven would be a primrose path, or that Christian doctrine would not demand sacrifice? "If you love them that love you, what reward shall you have? Do not even the publicans this? If you salute your brethren only what do you more? Do not also the heathens do this? But I say to you, Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you. That you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven and who maketh his sun rise upon the good and bad and raineth upon the just and unjust. Be you, therefore, perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect."

The Church has never taught us that we can live merely according to our likes and dislikes. Many people dislike humbling themselves to confess candidly their mortal sins to a fellow human being - a priest empowered to forgive them, but in spite of their feelings they confess according to Faith and knowing Christ said to his priests "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them." (John 20,23)

Many people find it difficult to abstain every Friday from meat, but they do so because of the Church's authority binding them under pain of serious sin to do penance on the day on which Christ suffered in His human flesh. "He that heareth you heareth me and he that despiseth you, despiseth me." (Luke 10,16) "Whatsoever thou shall bind upon earth it shall be bound also in heaven." (Matt.16,19)

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Few Catholics enjoy fasts or penances or the inconvenience of attending early Mass on Sunday or Holy Days of Obligation, but they do these hard things because they are directed by God thru the Church and by their Faith in order to save their souls.

The Church and her teaching has always been a challenge to the world. "Behold this child is set for the fall and for the resurrection of many in Israel and for a sign which shall be contradicted. (Luke 2, 34) You shall be hated by all men for my name's sake. But he that perseveres unto the end he shall be saved...The disciple is not above the master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?.... And fear ye not them that kill the body and are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell...Do not think that I came to send peace upon earth; I came not to send peace but the sword." (Matt.10,22)

Christ did not follow custom if they were wrong. He set customs which were right. "Then came to him from Jerusalem scribes and pharisees saying: "Why do thy disciples transgress the traditions of the ancients?... But He answering said to them, Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for your tradition?" ...This people honoreth me with their lips but their heart is far from me, and in vain do they worship me teaching the doctrines and commandments of men". (Matt.15, 1-9)

The Catholic Church has been meeting and solving such problems as an attack upon its bodily unity ever since the day of Pentecost when men from all nations first heard the word of God from the mouths of the Apostles. In that first Catholic crowd were more men of other nations and races than the few white "strangers from Rome". The Church, that calls itself Catholic today, because it is Catholic, still has more people of colored skin in its one communion than those who call themselves Caucasian. This Catholic Church has been meeting and solving by Christ's teaching race problems in all parts of the world: in India, in Africa, in Central America, in Mexico, in the West Indies, in the United States, in the North, in the East, and in the West. It will also solve them in time in the South. The Church is not for one section, or one period of history, but is Catholic in time and in territorial extent as well as in doctrinal teaching.

Witness the christianization of the Indian, instead of his extermination in South and Central America and in the Catholic Missions of the West. Witness the champions of the Church's Doctrine in Las Cacas, Father Montoya, and in a thousand pages of the history of Brazil and Paraguay, Mexico. Whenever the Church has been unhampered, she has not failed to solve such problems and even in face of difficulties she has always fought for God's rights and human rights on earth.

Christ, the Good Shepherd, taught "there shall be one fold and one shepherd." (John 10,16) What do we mean one fold; one flock of sheep? Do we mean a few sheep here and a few scattered there, or do we mean all united in one body? Is not the fold of Christ united in North Carolina?

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In one body, under its shepherd? Is not the fold in the United States or in the World, united under the supreme Shepherd, the Vicar of Christ? Can there be division in the Church of God? Can we divide a living body and keep the parts living? No. Neither can we divide the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church.

In North Carolina until a few years ago there were no special Catholic churches for our colored people and all Catholics worshiped God together irrespective of race. In order to give a special impetus to the missionary work among the colored people, former bishops of Raleigh contracted with various religious communities of men and women for specialized work among these people and for the establishment of special churches and schools in some sections of the Diocese for them. Did this mean that the Church was abandoning her century old teaching of "one fold and one shepherd" or that negroes were thereby forbidden to worship in any Catholic Church in the Diocese except those for colored. By no means. It meant that there was no division but merely that special attention was given to a few, and all Catholics still had the rights and privileges of worshipping God together, as everywhere in the Catholic Church.

To be assured that this was understood entirely by all Catholics and enforced by all Pastors, we wrote a letter clearly defining this teaching two years and a half ago on January 29, 1951. It was read in all of the Churches of the Diocese and printed in the North Carolina Catholic. The same teaching has been reiterated in our letters of February 9th and May 18th of this present year.

THEREFORE, SO THAT IN THE FUTURE THERE CAN BE NO MISUNDERSTANDING ON THE PART OF ANYONE, LET ME STATE HERE AS EMPHATICALLY AS I CAN: THERE IS NO SEGREGATION OF RACES TO BE TOLERATED IN ANY CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE DIOCESE OF RALEIGH. THE PASTORS ARE CHARGED WITH THE CARRYING OUT OF THIS TEACHING AND SHALL TOLERATE NOTHING TO THE CONTRARY. OTHERWISE, ALL SPECIAL CHURCHES FOR NEGROES WILL BE ABOLISHED IMMEDIATELY AS LENDING WEIGHT TO THE FALSE NOTION THAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST, IS DIVIDED. EQUAL RIGHTS ARE ACCORDED, THEREFORE, TO EVERY RACE AND EVERY NATIONALITY AS IS PROPER IN ANY CATHOLIC CHURCH AND WITHIN THE CHURCH BUILDING ITSELF EVERY ONE IS GIVEN THE PRIVILEGE TO SIT OR KNEEL WHEREVER HE DESIRES AND TO APPROACH THE SACRAMENTS WITHOUT ANY REGARD TO RACE OR NATIONALITY. THIS DOCTRINE IS TO BE FULLY EXPLAINED TO EACH CONVERT WHO ENTERS THE CHURCH FROM HENCEFORTH IN THE DIOCESE OF RALEIGH.

As Americans who have a reputation for defending the poor and the weak of all races in all parts of the world, as Christians who should be closing our ranks to Atheistic Communism on our frontiers; as Catholics who rejoice to be found worthy to suffer for the sake of Christ, (Acts 5,41) let each and every Catholic, worthy of the name, in the Diocese of Raleigh be courageous enough to correct any abuse of this kind in the house of God, remembering the promise of Christ, "As often as you have done it to these the least of my brethren, you have done it to me."

Thank God such abuse has not been general or widespread. North Carolina and the Diocese of Raleigh has been for the most part an example to the nation and to the Church in its correct Christian attitude on this

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subject. Witness the unity and the work of Catholics of all races in the Legion of Mary, and in the North Carolina Catholic Laymens' Association. Witness the colored priests and Bishops who have visited and been welcomed in the diocese. Witness our three colored seminarians, and the Catholic Mother of 1952, a Colored Catholic, chosen by twelve southern white ladies. Never in our newspaper, "The North Carolina Catholic" has there been any discrimination in regard to news or pictures. Our colored Catholics have served with distinction as officers in our diocesan societies and have attended retreats and conventions together. Our colored children have competed in all oratorical contests and have taken top honors many times. We are proud of our colored Catholics of North Carolina, some of whom are graduates of Catholic Universities, Colleges and Schools; some are business and professional persons of the highest education and culture; but we are especially proud of them because they are good religious men and women and belong to us as we do to them in the same communion of the Mystical Body of Christ- the Church.

I am not unmindful, as a Southerner, of the force of this virus of prejudice among some persons in the South; as well as in the North. I know, however, that there is a cure for this virus and that is, our Faith. Many southern boys facing death together in the trenches will bear me out. I revolt against our children being infected with this virus, when men and women of good-will everywhere can preserve them from it. The virus will not die out of itself, it has to be killed by being exposed to the light of Faith.

The Church does not propose tolerance which is negative, but love which is positive. If Christ said love your enemies, we certainly can love our friends. These are our friends and members of our own body, the Church. It is our duty, as Christians of the early days, not only to love them but to serve them. We need to help them get better educational facilities, better opportunities for culture, better living conditions, better jobs, better pay, better homes and families, better civic representation and better friendliness in the community and all of this presupposes the right to worship God freely with us in the Church everywhere.

As Pastor of your souls, I am happy to take the responsibility for any evil which might result from different races worshiping God together, but I would be unwilling to take the responsibility of those who refuse to worship God with a person of another race. May the example of our American soldiers, who died to stamp out a philosophy of "the Master Race" in a war with Hitler in Germany, prevent us from following a similar course.

My only sorrow is the fear that I shall not convince you of the wiles of Satan. But I shall be able to convince you if I love you enough, and if you love me you will understand, for God has first loved us.

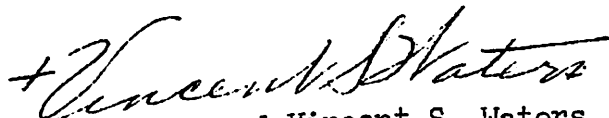
Our Blessed Lord at one time proposing a very difficult doctrine to the Church recalled the response made by some of His followers, "This is a hard saying and who can receive it. Turning to His Apostles, He said, Will you also go away? They answered in words of Faith, Lord, to Whom shall we go, Thou has the words of eternal life."

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Now at least with more confidence I shall be able to face the judgment spoken of in the Book of Wisdom, Chap. 6, 4-8:

"Give ear you that rule the people, and that please yourselves in a multitude of nations; For power is given you by the Lord and strength by the Most High Who will examine your works and search out your thoughts; Because being ministers of His Kingdom you have not judged rightly, nor kept the law of justice, nor walked according to the Will of God. Horribly and speedily He will appear before you; for a most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule. For to him that is little mercy is granted but the mighty shall be mightily tormented. For God will not accept any man's person, neither will He stand in awe of any man's greatness; FOR HE MADE THE LITTLE AND THE GREAT AND HATH CARE OF ALL."

Sincerely in the Sacred Heart of Jesus  
and the Immaculate Heart of Mary,



Most Reverend Vincent S. Waters,  
Bishop of Raleigh

Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus  
June 12, 1953



N.B. This letter is to be read at all the Masses on Sunday, June 21st, 1953  
instead of a sermon.